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Teaching Children Emotional Intelligence: A Closer Look at the Barbie Vlogs

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Key Terms

Trait Emotional Intelligence

Ability to recognize, process, and regulate emotions of self and others (Piqueras et al., 2019).

Culturally Relevant

Reflecting the reality of minority children (Clark & Fleming, 2019).

Literature Review

- Trait Emotional Intelligence has a buffering effect against maladjustment risks (Piqueras et al., 2019).
- Culturally relevant texts act → meaning-making, investment, and engagement (Clark & Fleming, 2019; Christ et al., 2018).
- Lack of representation or misrepresentation in media is associated with a negative psychological effect on those whose identities are underrepresented (Tukachinsky, Mastro, & Yarchi, 2017).

Hypotheses

H1: Children who watch the Barbie vlogs will score higher on Trait Emotional Intelligence than children who do not.

H2: Because Barbie may only be culturally relevant to only a portion of her audience, Black viewers who watch the vlog will show less improvement on Trait Emotional Intelligence than White viewers.

Methods

Participants

- 360 girls ages 6-11. Half of the participants Black (180), half White (180)
- Clustering to select 10 elementary and K-8 schools in Oregon

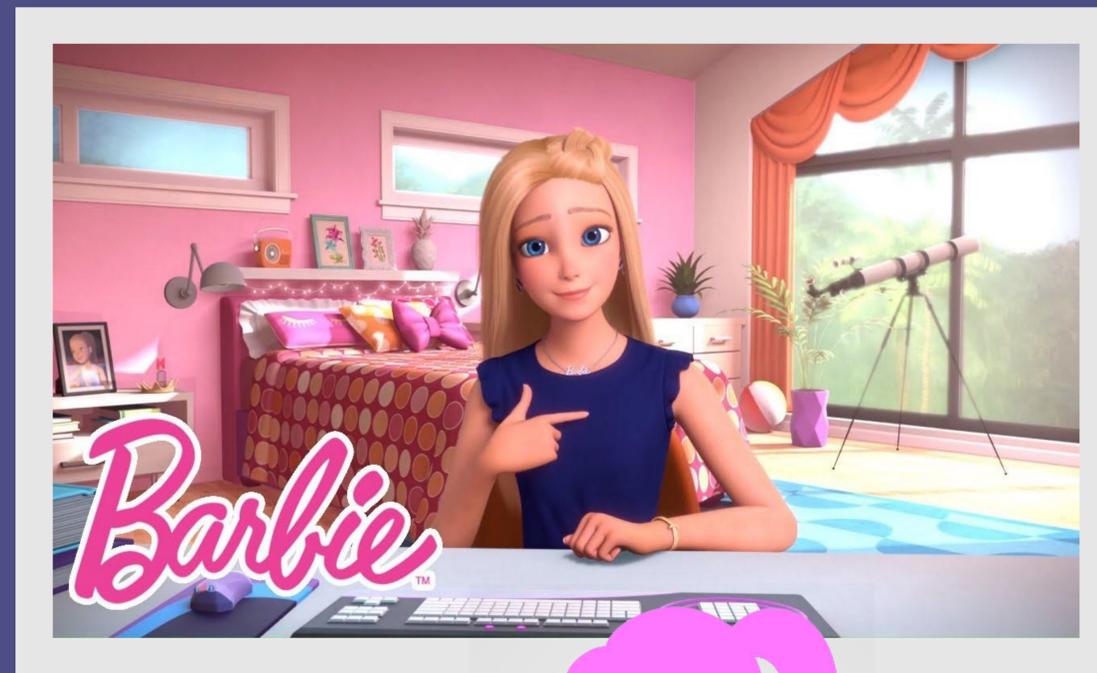
Measures

- Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Child Short Form (TEIQue - CSF) (Mavroveli et al., 2008).
- Family Affluence Scale (FAS; Currie et al., 1997) to control for socioeconomic status (SES) to capture a more clear effect of race.

Procedure

- Experimental group → show Barbie vlog.
- Neutral stimulus group → show different video of the same genre.
- All children take TEIQue - CF.
- All children complete the Family Affluence Scale.
- Debrief.

Cultural Relevance in learning materials leads to greater engagement and meaning-making.



Do the Barbie vlogs increase emotional intelligence overall?

Are they equally effective for children who do not see themselves reflected in Barbie?

Anticipated Results

- H1 is supported if → experimental group has higher Trait Emotional Intelligence scores than both control groups.
- H2 is supported if → Black participants in the experimental group show less improved Trait Emotional Intelligence scores than White participants.

Discussion

Implications

- Extend findings about culturally relevant educational materials (Clark & Fleming, 2019; Christ et al., 2018)
- Children's media producers should create similar but more culturally relevant programs
- More culturally relevant media in classrooms

Limitations

- Limited timespan, one measurement
- Gender-restricted sample
- Only examines two races

Future Directions

- Replicate with several measurements over time
- Consider the impact of gender
- Replicate with other ethnicities

Conclusion

In this proposal, I suggest that Barbie may effectively teach emotional intelligence through these vlogs, but a more culturally relevant program may be more effective at reaching a more diverse audience.

Read the full paper here

