Comparing Psychology and Non-Psychology Students' Attitude Toward Care Seeking

Activities

Cooking

Care Seeking

Counselling

Talk therapy

Psychotherapy

Psychiatric help

Support group

Psychological

advice

Stacy Chiu, Christopher Lee, Nicole Maina & Alaina Thomas | GL/PSYC 3525 Intermediate Experimental Psychology, Dr. Josée Rivest

Task: Implicit Association Test

Undependable Trustworthy

Cheerful

Sociable

Friendly

Competent

INTRODUCTION

Background

- Despite evidence that counselling and other forms of psychotherapy are critical to mental health recovery (e.g. Corrigan, 2014), less than 1/3 of people with mental illness seek treatment (e.g. Maranzan, 2014).
- Stigma —negative stereotype or social attitude surrounding mental health deters people from seeking out help (e.g. Corrigan, 2014). Last year, we found that York students implicitly associate care seeking activities with negative personal attributes (Chiu et al., 2018).
- Exposure, in the form of contact and education, reduces stigma and negative biases (e.g. O'Brien et al., 2010; Rudman et al., 2001).
- Psychology students who are educated on the realities of mental illness and treatment should have less negative stigma towards care seeking than students not exposed to these concepts. Whether this is the case is addressed here.

Approach and Predictions

- The implicit association between psychological care activities and personal attributes was measured and students.
- McGhee & Schwartz, 1998) was used to measure the time to make associations between negative and positive personal attributes with care seeking and daily living activities. Stigma dictates that negative attributes are associated with care seeking, and positive ones to
- - for all students, reaction time (RT) will be lower in the stereotype-congruent pairs, and that
 - the RT difference between congruent and incongruent pairs will be smaller for Psychology

METHOD

Participants

- 29 Psychology Students (minimum of 18 psychology credits; 25 Females; Age: M = 20.35, SD=1.47)
- 29 Non-Psychology Students (minimum of 18 non-psychology credits; 25 Females; Age: M = 20.41, SD = 1.50)

Instructions: Task 1. Activities (12 trials) • Does the word presented in the middle Care Daily belong to the left or right category? Living seeking Press the left or right key as soon as possible to give your answer. **MEASURE**: Counselling Task 2. Personal Attributes (12 trials) Reaction time (RT msec) Negative Positive to press correct key. **Awkward** Task 3. Stereotype-Congruent Pairs Counterbalanced Daily living Care seeking order across Positive Negative participants Task 4. **Activities*** (12 trials) Sad **Daily Living** Daily Care right | Shopping Living seeking **Personal Attributes** Socializing Commuting Task 5. Stereotype-Incongruent Pairs Commuting Negative **Positive** Entertaining (48 trials) Daily living Care seeking right Confident Nervous Grooming

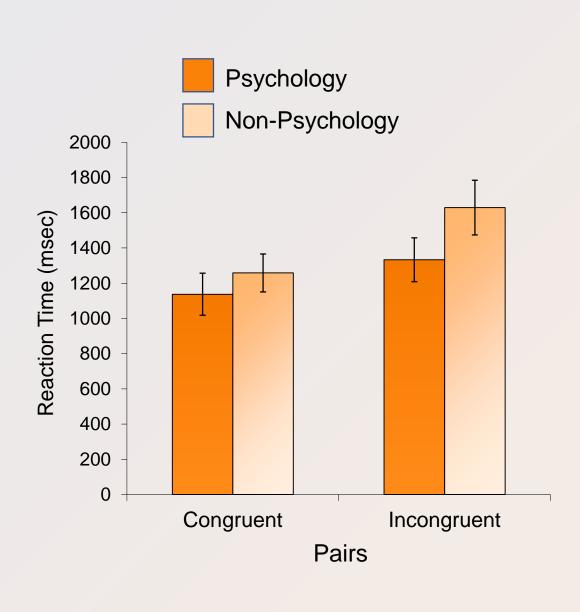
compared between Psychology and Non-Psychology

- The implicit associations test (IAT; e.g. Greenwald, daily living (stereotype-congruent pairs).
- It is predicted that,

 - than Non-Psychology students.

RESULTS

Reaction Time



- There was an interaction between Areas of Study and Pairings $[F(1, 53) = 6.37, p = .015; partial <math>\eta^2 = .11;$ Power = .70].
- -Non-Psychology students were slower than Psychology students: they slowed down by 121.33 msec in the congruent pairs, and by 2.5 times more (by 296.36 msec) in the Incongruent pairs. [Incongruent Pairs, t(53) = 3.91, p = .0001, and Congruent Pairs, t(53) = 1.98, p = .03].

Antisocial

Powerless

Awkward

- For all students, RT was significantly lower in the Congruent than in the Incongruent pairs [F(1, 53) = 66.84, p < .000;partial $\eta^2 = .56$; Power = 1.00].
- Non-Psychology students had longer RT $[F(1,53) = 12.22, p = 0.001; partial \eta^2 = .19;$ Power = .93].

Conclusions

 All students were faster at making associations in the stereotypecongruent than in the incongruent pairs.

(*in reverse order from Task 1

Negative

Cheerful

Positive

 However, Psychology were faster than Non-Psychology students at making these associations, especially in the Stereotype-Incongruent pairs.

DISCUSSION

- As found by Chiu et al. (2018), our results show that students implicitly associate negative personal attributes with care seeking.
- However, Psychology students can make faster decisions when faced with stereotyped information about care seeking. Specifically, they are less impacted by information incongruent to stereotypes about care seeking. These results confirm that exposure through education is useful in tackling stigma and negative biases (e.g. O'Brien et al., 2010; Rudman et al., 2001).

Future Directions

Universities should encourage students to take psychology courses to raise mental health awareness and decrease stigmatization.