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Introduction to Addictions: Internet/Social Media

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A substantial percentage of individuals these days are moderately habitual Internet users, spending some amount of daily time on social media. It is fairly common to see people multitasking along with browsing social media while driving or talking or constantly checking their phones even while eating. While for a majority of people these habits can be considered hazardous and annoying, for some, (with numbers increasing over the years), excessive usage of the Internet has been shown to have a detrimental effect on their everyday functioning, including building and maintaining relationships, work and academics related problems, and reporting psychological issues such as depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and loneliness. Commenting on this emerging societal trend, especially over the past decade, for this special issue we invited scholars to share their findings related to the area of Internet and social media addictions and deliberate how excessive usage of the Internet and social media might impact the health and well-being of the users.

Our first paper for this special issue (Mubarak, Shekhar, Govindappa, Hyunh, & Quinn) is an empirical paper that explores the association between Internet use and comorbid mental health problems among young people in India, a country that already has close to 450 million Internet users, and this number is expected to double by 2022. The second paper (Turel) aims to understand the excessive use of social media and adopts an approach that first looks at highlighting the possible positive and negative impact of social media on users followed by understanding the excessive use of social media on the users. The third paper from Japan (Ohno) highlights the positioning of escapism in Internet addiction problems. The author considers escapism as an often neglected factor in many studies on Internet addiction, especially while considering Internet gaming addiction.

News from the Society has several contributions for this issue including Notes from the President and Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting from the recently concluded and very successful 25th ISSBD Meeting at Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia. A report highlighting the various events and participation at the ISSBD Meeting is presented next (Zimmer-Gembeck) followed by a report by the incoming Early Career Scholar Representative for ISSBD (Hapunda). We also have a report by ISSBD Ghana representative (Amos) who highlights some of the challenges related to membership as well presenting plans for forthcoming workshops catering to the needs of early career scholars in Ghana. Finally, we have a special report, 'Early Career Spotlight' (da Cunha) where the author profiles an emerging scientist - Rafael Vera Cruz de Carvalho, University of the State of Rio de Janeiro - for this issue of the Bulletin.

We hope to encourage participation from even more members related to exciting future issues of the Bulletin and continue disseminating research findings on seminal topics in life span human development in a cultural context–the aim of the ISSBD Bulletin.

Internet Addiction and Comorbid Mental Health Problems among Young People in India

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Internet addiction and comorbid mental health problems among young people in India

Introduction

Internet technology has forever changed the way of life of people around the globe and specifically people living in India. The advent of smartphones and WiFi technology and the Government of India's enthusiastic initiatives such as BharatNet, have rapidly increased the access of the Indian population to internet technology. Under the BharatNet program, the Government of India will provide optical fibre to telecom companies at 75% lower prices so that these companies can provide cheaper internet access to people living all over India including rural and remote areas. The plan aims to get 100 million more Indians online by 2018 (World Economic Forum, 2018). A joint report by IBM and Kalaari Capital estimates that mobile phone penetration will increase from 65% to 90% by 2022; the number of internet users will be more than 850 million by 2022 (the current number is 450 million). This report estimates that the Government of India is aiming to generate up to $1 trillion of digital revenue by 2022 (IBM, 2018). The obvious outcome of these initiatives is a rapid increase in internet use by the Indian population. While these initiatives are good for the social and economic success of India, there could be other implications too from public health perspectives.

Unhealthy and problematic use of the internet, with negative impacts on human health has been a hotly debated topic since the early 1990s. At the heart of this debate is the view that the constant interaction of human beings with the internet may have certain negative influences on human emotions and behaviors (Yamamoto and Ananou, 2015). Specifically, the internet as a digital platform has many captivating facets such as social networking sites, pornography sites, online games, online gambling, etc., which interact directly with human emotions and significantly increase their frequency and intensity of internet use. It is very important and timely that the policymakers in India and elsewhere in the world are taking into consideration the public health implications of their plan to promote and increase the internet use among their population groups. Keeping this in view, a research study was undertaken which aimed to explore the association between internet addiction and co-morbid mental health problems among young people in India and the possible implications of this association on India's policy to promote increased internet use by members of the community in India.

The boundary between the healthy and unhealthy use of the internet has been a vigorously debated topic (Bell, Bishop, & Przybylski, 2015). The practice of using the internet in unhealthy and harmful ways has been portrayed in the scientific literature by using a range of terminologies such as internet addiction, pathological internet use, technology dependency, problematic internet use, etc. Irrespective of the terminology used, research evidence has linked unhealthy internet use to mental health problems (King, Delfabbro, & Zwaans, 2013). The potential for pleasurable activities available within the internet reinforcing human beings to become psychologically addicted to internet use has been a key debate in relation to the unhealthy use of the internet. Kimberly Young, one of the proponents of the term internet addiction defines internet addiction as a disorder of impulse control, that does not result in intoxication; however, heavy and addictive internet use significantly reduces the level of social, professional and psychological activity of the human being (Stepien, 2014). Evidence continues to emerge reporting varying prevalence rates of internet addiction in the communities. For example, based on their review of 68 epidemiological studies on

internet addiction Kuss, Griffiths, Karile, & Billieux (2014) estimated the prevalence rates of internet addiction ranging from 0.8% to 26.7%. Similarly, Ko, Yen, J., Yen, C., et al., (2012) reported the prevalence rate of internet addiction as ranging from 1% to 36.7% of the population. While studying the prevalence of internet addiction among adolescents, Mythily et al. (2008) estimated the prevalence rate of internet addiction as 1.4% to 17.9%. This high variability in prevalence rates of psychological addiction to the internet could be based on variations in the definition of the term internet addiction and variability in the measurement of internet addiction.

Recent research suggests a high prevalence rate of internet addiction among Indian communities. For example, Chaudhari, et al., (2015) explored internet addiction among medical students and reported a very high prevalence rate of 58.8%. Parel and Thomas (2017) studied internet addiction among nursing students and observed that 34.02% of their respondents had a moderate internet addiction and 1.03% had a severe addiction to internet use. Prakash (2017) studied internet addiction among junior doctors, and this study reported 13% of the study respondents as having a moderate level of addiction to the internet. Gedam, et al., (2017) explored the prevalence of internet addiction among undergraduate health professionals and identified 19.85% of these professionals as addicted to internet use. Goel, et al., (2013) studied the prevalence of internet addiction among Indian adolescents and reported 0.7% of their study respondents as psychologically dependent on internet use. Mitra, et al., (2015) investigated the prevalence of internet addiction among medical students in India and reported a prevalence rate of 15%. These research findings clearly demonstrate a highly variable prevalence rate of internet addiction in India ranging from 0.7% to 58.8%. However, most such studies were predominantly focused on medical or paramedical students limiting the generalizability of their findings to other population groups of India.

Yet another important trend in recent years is the emergence of literature suggesting that people with internet addiction may develop co-morbid mental health symptoms. These studies report that excessive or pathological internet use may be associated with mental health symptoms such as depression (Morrison and Gore, 2010), depression and ADHD (Gundogar, et. al., 2012), insomnia (Cheung & Wong, 2011) and attention deficit and hyperactivity and social phobia (Yen, et al., 2007). Carli, et al., (2011) conducted a systematic review of the literature on the association between problem use of internet and co-morbid psychopathology. Their review revealed the prevalence of anxiety symptoms among 57% of people using the internet in unhealthy ways. Ho et al., (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of studies on the association between internet addiction and psychiatric co-morbidity and found a significant positive association between internet addiction and alcohol abuse, attention deficit and hyperactivity, depression and anxiety. In addition there are suggestions that people with internet addiction may also report certain behavioral issues such as low self-esteem (Bernardi & Pallanti, 2009); aggressive behaviors (Ko et al., 2009); high level of perceived stress (Deatherage et al., 2014) and negative coping strategies (Chou et al., 2015). These co-morbid psychopathologies and behavioral issues add significant complication to any professional interventions for problems associated with internet addiction. These studies clearly remind us about the urgency of studying public health issues associated with problem use of the internet in India. It is highly likely that people are unaware that they are using the internet in unhealthy ways leading to public health issues such as mental health problems. They may be seeking professional assistance for their mental health symptoms without remedying the core issue of the pathological use of the internet.

Keeping in view an estimated 850 million people in India may be using the internet currently (IBM, 2018), there is an urgent need to explore the public health implications of unhealthy use of the internet in India. Such studies are crucial in assisting policy makers to understand the gravity of the situation and the urgent necessity of taking preventive measures to educate the masses on healthy internet use. Keeping this situation in view, the present research aimed to explore the association between socio-demographic factors and internet addiction and also the association between internet addiction and mental health symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress among young people in India.

Methods

Data for the present study were collected through a questionnaire designed by the researchers. This questionnaire collected basic socio-demographic information such as age, gender, age of starting using the internet; purpose and frequency of internet use; and questions from the Internet addiction test by Young (1995) and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). This questionnaire was distributed among adult students who were 18 years and above studying in the colleges located at Gulbarga and Mangalore, India.

Procedure

Following the approval by the research ethics committees, a junior member of the research team was present at college campuses where students congregated for social purposes. A convenience sample of college students 18 years and above from both gender groups and diverse socio-economic backgrounds were welcomed to take part in the present research. These individuals received a sheet consisting of frequently asked questions providing all relevant details regarding the aims and objectives of the research, anonymity of respondents and freedom of research participants to withdraw from the study at any time. In all, 703 respondents agreed to take part in the study and completed the questionnaire. Out of these 699 responses, 28 were not included due to erroneous responses or missing data. Thus, the current research included a final sample size of 675 respondents.

Measures

A standardised questionnaire was prepared which collected basic demographic information of the respondents and the purpose and nature of their internet use. Demographic information collected included gender, age, studying full time or part-time and type of household of the respondents. The authors formulated questions related to age of starting internet use, duration of internet use each

day during the past week and general experiences while using the internet for purposes such as social networking, online shopping, viewing sexually gratifying sites and playing online games. The 21-item version of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) was administered to collect information related to the mental health of the respondents. This instrument consists of a set of three self-report scales to measure the negative emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress, and collects information on a 4-point scale: Never, Sometimes, Often and Always. This scale has been extensively tested for its psychometric properties (Page et al., 2007; Cunningham et al., 2013; Szabo, M., 2011; Crawford et al., 2011). Information related to internet addiction was collected using Young's (1995) Internet addiction test (IAT). This instrument consists of 20 items, and it was developed as a screening instrument for the diagnosis of psychological addiction to internet use. Using a 5-point Likert scale, this questionnaire measures the extent of involvement of individuals with computers and identifies the extent to which the individual is impelled to use the internet. This instrument has already been in use in the Indian context e.g. Chaudhari et al., (2015); Parel and Thomas (2017); Prakash (2017); and Gedam et al. (2017).

Data analysis

The primary outcomes are depression, stress and anxiety. Each outcome was dichotomized; with a cutoff score of 7 and above was used to identify respondents as having moderate-to-severe depressive symptoms; a cut-off score of 6 and above was used to identify respondents as having moderate-to-severe anxiety symptoms; and a cut-off score of 10 and above was used to identify respondents as having moderate-to-severe stress symptoms (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995).

The primary predictor of interest is internet addiction. A cut-off score of 50 and above in the Internet addiction test (IAT) was used to identify people as having an internet addiction and those not having internet addiction (Young, 1995). Differences between those with internet addiction vs. not were analyzed using chi-squared tests, t-tests or Mann-Whitney U-tests, as appropriate, and the results are displayed in Table 1. Specifically, the nine purposes for using the internet items were analyzed using Wilcoxon Mann-Whitney U-tests due to the non-normal distribution of these items. Three multivariable logistic regression models were used to assess associations between each dichotomised outcome. The independent variables listed in Table 1 were also entered into each model to control for confounding. The seven variables indicating the purpose of internet use were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Several sensitivity analyses were also conducted with fewer covariates to examine the robustness of the results. Specifically, univariable sensitivity analyses were conducted involving logistic regression models with the dichotomized outcomes and internet addiction (dichotomized), as well as logistic regression models with dichotomized outcomes and predictors of internet addiction (dichotomized), such as age, gender and total internet use. The adequacy of each model was tested using the Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness of fit statistic, and no evidence of a model violation was detected.

Table 1. Comparing IA across factors

Variable	No Internet Addiction (No IA)	Internet Addiction (IA)	P-value
Age in years[a]	19.57 (1.15)	19.52 (1.21)	.738
Age started using computer[a]	15.76 (2.70)	14.85 (2.70)	.002
Total internet use per week[a]	16.33 (22.06)	31.42 (27.17)	< .001
Female Gender[b]	348 (60.8)	34 (33.0)	< .001
Purpose of internet use[c]			
College work	2 (1-3)	2 (1-3)	.057
Shopping	0 (0-2)	1 (0-2)	< .001
Networking	3 (1-4)	4 (3-4)	< .001
Browsing	3 (1-3)	3 (2-4)	< .001
Games	1 (0-2)	2 (1-3)	< .001
Chat	2 (1-4)	4 (3-4)	< .001
Gambling	0 (0-0)	0 (0-1)	< .001
Email	1 (1-3)	2 (1-3)	.017
Sexual	0 (0-0)	0 (0-2)	< .001

Note. ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$
[a]*M* (*SD*) are displayed, t-test used to quantify difference
[b]*n* (%) are displayed, chi-square test used to quantify difference
[c]*Median* (*Lq-Uq*) are displayed, Wilcoxon Mann Whitney U-test used to quantify difference

A p-value of less than 0.05 (two-tailed) was deemed as statistically significant. Results are reported with 95% confidence intervals (CI). All statistical analyses were conducted using Stata 14.1 (StataCorp, College Station Texas).

Results

A total of 675 respondents submitted valid responses to the survey instruments in this study. Among these, 293 (43.4%) were male (*M* age = 19.5 years, *SD* = 1.23) and 382 (56.4%) were female (*M* age = 19.6 years, SD = 1.10). Of the 675 respondents in this sample, 189 (28%) scored 50 or above on the IAT, classifying them as having moderate-to-severe internet addiction (IA). A comparison of IA and non-IA responses across individual factors as well as the purpose for using the internet are included in Table 1.

For individual factors, only age was not significantly different between IA and non-IA respondents. There were significant differences across all other individual factors. The age when a person first started using computers was significant, with IA respondents (*M* = 14.85, *SD* = 2.70) being significantly lower than non-IA respondents (*M* = 15.76, *SD* = 2.70). Likewise, the total internet usage per week was significantly higher for IA respondents (*M* = 34.42, *SD* = 27.17) compared to non-IA respondents (*M* = 16.33, *SD* = 22.06). There was also a significant association between gender and IA status, with the proportion of male IA respondents (*n* = 69, 23.55%) being significantly higher than the proportion of female IA respondents (*n* = 34, 8.9%). When using the internet for completing college work, there was no significant difference in frequency of usage between IA (*Median* = 2, *IQR* = 2) and non-IA

Table 2. Logistic regression of psychological internet addiction and purpose of internet usage on depression, anxiety and stress

	Depression[a]		Anxiety[b]		Stress[c]	
Variable	*OR*	*95% CI*	*OR*	*95% CI*	*OR*	*95% CI*
IA[d]	**3.61*** **	**0.84, 1.24**	**1.51*** **	**1.51, 4.26**	**3.72*** **	**3.72, 15.95**
Age	1.02	0.89, 1.08	1.06	0.88, 1.27	0.91	0.91, 1.62
Age start using computer	0.98	0.99, 1.01	1.03	0.94, 1.13	0.84	0.84, 1.12
Total hours of internet use per week	1.00	0.78, 2.22	1.00	0.99, 1.01	0.99	0.99, 1.02
Gender (ref = female)	1.32	2.12, 6.13	1.44	0.87, 2.40	0.51	0.51, 2.53
Purpose for using the internet						
College work	0.97	0.81, 1.17	0.93	0.78, 1.10	**0.57***	**0.57, 0.99**
Shopping	0.98	0.81, 1.19	1.07	0.89, 1.28	0.70	0.70, 1.27
Networking	1.05	0.86, 1.29	0.98	0.80, 1.19	0.73	0.73, 1.35
Browsing	0.86	0.71, 1.04	0.98	0.81, 1.18	0.65	0.65, 1.17
Games	1.05	0.88, 1.25	0.93	0.78, 1.10	**0.52***	**0.52, 0.93**
Chat	0.93	0.77, 1.11	1.05	0.88, 1.25	0.65	0.65, 1.16
Gambling	**1.37** **	**1.09, 1.72**	**1.32***	**1.05, 1.64**	1.00	1.00, 1.97
Email	1.02	0.85, 1.22	1.10	0.93, 1.31	0.82	0.82, 1.44
Sexual	1.22	0.96, 1.54	**1.27***	**1.02, 1.60**	0.91	0.91, 1.77
Nagelkerke Pseudo R^2	14.9%		11.5%		22.6%	
Classification Accuracy	82.6%		79.6%		91.9%	
Hosmer & Lemeshow	χ^2(df=8) = 5.87, p = .662		χ^2(df=8) = 4.69, p = .790		χ^2(df=8) = 4.00, p = .857	

***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05
[a]General depression coded 0 for scores 0-6, and 1 for scores 7 and above
[b]Anxiety coded 0 for scores 0-5, and 1 for scores 6 and above
[c]Stress coded 0 for scores 0-9, and 1 for scores 10 and above
[d]IA coded 0 for IAT scores 0-49, and 1 for scores 50 and above, ref = non-IA
[e]only significant interactions are displayed

(*Median* = 2, *IQR* = 2) respondents. All other purposes except email had a significant difference (see Table 1).

The associations between age, age at first computer use, total internet use per week, gender, IA and purpose of internet use had a statistically significant association with Stress, Anxiety and Depression (Table 2). Respondents classified as having IA were over 3 times more likely to experience moderate-to-severe depressive symptoms compared to non-IA respondents, OR= 3.61(95% CI 0.84, 1.24). Of the nine purposes of internet use, only gambling was identified as a significant predictor, with the odds of experiencing moderate-to-severe depressive symptoms being 37% higher for each additional unit of online gambling, OR = 1.37(95% CI 1.09, 1.72). There was, however, no significant relationship between general depression and the other eight purposes of internet use. Similar to depression, anxiety was dichotomized into (1) none-to-low anxiety (a score of less than 6) and (2) moderate-to-severe anxiety (a score of 6 and above). Respondents classified as having IA were 1.51 times more likely to experience moderate-to-severe anxiety symptoms compared to non-IA respondents, OR= 1.51(95% CI 1.51, 4.26). Two of the nine purposes of internet use had a significant relationship with anxiety: internet use for gambling and internet use for sexual gratification purposes. The odds of experiencing moderate-to-severe anxiety symptoms were 32% higher when using the internet for gambling purposes, OR= 1.32(95% CI 1.05, 1.64). Similarly, the odds of experiencing moderate-to-severe anxiety symptoms were 27% higher when using the internet for sexual purposes, OR= 1.27(95% CI 1.02, 1.60). Respondents classified as having IA were over 3 times more likely to experience moderate-to-severe stress compared to non-IA respondents, OR= 3.72(95% CI 3.72, 15.95). Two of the nine purposes of internet use had a significant relationship with stress: using the internet for college work and using the internet for gaming. The odds of experiencing moderate-to-severe stress symptoms were 43% lower when using the internet for college work, OR= 0.57(95% CI 0.57, 0.99). Similarly, the odds of experiencing moderate-to-severe stress symptoms were 48% higher when using the internet for gaming purposes, OR= 0.52(95% CI 0.52, 0.93).

Discussion

The present research has shown that internet addiction has a statistically significant association with mental health symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress among young people in India. In a rapidly evolving era of young people under extreme peer and social pressure to use the internet frequently through social media and other digital technology tools, the present study findings have important individual and social consequences. Specifically, rapidly growing economies such as that of India with a hunger to aggressively promote internet use among its population to reap the socio-economic benefits, need to take the present study findings seriously. Results of the present study estimates that at least 28% of young people who took part in it met the criteria for moderate-to-severe internet addiction. If this prevalence rate of internet addiction were to be applied to IBM's forecast of 850 million Indians to be using the internet by 2022 (IBM, 2018), at least 238 million users of

the internet are likely to report moderate-to-severe addiction to internet use. These users of internet may also be likely to report mental health symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress due to unhealthy internet use. This scenario strongly suggests the possibility of a major public health epidemic unfolding in India requiring the immediate attention of policymakers. While the aggressive promotion of internet connectivity might economically benefit India and its population groups, it is also crucial that simultaneously the Indian population receives timely public health education on the healthy and safe use of the internet. A high prevalence rate of internet addiction leading to many social and mental health problems among young people is not a new phenomenon in the Asian context. Asian countries such as China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and the Philippines have already been dealing with the challenge of a high prevalence of internet addiction among young people (Kwok-Kei, et al., 2014). A closer look at the experiences of these Asian neighbors might benefit policymakers in India. Preventive measures such as launching public health education campaigns regarding the importance of the healthy and safe use of the internet are one of the key steps to be taken urgently by the Indian Government.

The prevalence of internet addiction reported in the present study is relatively low when compared to other past studies assessing the prevalence of internet addiction in India. For example, Chaudhari, et al., (2015) reported a high prevalence rate of 58.8% and Parel and Thomas (2017) reported a prevalence rate of 34.02%, a moderate rate of internet addiction. Whereas the prevalence rate reported by the present research is comparable to a few past studies such as Prakash (2017) who found a 13% moderate-level addiction to the internet, Gedam et al. (2017) identified 19.85% of their respondents as addicted to internet use and Mitra et al. (2015) reported a prevalence rate of 15%. However, one major difference between the present study and other Indian studies is that the present study's respondents came from diverse socio-demographic backgrounds significantly increasing its generalizability.

Results of the present study explored the demographic variables closely associated with internet addiction among young people in India. Early age of first internet use, using the internet for long hours and being of male gender were closely associated with internet addiction. These findings provide a useful evidence base for planning public health education campaigns on healthy internet use in India. Early exposure to internet at a very young age is a reality that India and many other countries in the developing world are dealing with in recent years. According to the UNICEF estimates, one-third of internet users globally are children, with the proportion of internet users likely to be in lower-income countries where the internet is rapidly penetrating all spheres of public life (Byrne, 2013). Duration of internet use also is an important concern in India because of a high mobile penetration rate and aggressive competition among internet providers. In recent years, many telco companies in India are offering up to 1.4 GB of internet data downloads per day. This huge downloadable data lapses at the end of the day whether the customer uses it or not. This has prompted a heavy internet use and is perceived as value for money by the customers. The obvious outcome of this process is an increased amount of time spent using the internet. To the knowledge of the authors no research evidence exists on the implications of this aggressive mobile industry competition and its association with internet addiction. However, the present study findings suggest that current business strategies of internet companies may be counterproductive from the public health perspective. Specifically, the present study explored the purposes for which young people used the internet and its association with internet addiction. Using the internet for recreational purposes such as online shopping, social networking, general browsing, for playing internet games, gambling and for sexual purposes had a statistically significant association with internet addiction. By contrast, using the internet for college work had no association with internet addiction. Based on these data it is evident that frequent use of the internet for pleasure seeking purposes might work as a stimulus and positive reinforcement for increased internet use and internet addiction in India.

The respondents who had a high internet addiction score reported significantly higher scores on co-morbid depression, anxiety and stress symptoms (Table 2). These observations are in line with other research studies such as Morrison and Gore (2010); Gundogar et. al. (2012); Cheung and Wong (2011); Yen et al. (2007); Carli, et al. (2011); and Ho et al. (2014). Results of the present study suggest that young people in India struggle to cope with the challenges associated with high internet use resulting in mental health symptoms such as depression, anxiety and stress. To the knowledge of the researchers, the exact cause-effect relationship between internet addiction and co-morbid mental health problems is yet to be established. That is, whether people with internet addiction struggle to juggle their time and adopt unhealthy coping strategies that lead to mental health problems, or mental health problems contribute to increased internet use resulting in internet addiction is still unclear. Further complicating the life of people with pathological internet use is that their core issue of addiction to the internet might remain untreated because internet addiction is yet to be formally recognized as a clinical disorder in India and elsewhere in the world. The present study findings strongly suggest that young people in India having issues with their internet use might be presenting with mental health symptoms to the primary health care services. It is timely that the primary health care services need to be alerted about the possibility of internet addiction being an underlying issue for the mental health symptoms of young people in India.

Conclusion

The present study on internet addiction and co-occurring mental problems among young people in India has reported a significant association between internet addiction and co-occurring mental health symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. This study also investigated the purposes of internet use and its implications for the mental health of young Indians. Internet use for the purposes of playing online games, online gambling, for sexually gratifying purposes, for general browsing and for social chat were found to be significantly associated with internet addiction and mental health symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. Thus, the present study argues that professionals working with young people in India need to monitor the

purposes for which their clients use the internet. However, the present study has several limitations. This study used convenience sampling method to collect data at sites where college students were known to congregate. It may not be representative of college students in general or the wider population. The anthropometric characteristics of those with and without internet addiction were very different, as evidenced by Table 1. Hence, other non-measured confounders may be possibly influencing these results. Further research on internet addiction among young people in India is urgently needed keeping in view the Government of India's ambitious target of making the internet accessible to a majority of its population.

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Understanding Excessive Use of Social Media

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Introduction

Social media is a collection of technologies that allows people to create virtual networks of contacts, share text, video and images with these contacts, and view and respond to contacts' posts (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook are the most prevalent social media sites among US teens, with corresponding penetration rates of 85%, 72%, 69% and 51% (Pew Research Center, 2018). The increased prevalence of smartphone devices has afforded the anytime, anywhere use of social media sites. Indeed, ninety-five percent of teens have smartphones and 45% admit that they are almost constantly connected (Pew Research Center, 2018). The use of such sites is also largely unregulated and hence teenagers start using social media at a young age; half of 12-year-olds already have some social media presence (Common Sense Media, 2016). Even though social media sites enforce age limits (e.g., 13 years old is the minimum age to use Facebook), these restrictions are easy to bypass with simple untruthful reporting of one's birth year. In addition, in recent years social media providers started targeting the young audience (e.g., 6 years old and up in the case of Facebook's Messenger Kids) presumably in an attempt to capture audiences early on in life, before they can make more informed decisions (Metz, 2018).

Importantly, social media sites can act as a double-edged sword; they often present a duality of positive and negative consequences for users (Serenko & Turel, 2015; Turel & Serenko, 2012; Turel, Serenko, & Giles, 2011). This duality is supported in many studies that have demonstrated that social media use can be beneficial for some users (e.g., older or socially isolated populations) or in some situations (e.g., when used actively, as opposed to passively), but also be harmful for others (e.g., children, cyber-bullied individuals) or in different situations (e.g., when used while driving, or excessively). To illustrate this duality, I note that in a recent large survey 31% of teens reported perceiving social media impacts on them as mostly positive, 24% as mostly negative, and 45% were ambivalent regarding social media effects, as they saw both positive and negative effects of social media on them (Pew Research Center, 2018).

Possible Positive Effects of Social Media Use on Users

Positive effects of social media use often accrue at low-medium (as opposed to high or excessive) levels of social media use, at which level people typically do not have major decision making deficits (Chen et al., 2018; Wei, Zhang, Turel, Bechara, & He, 2017). Moreover, at low-medium levels of social media use, it can displace other rewarding but dangerous activities such as substance use (Turel & Bechara, forthcoming). Such positive effects also accrue mostly when people are active on social media (i.e., post messages and share content) as opposed to being passive users (i.e., merely follow their peers) (Krasnova, Widjaja, Buxmann, Wenninger, & Benbasat, 2015).

The basic element of the positive effect of social media use on people is psychological rewards (Turel & Serenko, 2012). Indeed the use of such sites (Turel, He, Xue, Xiao, & Bechara, 2014) and specific activities such as observing "likes" (Meshi, Morawetz, & Heekeren, 2013; Meshi, Tamir, & Heekeren, 2015) can be associated with activation of mesolimbic dopamine circuits in the brain, which produce subjective feelings of euphoria and joy. Other, higher-order, example-positive effects include reduced loneliness, mostly among isolated and lonely people (Nowland, Necka, & Cacioppo, 2018), increased social capital (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007), ability to observe and learn from others (Osatuyi & Turel, 2018; Turel & Osatuyi, 2017), increased productivity in organizational and learning settings (Turel & Serenko, 2010), allowing people to collaborate online (Turel & Connelly, 2012; Turel & Zhang, 2010, 2011), displacing other risky and rewarding activities (Turel & Bechara, forthcoming), affording an augmented-controlled self-image that shelters people from who they truly are or their vulnerable-selves (Gil-Or, Levi-Belz, & Turel, 2015), and allowing people to cope with boredom and share positive affect situations (Turel & Bechara, 2016b).

There is also emerging evidence that healthy (low-medium levels of) use of social media can be associated with brain changes that may be beneficial for individuals. For example, we show in a sample of 33 social media users that the level of social media use is associated with increased grey matter volumes in brain regions involved in social-semantic and mentalizing tasks (specifically, the posterior parts of the bilateral middle and superior temporal, and left fusiform gyri), such as assigning semantic meaning to faces and interpreting social cues in social interactions (Turel, He, Brevers, & Bechara, 2018b). If the use of social media causes such brain morphology adaptations (as opposed to being merely associated with or caused by such inter-individual brain differences; yet to be proved), then social media use can help populations with social deficits to strengthen brain regions that support social interactions.

Possible Negative Effects of Social Media Use on Users

Negative effects of social media use on users can accrue at any level of social media use, but they are more pronounced

at very high levels of use. Such negative effects stem from problematic or deviant behaviors, defined as a family of behaviors that can harm the self or others and which are largely socially disapproved. Examples of such behaviors include cyberbullying (Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2018a), swearing on social media (Turel & Bechara, 2017; Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2018a), using social media while driving (Turel & Bechara, 2016a), avoiding school work to engage in social media use (Qahri-Saremi & Turel, 2016; Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2016; Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2018b), and using social media excessively to a point where it interferes (significantly or not) with normal functioning (Turel & Bechara, 2016b; Turel, Mouttapa, & Donato, 2015; Turel, Poppa, & Gil-Or, 2018; Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2016; Turel & Serenko, 2012; Turel, Serenko, & Bontis, 2011; Turel, Serenko, & Giles, 2011).

The negative outcomes of such behaviors can include emotional strain in the form of guilt, in response to the social disapproval of such problematic behaviors and their incongruence with one's expectations from themselves (Turel, 2015, 2016), increased stress (Turel, 2017; Turel & Gaudioso, 2018), reduced school performance (Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2016) and engagement (Qahri-Saremi & Turel, 2016), time perception distortion (Turel, Brevers, & Bechara, 2018), increased sedentary time, obesity and cardio-metabolic risks (Turel, Romashkin, & Morrison, 2016; Turel, Romashkin, & Morrison, 2017), reduced belief in one's ability to control their use and quit it (Osatuyi & Turel, 2018; Turel, 2015; Turel & Osatuyi, 2017), increased work-family conflict (Turel & Serenko, 2010); and ultimately, the development of addiction-like symptoms in relation to social media use (Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2016; Turel & Serenko, 2012). Here, without discounting the importance of the many problematic behaviors and states that may be associated with social media use, I focus on excessive use of social media.

Excessive Use of Social Media

The excessiveness of social media use is not measured by use time, frequency or intensity, because what is excessive for one person may be normal, un-harmful and even beneficial for another. For example, five hours of social media use per day may benefit an isolated, lonely elderly person, but may be harmful for a middle-school student who needs to spend time studying, maintaining hobbies, exercising, or socializing face-to-face. Excessiveness may even change within-individual depending on the circumstances. For example, spending three hours a day on social media may not be excessive for a student on summer break who needs to pass time between social and sports activities, but it may be excessive during school time or exam periods.

As such, the excessiveness of social media use is typically captured by the persistent negative symptomology it produces (Turel et al., 2014; Turel, Serenko, & Giles, 2011). These symptoms resemble those observed in relation to more established addictions, and specifically behavioral addictions such as gambling; they include salience, withdrawal, relapse, tolerance, mood modification and conflict symptomology (Griffiths, Kuss, & Demetrovics, 2014) that is presented in relation to social media use (Serenko & Turel, 2015). The more addiction-like symptoms the use of social media is associated with, the more excessive this activity becomes (Serenko, Turel, & Giles, 2009; Turel & Serenko, 2012; Turel, Serenko, & Giles, 2011). I accordingly define excessive use of social media (sometimes called "social media addiction" or "social networking site addiction") as a "state of maladaptive dependency on the [use of the social media site] that manifests in compulsively seeking and engaging in [social media site] use to such an extent that typical behavioral addiction symptoms emerge (e.g., withdrawal, salience, tolerance, mood modification, conflict, and repeated relapses)" (Turel, He, Brevers, & Bechara, 2018a, p. 694).

I note that describing such issues as an "addiction" as opposed to " excessive use" is not yet agreed upon and that clear criteria for classifying people as "addicted", "clincially impaired users" or "excessive users" are still lacking (Carbonell & Panova, 2017). Therefore, I use the term "excessive social media use" here, while noting that it parallels the myriad of terms (e.g., social media addiction) used in prior research. There are several proposed classification criteria for video-game disorder (van Rooij, Schoenmakers, Vermulst, van den Eijnden, & van de Mheen, 2011), including proposed criteria in DSM 5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The situation is in more embryonic stages when it comes to excessive social media use, even though some criteria started emerging (Banyai et al., 2017). Using such preliminary classification criteria, it has been suggested that there is about a 4.5% prevalence rate of risk for excessive social media use in adolescents, but rates can reach 15.2% (Turel, Brevers, et al., 2018) and 17.8% (Tang, Chen, Yang, Chung, & Lee, 2016) in young adults. A large portion of the rest of the population of users also experiences at least some addiction-like symptoms, but they do not meet the commonly employed classification criteria (Turel, Brevers, et al., 2018). Hence, studying excessive use of social media, its drivers, outcomes and mitigation mechanisms is important and can pertain to large segments of the population.

Why People Use Social Media Excessively

Like other excessive and problematic behaviors (Chen et al., 2018; He, Huang, et al., 2018; Wei et al., 2017), excessive social media use is rooted in an imbalance between a hyper-active reward system, and relatively weak (or hypoactive) self-control or inhibition brain faculties (Turel et al., 2014; Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2016; Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2018b). This imbalance can be influenced by both nature and nurture (He, Turel, & Bechara, 2017; He, Turel, Brevers, & Bechara, 2017). A necessary condition for activating and accentuating this imbalance lies in the way social media sites are designed and the consequent reward variability they generate.

Like many other websites, social media sites need to fight for customer retention and increased time spent on their sites, as opposed to on competing sites. They do so by trying to reinforce social media use behavior through a variable reward schedule (Eyal & Hoover, 2014). Rewarding behaviors produce behavior-reward associations in people's brains, which leads to behavior seeking and reenactment (Sutton & Barto, 1998). This reinforcement is accentuated when rewards are obtained on a variable schedule (Ferster & Skinner, 1957). When reward schedule is variable, people can develop behavioral addictions and

substance abuse disorders (Clark & Limbrick-Oldfield, 2013; Everitt & Robbins, 2005) and engage in problem gambling (Sescousse, Barbalat, Domenech, & Dreher, 2013). Social media sites have mastered the provision of variable reward, for example through an unknown schedule of others' posts, "likes", and comments (Meshi et al., 2015). Hence, it is not surprising that some social media users behave in a similar way to the way Skinner's pigeons behaved in his famous experiments. They do not peck surfaces for food pallets; they instead peck (or click in their case) for "likes", new posts, and new self-enhancing and rewarding information, which too, appears in a variable schedule.

It is worth noting that children and youth are more vulnerable than many other populations to such excessive and often risky behaviors, given that they have a built-in imbalance between the reward and self-control systems. The reason for this imbalance is that these brain systems develop on different schedules (Casey, Getz, & Galvan, 2008; Giedd, 2004; Sowell, Thompson, Holmes, Jernigan, & Toga, 1999). While the reward system is fully developed during adolescent years, the self-control/ inhibition brain system matures later on; and the connectivity between left and right hemispheres (corpus callosum) which is needed for proper decision making matures even later (Casey et al., 2007; Casey, Giedd, & Thomas, 2000; Casey, Tottenham, Liston, & Durston, 2005; Durston et al.). This behooves researchers and system developers alike (and perhaps governments) to consider protections for children and youth.

The Neuroanatomical Roots of Excessive Social Media Use

In the Decision Neuroscience Lab of Dr. Antoine Bechara, we performed a series of studies aimed at unraveling similarities and differences between excessive use of social media and other behavioral and substance addictions. Multiple studies support such similarities, especially regarding functional hyperactivity (Turel et al., 2014) and structural pruning (reduced grey matter volume) of the reward (amygdala-striatal) system (He, Turel, & Bechara, 2017; He, Turel, Brevers, et al., 2017). We also observed similarities in interoceptive-awareness brain systems (insular cortex dependent) in that reduced volumes of the posterior insula were linked to addiction-like symptoms, as mediated via steeper delay discounting (Turel, He, et al., 2018a). While such studies did not reveal deficits in the brain systems that are involved in self-control (prefrontal cortex dependent), we found in another study some deficits in inter-hemispheric connectivity (white matter integrity) that can reduce self-control abilities in excessive users (He, Turel, & Bechara, 2018). Together, these findings show that the imbalance between reward and self-control systems is primarily a function of the hyper-sensitive (functionally and structurally) reward system; this is similar to less harming behaviors such as light smoking and moderate gambling. This is good news for people who try to treat or overcome excessive social media use–most of them can do it if they have sufficient motivation to do so; techniques such as mediation and cognitive behavioral therapy may help (He, Turel, & Bechara, 2017; He, Turel, et al., 2018; He, Turel, Brevers, et al., 2017).

Conclusions

Social media sites are here to stay. Like food, their consumption or use is almost a necessity. However, over-consumption or over-use can be harmful. We hence need to further study the behavioral and brain mechanisms associated with excessive use; and put emphasis on vulnerable populations, such as children and youth. We ultimately need to learn to live responsibly with such technologies.

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Positioning of Escapism in Internet Addiction Problems

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Introduction

According to a survey conducted by the Cabinet Office in Japan (n = 3,288), 5.1% of elementary school students, 11.6% of junior high school students and 26.1% of high school students use the Internet averaging over 5 hours per day (Cabinet Office, Government Of Japan, 2018). In a large-scale questionnaire survey conducted recently by the research group including the author, 4.6% of high school students in Tokyo (n = 15,191, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, 2014) and 5.7% of junior high school students in Yokohama (n = 10,596, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, 2016) have high internet addiction tendency[1].

Escapism is a very important factor in the formation of Internet addiction problems, including Internet gaming addiction. However, escapism has been neglected in many studies of Internet addiction. In this paper, the phenomenon of "net escapism" is examined.

Internet addiction is associated with a large number of psychosocial variables. A large-scale quantitative survey of psychological variables such as depression, isolation, hostility, anxiety, and low self-esteem; and social variables such as low satisfaction with life and relationships, family relationship problems, and academic stress have been shown to be associated with Internet addiction, according to a literature survey by Kuss et al.(2014).

For almost every negative psychosocial variable associated with Internet addiction, Kardefelt-Winther (2014a) proposes to consider indirect-effect models (rather than direct-effect models). Internet escapism is a very powerful variable that links all psychosocial problems to addiction.

Rewards of Internet use

Addiction to the Internet arises from euphoric moods induced by internet use. Such moods may be a stimulus for operant conditioning, accompanied by a strong impetus to continue Internet use.

As the basis for generating euphoric moods with Internet use, for example, using the mood management theory proposed by Zillmann (1988), people will minimize bad moods and maximize good moods by choosing the appropriate content; thus Internet use will bring rewards for a successful mood adjustment. Using the theory of compensatory Internet use (Kardefelt-Winther, 2014a), Internet-based interaction and mood regulation can be rewarding stimuli because they can compensate for psychological distress such as depression and loneliness in real life. Indeed, some studies have shown that Internet addicts tend to choose Internet use as a stress-relieving tactic (Whang, Lee, & Chang, 2003), suggesting that Internet use may provide a psychological reward. In this paper, which addresses the motivations for Internet use, "Internet escapism" is a case that is not positive or active (e.g. enjoyment, achievement), but negative or passive (e.g. avoidance of psychological stress or forgetfulness).

In Internet escapism, use of the Internet to cope with psychosocial problems becomes the mediator linking Internet addiction to a variety of negative psychosocial variables. Addiction symptoms can arise from use of any application, so it is difficult to apply simple methods such as use restriction to mitigate addiction.

Relationship between Escapism and Internet Addiction

The association between Internet escapism and Internet addiction was pointed out by earlier studies. Regarding the process by which internet use is an escape-objective behavior and leads to addiction, Young (1998a) pointed out that motives for use, such as escape from college stress, can induce Internet abuse in adolescents. This assumption suggests that the use of the Internet to escape stress and avoid confronting problems may be a factor in Internet addiction. Clinical cases of Internet escapism have been reported by Young (1998a), Griffiths (2010), and Voss et al. (2015), and Internet escapism has become a universal factor among people of any age.

Escapism and Internet addiction scales

Young's initial 8-item Internet addiction Scale (Young, 1998b) asks respondents whether they use the Internet for escape. This scale was developed with reference to the DSM-4 (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) diagnostic criteria for Pathological Gambling[2].

Thus, Internet escapism has been treated as an element for screening Internet Addiction individuals. On the other hand, it does not seem to be entirely regarded as a necessary item. Internet addiction criteria, which have been developed, one after another, include both items related to Internet escapism and those not related to it. According to Lortie and Guitton's (2013) discussion of the dimensional structure of the 14 Internet addiction Diagnostic Scales, the scale containing the escapism component was 21%. Analytical considerations also differ from study to study, such as the use of Internet escapism as a component of Internet addiction and the use of Internet addiction identifiers.

Quantitative study of escapism and Internet addiction

Recently, quantitative studies of escapism have identified it as a variable associated with Internet addiction, e.g., Panova & Lleras (2016), Caplan, Williams, & Yee (2009), Hagström & Kaldo (2014), and Kuss, Louws, & Wiers (2012). Soh, Charlton, & Chew (2014) conducted a questionnaire survey of 1,577 Malaysian students, showing that escape is most strongly associated with Internet addiction, along with other Internet use motives such as erotic stimulation, social interaction, and entertainment.

In a model using Internet escapism as a mediator, Ohno (2016) conducted a survey of 15,191 Japanese high school students which suggests that Internet escapism mediates psychological distress and Internet addiction. Casale, Caplan, & Fioravanti (2016) verified the ability of escapism to mediate DERS (deficits in emotional dysregulation) and PIU (problematic Internet use) in a study of 293 Italian university students. In the context of game addiction, Li, Liau, & Khoo (2011) verified the path of AISD (actual-ideal self-discrepancies) and depression through escapism to pathologic gaming. Kardefelt-Winther (2014b) also quantitatively verifies that escapism becomes a mediator and leads to game addiction, and Chang, Hsieh, & Lin (2018) quantitatively verified that escapism and advancement mediate game participation and PIU, respectively.

Escape into social media

How is the association between Internet escapism and Internet addiction altered by the rise of smartphones and social media? The author conducted an online group interview with 19 Japanese Internet addicts in November 2017 and analyzed specific information behaviors. As a result, we found the elements of "escape to peace of mind by empathy" and "interruption of realistic sense" as escape behaviors to the Internet and applications for relief of stress. Examples of "escape to peace of mind by empathy" statements are: "I feel reassured by finding the same opinions and people who agree with me in the Social media," and "I can get so many comments that it is calming. I write unpleasant things on Twitter," and "to get 'good' in the Twitter, I feel that the approval needs are met". Of the nine respondents' statements to "escape to peace of mind by empathy," six said this about Social media use. Six out of the seven people who cited "homeostatic stress" as physical and mental symptoms confirmed that they sought "escape to peace of mind by empathy".

It is difficult or costly to cope with stressors that require empathy or approval in real life, except in circumstances where face-to-face empathy or approval is always available, such as with family, partners, or close friends. Social media, bulletin boards, and search systems may help alleviate stress. Their use is suitable for the purpose of escaping from everyday lives that cannot be understood, empathized with, or approved by people. However, when the escape to empathy becomes a habit with an increasing tendency to addiction, serious problems can arise in daily life. On the other hand, the escape to empathy as a means to cope with homeostatic stress may be an appropriate response in situations where fundamental problems are difficult to solve; in this area, more intensive study is required.

Conclusion

As mentioned so far, Internet escapism is one of the most important factors leading to Internet addiction. With the widespread use of smartphones and social media, the use of social media as a daily escape has emerged as a significant problem. However, many Internet addiction studies do not address the impact of Internet escapism. Coping with Internet escapism and providing preventive education can significantly reduce the risk of Internet addiction, game addiction, and social media addiction. Future studies need to clarify the critical factors influencing addiction through a clearly delineated model of Internet addiction and Internet escapism.

Notes

1. Modified 20 item scale by Young (1998a), Cutoff point: 70.
2. Fifth edition (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), updated in 2013, changes the 4th edition's wording of escapism items and does not use the word "escape".

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Notes from The President

Dear ISSBD Colleagues,

It is indeed an honor to be your new ISSBD President. I am both thrilled and awed to be elected to serve you.

We are living in challenging times. Many parts of the world are experiencing war, conflict and political unrest. An unprecedented number of children, adults and families live in unsettled circumstances as immigrants, refugees or under siege. There are children who have never lived in a permanent safe home or attended school on a regular basis. Governments are making decisions based on political or economic gain rather than what will maximize child or human well-being. While personal politics are indeed sensitive and private, as scientists we strive to achieve optimal human development regardless of geography or political opinions.

The International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) is committed to promoting scholarly research and the application of knowledge to maximize well-being at every point in the life span. We are served by the multidisciplinary field of developmental science. Developmental science aims to describe, explain and, where appropriate, intervene to optimize developmental outcomes. Because of this, developmental science provides insights relevant for all human service fields including education, health, and social services. Therefore, to ensure that policies and professional practice in these fields are effective and efficient, it is important that they are informed by rigorous research in developmental science, supported by effective knowledge translation and applied in ways guided by implementation science.

Developmental science has gained an understanding of the wide range of life course trajectories that lead to adaptive or adverse outcomes, the factors that precipitate these different trajectories, and the developmental transition points at which interventions are likely be most effective. We have learned the importance of identifying and capitalizing on individual, family and community strengths to maintain and advance positive development among people of all ages.

Although we are living in challenging times, it is my hope that we can work together to forge new pathways to address these challenges in exciting ways, informed by science and fueled by our mutual goal to improve the lives of all.

I look forward to working with you to achieve this goal.

Toni Antonucci
President of ISSBD

Minutes of the ISSBD 2018 Executive Committee Meeting I in Gold Coast, Australia

July 15th 2018, 9 am – 5 pm
Site: Standbroke Room Pool Level of the Star Gold Coast Hotel, Australia

Present in the meeting from Executive Committee

Xinyin Chen
Toni Antonucci
Karina Weichold
Nancy Galambos
Tina Malti
Esther Akinsola
Marcel van Aken
Julie Robinson
Sabine Walper
Rita Zukauskiene
Peter Smith
Brett Laursen
Kerry Barner
Josafa da Cunha
Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck
Bonnie Barber

1. Opening by the President: Xinyin Chen

Xinyin Chen welcomed the EC.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the EC Meeting at SRCD in Austin, Texas, USA, April 5, 2017

Action → The Minutes from the ISSBD EC Meeting in Austin in 2017 were approved by all members of the Executive Committee.

3. Report of the President Xinyin Chen

First of all, the president Xinyin Chen thanked all members of the EC Meeting, the colleagues from SAGE and the Chairs of the various committees for their work and support during the past year. He also extended these thanks to his entire period as president.

Biennial Meetings and Preconference Workshops

Xinyin Chen summarized the accomplishments of the society regarding the 2016 Biennial Meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania. He congratulated Rita Zukauskiene for her wonderful work and the great success of the conference. He also reflected on the status of the 2018 Meeting in Gold Coast, Australia. He emphasized that the invited program is very representative and strong. In addition, he honored the broad geographical representation of the speakers. There was an agreement among the EC members that this broad range has to be standard in all upcoming conferences. For both Biennial Meetings in 2016 and 2018, various preconference workshops were successfully organized under the aegis of Marcel van Aken.

Regional Workshops

Xinyin Chen reported that five regional workshops were supported by the society in the last year, including workshops on school safety and school climate (Thailand), values and development of Southeast Asia (Indonesia), positive youth development in times of social change (Greece), research on adaptive behaviors and context of change (Ghana), and social competences and interpersonal relationships (Italy). There are two workshops planned for the next year, one in Argentina, and another one in Hong Kong. There was an agreement among the EC members that fewer senior scholars will be invited as speakers for the regional workshops. In contrast, there should be a mix of senior researchers with middle career and young scholars. More senior scientists could be paid by the universities who apply for regional workshops; the middle and early career scientists could be paid via the financial support of ISSBD. This solution was supported by the EC. In addition, there was an agreement that Julie Robinson, in cooperation with Suman Verma and Katherine Cooper, will work on the guidelines for how to apply for a regional workshop and will update its content on the ISSBD internet site.

Xinyin Chen also reported on his activities to promote cooperation of ISSBD with other societies. In this context, he updated the Executive Committee on the activities of the ICDSS (International Consortium for Developmental Science Societies). There was an agreement among the EC

members that ISSBD should continue to cooperate with the consortium and with other national and regional developmental scientific organizations, representing a win-win situation overall. Finally, Xinyin Chen reported on collaborative efforts with SRCD (Society for Research in Child Development) in recent years. A plan for joint symposia at each meeting was established.

Committees

Xinyin Chen discussed with the EC the fact that the head of the Publication Committee has to be replaced and EC members are invited to bring in new ideas for this position.

50th anniversary of ISSBD

In preparation of the fiftieth anniversary of ISSBD in May 2019, several activities were discussed between the president of ISSBD and the members of the EC. Lots of ideas were collected for the celebration of that date, for instance the publication of a history article of the society. In addition, the Bulletin editor Karina Weichold is planning a special edition involving past presidents, giving pictured impressions on the past years, and reflecting on milestones and accomplishments of ISSBD. Other activities were discussed, such as webinars, new videos for the website, interviews, and an exhibition and celebration at the occasion of ISSBD 2020 in Rhodes. A new committee was formed to prepare for this anniversary. The Head of this committee is Toni Antonucci; members are Kerry Barner, Karina Weichold, Marcel van Aken, and Josafa da Cunha.

4. Report of the Secretary General, Karina Weichold

Karina Weichold reported that she has been involved in many aspects of running the society's filing and organizing of materials. EC Meetings were prepared, and the book of reports has been established for past EC Meetings, including the EC Meeting in 2018. She reported on the elections that she led during autumn 2017. Various positions were open, and as a result the members of the society elected three new EC members: Antonella Marcetti (Italy), Jackie Jere-Folotiya (Zambia), and Julie Bowker (USA). In addition, a new Early Career Representative was elected (2018 to 2022): Given Hapunda from Zambia. The elections were conducted in association with SAGE, Toni Antonucci, and Xinyin Chen. Karina Weichold expressed her thankfulness for the collaborations with the president Xinyin Chen, SAGE, and the entire EC.

Weichold discussed together with the president and the EC what happens if elected EC members are not reachable and cannot attend an EC meeting. It turned out that some EC members, in particular from low income countries, may not have the support to participate in the conference or are disconnected from the internet because of incidents and restrictions in that specific region.

Action → The EC decided to reimburse travel costs for all early career representatives to ensure the participation of young scholar representatives at EC meetings. EC Members who are for not reachable for long periods of time have to be replaced to ensure continuity within the EC.

5. Report of the ISSBD Membership Secretary and Membership Committee, Tina Malti

Tina Malti summarized her activities to increase the number of members of the society. She reported that renewal letters and email reminders were sent out. Additionally, one new regional coordinator has been appointed for Turkey. Also, new member forms describing the benefits of joining ISSBD were posted to regional coordinators, and reminders were sent to them to submit updated lists for lapsed members in 2017 and 2018. Malti reported that growth in membership of the society was observed in particular in Australia, the hosting country of the 2018 ISSBD conference. Additional increase in membership has been observed in Ghana, India, and the US. In contrast, a specific drop of members happened in Zimbabwe. The society currently has close to 1,000 members (986)–these are active and engaged members. Tina Malti discussed recruitment strategies in regions of the world where ISSBD is less represented. Here, new regional coordinators may be appointed. However, new guidelines must be developed for regional coordinators to help them to guide and structure their work, and allow them to be evaluated.

Action → Guidelines will be developed for regional coordinators.

6. Report of the ISSBD Treasurer, Nancy Galambos

Nancy Galambos praised Rick Burdick who manages the finances of ISSBD in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In addition, she was thankful to Ingrid Schoon as the chair of the Finance Committee, who provides recommendations on investments. Nancy Galambos gave an overview on the ISSBD accounts, which stand very positively. The society's finances are in very good shape with more than 3 million dollars overall. About 75% of the ISSBD expenditures in 2017 related to the support of early career scholars through the Jacobs Foundation and DCF fellowships, and travel grants for early career scholars to attend ISSBD conferences, for instance in 2018 Gold Coast, Australia. Only 17% of the expenditures go to officer and editor stipends, 7% goes to services, and another 1% to other issues. The EC responded very positively to Nancy Galambos' report, and thanked her for her great efforts. There were discussions on the constitution of the Finance Committee. Xinyin Chen advised that the EC keep Brett Laursen on the board of the Financial Committee because he made wise decisions in favor of the society in the past.

7. Publications

7.1 SAGE, Kerry Barner

Kerry Barner thanked the president and the EC of ISSBD for a wonderful cooperation, and in particular Brett Laursen who is the current editor of the IJBD. She reported on her

activities during the past year and gave insights into SAGE's activities and journal highlights from the past year. She was very positive about the development IJBD. The journal has been given extra pages just to reduce the backlog of articles. Another strategy was also a reduction of the acceptance rate. In addition, the return rate is on average very low (submissions are evaluated by the reviewers and most notifications are sent out within 25 days). Furthermore, Barner reported that the journal is in excellent shape with an increase in impact factor up to 1.76. The president of the society and the entire EC congratulated SAGE for their excellent work relating to the IJBD. Similarly, positive developments of the ISSBD Bulletin were reported and acknowledged. Finally, Kerry Barner reported on the update of the ISSBD homepage and on the increasing social media use around all activities of ISSBD.

7.2 Editor of the IJBD, Brett Laursen

Brett Laursen also reported positively on the development of the journal during the past year. He was happy to report on the stabilization process of the journal, and its very positive situation. Brett Laursen is thinking of appointing a new set of associate editors. He also reported on new special sections, and commented on actions to reduce the article backlog. He stressed the importance of keeping a balance between extra pages in the IJBD and lowering the impact factor of the journal. The president and the entire EC thanked Brett Laursen for his great success in editing the journal and said they're looking forward to many more years with Brett as Editor.

7.3 Editor of the ISSBD Bulletin, Karina Weichold

Karina Weichold reported on the activities in her role as editor of the ISSBD Bulletin during the past year. During that time two Bulletins were published. The president and the EC discussed whether the editorship term of Karina Weichold should be prolonged. There was a great appreciation of her work for the Bulletin and she was strongly encouraged to continue with her editorial work. Weichold agreed to that. One idea was to include a younger scientist on the editorial team. In addition, Weichold will invite current reactions to and ideas for the Bulletin via the upcoming membership questionnaire to push the Bulletin forward to meet the interests of ISSBD members.

7.4 Social Media, Josafa da Cunha

Josafa da Cunha was also thanked for his great collaboration with SAGE, the president, and all members of the EC. He updated the team on social media issues, and noted the webpage needs to be revised. For example, various archived materials will be included in the ISSBD homepage, while taking into account the new data protection rules, and webinars will be presented more as podcasts, with a view to higher and more effective involvement of young scholars at low cost.

8. ISSBD Biennial Meetings

8.1 2018, Gold Coast, Australia, Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck

Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck reported on the progress of the ISSBD 2018 conference at Gold Coast, Australia. She was able to assemble an impressive program with 90 symposia, 621 individual posters and 8 poster workshops. In addition, well known keynote speakers were involved in the conference and 14 invited symposia were included in the program. Furthermore, two memorial sessions, early career scholars activities, and six pre-conferences were scheduled for the conference. Overall, the conference was financially balanced, primarily due to the great sponsor activities of Zimmer-Gembeck. During the conference, meals were provided for the participants, which resulted in the fact that members of the conference were kept on site. Many positive reactions flowed from that. The president of the society, Xinyin Chen, and the members of the EC congratulated Zimmer-Gembeck and the entire team for their tremendous efforts to organize this conference which was a great success.

8.2 ISSBD 2020, Frosso Motti-Stefanidi

Frosso Motti-Stefanidi reported on the progress in preparing the conference for 2020 in Rhodes, Greece (shifted to the EC II Meeting). All preparations are in good shape. Fees for developing countries were kept low, eliciting praise from the EC. In addition, Motti-Stefanidi promised that there will also be meals at the conference, but not so much as at the 2018 conference. She is engaged in searching for sponsorships to fund the conference and is also willing to provide financial support for the travel of young scientists. Finally, Motto-Stefanidi is in the process of forming the international committee for the conference. The participants of the meeting were very positive about the progress report on the Rhodes 2020 conference and advised the organizers to go ahead with further planning.

8.3 ISSBD 2022

The president and the EC stated that there is no proposal for the Biennial Meeting in 2022. At the EC meeting in Austin 2017, Manuela Verissima presented a preliminary proposal on having the conference in Lisbon, Portugal. The EC will be happy to see a full proposal for that conference. However, others may be interested too, so there is no guarantee that the conference will be held in Portugal in 2022 so far. Karina Weichold will encourage Manuela Versissima to submit a full proposal to hold the ISSBD Biennial Meeting in Portugal in 2022.

9. Committees

Apart from what has been reported earlier, the president and the EC in conjunction with the heads of the various committees discussed the following points:

9.1 Membership, Tina Malti

Tina Malti discussed the regional representatives with the president and the EC. Some of them have reported only irregularly on their activities, and may be replaced because of inactivity. In any case, guidelines and goals have to be defined for national representatives to frame their work in a more structured way. After the discussion, the EC agreed that over the next five years there may be a re-evaluation of the situation of the activities of regional representatives (based on the guidelines) followed by a decision to prolong their position or to involve other representatives.

9.2 Fellows

Until now the Fellowship Committee was led by Tina Malti, who now steps down. The EC discussed identifying a new leader of the committee and Marcel van Aken volunteered to think about taking on this new position.

9.3 Developing Country Fellowship Awards

Peter Smith reported on the 50th tranche of fellowships, which was very positively evaluated by the participants. There will be three fellows in 2017. For the new round of applications, advertisement is necessary during the next year. The president and the entire EC voted on whether the program will be continued and supported by ISSBD.

Action → The proposal to continue with the DCF program has been evaluated positively.

Peter Smith also handed in a document with a suggested scoring procedure for DCF candidates. There were varying opinions on issues within the EC, questioning whether scientific excellence will still be a criterion in the selection procedure of the candidates. The EC voted on this proposal, resulting in a negative decision: thus, the scoring procedure for DCF candidates as suggested by Peter Smith will not be applied for the next tranche of candidates.

9.4 Preconference Workshops

Marcel van Aken reported on the organization and status of the preconference workshops. He reported that 90 participants are involved in interesting preconference workshops, working in small groups of about 20 students. He was thankful to Nancy Galambos and Julie Bowker who organized stipends for the participants. The EC agreed that the preconference workshops are an excellent addition to the ISSBD conference, and evaluated van Aken's activities very positively. There was just one negative issue discussed: Early career workshops and preconference activities may overlap too strongly. This issue needs to be considered for the future.

9.5 Early Career Travel Grant

Julie Bowker reported that around 60 scholars received financial support from ISSBD to participate in the conference. The president and the EC noted with delight that decisions on applications are now made much quicker. The introduction of different timelines for applications and evaluations worked out well.

9.6 Early Career Development: Jacobs Foundation Fellows

Toni Antonucci reported on the status of the Jacobs Foundation fellows. They are progressing well, and some are attending the 2018 ISSBD conference. There are plans to write a report on that and to give updates from cohort one and cohort two. The president and the EC positively valued all the efforts of Toni Antonucci to keep up with the Jacobs Fellows program.

10. Other Issues

Other issues were discussed at the EC meeting at Gold Coast 2018. With regard to the connection with the Jacobs Foundation (JF), Toni Antonucci gave an update on her correspondence and engagement with the Foundation. She reported that a proposal was written in tight interaction with JF. This will be an intervention-based project with the aim of capacity building at the Ivory Coast. In this workshop, 6 PhD students from the Ivory Coast plus 15 other students and fellows from outside the Ivory Coast will be invited. Toni Antonucci asks for a decision by the president and the EC to go ahead with further negotiation on the topic. After discussion, the entire group voted to approve this workshop plan.

Action → At the behest of the president and the EC, Toni Antonucci agreed to go ahead with further planning of an intervention-based workshop for capacity building at the Ivory Coast.

The second issue under discussion was brought up by Julie Robinson. She led a brainstorming session with the entire group on different strategies to maintain engagement of middle career scholars in the society. Many senior scholars are actively engaged in the society, but middle career scholars seem to be neglected. Two suggestions were made by the participants at the meeting: Josafa da Cunha suggested establishing Master classes by middle career scholars at the next workshops, which can be shared with other members of the society, in particular young scholars. Karina Weichold suggested building up a database for experts, wherein middle career scholars can play a meaningful role. This database could name experts when searching by particular research topics. Those experts at the middle stage of their careers could also provide mentoring for younger scientists. Both suggestions were very positively evaluated by the EC.

A final issue discussed at the meeting was the constitution of the EC. Robert Kail will not continue to be part of the EC and needs to be replaced in the future. Joseph Loh-Oh, our early career representative, has had no access to the internet for quite some time and thus cannot respond to contact. The EC suggested replacing him, because he cannot fulfill his duties in the near future. Finally, the new president, Toni Antonucci will appoint new members to collaborate with her in the EC of ISSBD.

Karina Weichold, Secretary General of ISSBD
Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena, Germany

Minutes of the ISSBD 2018 Executive Committee Meeting II in Gold Coast, Australia

July 19th 2018, 8 am – 10 am
Site: Standbroke Room Pool Level of the Star Gold Coast Hotel, Australia

Present in the meeting from Executive Committee

Toni Antonucci
Xinyin Chen
Karina Weichold
Nancy Galambos
Tina Malti
Esther Akinsola
Marcel van Aken
Julie Robinson
Sabine Walper
Jackie Jere-Folotiya
Antonella Marchetti
Given Hapunda
Kerry Barner
Frosso Motti-Stefanidi
Ann Sanson

1. Opening by the President, Toni Antonucci

Toni Antonucci welcomed the EC as new president of ISSBD. She encouraged the new and the old members of the EC to give input for her new role as president and asked for suggestions from scientists who support the EC and the various committees. Antonucci stressed the importance of involving younger scholars to ensure generativity within the EC.

In Addition, Toni Antonucci encouraged the EC to think about new activities to promote positive adaptation in refugees, and concomitantly, the crucial role that societies like ISSBD may play to influence social policy. Along those lines, ISSBD could publish a scientific statement, for instance on the children in detention in the US. Other members of the EC mentioned that the international Consortium of Developmental Science Societies (ICDSS) could take on a more networking organizational role in this regard. There was an agreement that joint actions together and under the umbrella of the ICDSS could make a stronger impact with a common statement. The president and the EC agreed that there needs to be a dialogue with the ICDSS in the near future to push this issue forward.

2. Report of the Outcomes of the EC Meeting I, Karina Weichold

Karina Weichold reported on the important outcomes of the EC Meeting I. She also reported that following Meeting I on July 15 she got in touch with Manuela Verissima to encourage her to hand in a full proposal for hosting ISSBD 2022 in Portugal.

3. ISSBD Regional Workshops

Toni Antonucci, past president Xinyin Chen, and the entire EC discussed the two planned ISSBD regional workshops in Argentina and Hong Kong. During the meeting, and also afterward, the EC committed to financially support both workshops. Workshop organizers were informed immediately.

Action → Both workshops will be financially supported by ISSBD.

4. Other Issues

Antonella Marchetti handed in a proposal to promote a partnership between the Italian Association of Psychology (IAP) and ISSBD. There was an agreement among the entire EC that this is a good idea and the partnership was positively evaluated.

Furthermore, Ann Sanson presented a proposal regarding climate change. The proposal was discussed during the EC meeting and also afterwards via email exchange. In a nutshell, the EC showed high commitment to the proposal by Ann Sanson, and encouraged her to go ahead with this activity in conjunction with the ICDSS.

Finally, another issue was discussed in the EC meeting: Nancy Galambos stressed the fact that some countries had moved up in the World Bank categories. This has consequences for ISSBD, as she pointed out. Some countries may not be considered as low-income countries anymore, resulting also in different categories for ISSBD funding situations. Further consideration of this point should take place soon.

5. Next EC Meeting in 2019

During the meeting, the president and the EC discussed a proposal of the Secretary General, Karina Weichold, to have the next EC meeting not at SRCD in 2019 but at the Meeting of the ECDP (European Conference of Developmental Psychology) which will be held in Athens, Greece from August 29 to September 1, 2019. The EC positively evaluated this suggestion, and set the date for the next EC meeting in 2019 as August 28th 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Karina Weichold, Secretary General of ISSBD
Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena, Germany

Report of the 25th Biennial Meetings of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia 15-19 July 2018

Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck

Griffith University Goldcoast Queensland, Australia
Email: m.zimmer-gembeck@griffith.edu.au

Many, if not all, of those working in academia and their postgraduate students look forward to attending major international research conferences. It is one of the very best experiences of our work lives and a way to share new research ideas and findings, to connect and network, and to have time to focus on research only for a few days without interruption. The Biennial Meetings of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development are no exception, drawing academics, postgraduate students and community members together for five days of research presentations, workshops and networking events every other year.

Chaired by Professors Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck and Bonnie Barber, the most recent ISSBD conference - the 25th Biennial meetings of ISSBD - was held at The Star Conference Centre on the Gold Coast, Australia (15-19 July 2018). The conference was generously supported by Griffith University (located in Gold Coast & Brisbane, Australia), Gold Coast Tourism, Gold Coast Business Events, and ISSBD. In addition, exhibitors included SAGE Publications,


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Parent-Child Interaction Therapy
Regulating Overload and Rage
PCIT
Family Interaction Program

Databrary, Cambridge University Press, and the Family Interaction Program (Griffith University).

Across the five days, 10 keynote and invited addresses and 14 invited symposia were presented. In addition, 90 Symposiums, 621 Individual Posters and 8 Poster Workshops were accepted into the conference program via a process of peer review involving 24 panels and more than 200 reviewers from around the world. This meant that the 25th biennial ISSBD meeting had up to 9 simultaneous symposium sessions running most hours over four days, with an additional 6 research poster presentation sessions (containing more than 100 posters each). Accepted research presenters came from more than 60 countries around the world, with 256 from Australia, 185 from Asia or SE Asia, 148 from North America, 135 from Europe, 7 from Central America or the Caribbean, 10 from South America, 28 from Africa, 26 from Oceania, and 5 from the Middle East.

We were extremely privileged to hear Keynote Addresses from the following distinguished behavioral and clinical scientists and criminologists from around the world. Keynote speakers in order of appearance included:

Professor Jacquelynne Eccles (University of California, Irvine),

Professor Ron Rapee, (Macquarie University, Australia)

Professor Richard Lerner (Tufts University)

Professor Xinyin Chen (University of Pennsylvania)

Professor Frosso Motti-Stefanidi (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)

Professor Wayne Osgood (Pennsylvania State University, USA)

Invited addresses were given by:

Professor Andreas Beelman (Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena, Germany)

Professor Debra Pepler (York University, Canada)

Professor Daniel TL Shek (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University)

Professor Robert Crosnoe (University of Texas at Austin, USA)

Across the many panel review topics, there continued to be some of the broadest representation of research on cognitive science; personality and temperament; social, emotional, and moral development; mental health and developmental psychopathology; and parenting and parent-child relationships. Other well-represented topics included peer relationships, prevention science and intervention research, and academic, civic and vocational development.

A special focus of every ISSBD conference is Early Career Scholars (ECS) and International Representation. Thus, as in the past, the 25th Biennial Meetings on the Gold Coast also included a series of ECS events on topics of broad interest to all researchers (e.g., publishing and methodology), and a selection of six all-day preconference workshops for ECS and scholars from developing countries held at Griffith University. For the preconference events, ISSBD provided scholarships for many attendees to offset some of their travel and living costs while on the Gold Coast.

Message from the Early Career Representative

Given Hapunda

University of Zambia, Lusaka, Zambia
Email: given.hapunda@gmail.com

I want to begin this message by thanking you all for electing me as the incoming Early Career Representative (ECR). I don't take this responsibility lightly. Josafa Cunha, the past ECR, and Joseph La Lo-oh, the current ECR, are committed to ensure that the needs of ECS are well represented. Together we shall endeavor to ensure that your needs are not just represented but met.

The 25th ISSBD meeting was such an exciting meeting for early career scholars (ECS). Apart from participation in symposiums and poster sessions, ECS were privileged to participate in four different workshops facilitated by renowned scholars. The workshops included:

1. Developmental research for public good: A conversation with Editors - *Facilitated by Deb Pepler and Sue Spence*
2. Foundations in cross cultural research - *Facilitated by Sara Harkness and Charles Super*
3. Tips and tricks for publishing: A conversation with Editors – *Facilitated by Brett Laursen, Tina Malti and Jennie Hudson*
4. A brief introduction to longitudinal modelling - *Facilitated by Kathryn Modecki*

The meeting was held in the beautiful city of Gold Coast dubbed as the *surfers' paradise* with one of the best beach coastlines. As if this was not enough, the ECS were treated to a wonderful early career scholars' reception. This was a great opportunity for ECS to network and just wind down from the stress of being researcher and academician.

Early career scholars are the heart of the society. Therefore, your active participation in the activities of the society will keep the society moving forward for the better. We feel that giving you a platform to actively participate in the society's development is the first step. To this end, a Facebook page for ECS has been created. Follow the page **ISSBD Early Career Scholars** and participate in the activities of ECS. Through this page we can share ideas, information about research grants, conference information and must-have textbooks, among other topics. Furthermore, we shall be posting a call for applications for ECS to participate in various committees of the society. Our

representation in these committees will ensure that our needs are considered in the decision-making and planning of the Society.

In the coming few months we have planned a number of activities to meet your needs. This includes a series of Webinars, early career scholars' spotlight, and a needs assessment survey. All these will be available on the ISSBD website. Ensure you regularly visit the site to be up-to-date with the exciting activities we have planned for you. For the needs assessment survey, your responses will be extremely helpful in determining what sorts of changes the society should implement to ensure our needs as ECS are met. We shall be notifying you when this survey is posted on the website.

To help ensure that the Society continues to serve as a valuable resource to all ISSBD ECS, the Early Career Scholars committee invites you to share any ideas you may have. We are particularly interested in developing a platform for publishing articles from ECS. Your ideas and suggestions to achieve this goal are most welcome.

To share your ideas, please contact Joseph La Lo-oh, the current ECR by email at ljosephlah@yahoo.com, Given Hapunda, the incoming ECR at given.hapunda@gmail.com or Josafa Cunha, the past (ECR) josafas@gmail.com . Thank you for your loyal readership. I look forward to hearing from you.

Ghanaian Participation in ISSBD

Patricia Mawusi Amos

ISSBD Regional Coordinator, Ghana
University of Education
Winneba, Ghana

Introduction

Ghana is a low-income country with about eight public universities and more than 10 private universities. It is considered as one of the more stable countries in West Africa since its transition into multiparty democracy in 1992. The membership of ISSBD in Ghana stands at 72 with most of the membership coming from University of Education, Winneba.

It should be emphasized that membership increased swiftly due to the African Regional Workshop organized in Ghana in 2017, primarily because of the kind of activities organized during the workshop that encouraged scholars to register with ISSBD. Some of the programs were poster and oral presentations; and presentations by ISSBD senior scholars, who really made an impact during the period of the workshop.

Programs

Organizing programs has been a bit of a challenge. This is because we do not have enough financial resources to be able to organize workshops and seminars for members. Even so, we did not rest on our oars. We usually circulate information about which conferences are available, and we meet to discuss which ones are feasible and within our financial budget so that we can attend.

In order to get every member on board, we have created a WhatsApp platform where calls for proposals are usually circulated. These call for proposals can be from either ISSBD or any accredited organization which will be of value to members.

Our main activity for this year is to organize a workshop on the use of Nvivo. This has not yet been done, due to the fact that we have not been able to secure the sponsorship we planned to be able to launch the workshop.

Recruitment

One of our recruitment strategies was tasking the few scholars in ISSBD who are in other institutions to encourage their colleagues to register with ISSBD. There have been instances where the regional coordinator is invited to other institutions to brief some scholars on the benefit of ISSBD. This and the regional workshops are what has increased our membership at such an exponential rate.

Challenges

- One main challenge is that all the members are young scholars including the regional coordinator. Due to this we lack mentorship in our region and are not able to get assistance when it comes to issues concerning ISSBD.
- Also, we lack financial resources. It is our hope that we will get the financial resources we require to be able to organize seminars and workshops to serve as continuous professional development for our members.
- It has been a challenge to retain existing members. Since we always pay our dues to SAGE, we are not able to organize programs for ourselves which will attract membership. It is our plea that ISSBD executives will assist us in retaining some of our funds or dues so we can use it in running ISSBD-Ghana.

Conclusion

Ghana is a young region in ISSBD but we believe that with determination, we can recruit more members for ISSBD and become vibrant.

Early Career Spotlight

Josafá M. da Cunha
Professor, Departamento de Teoria e Fundamentos da Educação
Universidade Federal do Paraná

Rafael Vera Cruz de Carvalho
University of the State of Rio de Janeiro
Curriculum: http://lattes.cnpq.br/9555656309742134

Rafael Vera Cruz de Carvalho is a doctor in Social Psychology (focus on Developmental Psychology) from the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil. In this brief interview, he offers a unique insight into his research and experiences as a former fellow of the ISSBD-Jacobs Foundation Fellowship, also highlighting the challenges of reconciling parenthood and academic work.

His research interests are focused on the development of empathy, within the context of family interactions and self developmental trajectories, through the perspective of Evolutionary Developmental Psychology and Cross-Cultural Psychology. Rafael has worked for 10 years with professor Maria Lucia Seidl-de-Moura, one of the most important names in Brazilian Developmental Psychology. In her research group, Social Interaction and Development, he has learned the foundations of Evolutionary Psychology and honed his theoretical, methodological and teaching skills, since research and teaching formation were strongly valued. His current project is focused on the study of prosocial behavior, through comparisons within two cultures, Brazil and Germany, and also intraculturally, as a function of diverse trajectories, with emphasis on autonomy and relatedness. This study engages researchers from the Osnabrück and Münster universities, in Germany, and also universities from the states Pará and São Paulo, in Brazil.

He says his experience as a fellow of the first cohort of the ISSBD-JF fellowship was the highlight of his career. Coming from a disadvantaged background, he also was enabled through the fellowship to access much needed resources, including support to attend conferences, purchase books and a computer and, most importantly, to receive mentoring from leading developmental researchers, such as the late professor Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı (Koç University, Turkey), and professor Paul Hastings (University of California, Davis, United States), with whom Rafael did his doctoral internship. He acknowledges that the success of the ISSBD-JF fellowship can be attributed to its emphasis on providing opportunities to students from the Majority World, who often have very limited resources, and found in this fellowship a unique opportunity to further their career development.

For the 2018 ISSBD Biennial Meeting, he organized a symposium to pay tribute to the late professor Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı, from Turkey, who was his mentor during the ISSBD-JF fellowship. "There are still large imbalances between where most babies are born in the world, and where developmental research is produced, and thus more initiatives to build capacity among Majority World scholars are needed," he states. And as he moves forward, he seeks to follow the work of his mentors, and hopes that inclusive fellowships continue to exist, as one of the many activities from ISSBD that foster positive development among early career researchers from all over the world. "More of these inclusive fellowships are needed, so as to help researchers from the Majority World to have their voices heard through their data, and to overcome the adversities they face in collecting data", he argues. Rafael also proposes equal relations in the studies: "It is fundamental in supporting research relations to have equality between researchers from rich and poor countries, aiming at widening our knowledge on intra- and cross-cultural variability. Besides being simpler to make a study on minority groups in a country, it is much richer to compare data from this country to data from the countries those minority groups come from. Only with continued support of renowned societies, such as ISSBD, and foundations, such as Jacobs, is this possible".

In addition to addressing the challenges of the early years in his academic career, Rafael underlines the challenges of balancing work and life, especially in regard to

parenthood. He has been engaged in an organization called Parents in Science, which focuses on understanding the challenges of motherhood and fatherhood for researchers. As a father of two smart and lovely boys, he experiences first hand such challenges, which require organization and support from family and others to complete his studies. However, he points out, "more can also be done in terms of rethinking evaluation processes (using empathy!), so that 'just-new-parents' can be evaluated fairly."

MAJOR CONFERENCES OF INTEREST

November 29 – November 30, 2018
Conference on Environmental Psychology
Location: Lillehammer, Norway
Web: https://eng.inn.no/CEP2018

December 7 – December 8, 2018
5th International Conference on Research in Behavioral and Social Science
Location: Barcelona, Spain
Web: http://www.icrbs.org

December 13 – December 15, 2018
13th Annual Conference on Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE
Web: http://www.c4events.org/evolution

January 24 – January 27, 2019
Evolution of Addiction Treatment Conference
Location: Los Angeles, United States
Web: http://www.c4events.org/evolution

March 21 – March 23, 2019
Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development
Location: Baltimore, Maryland, United States
Web: http://www.srcd.org/meetings/biennial-meeting

March 21 – March 23, 2019
The Asian Conference on Psychology and the Behavioral Sciences
Location: Tokyo, Japan
Web: https://acp.iafor.org

March 28 – March 31, 2019
Anxiety and Depression Association of America 2019 Conference
Location: Chicago, United States
Web: https://adaa.org/2019-conference

April 6 – April 9, 2019
27th European Congress of Psychiatry
Location: Warsaw, Poland
Web: https://epa-congress.org/2019#.W9AQzvYo_IU