The Children's Memory Questionnaire - Revised

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Statement of Originality

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Abstract

Problems with memory functioning in children can result in impaired learning across a broad range of areas as the ability to store and retrieve information is important for skill acquisition. For children, an interruption in the natural flow of brain development, resulting in difficulties with memory and learning, has pervasive implications across all areas of social, emotional, academic, and behavioural development. Further, as skill development continues over a life span, deficits in memory can have a cumulative effect. A young childhood brain is susceptible to a range of influences which can cause deviations in its otherwise normal development. As childhood spans a number of important developmental phases and since memory plays a significant role in early development, it is essential that deficits are accurately identified so that early interventions can be developed. Observer rating scales appear to be a timely and cost effective way to screen for memory deficits with the aim of identifying children that may benefit from more formal assessments. There are a number of observer rating scales that have been explored in the available literature however so far, few have proven to be suitable for use as a screening tool or for clinical diagnostic application.

The Children's Memory Questionnaire - Revised (CMQ-R) is a parent report scale aimed at assessing the memory skills of children. It was the aim of the present study to evaluate the CMQ-R as a reliable and effective measurement of memory functioning in children. In addition, a factor analysis was conducted to assess the CMQ-R's ability to reflect the multidimensional nature of memory. Three hundred and seventy one children between the ages 5-12 participated in the study and parents of all 371 children completed the CMQ-R. Children in the school group at the ages 6, 8, 10 and 12 years also completed a formal assessment of memory which utilised selected subtests from the first and second editions of the Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning, in addition to selected subtests from

CHILDREN'S MEMORY QUESTIONNAIRE

the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children Fourth Edition. CMQ-R scores were compared to formal memory test scores and the conclusions drawn were that the two assessments of memory were weakly correlated across a range of subscales and age groups. Validation studies often compare observer memory scales to more formal measures of memory assessment and these associations have historically been weak. These conclusions directed discussions to focus on whether or not the CMQ-R is more accurately defining every day memory, and whether or not every day memory is indeed being neglected when assessing memory in more formal testing situations. Limitations to the research study included a clinical group with fewer than expected participation numbers and with less than intended participants who experienced a primary memory deficit. It was recommended that future research focus on exploring the CMQ-R's utility in screening for everyday memory abilities in context of the everyday memory literature.

Keywords: children's memory, memory questionnaires, everyday memory