

ABSTRACT

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Benefits of Self-Help Groups in Turkish Migrant Women

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Effectiveness of self-help groups was investigated in a study on female Turkish migrants with recurrent depressive disorder. Self-help groups were guided by group leaders of Turkish decent, providing a platform for exchange and social support. Analysis of qualitative data on effects of participation in groups was done, though no alleviation of symptoms was found.

43 female Turkish migrants participated in groups over a period of 4 months. Qualitative data contained interviews with participants, group protocols and supervision protocols of group leaders. Analysis of data was done with the qualitative content analysis (Mayring).

Findings revealed that women reported feelings of being neglected and violated by their husbands, pointing towards a functional value of the illness. During participation in self-help groups women also reported emancipating from their husbands and gaining strength. Self-help groups were seen as social resource and support for change in their lives.

Interventions to improve well-being and social functioning in female Turkish migrants should consider the functional value of depressive symptoms and focus on social support systems as well as social networks.