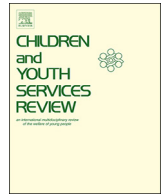




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Children and Youth Services Review

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/childyouth

Differences in perceived living group climate between youth with a Turkish/Moroccan and native Dutch background in residential youth care

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Living group climate
Cultural differences
Residential youth care
Turkish/Moroccan youth

ABSTRACT

There is increasing evidence for the importance of a positive living group climate in residential youth care with regard to treatment and recovery. However, cultural differences in perceived group climate and in particular the experiences of the group climate among youth with Turkish/Moroccan background have not been investigated yet. The main objective of this study was to examine differences in experience of living group climate between native Dutch youth and Turkish/Moroccan youth. The sample consisted of 437 youth (age $M = 15.44$, $SD = 1.47$) with a native Dutch background (80.3%) or a Turkish/Moroccan ethnic background (19.7%) living in Dutch residential youth care institutions. Data were collected using the Group Climate Instrument. Results indicated that Turkish/Moroccan youth experienced less support by group workers compared to native Dutch youth. These findings imply that professional caregivers working with youth with a different ethnic background should be sensitive to cultural differences in order to be responsive to their needs.

1. Introduction

In the Netherlands, around 15,000 children and adolescents between the ages of 12 and 22 years live in residential youth care institutions (RYCIs) (Statistics Netherlands, 2018). Residential youth care institutions can be open (ORYC) and secure (SRYC) or forensic (FRYC) (Boendermaker, Van Rooijen, Berg, & Bartelink, 2013; Leloux-Opmeer, Kuiper, Swaab, & Scholte, 2016). In these settings the youth receive pedagogical care, education, and treatment (Bastiaanssen et al., 2012; Knorth, Harder, Zandberg, & Kendrick, 2008). Research – though still limited – has revealed that an increasing number of non-Western youth is referred to RYCI. They form 18% of the total youth group. The two largest groups of non-Western youth are youth with Turkish and Moroccan background, comprising 19% and 16% of the non-Western youth population and 2.9% and 3.5% of the total youth population in the Netherlands, respectively (Statistics Netherlands, 2019). Statistics Netherlands reported that 0.6% of non-Western youth use residential youth care, twice as much as native Dutch youth. Between 20% and 25% of the youth in ORYC have a non-Western background, together with between 30% and 35% of youth in SRYC who have a non-Western background (Harder, Knorth, & Kalverboer, 2015; Nijhof et al., 2012).

Several studies have shown that Turkish and Moroccan youth have

more behavioral and mental health problems compared to Dutch native youth (De Wit et al., 2008; Janssen et al., 2004; Paalman et al., 2015; Stevens et al., 2003). However, Turkish and Moroccan youth are less frequently treated for their problems (Verhulp, Stevens, Van de Schoot, & Vollebergh, 2013; Zwirs, Burger, Schulpen, & Buitelaar, 2006). In addition, Turkish and Moroccan youth in RYCI may also deal with cultural adaptational issues associated with the process of migration, the ethnic minority position of being a migrant, and their cultural backgrounds, which can result in poor integration, a lack of engagement with society, and feelings of being discriminated against (Andriessen, Fernee, & Wittebrood, 2014; Azghari, Hooghiemstra, & Van de Vijver, 2015; Van Bergen, Feddes, Doosje, & Pels, 2015).

Once placed in an RYCI, youth live in units with approximately eight to twelve persons per unit (Bastiaanssen et al., 2012), with different cultural backgrounds supported by group workers, the majority of whom could be assumed to be women and of Dutch origin. This implies that a substantial proportion of residential group workers face an increasing number of youth with a Turkish/Moroccan background that differ from their own background. A small number of studies have shown that group workers find it challenging to work with Turkish/Moroccan youth in RYCI, due to their behavioral and emotional problems in combination with their different cultural background (Knorth,

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105081>

Received 27 November 2019; Received in revised form 8 May 2020; Accepted 8 May 2020

Available online 11 May 2020

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2002; Kromhout, Eldering, & Knorth, 2000). They tend to have difficulties with the client-therapeutic relationship, which, in addition to the agreement between clients and group workers on goals and collaboration on tasks, is one of the main components of the therapeutic alliance (Harder, Knorth, & Kalverboer, 2012; Roest, Van der Helm, & Stams, 2016).

Research suggests that a good therapeutic alliance in RYCI has a positive influence on treatment motivation and outcomes (Duppong Hurley, Van Ryzin, Lambert, & Stevens, 2015; Roest et al., 2016). A study by Van der Haar (2007) indicates that the support of youth with an ethnic minority background does often not fit their needs and expectations. When group workers are not responsive, this may result in frustration of the youth's basic psychological needs i.e. relatedness, perceived competence and autonomy, resulting in distress and psychopathology (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Additionally, it may also result in a negative living group climate (Leipoldt, Harder, Kayed, Grietens, & Rimehaug, 2019; Van der Helm, Kuiper, & Stams, 2018).

A distinction can be made between a positive and a negative living group climate, which are associated with determinants in terms of staff, youth, and organizational characteristics (Leipoldt et al., 2019; Van der Helm, Stams, & Van der Laan, 2011). Studies have shown that a negative living group climate is characterized by low levels of support, fewer opportunities for growth, a negative atmosphere and high levels of repression, which can result in more youth behaviour problems, social problems situations, violence and stress, and less empathy (a coercive cycle both in group workers and youth; Eltink, Van der Helm, Wissink, & Stams, 2015; Leipoldt et al., 2019; Van der Helm et al., 2011). A positive living group climate is characterized by responsiveness and support from group workers, possibilities for growth and learning for youth, safety in general and structure in the daily program but also very important: autonomy with shared decision making. It has a significant impact on motivation for treatment, self-control, self-image, emotional stability and the perception of control and responsibility (Heynen, Van der Helm, & Stams, 2017; Van der Helm et al., 2018).

The question is to what extent the culturally responsive support by group workers fits the basic psychological needs and goals of Turkish/Moroccan youth and how they experience the living group climate in ORYCs and SRYCs. It is important to investigate how Turkish/Moroccan youth experience the living group climate in ORYCs and SRYCs and whether their experience differs from that of native Dutch youth. This knowledge is not only useful for group workers, in order to improve the quality of support for youth, it can also be used for determining policy regarding care and treatment in ORYCs and SRYCs. No studies have been published yet on differences in the experience of living group climate between youth with different cultural backgrounds. The aim of this study is to explore differences in perceived living group climate between native Dutch youth and Turkish/Moroccan youth. The following research question will be addressed: Are there differences between native Dutch youth and Turkish/Moroccan youth in the experience of the living group climate in ORYCs and SRYCs?

We investigate the experiences of the youth with a Turkish/Moroccan background. Their parents came to the Netherlands as guest labourers from predominantly rural and socio-economically disadvantaged areas of Mediterranean countries (Ersanilli & Koopmans, 2011). In this study, Turkish and Moroccan youth are viewed as one group because they have an overlap in their cultural frame of reference, which can influence their communication and behavior as well as perception, interpretation in general and in particular the living group climate. This overlap is due to their common experiences that include the process of migration in the Netherlands, a similar position as ethnic minorities and similar cultural background, which includes growing up in a collectivistic home culture with strong Islamic influences (Özbek, Bongers, Lobbestael, & Van Nieuwenhuizen, 2015; Phalet & Schönplflug, 2001). Their upbringing teaches youth to regard themselves as an in-group that values connectedness, conformism, group

honour, respect, obedience and social responsibility. These youth generally occupy a disadvantaged social position, growing up in low-income families and living in highly deprived neighbourhoods. They are overrepresented in lower high schools and they face a higher risk of dropping out of school and becoming unemployed (Huijnk & Andriessen, 2016). However, despite the similarities in these two ethnic groups, there are some differences. For example, research shows that Turkish youth grow up in a more socially cohesive community than the Moroccan youth (Huijnk & Andriessen, 2016; Phalet & Schönplflug, 2001). In comparison to Moroccan-Dutch parents, Turkish-Dutch parents are more concerned with transmitting collective cultural values.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants and setting

The present study was conducted in six Dutch ORYCs and eight Dutch SRYCs, located in different regions of the country. Data were collected between 2014 and 2016. During this period, in the context of routine monitoring of living group climate, research was carried out into the living group climate in these institutions as part of practice-oriented research aimed at improving the living group climate. ORYCs and SRYCs offer pedagogical support, education and treatment to boys and girls aged between 12 and 18 and 12–22 years, respectively. The sample consisted of 437 youth, with 218 (50%) boys and 219 (50%) girls (also see Table 1). It is a sample of convenience of all youth who were available at the time to participate in the study. Their mean age was 15.44 years ($SD = 1.47$). All youth had severe behavioral and/or mental disorders. Youth in the SRYCs had been placed by a judge under a civil measure because of their severe problems. Youth residing in ORYCs had been placed either by judges (coercively) or on a voluntarily basis.

To determine the ethnic backgrounds of youth, we followed the guidelines of the Dutch government. The ethnic backgrounds of youth were specified as following: if the country of birth of both parents was the Netherlands (regardless the country of birth of the youth), the youth was regarded as native Dutch. If one or both parents were born abroad, the foreign country was taken as the country of origin. If both parents were born abroad but in different countries, the mother's birth country was taken as the country of origin. Based on this information, the participants were divided into two ethnic groups: native Dutch ($n = 351$; 80.3%) and Turkish/Moroccan ($n = 86$; 19.7%).

2.2. Procedure

All youth in both the open and secure residential youth care institutions were invited to participate. They were approached by group workers who were familiar to the youth. Parents and/or legal caregivers of minors were passively asked for permission of their child's participation by sending a letter with information about the study and instructions for how to withdraw the minor from participating in the

Table 1
Background characteristics of youth.

	ND ^a ($n = 351$)	T/M ^b ($n = 86$)	$\chi^2(1)$	$F(1)$	p
Gender			0.49		0.49
Boys: n (%)	178 (51)	40 (47)			
Girls: n (%)	173 (49)	46 (53)			
Age in years: mean (SD)	15.48 (1.49)	15.26 (1.36)		1.48	0.23
Length of stay in weeks: mean (SD)	33.76 (60.95)	36.55 (50.93)		0.13	0.72

Note. ^a Native Dutch. ^b Turkish/Moroccan. $\chi^2 =$ Chi-square. $SD =$ standard deviation.

study. The questionnaire (GCI, see below) was carried out by trained students or researchers who signed a statement of confidentiality. Youth were informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that the data would be treated confidentially and anonymously, and would only be accessed by the researchers. All participants signed an informed consent form. Youth filled out the questionnaire by themselves or were assisted by a student or researcher. All questionnaires were coded to guarantee anonymity of the participants. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board and the ethics committee of the Leiden University of Applied Sciences.

2.3. Group climate instrument

The experience of the living group climate was measured with the Group Climate Instrument (GCI). The GCI is derived from the Prison Group Climate Instrument (PGCI; Van der Helm et al., 2011) that has been extensively studied in groups of adolescents in (semi-)secure youth care and adults prison. The PGCI was validated in 2011, showing favorable construct validity and reliability (Van der Helm et al., 2011). Meanwhile, the GCI is available for youth aged 12–18 years old in the youth care. The items of the GCI are derived from the PGCI in a simplified form in order to bring more understanding, sensitivity and clarity. The GCI consists of 36 items rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1 = *I do not agree* to 5 = *I totally agree*) and distinguishes four factors of the living group climate (similar to the PGCI): Support, Growth, Atmosphere, and Repression. Each of the 36 items belongs to only one of the four subscales. The subscale Support (12 items) measures the extent to which the youth feel supported by the group workers, in terms of trust, respect, paying attention to the youth, and taking complaints seriously. An example of a Support item is ‘Group workers treat me with respect.’ The Growth subscale (8 items) measures the extent to which the youth find their stay in the institution meaningful, feel they are able to learn things during their stay, and have hope for the future. An example of a Growth item is ‘I learn the right things here.’ The Repression subscale consists of 9 items, and measures the youth’s experience of strictness and control, unfair and haphazard rules, and a lack of flexibility in the living group. An example of a Repression item is ‘You have to ask permission for everything here.’ The subscale Atmosphere (7 items) measures the experience of the youth regarding the way they deal with each other and trust each other, have feelings of safety in respect to each other, and are able to find rest and enough daylight and fresh air. An example of an Atmosphere item is ‘We trust each other here’.

There are indications that the GCI is sufficiently culturally sensitive. The PGCI has been validated in Dutch (semi)secure youth care, where there is an overrepresentation of ethnic minority groups. The instrument is also currently being used in more than 42 Dutch residential institutions in samples consisting of 20–30 percent of the youth with a migrant background (Van der Helm et al., 2018). In addition, the PGCI has been validated in German juvenile prisons, where there is an overrepresentation of ethnic minority groups, mainly with a Turkish background (Heynen, Van der Helm, Stams, & Korebrits, 2014).

In the present study, internal consistency in terms of Cronbach’s alpha for both native Dutch participants and Turkish/Moroccan participants were sufficient to good. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for native Dutch participants and Turkish/Moroccan participants were $\alpha = 0.87/0.88$ (Support), $\alpha = 0.91/0.86$ (Growth), $\alpha = 0.82/0.80$ (Atmosphere), and $\alpha = 0.74/0.65$ (Repression), respectively.

2.4. Statistical analyses

To determine whether the groups were comparable in terms of age, gender and duration of stay (number of weeks) in the living group, it was first investigated whether there were differences between native Dutch youth and Turkish/Moroccan youth for these variables. Group differences were investigated using one-way univariate analysis of

variance (ANOVA) for continuous variables (age and duration of stay) and Chi-square tests for the categorical variable (gender).

To examine whether there were any significant differences between the Turkish/Moroccan youth’s and the native Dutch youth’s mean scores on the support, growth, repression and atmosphere subscales, a multivariate analysis of covariance (Mancova) was performed (with age and gender as the covariates). The independent variable was the ethnic background of youth and the dependent variables were the four factors of the GCI. Means and standard deviations of the factor scores were calculated for the Turkish/Moroccan and the native Dutch group. In case of a significant multivariate effect, univariate analyses were conducted, using Bonferroni’s adjustment. When significant effects were found, the effect size was also calculated. Finally, cultural differences were further examined by Mancova (with age and gender as the covariates) at item-level using Bonferroni’s adjustment when there was a significant relation between a factor and the cultural background.

All analyses were conducted using SPSS (version 21/24). The alpha value was set at 0.05. The effect size index was calculated with Cohen’s d (boundary values for small, medium, and large effects are 0.20, 0.50, and 0.80, respectively; Cohen, 1992) and partial eta squared (boundary values for small, medium, and large effect sizes are 0.01, 0.06, and 0.14, respectively; Cohen, 1988).

3. Results

Differences between native Dutch youth and Turkish/Moroccan youth in age, gender and duration of stay in the living groups were investigated first (also see Table 1). No significant differences between groups were found in gender, age, and duration of stay.

3.1. Differences in living group climate between Turkish/Moroccan and native Dutch youth

Table 2 shows mean scores and standard deviations of the subscales of the GCI of Turkish/Moroccan and native Dutch youth. There was a significant difference in living group climate between the groups, with Wilk’s $L = 0.971$, $F(4,419) = 3.10$, $p < .05$. The multivariate η^2 based on Wilks’s L was 0.03. An univariate effect of ethnic background on living group climate was only found for the subscale ‘support’ ($F(1, 422) = 5.54$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$), with a small effect size $d = 0.27$. Turkish/Moroccan youth reported significantly less support than native Dutch youth. There were no significant differences between the two groups on the other three subscales.

3.2. Differences in items of support between the groups

There was a significant relation between the factor support and ethnic background. The next step was to compare the two groups at the item level. As can be seen in Table 3, results overall revealed that Turkish/Moroccan youth reported lower support scores than native Dutch youth. However, the difference was significant on 4 items: ‘I trust the group workers’, with a medium effect size, and ‘Group workers treat me with respect’, ‘Complaints are being taken seriously’, and ‘Even

Table 2
Mean factor scores on the GCI for Turkish/Moroccan and Native Dutch Youth.

Scale	ND ^a (n = 351)	T/M ^b (n = 86)	F(1)	d
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		
Support	3.51 (0.80)	3.28 (0.91)	5.54*	0.27
Growth	3.46 (1.00)	3.29 (1.01)	2.14	0.17
Repression	3.38 (0.69)	3.52 (0.64)	3.10	0.21
Atmosphere	3.05 (0.80)	3.07 (0.84)	0.74	0.03

Note. ^a Native Dutch. ^b Turkish/Moroccan. SD = standard deviation. d = Cohen’s d .

* $p < .05$.

Table 3
Items on factor support for Turkish/Moroccan and Native Dutch Youth (oid).

Item 'Support' Scale	ND ^a (n = 322)	T/M ^b (n = 79)		
	M (SD)	M (SD)	F(1)	d
When I have a problem, there is always somebody I can turn to	3.81 (1.10)	3.65 (1.30)	0.77	0.13
Taking initiative is welcomed by group workers	3.70 (1.10)	3.69 (1.12)	0.01	0.00
Group workers treat me with respect	3.95 (1.00)	3.57 (1.21)	5.72*	0.34
I trust the group workers	3.47 (1.20)	2.83(1.35)	11.21**	0.50
The group workers treat me unbiased and really want to help me	3.48 (1.19)	3.15 (1.38)	3.03	0.26
Groupworkers pay attention to me and respect my feelings	3.63 (1.09)	3.31 (1.27)	3.37	0.27
Group workers stimulate me to try new things	3.60 (1.18)	3.47 (1.18)	0.45	0.11
Complaints are being taken seriously	3.15 (1.26)	2.63 (1.36)	6.74*	0.40
There are always enough people to help me	3.50 (1.13)	3.32 (1.23)	0.93	0.15
Group workers don't have enough time for me	2.79 (1.17)	2.94 (1.25)	0.66	0.12
Even when I get very angry people try to treat me with respect	3.44 (1.27)	2.96 (1.46)	5.49*	0.35
We regularly discuss things with the group workers	3.67 (1.05)	3.59 (1.14)	0.30	0.07

Note. ^a Native Dutch. ^b Turkish/Moroccan. SD = standard deviation. d = Cohen's d.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

when I get very angry people try to treat me with respect', with a small effect size.

4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore differences in experience of the living group climate between youth with a Turkish/Moroccan background and youth with a native Dutch background. Results showed that Turkish/Moroccan youth experienced less support compared to native Dutch youth with a medium to small effect size. These findings can possibly be explained by cultural differences between Turkish/Moroccan youth and group workers and the influence on their relationship. Youth with Turkish/Moroccan background originate from so-called collectivistic cultures, whereas Dutch group workers' Dutch culture, the majority of whom could be assumed to be of Dutch origin, can be described as a more individualistic culture (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Özbek et al., 2015; Phalet & Schönplüg, 2001).

When group workers are not responsive to the cultural differences and needs of these youth, it negatively influences the relationship between Turkish/Moroccan youth and the group workers. According to various studies, the group workers should be responsive to the basic psychological need for relatedness to establish a relationship. A positive emotional bond between a group worker and a youth is an important component of the therapeutic alliance (Byers & Lutz, 2017). Several studies have concluded that the therapeutic alliance in residential youth care has a positive influence on treatment motivation and outcomes (Duppong Hurlley et al., 2015; Orsi, Lafortune, & Brochu, 2010; Roest et al., 2016). If the therapeutic alliance is not present, this can result in youth no longer feeling at home in these institutions.

Several reasons for the disparities in support experienced by native Dutch and Turkish/Moroccan youth can be put forward. Firstly, Turkish/Moroccan youth often have different views and perceptions of support which may lead to different expectations regarding the behavior and attitude of group workers in residential care. Turkish/Moroccan parents raise their children with more discipline and less monitoring and support than the parents of youth from a native Dutch background (Pels, Deković, & Model, 2006; Pels, Nijsten, Oosterwegel, & Vollebergh, 2006). Turkish/Moroccan youth are brought up with collectivist values (such as social relatedness and opinion dependence), and are predominantly raised by mothers. However, it could be assumed that they are mainly supported by female Dutch group workers with a more individualistic cultural frame of reference that values autonomy, independence, self-development and determination. These values may be reflected in the behaviour and support of the group workers, which may not always be in agreement with the youths' expectations and needs. It could mean that the group workers place more emphasis on individual success, take responsibility for oneself and self-

awareness. Furthermore, such support may directly confront these youth with their behaviour which is primarily based on collectivistic values. Group workers' approach to support the youth with a collectivistic orientation may lead to negative feelings, such as a shame, fear, loss of face and even mistrust and disrespect towards their cultural background. Moreover, Moroccan/Turkish youth's interpretation of respect and trust may be different because of their cultural frame of reference. If the group workers are unaware, unable and/or unwilling to perceive both their own and the youths' cultural frames of reference, to empathize their collectivistic norms and values and/or to move flexibly between these frames of reference, they will not be able to adequately meet the needs of these youth. As a result, it may lead to conflicts between the group workers and these youth or even more to distrust of the group workers.

Secondly, the diminished support experience of Turkish/Moroccan youth may be the result of distrust in the group workers. In the present study, a distinction between groups was noticeable on several items of the support subscale. Turkish/Moroccan youth scored lower on items related to respect, trust, and taking complaints seriously, which may be associated with less trust in group workers. Furthermore, distance and distrust towards professional caregivers is high among young people of Turkish/Moroccan origin (Azghari, Van de Vijver, & Hooghiemstra, 2018; Pels, Distelbrink, & Tan, 2013). Trust or distrust of social services is based on interpersonal experiences and the image that people form about these social services. Turkish/Moroccan youth enter the residential institutions with a negative image about care and they enter these institutions with negative experiences, such as discrimination, rejection and subordination from the society (Andriessen et al., 2014). As a result, they have less connection with the Dutch society (Van Bergen et al., 2015). They may feel negatively about the residential youth care and native Dutch group workers, and reinforced by the Western appearance of the residential institutions, which may cause these youth to reject group workers. The more the cultures of the youth and the group workers differ from each other, the more quality time has to be invested in order to win these youth's trust. Currently, to be available for the youth is a difficult task for the group workers.

Thirdly, lack of open communication culture, received from home, can cause them to not being able to communicate openly with group workers. Because of respect and obedience towards their parents, children are not taught to give their opinion or stand up for themselves. Therefore, questions regarding 'why', 'how' and 'which' are not encouraged (Nijsten, 2006; Pels, 2006; Pels et al., 2006). This could lead to Turkish/Moroccan youth being less open to communicate with group workers about help and support. In order to find ways to be helped the youth have to be able to engage with group workers and communicate openly. These youth are not able to or used to talk about what occupies them, to ask for adequate attention, help and support, or to express

opinions about the help and support offered to them and to negotiate and discuss it. This lack of open communication culture with these youth results in gaining less support.

Another explanation for the discrepancy may be that the responsiveness of group workers is partly determined by the behavior of the youth (Bastiaanssen et al., 2012). In residential care, both the group workers and the youth have a strong influence on each other's behavior which occurs due to a transactional process (Sameroff, 2009). The Turkish/Moroccan youth have a weak identification with the Dutch community (Azghari et al., 2015; Van Bergen et al., 2015). They can stand up very strongly for each other and can react 'hostile' to 'outsiders' based on cultural differences. Therefore, the strong 'we-they' relationship between the youth is visible in a hostile attitude towards care workers which might be an issue for group workers as well. In addition, it also appears that Turkish/Moroccan youth are more likely than native Dutch youth to face 'untreated' behavioral problems at an early age (De Wit et al., 2008; Janssen et al., 2004; Paalman et al., 2015; Stevens et al., 2003). This all can result in feelings of anxiety in group workers. The fear of aggression can exert a negative influence on the attitude of group workers and thus may have an effect on their responsiveness, which can also be negatively influenced by specific characteristics of the Moroccan/Turkish youth. The feelings of being disadvantaged and being an immigrant, having little trust in the care, and the taboo and shame of being included in the residential youth care have a negative influence on the behavior of the Moroccan/youth and, as an extension, makes the responsiveness of the group worker more difficult. This may even lead to group workers withdrawing themselves, for example, by being less available in the group.

The final explanation is that group workers do not provide cultural sensitivity in regard to the specific needs of these youth. Cultural sensitivity demands insight from the group worker regarding their own cultural values, as well as an open attitude towards the cultural background of the youth. This attitude has an influence on the extent to which the group workers respond adequately and responsively in support of these youth. Group workers with a similar cultural background seem better capable of understanding these youth. Often, there are only few group workers with a non-Western background at these institutions, as diversity in the workforce is a challenge for these institutions.

The present study is the first to examine differences in perceived living group climate between native Dutch youth and Turkish/Moroccan youth who reside in a ORYC or SRYC. Some limitations should be mentioned. First, the Group Climate Instrument has not been validated for Turkish/Moroccan youth. Unfortunately, in practice, youth with a Turkish/Moroccan background in the Dutch youth care are still assessed with instruments that are developed and standardized in Western samples. Although there are indications that the GCI is sufficiently culturally sensitive, future research is recommended to validate the GCI for this specific target group. Notably, study on measurement invariance is needed. Secondly, this study has examined the living group experience of youth with a Turkish and Moroccan background. This group is taken as one group. Though it can be seen as a limitation of this study, there are similarities in the cultures of youth with Turkish and Moroccan backgrounds (Crul & Doornik, 2003). Parents from both of these youth groups came as guest workers from Mediterranean countries, therefore, they share the same history, collectivistic culture and religion. Thirdly, we used a convenience sample; generalization to the population should be done with caution. Finally, self-report measures have been used to assess the experience of the living group climate, which could result in displaying socially desirable answers. However, as the questionnaire was carried out under the supervision of a trained interviewer and anonymity was assured, self-report is assumed to be reliable.

This study indicates that Turkish/Moroccan youth experienced less support compared to native Dutch youth, which might be explained by cultural differences between these youth and group workers and the influence on their relationship. As a conclusion, one may believe that

group workers who work with youth with a different cultural background should be culturally sensitive to cultural differences in order to be responsive to the needs of these youth. In this case, to conduct culturally sensitive support, the group workers should work out the knowledge of the youth's development and the cultural context in which the youth is embedded. The group workers may pay more attention to similarities and differences between group worker's and youth's cultural norms and values regarding support. They can look at a cultural aspect both from their own cultural frame of reference and the cultural frame of reference of the youth and they can easily move with respect and with cultural flexibility between the different cultural frames of reference, without losing their identity.

To improve responsiveness, group workers may need training in intercultural competencies, such as cultural awareness and sensitivity (Bean, Davis, & Davey, 2014). These are the knowledge and skills that a group worker should possess in order to work adequately with youth from different ethnic backgrounds. It is unfortunate that in residential institutions few requirements are set for these competencies for group workers. The question also arises to what extent residential youth care may require intercultural competencies from group workers, and to facilitate such competencies and improve the responsiveness on the part of the group workers.

Another question which is not less important in the improvement of the relationship between the group workers and Turkish/Moroccan youth is whether the latter should be more supervised in the acculturation adjustment. These youth need to be supported to cope with feelings of being disadvantaged and being immigrant, having a trust in the care and taboo, and shame of being placed in the youth care. However, further research is required regarding the development of positive relationships between Turkish/Moroccan youth and group workers. Considering our findings, future research should aim at exploring which potential explanations mentioned above are the most relevant and correct. Future research may focus on these potential explanations by conducting in-depth interviews with both professionals and residentially placed native Dutch youth. More specifically, studies should focus on the intercultural skills that group workers require in order to build relationships. For now, it is important to be aware of the differences in the experiences of the living group climate between native Dutch youth and Turkish/Moroccan youth.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical approval

All procedures performed in this study were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board and ethics committee of the Leiden University of Applied Sciences.

Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants and their legal caregivers included in the study.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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