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ABSTRACTS

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCES AND PRACTICES OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS IN RURAL NEBRASKA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Jo Lynn Mescher

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Lifelong learning is a crucial component of a school psychologists' career. The diverse needs of students would require school psychologists to continuously update their professional knowledge and skills to provide relevant and competent services to students. Presenters will share information on topics of continuing professional development (CPD) most beneficial to practitioners. Participants will gain knowledge on CPD that will best fit the school(s) they are serving.

PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND PRACTICES OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS FROM MIDWESTERN STATE

Alexis Moser

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The purpose of the study is to better understand the workplace characteristics, roles, practices, and professional challenges of rural school psychologists. The presenter will share the results of the workplace characteristics, roles, practices, and professional challenges of school psychologists in rural and urban school districts. Practitioners will learn that by looking at school psychologists roles, strengths and weaknesses of both rural and urban schools would be shown.

PREDICTIVE VALIDITY OF A COMPUTER-BASED ACADEMIC MEASURE IN ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS

Brittney King, Regan Koller, Seth Larson, Rhett Young
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The purpose of this study was to determine the predictive validity relationships of high school assessments and to examine performance in high stakes assessment among students in a rural Midwestern high school. Archival data was gathered from 181 eleventh grade students. Attendees can expect to gain, in their understanding of the predictive relationships of high-stakes, high school assessment and the implications on student achievement.

ASSESSMENT OF BYSTANDER PERSPECTIVES IN GREEK LIFE

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The education of college students to promote taking action by being a positive bystander advances prevention from a higher level of engagement and influence. The presenters will review bystander intervention program that was conducted with Greek members on a Midwestern university campus. This intervention program used video scenarios to promote interactive discussions in small groups. Attitudes and behaviors were assessed regarding alcohol use, sexual violence, and hazing situations.

OUTCOME OF THE UNGUIDED INTERNET-BASED SOLUTION-FOCUSED SELF-HELP PROGRAM FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONING

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Recent studies and meta-analyses repeatedly demonstrate the effectiveness of self-help methods (standardized interventions helping clients to work on their issues without major help from helping professionals) and comparability to the outcomes of traditional psychotherapy. There is some evidence that solution-focused approach, emphasizing strengths of a person as well as continual change, could be a good base for self-help. However, there is only limited research data to prove this. From the fall semester of 2014, students of Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania) were offered unguided internet-based solution-focused self-help program as one of the Psychology clinic's services. The aim of this study was

to evaluate the outcome of unguided internet-based solution-focused self-help program in the sample of Vytautas Magnus University students.

The study procedure involved pre- and post- intervention evaluations with one month in-between. The self-help program invited participants to work on a chosen life area by reflecting on their desired future, strengths/resources, actions, clues of positive change, progress and etc. The evaluation of the outcome combined subjective (10 point scales) as well as standardized (OQ-45.2) measures.

The sample consisted of 22 participants, who completed the self-help program. Analysis of the results revealed that (1) students showed interest and participants appreciated the Program; (2) participation in the Program resulted in positive outcome; (3) drop-out rate was rather high, which is common for unguided self-help, but also prompts to look for the improvements in the self-help program.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN LITHUANIA: A PILOT STUDY

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Introduction. Scientific researches confirmed that mental illness stigmatization has very serious consequences to people with mental illness. The main domains affected are education (people with mental illness can't get the education they need, they face discrimination from teachers or other students), professional area (they suffer discrimination when selecting employment, and even if they are employed, they face negative attitudes from their colleagues or chief), housing (people don't want to rent accommodation for people with mental illness), criminalization (people who suffer from a serious mental problem are more frequently arrested by police officers, they spend more time in prison), health care (doctors devalue their complaints, avoid prescribing some procedures), interpersonal relations with friends, family, community (for example, divorce, gossips, no invitation to participate in family celebrations), self-consciousness (self-esteem, self-efficacy and the consequences like depression or help seeking). Mental health professionals are like role models when we are talking about mental health issues. People with mental illness meet them to discuss the most personal problems. Furthermore, mental health professionals often are tutors and their attitudes affect future specialists. However, research exposes negative attitudes that mental health professionals have towards mental illness and people with mental illness.

It is known that attitudes about specific groups of patients are related to social and cultural context and specialists' training traditions. Thus it is important to explore different countries. In Lithuania, we couldn't find any research investigating attitudes towards mental illness among mental health professionals. By this time, there is some research on future professionals in a very specific (addiction) area. Thus the aim of this study is to evaluate attitudes towards mental illness among mental health professionals in Lithuania.

Methodology. A survey of 60 mental health professionals (20 psychologists, 20 psychiatrists and 20 mental health nurses) was conducted in spring 2015. 4 males and 56 females participated in this study. Age range was 22–56 years, mean age – 33.75 years. Work experience ranged from 2 months to 32 years. The questionnaire was aimed to evaluate five aspects

of attitudes: social distance, emotional reactions to mental illness (fear, compassion, anger/annoyance), causal attributions of mental illness (locus of causality, external control, stability, personal control), community attitudes toward the mentally ill (authoritarianism, benevolence, social restrictiveness, community mental health ideology) and stigma of help seeking. The internal validity of questionnaire was sufficient (Cronbach α – 0.894). Demographic data included participant's gender, age, education, work area (mental health, education, other), work experience and personal contact with mentally ill people.

Results. The results showed that all attitude dimensions were equally stigmatized, although there was a tendency to stigmatize community attitudes toward the mentally ill a little bit more. Also it was found that there is no difference in emotional reactions, causal attributions of mental illness, and community attitudes toward mentally ill people in different professions. However, there was a difference in social distance and stigma of help seeking depending on profession. Mental health nursing staff stigmatized all aspects, except causal attributions, the most.

Implications. This study may broaden psychological understanding of attitudes towards mental illness among mental health professionals in general and particular ways in our country. The results revealed that there is a tendency for mental health professionals to stigmatize their patients and that it is a phenomenon we have to fight, because it damages people with mental illness and their quality of life. Even though these results are based only on the small sample of the mental health professionals, we still need to think about the reduction of stigmatization among mental health professionals in Lithuania. On the other hand, we hope that further implementation of this study both in Lithuania and USA will provide us with more reliable information about stigmatizing attitudes towards mental illness among mental health professionals in both countries.

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PREDICTING LITHUANIAN EMPLOYEES' INTENTION TO EMIGRATE AND REEMIGRATE: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED SOCIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

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Introduction. In recent 10 years, more than 300 thousand Lithuanians have emigrated to various European countries. This mobility has serious implications on Lithuanian economy and welfare system. Thus it is important to understand the reasons why people decide to emigrate abroad or to return back to Lithuania. One of the predictors there might be the feeling of justice. Previous research has shown that employees want to be treated fairly in their workplace and various types of injustice in the organization can lead to the turnover

of the employee and willingness to look for the employment outside the native country. It is also hypothesized that country-level perceptions of justice might be important for making this decision as well.

Methodology. 906 Lithuanian employees participated in this study. 425 were working in Lithuania, while 481 Lithuanians were working in various other European countries. Most of them were females (79.9% and 75.9%), had university degree (82% and 61.6%) and their mean age was 37.52 and 32.28 years respectively. Participants completed online questionnaire assessing perceived organizational justice, perceived social justice, their intentions to emigrate or re-emigrate to Lithuania, and their demographic characteristics. Perceived organizational justice was measured by 20-item Organizational Justice questionnaire developed by Colquitt (2001), which consists of 4 subscales: distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice and informational justice. Perceived social justice was measured by 5-item scale developed by Kazlauskas and Želviene (2014).

Results. The analysis of data shows that only lower levels of distributive justice predicted the intention of employees working in Lithuania to emigrate abroad. Meanwhile, for Lithuanians working abroad, only lower levels of informational justice predicted their intention to re-emigrate back to Lithuania. Other types of organizational justice had no predictive value for mobility decisions. In both groups, perceived social justice was not important in predicting the intention to emigrate or re-emigrate.

Conclusions and implication. The findings of this study suggest that only organization-level perceptions of justice are important for making the decision to emigrate abroad or to return back to the native country.