



Empathy in Ethiopian and German Medical Students



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i.Nez International Network for Cooperation
in Mental Health

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Mental Health in Developing Countries

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Physician–Patient Relationship

Is There Hardening of the Heart During Medical School?

Bruce W. Newton, PhD, Laurie Barber, MD, James Clardy, MD, Elton Cleveland, MD, and Patricia O’Sullivan, EdD

Acad Med. 2008; 83:244–249.





Einfühlung, innere Nachahmung, und Organempfindungen.

Von
Theodor Lipps.

ARCHIV

FÜR DIE

GESAMTE PSYCHOLOGIE

LEIPZIG

VERLAG VON WILHELM ENGELMANN

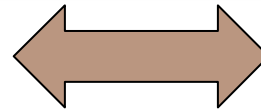
1903
DIRECTION

DER PSYCHIATRISCHEN KLINIK

Man meint die — Einfühlung. »Einfühlen« aber heißt — nicht etwas in seinem Körper empfinden, sondern etwas, nämlich sich selbst, in dem ästhetischen Objekte fühlen.



affective/emotional



cognitive

vicarious

Theory of Mind-related

Empathy

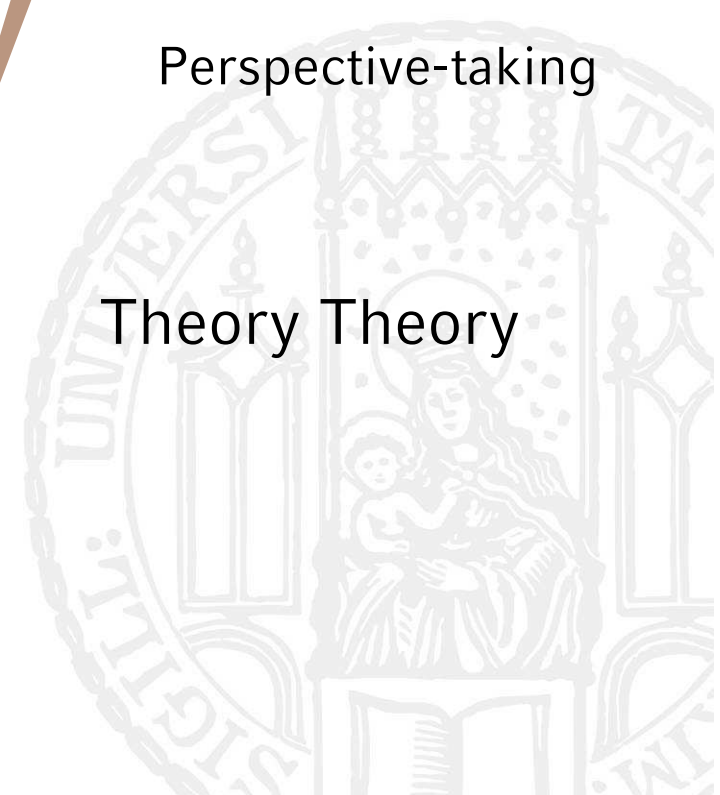
Perspective-taking

Simulation Theory

Theory Theory

narrative

clinical?

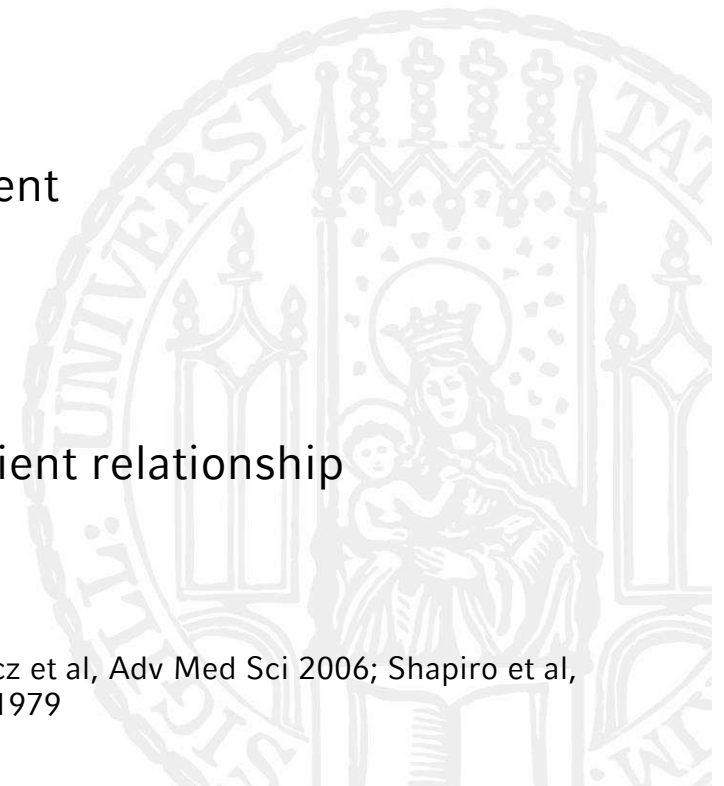




Clinical empathy...

- Relieves breaking bad news
- Increases therapeutic success
- Increases trust and confidence of the patient
- Increases adherence to treatment
- Improves satisfaction in the physician-patient relationship

VandeKieft GK, Am Fam Physician 2001; Blatt B. et al, Acad Med 2010; Kliszcz et al, Adv Med Sci 2006; Shapiro et al, Arch Intern Med 1989, Di et al, Lancet 2001, Eisenthal, Arch Gen Psychiatry 1979



Patients describe empathy with personal attributes:

■ High Empathy

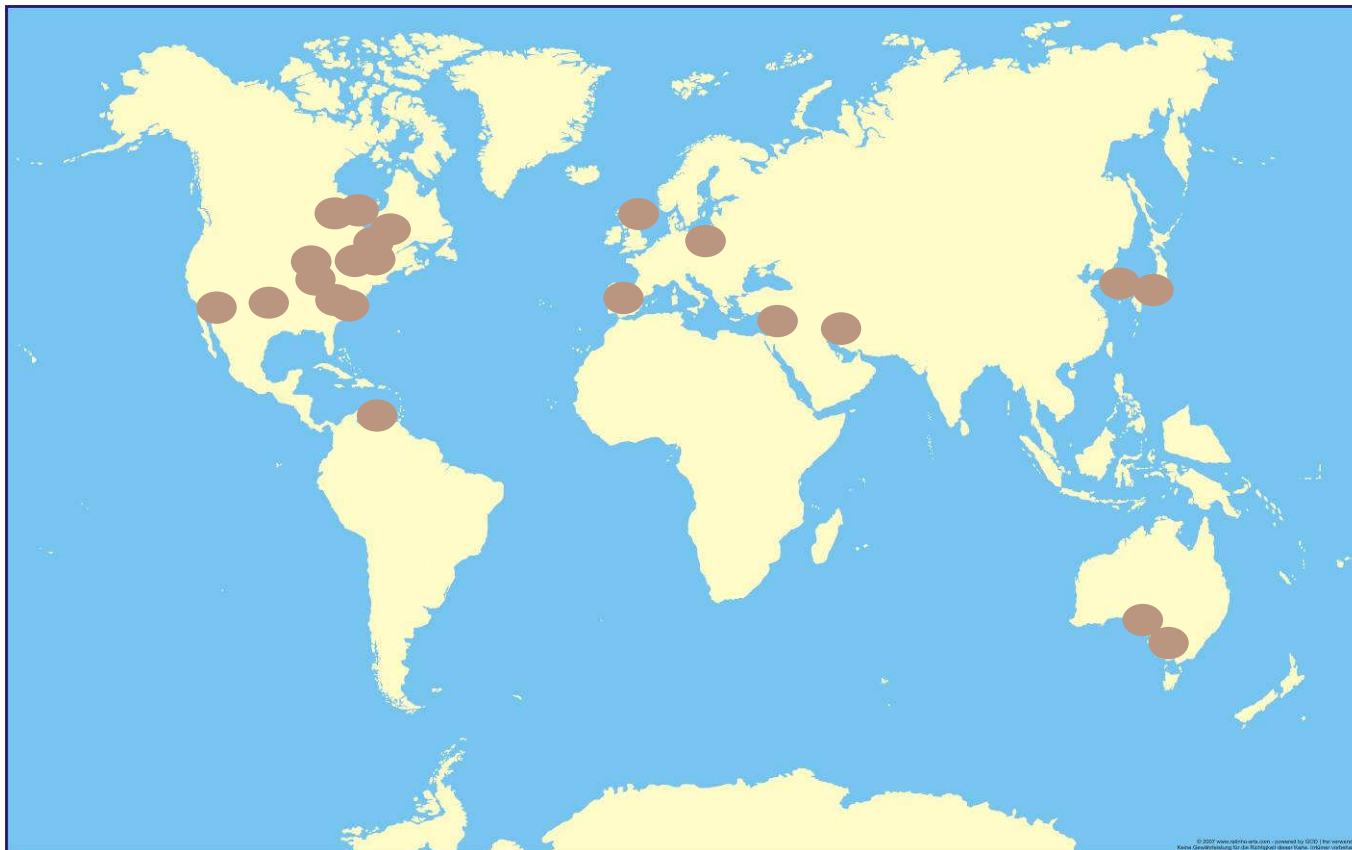
- Pleasant
- Charming
- Friendly
- Cheerful
- Sociable
- Dreamy
- Sentimental
- Imaginative
- Discreet
- Tactful

■ Low Empathy

- Cruel
- Cold
- Quarrelsome
- Hostile
- Bitter
- Unemotional
- Unkind
- Hard hearted
- Argumentative
- Opinionated



Empathy Measurements in Medical Students worldwide





JU-LMU Link

WORLD HEALTH SUMMIT

MASTERPLAN FÜR ÄTHIOPIEN

Moderne Psychiatrie im Einklang mit traditionellen Heilmethoden

Die Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München hat in Zusammenarbeit mit der Universität Jimma einen zweijährigen Ausbildungsgang zum „Mental Health Worker“ ins Leben gerufen, um die psychiatrische Versorgung im Land zu verbessern.



Jimma) können Patienten im Land stationär versorgen. Ansonsten beschränkt sich die psychiatrische Versorgung in Äthiopien auf eine allgemeinmedizinische Mitbehandlung in regionalen Gesundheitsstationen.

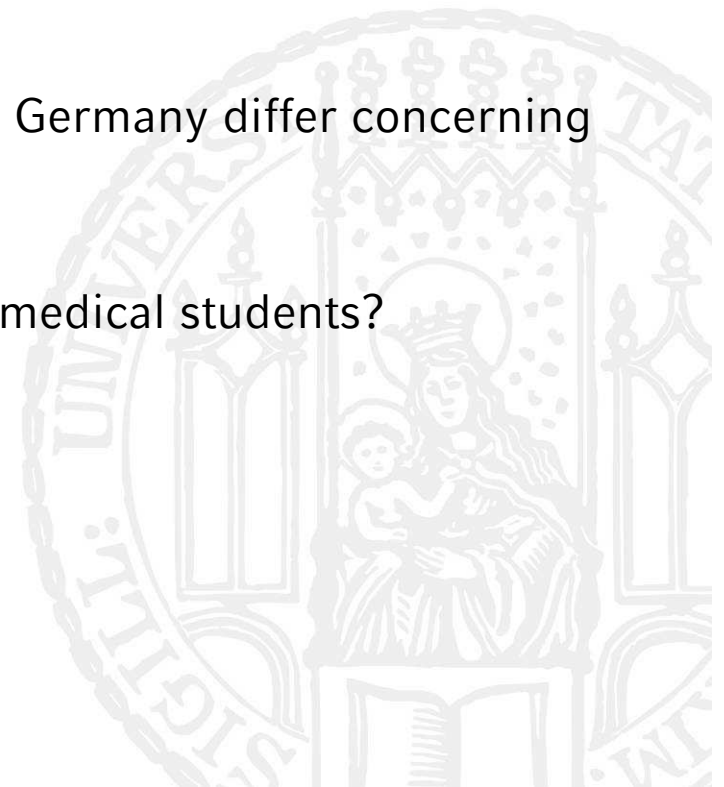
Auch besteht innerhalb der Bevölkerung wenig Aufklärung über psychische Erkrankungen. Psychiatrische Symptome werden daher häufig „magisch“ erklärt und Patienten von ihren Familienangehörigen zu traditionellen Heilern gebracht, die heiliges Wasser anbieten, welches geträufelt oder getrunken werden soll. Amulette werden getragen, Kräuterelixiere verabreicht sowie Rituale und Exorzismen durchgeführt. In der Bevölkerung herrscht der Glaube, dass





Research Questions

- How empathetic are Ethiopian and German medical students?
- Do medical students in Ethiopia and Germany differ concerning empathy ?
- Which factors influence empathy in medical students?



2. I cannot feel much sorrow for those who are responsible for their own misery.

-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

10. Unhappy movie endings haunt me for hours afterwards.

-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

■ Participants

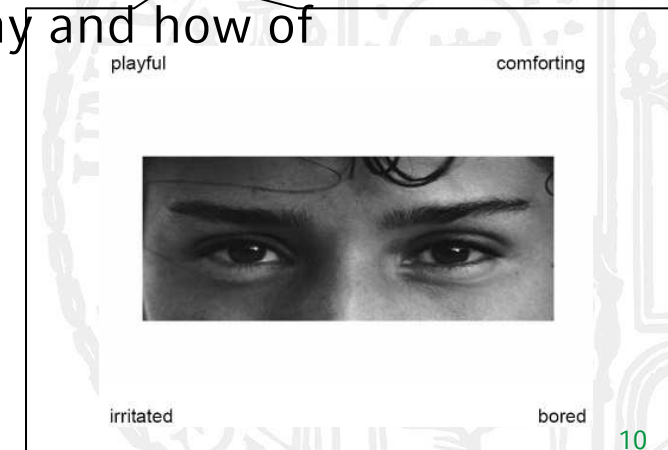
- n= 257 first-year medical students
(126 LMU students, 131 JU students)

■ Instruments

1. Balanced Emotional Empathy Scale (BEES)
2. Sociodemographic characteristics
3. Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RME-R-Test)
4. Qualitative Interviews (experiences, why and how of empathy?)

■ Data collection

- 12/2010 Jimma, 02/2011 Munich





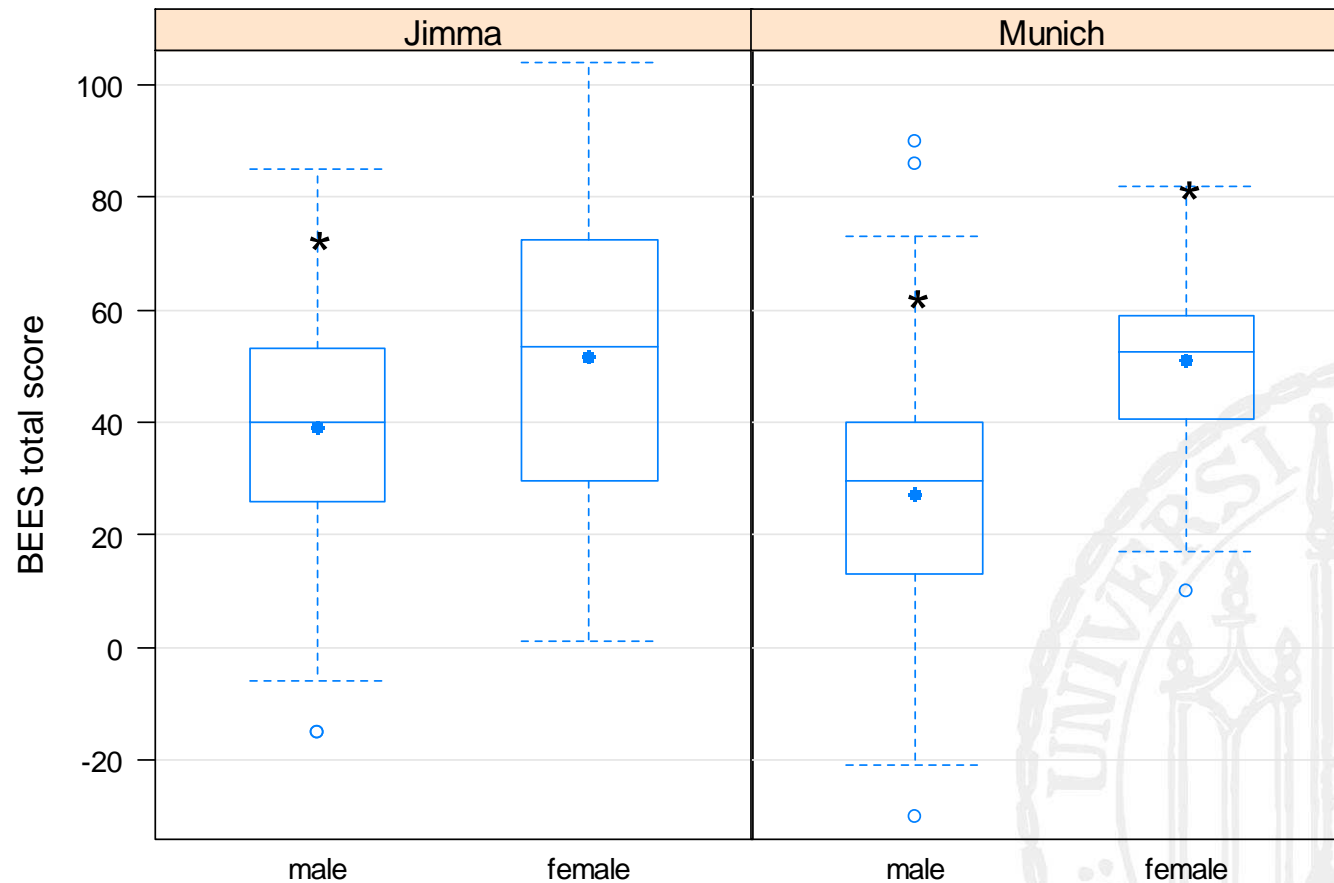




Population

	LMU	JU
n	126	131
Average age	21	19,3
Male/female	71%/29%	88%/12%
Active religiosity	32%	74%
Future specialization choice with close patient contact	41%	59%

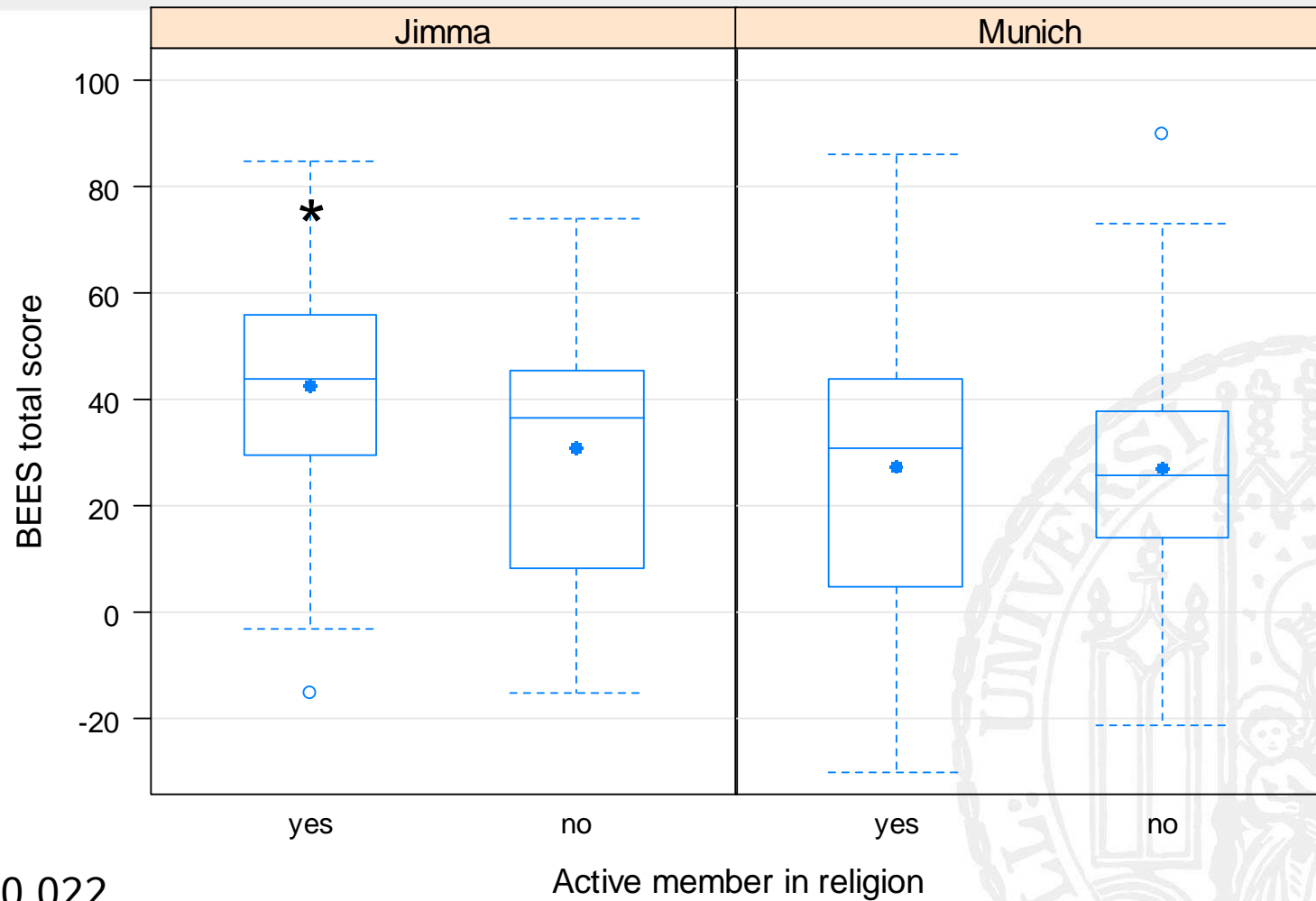
1. Emotional empathy (BEES)



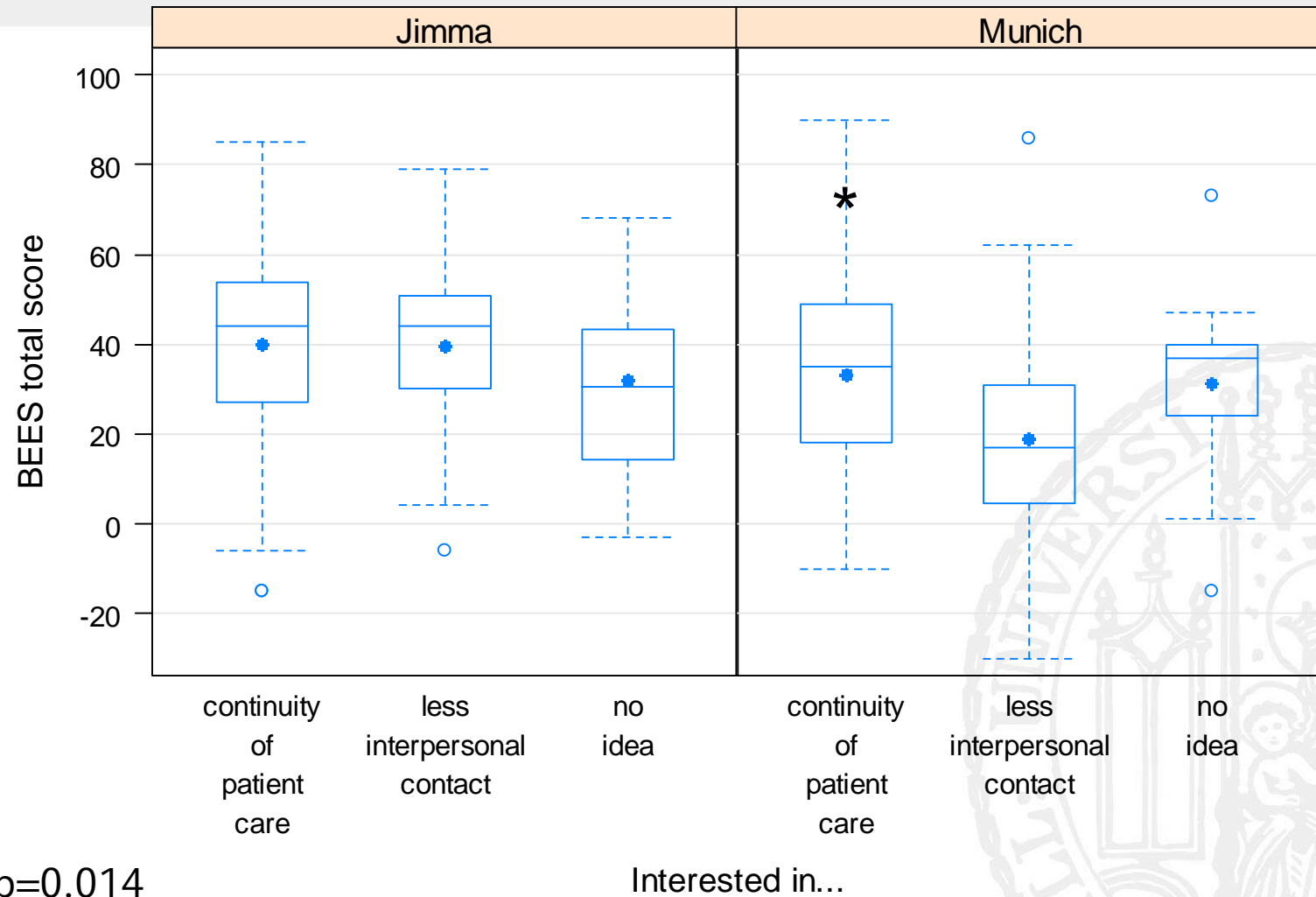
* $p_{\text{Total Score}} \text{ Jimma (40.7)/Munich (34.0)}=0.026$

* $p_{\text{Male Score}} \text{ Jimma (39.1)/Munich (27.2)}=0.00023$

1.1 Influence of active religiosity

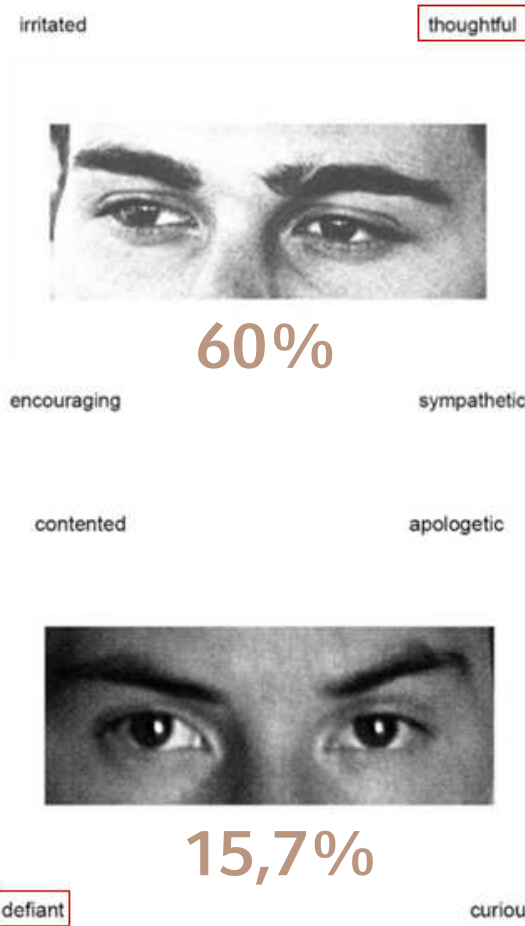


* $p=0.022$

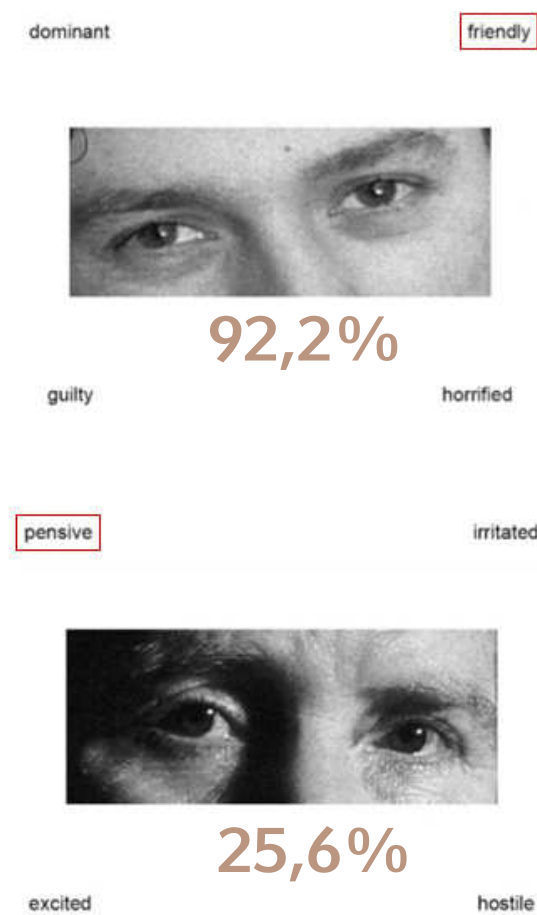


2. Cognitive empathy (Eyes-Test)

JU-students



LMU-students



3. Qualitative Interviews

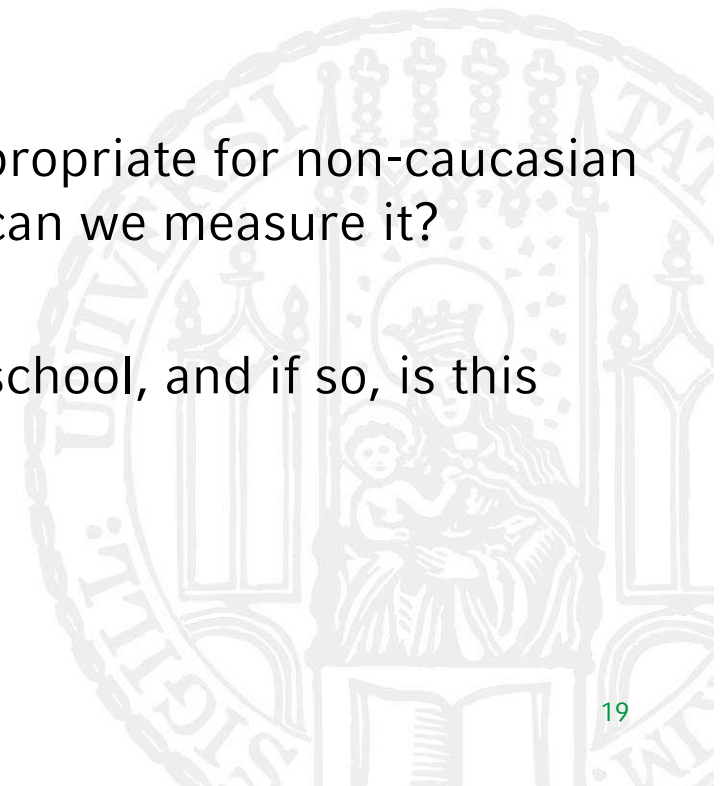
7. empathy in Germany and Ethiopia

- It is stronger in Ethiopia due to traditional institutions (like “ekub” and “eder”). (male, 18 years)
- It is stronger in Germany. The low-standard of our living conditions makes the people in Ethiopia feel risky. When poverty dominates their mind, they lack the ability to feel for others. (male, 20 years)
- In Ethiopia, empathy is culturally valued. There is a close togetherness at the grassroad area. The family is sharing all meals, and dining together. When you are older than 18 years old and have moved out from home, your family will keep on caring for you.
The poverty of the country tightens the people: it is immoral to pass the baggers in the streets: if you do not give them money, you at least spend them consideration. (male, 19 years)
- There is more empathy in Ethiopia. What I know from films and movies, the people in Europe are more or less selfish. The interpersonal competition is so high, and the people are so busy on doing their things, so they have no time. Everyone lives his own life. (male, 19 years)



Summary and Discussion

- The mean emotional empathy score is significantly higher in Ethiopia.
- Association between empathy and active religiosity and future specialization
- Is the Reading the Mind in the Eyes-Test an appropriate for non-caucasian participants ? What is clinical empathy and how can we measure it?
- Is there hardening of the heart during medical school, and if so, is this culturally independent?





Köhler-Stiftung
im Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft



Thank you! Ameseginalew!



“To be with another in this way means that for the time being, you lay aside your own views and values in order to enter another's world without prejudice. In some sense it means that you lay away your self; this can only be done by persons who are secure enough in themselves that they know they will not get lost in what may turn out to be the strange or bizarre world of the other, and that they can comfortably return to their own world when they wish.”

Carl R. Rogers, From “A way of being”, 1980