

The Necessity of Screening for Internalizing Mental Health Problems in Primary School Educational Settings

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Abstract : Mental health problems that children introspect them are hardly identified. The internalizing nature of Anxiety Disorders as the most prevalent psychological diseases, make them been under recognized by parents and teachers and so become under attended by school counsellors and subsequently under referred to clinicians. The aim of this study is to investigate the level of Anxiety Disorders to clarify if it is necessary to run screening programs in rural educational settings. Spence children anxiety scale-malay-child for the first time in Malaysia distributed among 640 Malay rural primary school students aged from 9-11 years old. Cut-off score was considered one standard deviation more than the mean of all students' scores. The results of descriptive analyses revealed the mean for scores of SCAS was 32.84 and 15.6% of students had high level of anxiety. In addition, the level and prevalence of six types of anxiety disorders based on SCAS were described. In regards to the study outcomes, screening for anxiety disorders in academic settings could prevent and reduce their side effects by early identification.

Keywords : anxiety disorders, primary schools, SCAS, screening

Conference Title : ICEP 2015 : International Conference on Education and Pedagogy

Conference Location : Venice, Italy

Conference Dates : April 13-14, 2015