



Perceptives on cross lingual communication in psychiatry

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Abstract

Background & Aim: World Health Organization (WHO) established that mental illness is globally on rise. In the Middle East in particular, the population may be at an even higher risk, not least due to the predominance of contemporary issues of a contentious nature and international scale. With psychiatrists still in shortage, medical education and training has a foremost role to play in attending to this problem. It is significant that medical education in the region is largely conducted in English, especially in the context of psychiatry where patient assessment is almost entirely qualitative and dependent on patient-doctor communication. In this study the interplay between language and communication as reflected in the patient-doctor interaction, in a population of medical students who are in the singular position of learning psychiatry in English, but communicating with patients in their native tongue, namely Arabic will be assessed. The characteristics of medical students' adaptation of psychiatric vernacular into Arabic, the extent to which it is influenced by preconceived notions of mental illness, and the level to which they are attuned to a prominent background issue: the enduring stigma faced by patients with psychiatric illness will be addressed. A preliminary appraisal of the current situation, upon which further work can be built, will be provided.

Methods: We formulated an electronic survey based on a review of literature and consultation with practicing psychiatrists in Saudi Arabia. Participants are senior medical students and interns at Alfaisal University; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, participation is voluntary and anonymous.

Biography

Naima Waheed is a 5th year medical student studying at Alfaisal University, Saudi Arabia. She has a particular interest in in-depth studying and researching human behaviour and effects of mental health on different medical diseases, as well as the effects of environment and technology on mental wellbeing. She aspires to become a research clinician in the field of Psychiatry.



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