Cross Cultural Investigation of Children’s Perception Towards Mental Health

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About me

Teach First in Portsmouth, King Richard School

BSc Psychology at the University of Warwick

Interest in Child Psychology
Why did I conduct research on this topic?

- Increase awareness of mental health
- Educating people about the commonality of mental illnesses
- Starting interventions early
- Cultural differences
- Get rid of misconceptions
Previous Findings on the Effect of Age on Perception

- Negative attitude from the age of 6
- Differentiated reasoning abilities
- Attitude becomes increasingly negative
Effect of Cultural Background

Collectivist
- Hong Kong
- Japan

Individualist
- United Kingdom
- United States
Previous Findings on the Effect of Culture on Perception

- Age is not the only factor that affects children’s perception.
- Hypothesis: Children from the UK will have a more accurate perception towards mental health than children from HK.
Participants

141 Participants

- UK: 60%
- HK: 40%
Online Questionnaire

- 5x Vignettes
- Physical & Mental Illness
- 4x questions
- Consent Forms
Responses (%) for the Treatment of Dementia from UK and HK

Responses (%)

Treatment

Doctor | Therapy | Social Support | Home | Operation

HK | UK
Can Dementia be Cured?

- UK: 67%
- HK: 33%
Discussion of Results

- **Hypothesis:** Children from the UK will have a more accurate perception towards mental health than children from HK.

- Significant results for Dementia

- Better understanding in Physical Illnesses
Discussion based on HK Children’s responses

- Physical methods to cure Mental Illnesses in HK
  - Regain Control
  - Fixing Self-Image
- “Genetically Tainted”
- “Demons”
- Superstition
- Lack of understanding in physiological causes
Discussion based on HK Children’s responses

- Curability of Dementia
  - Disagreement with the use of care homes
Limitation

- Sample
  - Semi-structured interviews
  - International School
- Label as a collectivist / individualist is outdated
- Understanding vs Perception
Where to go from here?

- Remove discrimination
- Cross cultural interventions
- My experience in the classroom