

Mental Health Systems and Care in Children and Adolescents: A Comparative Analysis of India and the United Kingdom | Stuti Pemmaraju | OJSS Conference

Introduction and Background

Introduction

- OCD: common adolescent condition with obsessions & compulsions
- Diagnosis/treatment access depends on national mental health policy
- RQ: Do differences in UK/India systems affect OCD care for youth?

Background

- UK: NHS-based; NICE guidelines for CBT/ERP first, SSRIs for severe cases; CAMHS covers under-18s
- India: mixed public/private system; access varies by state
- Key India policies: National Mental Health Policy (2014), Mental Healthcare Act (2017)

Methods and Literature Review

Methods

- Qualitative comparative analysis; 11 sources
- 3 steps: policy → real-world access → implementation gaps

Literature Review

- Policy in both countries remains poorly implemented (Roy, 2019; Udu, 2026)
- UK: long waits, inconsistent access. India: data gaps, poor rollout (Avasthi, 2019)
- Stigma & low awareness block treatment in India (Sravanti, 2024)

Analysis: India and the UK

India

- 150M need care, <30M receive it; treatment gap over 60% (NIMHANS, 2016)
- Strong policy exists (NMHP 2014), but care doesn't reach most who need it
- Lack of trained professionals & infrastructure

United Kingdom

- 949K children referred to mental health services in 2022-23; 28% waiting for care
- Referrals are outpacing staffing, not the referral pathway itself

Comparison

- India: diagnosis problem
- UK: treatment-timeliness problem

Solutions and Conclusion

Proposed Solutions/Discussion

- India: train school/primary staff to screen; expand DMHP
- UK: fund CAMHS staffing; adopt early-intervention model

Conclusion/Results

- Good policy does not mean good outcomes without implementation capacity
- India needs infrastructure; UK needs staffing capacity

References

Avasthi, A., Sharma, A., & Grover, S. (2019). Indian Journal of Psychiatry.

NIMHANS. (2016). National Mental Health Survey of India.

Children's Commissioner for England. (2024).

Sravanti, L. et al. (2024). Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health.

Full reference list available upon request.