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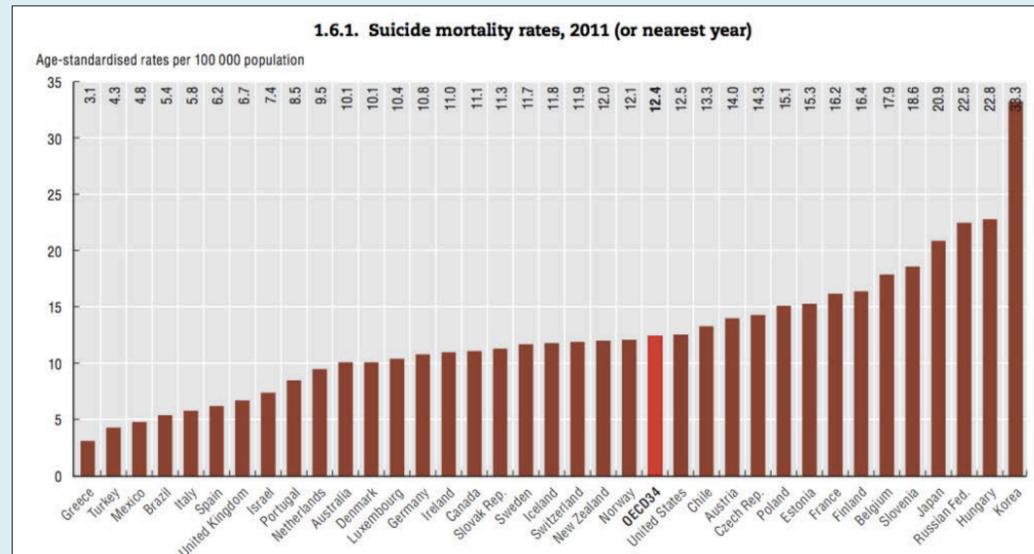
Christian Model of Mental Health Care for South Korean Youth

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Abstract

The state of mental health in South Korea is very poor, where a flourishing mental health state is rare and a struggling one is the norm. This is true for a wide range of populations, but adolescents, specifically high school students in South Korea, very well may be most vulnerable. Suicide statistics in South Korea are the highest among Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations, with statistics of students' happiness ranking South Korea at the bottom of the world alongside third-world countries. Studies have identified alcohol abuse, peer pressure, competition at work and in education, and a warped sense of oneself and what is beautiful as some of the sources of this deprived mental state. In investigating this issue, the project takes an approach based on the Christian faith. A Christian understanding of the Fall and the redemptive work of Christ will provide new perspectives, both in understanding a deprived state of mental health, and in developing a model of mental health care that is in alignment with the teachings of Christ. Understanding mental health poverty as broken relationships with others, God, self, and the environment acknowledges that only Christ has the power to redeem and save. How could our model of mental health practices be influenced by a holistic understanding of the causes behind mental health poverty and by defining a completely healthy and flourishing state of mind as one that is in alignment with God's vision of shalom and our purpose of giving Him praise? The project will systematically examine the causes of poverty of mental health as perceived by high school students in urban South Korea to inform the development of a model of mental health care specifically suited to that population.



Method

- Apparatus: An electronically developed survey using Survey Monkey that seeks to learn students' perception of their stress factors and relationships
- Population: 1st ~ 3rd year students from 20-30 High Schools in Seoul, South Korea



- Procedure: Students with implied consent will gather in a classroom/computer lab to electronically give informed consent and to complete the survey task.
- Incentives: Raffle-format prizes for 3 participants in the form of electronic tablets.

Background Information for High School Education In Korea

- Primary school lasts six years, Middle School lasts three, and High School also lasts for three years.
- A typical student will go to school from 8:00 A.M. to around 4 P.M., then proceed to "Hagwon", after school study centers, until around 10:00 P.M. or midnight.
- Entrance to Universities are entirely based on students' GPA, College-regulated exams, and "Su-Neung", the Korean College Scholastic Ability Test.
- The College Scholastic Ability Test comes only once every year and is in a multiple-choice format. Students who perform below expectations will often defer college entrance for a year for another shot at the test.
- Education is highly valued in Korea. Pressure to study naturally follows.

A Christian Perspective

Popular Approach

- We must aim to reverse or soothe any negative impact a psychological disorder has had on a patient.
- The goal of a mental health professional is the treatment of a diagnosis.
- With the help of family members and the patient, the mental health professional can treat most disorders.
- The power to heal is within every patient
- Everyone deserves a happy and dignified life.
- The patient is a sick person who needs professional help.

Christian Approach

- We must ensure the positive flourishing of a patient's mental health by addressing their broken relationships with self, others, the environment, and God.
- The goal of a mental health professional is a holistic care for the patient.
- The redemptive work of Christ is His work alone, and through his ministry of reconciliation anything is possible.
- God is sovereign. It is only through Christ that we can do good.
- God has a vision of Shalom for all of His creation,
- We are all equally broken and sinful, and we all desperately need Christ.

Predictions

- Educational pressure to be the primary stress factor
- Strength of relationships between family, friends, God, and one's view of oneself to be positively correlated with one's flourishing mental health state
- Substance abuse, low self-esteem, and bullying to be positively correlated with one's deprived mental health state
- Gender differences in terms of stress factors and coping mechanisms
- Stress difference varying by prestige of school
- Stress difference varying by the grade (1~3) of the student