Relationship between and Cultural Homelessness of Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and their Psychological Well-Being: Mediating Effects of Resilience

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Introduction

A person who has lived in or meaningfully interacted with two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time before reaching adulthood can be called TCKs (Third Culture Kids) (Pollock, Van Reken & Ruth, 2009; Van Reken & Bethel, 2005). With the advent of technology development, rapid advancement of transportation and globalization, the number of TCKs has increased. This study aims to examine the difference of third culture kids in the aspects of cultural homelessness, psychological well-being and resilience and the mediation effect of resilience on the relationship between cultural homelessness and psychological well-being.

Method

Participants were 163 middle high school students living in Korea who had resided abroad more than one year. Collected data were statistically analyzed using frequency analysis, correlation analysis, ANOVA (Analysis of variance), multiple regression analysis, sobel test.

Results

Major findings were as follows. First, psychological well-being and resilience had significant negative associations with lack of cultural group membership and attachment, lack of a cultural home, need for a cultural home. Second, older of age returning to their home country corresponded to greater levels of lack of cultural group membership and attachment, need for a cultural home. Besides, psychological well-being and resilience of the students who have lived more than 10 years less than 15 years in Korea were the highest. Third, the mediation effect of resilience on the relationship between lack of cultural group membership and attachment and psychological well-being was confirmed. So, if resilience of TCKs could be enhanced by improvement of protection factors, negative effects on psychological well-being could be reduced.

Discussion

In this study, mediation effect of resilience on the relationship between cultural homelessness and psychological well-being was validated. Therefore, it will be necessary for educators and counselors improve resilience of TCKs. Specifically, it is important to enhance social skill, cultural receptiveness, peer relationship, social support, ego identity. For this, it would be effective to provide art therapy to TCKs. Such Program was helpful for TCKs to reduce stress, express unsolved emotion, improve cultural sensitivity (Kim & Kim, 2014). And TCKs usually share thoughts, emotion, feeling with students who have overseas experience. So, it would be helpful for make various group for TCKs. They can have sense of belonging, affinity in their group.

The study bears significance to show relationship of cultural homelessness, resilience and psychological well-being. However, social desirability factors may have interacted due to the self-reporting measurement system for students. And other variables which can have an effect on cultural homelessness will have to be studied.

References


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