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Contents

SPECIAL ISSUE:
Quantitative and qualitative methods for cross-cultural research

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Introduction to the Special Section: Quantitative and qualitative methods for cross-cultural research

Cross-cultural psychologists are increasingly calling out for greater consistency in the approach to culture and the need to pay more attention to concrete, specific, local cultural processes that are likely to shape psychological outcomes. This is particularly important when confronting the problem of transferability of theoretical constructs since a majority of the theories have been largely developed and tested by western psychologists and researchers from allied fields and as such may be limited in their approach to the study of other groups/cultures.

Research informed by a cultural psychological approach necessitates the combination of qualitative and mixed methods to approach new research questions and study designs. However, it is equally important to examine issues arising in cross-cultural research regarding the most appropriate research approach and the considerations in the process of deciding whether a qualitative, quantitative or mixed method approach is most suitable. This will be a step forward in addressing challenges that researchers might encounter when designing multinational and multicultural studies and would tend to ensure the cultural relevance of the findings

We are delighted to have an excellent lineup of contributions from scholars across geographies. The first contribution highlights the need for a tool to inform cultural adaptation in mental health interventions (Kotera et al.) and the second paper for the special issue of this Bulletin discusses the design of longitudinal cross-cultural mixed methods research (Schuster et al.). We also have a paper from Kenya discussing lessons learnt from the Shamiri intervention and the author builds upon this intervention as a case for cross-cultural research in improving mental health (Osborn). In our lab report section, the authors (Wiium & Ferrer-Weeder) report on the cross-national project on positive youth development and discuss the scientific activities, lessons learnt, and challenges.

The papers included in the special section of this Bulletin have helped deepen our understanding of combining cross-cultural with longitudinal and mixed methods approach along with appreciating cultural differences in the experience of mental health problems and the development of tools for optimal cultural adaptation. Cross-cultural research grounded in cultural psychology and greater interdisciplinary collaborations also emerged as an urgent need.

In news from the society, we have minutes from the ISSBD Executive Committee Meeting and also get to know about the brilliant work being carried out by the Early Career Scholars committee. Thank you for your continued support for our publication. We welcome the ISSBD membership to contribute to the Bulletin by letting us know about the work you are involved in and to consider the Bulletin to showcase your research. We encourage inputs from you to improve the Bulletin and make it more approachable for the members.

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Need for a tool to inform cultural adaptation in mental health interventions

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A high prevalence of mental health problems is a global concern. Nearly one billion people globally experience some form of mental illness. A considerable amount of research reports that the experience of mental health varies significantly by cultures. Service disparity for minority culture groups presents a global mental health challenge today. Mental health interventions need to be adapted to different cultures; however this is an under-researched topic. Some cognitive behavioural therapists in the UK have made cultural adaptations to their approaches to minority culture groups, and the effects were promising. However, a tool to inform cultural adaptation remains to be developed. A global study is needed to gather knowledge and insights to establish cultural adaptation tools in mental health.

Mental Health as a Global Concern

Mental health problems contribute significantly to the global burden of disease and are one of the leading causes of disability worldwide (Javed et al., 2021). It is estimated that nearly one billion people globally experience some form of mental illness (World Health Organization, 2022). Despite this high prevalence, mental health is not highly prioritised among policymakers (Votruba et al., 2021). As a result, individuals in many countries are not receiving the treatment they need to manage their mental health problems (Andrade et al., 2014). This is a serious concern in today's global mental health. People living in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) are disproportionately affected by the mental health treatment gap (Javed et al., 2021). One contributing factor is a shortage of trained mental health professionals, especially in LMIC, where people do not have good access to high-quality mental health treatment (Bruckner et al., 2011). Moreover, a cultural fit of mental health interventions to minority culture groups also matters (Fido et al., 2019). The service disparity is a crucial problem for today's global mental health challenge, and this is caused by a lack of cultural adaptation in mental health treatment (Rathod et al., 2018). Efforts have been made to address this situation globally. Mental health initiatives such as the World Health Organization's Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) (World Health Organization, 2020) provide a framework for addressing the barriers to care and connecting individuals to appropriate services. Notably, mhGAP has helped in identifying and managing mental health needs in over 100 countries; however much work remains to be done locally, tailoring treatments to the local culture (Kotera & Van Gordon, 2019). Cultural adaptation is important in high-income countries as well, because their clinical workplaces have become more culturally diverse (Nair & Adetayo, 2019; Stanford, 2020). Understanding of clients' individual mental health needs and cultural values is important (Gopalkrishnan, 2018). Cultural adaptation is needed in today's mental health interventions to address global mental health challenges.

Experiences of Mental Health Problems Vary by Culture

Growing research outlines the cultural differences in the way mental health problems are experienced/viewed (Kotera, Van Laethem, et al., 2020; Lewis-Fernández & Kirmayer, 2019; Simkhada et al., 2021). Reported mental health illness may differ cross-culturally through differences in 1) disclosure; and 2) expression. Either of these factors may impact prevalence rates through lack of treatment, or misdiagnosis; A 3rd factor is culture-related distress (i.e. culture-bound syndromes).

Disclosure

Mental health illness is widely stigmatised across cultures, impacting disclosure (Kotera, Mayer, et al., 2021). This is particularly the case across Asia (Kotera, Kotera, et al., 2022; Kudva et al., 2020). For example, in China, mental illness is widely stereotyped as unpredictable and dangerous (Chen et al., 2013). Mental health stigma from families and society (Kotera, Cockerill, et al., 2020) and an individual's own feelings of mental health-related shame, are barriers to disclosure and help seeking (Kotera, Taylor, et al., 2022). Lower disclosure may contribute to a lower reporting prevalence of disorders such as anxiety and depression in Asia, compared with America and Europe (Baxter et al., 2013; Bromet et al., 2011; Kotera, Sheffield, et al., 2021).

Expression

In the same way that emotional expressions differ across cultures (Ekman et al., 1987; Keltner et al., 2019; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2019), expressions of mental illness also differ across cultures. For example, Nepali individuals experiencing anxiety

have a greater somatic focus of symptoms (i.e. dizziness, indigestion) compared with Americans who scored higher on psychological subscales (i.e. feeling scared and nervous) (Hoge et al., 2006). This pattern is similarly reflected in schizophrenia with Anglo-Americans reporting greater psychological symptoms (persecutory delusions, blunted affect), compared with Mexican-Americans who report greater physical symptoms (e.g. hyperchondriasis) (Weisman et al., 2000). Schizophrenia also provides a good example of cultural differences in conceptualising mental illness: Individuals experiencing hallucinations and delusions, fitting the diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia, attribute different meanings to their symptoms. In America, hearing voices was perceived as 'being crazy', whereas in India and West Africa, voices were given a spiritual interpretation as guidance from kin (Luhrmann et al., 2015).

Culture-related distress

The Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) has previously been criticised for its lack of cultural sensitivity in diagnosing mental health illness (Ecks, 2015). While the DSM-V aimed to include greater cultural sensitivity by including culture-related diagnostic issues alongside the diagnostic criteria of most disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), and by including a Cultural Formulation Interview, the effect is still limited (Bredström, 2019). For example, culture-related distress (culture-bound syndromes) is still not effectively captured. Kotera & Taylor (2022) outlined the limitations of the DSM in effectively diagnosing Taijin Kyofusho, a disorder characterised by two subtypes: the Sensitive type (characterised by anxiety of interpersonal interactions) and the Offensive type (characterised by concerns about offending others) (Kotera & Taylor, 2022). While the authors argue that TKS Sensitive Type essentially falls under the diagnostic criteria of Social Anxiety Disorder, which should be expanded further to include culturally-specific expressions of anxiety, the Offensive Type requires further development of diagnostic criteria as a specific condition (Kotera & Taylor, 2022). Mental health diagnoses need cultural considerations (Patel & Hall, 2021).

Mental Health Interventions Need Cultural Adaptations

To address the global mental health problems, mental health interventions need cultural adaptations (Beck & Brooks-Ucheaga, 2022). This is emphasised among cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) practitioners in the UK (Beck et al., 2019), because the outcome of mental health treatment is poorer in minority culture groups than among the majority; that is, people from white backgrounds (Baker, 2020; Mercer et al., 2019). For example, a culturally adapted version of CBT was developed which aims to improve the service user's experience and outcome (schizophrenia) in the minority culture groups as compared to a non-adapted version, because of the poor outcomes from treatment in minority culture groups (Rathod et al., 2010). In this study, 15 patients diagnosed with schizophrenia were interviewed alongside CBT therapists and community mental health workers. This helped develop meaningful understandings of how psychosis is viewed in these minority cultures and enabled therapists to identify cultural views towards mental health. CBT for chronic depression was culturally adapted by using the Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) positive practice guide (Beck et al., 2019) as a framework to include the client-identified cultural needs within the formulation, and to incorporate these needs within treatment to make it both culture- and patient-responsive, which led to reduced depression (Skilbeck et al., 2020). Mental health interventions need to be culturally adapted.

Need for a Tool to Inform Cultural Adaptations in Mental Health Interventions

The experience of mental health problems varies greatly by culture (Kotera, Jackson, et al., 2023). Therefore mental health interventions need to be adapted to service users' cultures (Kotera, Rennick-Egglestone, et al., 2023). This is not only helpful to the local context, where minority culture groups need more support, but also to the global context, where an intervention that has been proven effective is exported to a different context (Kotera & Fido, 2021). This is especially important to individuals from LMIC, as often their resources are limited, preventing their full participation in rigorous, resource-demanding trials. A cultural tool to offer initial ideas about how the adaptations to a mental health intervention should be made would be valuable. The tool can be used when an intervention is being exported from one cultural context to another, or when treating service users from minority culture groups.

Cross-cultural research is needed at a global scale using established cross-cultural indices such as Hofstede's cultural dimension index (Hofstede et al., 2010) or Gelfand's tight-loose culture index (Gelfand et al., 2021). This can inform what cultural characteristics are associated with the intervention. The Author YK is currently undertaking such a project using the existing global network, aiming to inform cultures and mental health. Mental health is now a global challenge. Mental health differs by cultures (Kotera, Tsuda-McCaie, et al., 2021). Cultural adaptation improves mental health. A tool to help make the optimal cultural adaptation is needed.

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Design for longitudinal cross-cultural mixed methods research

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Introduction

Longitudinal and mixed methods research are all widely accepted and applied in the social and behavioral sciences. Our goal here is to describe how these can be integrated together systematically in cross-cultural research, as a nascent approach to understanding how and why applied social, behavioral, and health phenomena vary dynamically across groups and sites.

Familiar to most readers, *mixed methods research* integrates quantitative methods that determine trends, patterns, frequency and size of constructs while qualitative methods give meaning and 'thick descriptions' to these constructs (Creswell et al., 2011, Geertz, 1973). *Longitudinal research* involves collecting data on the same individuals at two or more points in time, and thus is the optimal design for investigating the "dynamic phenomena" that we expect to change over time in response to interventions or time-dependent constructs, such as stages of disease or recovery, life course progression and transitions, and time after emigration (Schumacher et al., 2021). Fully longitudinal mixed methods studies capture qualitative and quantitative data on the same constructs at multiple time points. This contrasts with other mixed methods designs, such as the sequential use of qualitative methods to inform the development of quantitative measures, or their one-time use to surface participant expectations at the study outset or to explicate findings at study end (Plano Clark et al., 2015).

Drawing from its foundation in anthropology, *cross-cultural research* has traditionally been grounded in ethnographic research approaches to test hypotheses of cultural variability across groups (Ember et al., 2015). However, cross-cultural research approaches are increasingly used in applied fields such as global health (Schuster et al., 2020), psychology (Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006), and nursing and clinical care (Cain et al., 2018), among others. Optimally, cross-cultural comparisons describe and operationalize culture – or culture and place-based context – as an explanatory variable (Dengah et al. 2020). But the interpretation of cultural findings – absent strong theories of cultural variation (Dressler 2017) – can become problematic: for example, conflating culture with imposed social categories like race, identifying culture as some unmeasured explanatory factor, or merely listing culture as a limitation as to why programs "failed" (Hruschka, 2009; Kagawa Singer et al., 2016).

Combining cross-cultural with longitudinal and mixed methods approaches allows us to measure and contextualize dynamic phenomena and identify where patterning is shared or divergent across cultures and over time. In the applied health fields, this can also facilitate the assessment of programs or strategies that have the greatest impact for culturally different groups. But such work is hampered by a lack of clarity on how such research should be designed. All this is complicated by the fact that longitudinal and cross-cultural comparative research are neither simple nor cheap. Despite the recent development of sophisticated new designs for cross-cultural research (Schnegg & Lowe 2020), there are very few published studies that use longitudinal, cross-cultural mixed methods (e.g., Kärtner et al., 2022, Dressler et al. 2005), and none we can identify that meet fully the full set of criteria for group selection and sampling across all three measurement domains (qualitative, quantitative, longitudinal). In this brief, we outline three initial steps for longitudinal, cross-cultural, mixed methods research: selecting the cultural groups, identifying the sample size, and determining the study design. We describe two different study designs for cross-cultural research in a fully longitudinal design that focuses on merging qualitative and quantitative analyses and then identifying ways forward.

Group Selection

Carefully considering the justification for the selection of particular cultural groups or sites is an important first step in all cross-cultural research design, both for theoretical rigor and ethical consideration of the potential burden and benefits to groups (Broesch et al., 2020). While some interpret cross-cultural to simply mean 2+ sites, a better approach to small studies is four groups in a 2 x 2 design (Ember et al., 2015; Munroe & Munroe, 1991). This facilitates comparison of key group or site characteristics with a theoretically-derived variable (Wutich et al., 2014; Wutich & Brewis, 2019). In applied health fields, a practical approach may additionally guide group selection and inclusion. One question in our work has been to determine how to improve models of health care and social services for culturally diverse groups of forced migrants, whose needs have not been prioritized due to small group numbers compared to dominant cultures and the resource investments needed to comprehensively address them (Schuster et al., under review). Here, the

groups' desire to be included in research in order to derive future benefits that will directly apply to them (e.g., feed into service changes) as well as the relative group size may be important practical factors in generating findings that can improve models of care.

Sample Size (Qualitative)

There is already a plethora of well-known methods to estimate sample sizes for quantitative research, including longitudinal designs and the use of power analysis. Here, we focus on the less-well-understood literature on minimum sample sizes for qualitative research, specifically theme saturation (Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2007, Wutich, Beresford, & Bernard, in review). Theme saturation – also called data or code saturation – is the point at which *no new themes are identified* and is the most widely-used method for estimating qualitative sample sizes (Guest et al. 2006, Francis et al. 2010, Guest et al. 2017). To reach theme saturation in research with a single culture group, 12-13 interviews or 5-6 focus groups are needed (Hennink and Kaiser 2022). Meaning saturation, the point at which *no new thematic meanings are identified*, is the most widely-applicable approach for estimating sample sizes for qualitative data analysis (Hennink et al. 2017, 2019). To reach meaning saturation in research with a single culture group, a minimum of 24 interviews or 8 focus groups is needed (Hennink and Kaiser 2022).

In cross-cultural research, themes can be identified in each culture but *metathemes* capture shared meaning that occurs across cultural contexts (Wutich, Beresford, SturtzSreetharan, Brewis, Trainer, & Hardin, 2021). Metatheme saturation, in which cross-cultural themes reach saturation, take as few as 20 interviews per site for data saturation and up to 40 interviews per site for meaning saturation (Hagaman and Wutich, 2017). When considering the dual objectives for group-specific thematic analysis and cross-cultural metathematic analyses, we encourage planning for a minimum of 20 interviews per site and ideally 40 interviews per site (e.g., Schuster et al., 2022); however this could increase depending on the heterogeneity of the population (Hagaman & Wutich, 2017: 35), the broad or narrow structure of the codebook (Guest et al., 2006; Morse, 1995) and complexity of the topic (Guest et al., 2017).

Study Design A: Convergent mixed methods

Case Context: A subset of co-authors research the protective effects of social support on health outcomes among culturally distinct groups of forced migrants in the United States. The adjustment period in a new country is a dynamic and fraught process characterized by high needs for support but low access to supportive networks, with direct implications for health (Wachter & Gulbas, 2018). *Design:* To capture the effects of this dynamic process, we designed a cross-cultural longitudinal *convergent* mixed methods study, where quantitative and qualitative data is collected independently and then compared and merged together. In this process, we quantitatively assess constructs such as adjustment stressors, social support, and physical health outcomes via surveys at three data collection points at one-year intervals. We conduct qualitative interviews with a subset of participants close to the same timepoint as the quantitative data (ideally one week after administering quantitative surveys so as not to overburden participants). *Group selection:* The cross-cultural facet features six groups of forced migrants representing distinct world regions who have been prioritized for resettlement in the United States. (*Qualitative) Sample Size:* Within-group samples are sufficiently powered to detect changes in quantitative constructs (e.g., 120/group). Qualitative interviews are conducted with a subset of participants (n=20/group), timed to occur one week after administering quantitative surveys. *Data integration*: The convergent mixed methods design necessitates merging quantitative and qualitative analyses at each timepoint and longitudinally at the individual, within-group (thematic), and between-group (metathematic) levels. This approach allows us to contextualize key constructs in our conceptual model, examine the perceived effects of social support on physical health, and further elucidate its mechanisms in order to produce a robust model of the protective role of social support on the physical health of forced migrants in the United States.

Study Design B: *Quantitative data generated from qualitative data*

Case Context: The ENDOW (Economic Networks and the Dynamics Of Wealth (Inequality)) project is a longitudinal cross-cultural study of social and economic inequality in 40+ field sites in 30+ countries (Koster and Murphy 2017). One early research question assessed using the ENDOW study infrastructure contributed to the debate about whether women live beyond their reproductive years because they serve to bolster inclusive fitness (Koster et al. 2019). Specifically, the authors hypothesized that younger women in a community initially have fewer kinship ties (i.e., less genetic/biological relatedness), but over time they would exhibit greater (genetic) relatedness as they produced children and stayed in the community. *Design:* To test whether younger women in a community exhibit lower genetic relatedness than their older counterparts, qualitative genealogical information was retrieved from life history and census interviews. The life history interviews contributed historical depth for each informant, including demographic and genealogical information. *Group selection & sample size:* For this substudy, data was collected from a census of all residents in the 19 study communities that participated from the larger ENDOW study design. Communities included in the census ranged in size from 86 to 1387 individuals. *Data integration:* Interviews with informants were transcribed and structurally coded for sex, age, and instances of reported relationships with other community members. Reported relationships were coded by kinship relatedness (e.g., sibling coefficient = 0.25, cousin coefficient = 0.125). These coefficients were then extracted as numeric variables of relatedness. This design yielded insights into the degree of past (genetic) relatedness among the members of the community which can serve to answer novel quantitative questions but also augment reported affective ties gleaned through interviews (Koster et al., 2019). While the initial wave of data collection focused on extracting historical data from life histories, future waves will follow up with informants to collect prospective data, completing the longitudinal design.

Conclusion

We have described design facets and cases to illustrate how longitudinal, cross-cultural, mixed methods research can respond to complex inquiries in applied social and behavioral research, including applied health investigations and testing evolutionary hypotheses. These cases illustrate different approaches to the cross-cultural component: the inclusion of distinct cultures within one geographical context or at multiple unique sites and approaches to the mixed methods component. Convergent mixed methods (Case A) include a significant investment of resources for data collection and analysis for both qualitative and quantitative methods. The development of quantitative data out of qualitative data (Case B) bolsters the research output and often draws out new areas of exploration in a longitudinal study, which can be further examined and even quantified at subsequent timepoints if applicable to the research question. In any cross-cultural design, the translation/back translation and piloting of tools (even after using validated quantitative measures) in multiple languages and then the translation of qualitative data back into a common language of analysis is expensive and time-consuming – and essential (Liamputtong, 2020; Sperber, 2004; Wutich et al., 2021).

The concurrent analysis of mixed methods data cross-culturally and longitudinally has the potential to facilitate a more precise examination of change over time, the development of predictive – and to a large extent causal effects, the exclusion of recall bias, and the establishment of event sequence. Researchers using these methods carefully consider the variation in the timing of repeated measures and expectations for missing data, in order to inform statistical approaches for quantitative analysis (Caruana et al., 2015). Best practice suggests similarly timing the collection of the quantitative and qualitative data.

We join calls inviting empirical evidence and methodological guidance for advancement in cross-cultural (Schuster et al., 2022) and longitudinal mixed methods research (Schumacher et al., 2021), seeing even more opportunities for the nascent field of longitudinal, cross-cultural, and mixed methods. Cross-cultural research and longitudinal mixed methods research are both logistically complex and resource-intensive, requiring extensive and careful planning (Schumacher et al., 2021; Wutich et al., 2021). But as we seek to improve our understanding of entrenched health challenges and develop cross-culturally meaningful solutions, applying longitudinal, cross-cultural mixed methods may be a good fit to identify shared variability on time-sensitive, dynamic phenomena.

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The Case for Cross – Cultural Research in Improving Mental Health: Lessons from the Shamiri Intervention in Kenya

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Introduction

Mental health disorders present a global health challenge. Some 1 billion people around the world suffer from a mental disorder (Health, 2020). The effects of these problems on individuals, communities, and economies can be devastating (Health, 2020; Roth et al., 2018; World Health Organization, 2022). While significant strides have been made in the last decades to reduce the treatment gap and expand access to mental healthcare (World Health Organization, 2022), there is still a long way to go in alleviating the suffering of individuals and communities around the world (Osborn et al., 2022).

Whereas the mental health treatment gap — which is the difference between the number of people who struggle with a disorder and those who can access appropriate treatment — is high globally, it is as high as 85% in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) (World Health Organization, 2016). One of the reasons for this big gap is that our present approach to mental healthcare is heavily derived from Western research and practice. Unfortunately, even though a majority of those struggling with mental health problems live in non-Western regions, how we think about and treat these problems is informed, largely, by Western research and practice (Haroz et al., 2017). Sadly, this approach relies on assumptions about the generalizability of Western - derived methods across diverse cultures (Haroz et al., 2017; Osborn, Kleinman, et al., 2021).

How does the Western orientation limit our efforts to close the treatment gap? Firstly, cross-cultural research informs us that the Western orientation in our conceptualization and treatment of mental health problems fails to capture culturally salient features of distress across communities (Haroz et al., 2017; Kirmayer et al., 2017; Kirmayer & Ryder, 2016). Secondly, this approach lends itself to societal stigma which inhibits help-seeking (Ndetei et al., 2016). For example, in Kenya, where we work, formal Western-derived psychiatry was introduced in Kenya by the British colonial administration in Kenya. The primary model of care was the colonial asylum where individuals diagnosed with a problem could be detained and deprived of their individual, social, and political liberties (Akyeampong, 2015). In addition, mental health and psychiatry is used to advance the colonial administration's interests in the country (case in point: the diagnosis of freedom fighters as struggling with mass psychosis; (Akyeampong, 2015)). Because of this history, it makes sense that formal mental health is still stigmatized (Alemu et al., 2023; Osborn, Kleinman, et al., 2021). Finally, this approach emphasizes the Western model of care, based on the idea that caregivers should be experts like psychiatrists and psychologists, as the gold-standard approach to reducing the treatment gap. This model, however, does not always translate into effective and accessible care in LMICs and de-emphasizes the utility of other non-specialist caregivers (Ndetei et al., 2023).

It seems, therefore, that there is an urgent need to complement existing Western-derived approaches with culturally – nuanced methods. Cross-cultural research offers us one avenue for doing this. Generally, cross-cultural research seeks to investigate how culture informs and influences mental health and psychotherapy (Kleinman, 2004; Kleinman & Good, 1985). But often, cross-cultural research remains overly reliant on Western concepts and theories, an approach that is insufficient for a robust understanding of how the diversity of cultures inform unique psychological needs (Koç & Kafa, 2019). As such, there is an increasing movement to ground cross-cultural research on cultural psychology, i.e., cross-cultural research should emphasize the importance of context, history, and dynamic cultural values that shape psychological processes (Koç & Kafa, 2019). This approach can lead to a more culturally sensitive and relevant approach that would be better suited to meeting the needs of diverse populations (Koç & Kafa, 2019).

How can we conduct cross–cultural research that emphasizes an active consideration of the importance of context, history, and cultural values in mental health research and practice? From our experience in Kenya, we suggest two ways: 1) conducting research through multicultural and interdisciplinary collaboration, and 2) employing both qualitative and quantitative methods in research. We discuss these two ways below and highlight how they've informed the development of the Shamiri intervention for youth mental health in Kenya.

Conducting research through multicultural and interdisciplinary collaboration

The nature and composition of a research team is very important in enhancing cross–cultural research. We have found that active consideration of the importance of context, history, and cultural values is most enhanced when the team is both multi-cultural and inter-disciplinary. Obviously, a multicultural team allows for the addition of sociocultural expertise at a formative stage of the research process. But importantly, an inter-disciplinary team helps bring dynamic cultural values into the conversation as we've found that different disciplines see culture differently.

Why is there a need for multi-cultural and interdisciplinary research? First, we know that most research, at present, isn't multi-cultural and inter-disciplinary. Take, for instance, intervention development research in LMICs, where we work. It has been shown that these research efforts are primarily driven by researchers based in high–income countries in the West (Osborn, Wasil, Weisz, et al., 2020). Where LMIC collaborators are involved, often they are involved at the later stages of the research project after important decisions have been made. As such, not only is important sociocultural expertise lost but the eventual acceptability and adoption of research in diverse contexts is weakened (Osborn, Wasil, Weisz, et al., 2020).

Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods can enhance cross-cultural research

Often, cross-cultural research is limited when we use qualitative and quantitative methods separately. This is unfortunate because combining quantitative and qualitative research methods when answering a common research question can be very beneficial to enhancing and enriching cross-cultural work (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Some of the advantages of combining quantitative and qualitative research methods are that this approach provides a more thorough and comprehensive understanding of the question, allows for triangulation of results, enables researchers to explore the richness and complexity of culture, affords avenues to identify salient cultural patterns and themes, and allows for a more nuance and context-specific understanding of cross-cultural phenomena (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Flick, 2022; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Examples of combined methods in cross-cultural research include the use of a survey to collect quantitative data followed by in-depth interviews to gather qualitative data or the combination of ethnography with quantitative surveys to gain a more holistic understanding of a culture.

Case Study: Development of the Shamiri Intervention

Our team used the above two-step approach to allow for an active consideration of the importance of context, history, and cultural values when we developed the Shamiri intervention for youth depression and anxiety in Kenya. The Shamiri intervention is a 4-week lay provider – delivered group – based intervention that teaches growth mindset, gratitude, and value affirmation (see (Osborn, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2021) for full description). Youths meet once a week for one hour in groups of 6-to-15. The groups are led by 18-to-22-year-olds trained as lay-providers (see (Venturo-Conerly et al., 2021) for information on recruitment training and supervision of lay providers). Clinical trials have shown that the Shamiri intervention can reduce depression and anxiety symptoms among Kenyan adolescents with elevated symptom with effects lasting at least 7 months (Osborn, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2020, 2021; Osborn, Wasil, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2020). Below we describe how we brought together a multi-cultural and inter-disciplinary research team and used mixed methods to develop and implement the intervention.

Step 1: A multi-cultural and interdisciplinary research team

Given the importance of the composition of the research team in enhancing cross–cultural research, we sought to ensure that the Shamiri research group was both multi-cultural and inter-disciplinary. First, we wanted to ensure that our team could benefit from sociocultural expertise. As such, the project was led by two co–PIs, the first from Kenya and the second based in America. In addition, we ensured that a majority of the research team was based in Kenya and had the sociocultural experience and context to inform research planning and decision–making. Second, we wanted to ensure that our team was representative of all the constituents who would be impacted by our intervention. This meant that beyond including researchers in the team, we had to seek out to include educators, youths with lived experience, mental health practitioners who were currently providing youth mental health care, and entrepreneurs who were building companies that offered youth mental health services. This approach allowed us to have an inter-disciplinary team with multiple viewpoints and perspectives.

To achieve this broad objective of developing an interdisciplinary and multi-cultural team, our team was informed by some guiding values. For instance, beyond simple collaboration, we wanted to collaborate in a matter where all stakeholders—and especially those from the context where we worked—were empowered and actively involved throughout the research process. In addition to this, we also sought collaboration with community members with a view to enriching the research process and offering insights to the target audience. We write about why this was important elsewhere (see Osborn, Wasil, Weisz, et al., 2020).

Step 2: Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods

From the onset, we sought to ensure that we used mixed methods to enrich our research. Below I highlight how we used mixed methods to: 1) develop and test the Shamiri intervention, 2) recruit, train, and supervise lay-providers, and 3) get parental and teacher involvement.

The development of the Shamiri intervention was a collaborative effort aimed at providing an evidence-based, culturally appropriate, and scalable intervention for Kenyan

youths. The team adopted a multi-phased approach that included desk review, stakeholder engagements, controlled trials, and long-term follow–up to ensure that the intervention was effective, feasible, and acceptable (Osborn, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2020). In the desk review phase, the team identified evidence-based techniques, specifically brief positively focused interventions, that could inform the intervention protocol (sometimes called "wise interventions", see (Schleider et al., 2020). The team then conducted multiple focus groups and stakeholder engagements, including educators and youths with lived experience, to determine the appropriateness of these interventions in the Kenyan context.

Next, the team identified the behaviors and drivers for behavior change and worked with stakeholders to develop processes and methods that were scalable and contextually relevant. For example, one behavior change was that students had to sign up for the intervention, and the driver for this change was student recruitment and mobilization. The team worked with stakeholders to ensure that the developed processes and methods made sense in the Kenyan context and were scalable (Osborn & Wasanga, 2020).

The resulting 4-week Shamiri intervention was designed to reduce stigma and improve youth mental health. The intervention was delivered in groups by lay-providers and included specific protocols for emergencies and other needs (Osborn, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2020; Osborn, Wasil, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2020). The team found that they had to adopt a group-based and non-psychopathology focused intervention approach to tackle stigma. The intervention was tested in a controlled trial with an active control group of equal duration and dosage (Osborn, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2020, 2021; Osborn, Wasil, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2020). This was supplemented by focus group discussions with participants, long-term follow-up on mental health, health, and livelihood outcomes, and qualitative feedback and thematic analyses (K. E. Venturo-Conerly, Johnson, et al., 2022; K. E. Venturo-Conerly, Wasil, et al., 2022, 2022; Wasil et al., 2019). The Shamiri intervention has proven to be clinically feasible and acceptable, and it currently serves 25,000 youths in Kenya. Overall, the Shamiri intervention is a model for developing culturally appropriate, evidence-based, and scalable interventions that can improve youth mental health in low-resource settings (Osborn, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2021).

Let us now talk about how mixed methods informed how we recruit, train, and supervise lay providers. As mentioned, our model relies heavily on lay-providers, who are 18-to-22-year-olds (Osborn, Venturo-Conerly, et al., 2021). We based our use of lay providers on literature that highlights their effectiveness. To gauge the efficacy of training and supervising lay-providers, we conducted a mixed-methods study that combined quantitative surveys and qualitative feedback through focus group discussions. To ensure fidelity to protocol and quality of service delivery, we recorded training sessions and had independent raters code session recordings (Venturo-Conerly et al., 2021). This approach allowed us to collect reliable and mean ratings for fidelity and quality measures, and also to identify central qualitative themes and implications for future research and work (Venturo-Conerly et al., 2021). Notably, we found that considering local context when planning and continuous feedback collection are important considerations. The rich resulting dataset enabled us to answer quantitative questions and identify important lessons for future work (Venturo-Conerly et al., 2021).

Finally, we realized quite early that we needed to get parental involvement in our efforts. As such, we wanted to design a mental health literacy workshop targeted towards parents. Here, we once again employed a mixed–methods approach. The development of a workshop aimed at improving communication between students, parents, and teachers was guided by an approach that included two phases of needs assessment and two phases of workshop design. Focus group discussions were conducted with secondary school students, parents, teachers, and school administrators to identify gaps in communication and solutions to improve youth mental health. Students reported academic pressure and a lack of trust from parents, while parents discussed barriers to family relationships, such as "tyrannical parenting" and unrealistic expectations. Based on these findings, the team developed parent-targeted holistic psychoeducation content to be delivered in a group-based workshop. The final workshop content prioritized the Shamiri intervention and was designed for in-person delivery by trained facilitators. Its efficacy was then tested in a pilot randomized trial.

Conclusion

Our work in Kenya encourages us that actively combining quantitative and qualitative research methods can lead to more robust and comprehensive research with real-world impact. In our instance, taking this approach in the development of the Shamiri intervention has led to what we think is an intervention that can improve youth mental health in Kenya. Of course, there are some challenges in adopting this approach. This includes the requirement of a high level of expertise and skills in both domains—which can be solved through an inter-disciplinary team, and the time and resource intensity of mixed methods process. Furthermore, because of this approach it can be difficult to generalize about other cultures or contexts, but that is precisely the point.

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Lab Report: The Cross-National Project on Positive Youth Development (CN-PYD) – Scientific Activities, Lesson Learned, Challenges, and Next Steps

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The Cross-National Project on Positive Youth Development (CN-PYD) was initiated at the University of Bergen, Norway, in 2014. At its inception, the project comprised two countries, Ghana and Norway, the country of origin and the country of residence of the principal investigator (Nora Wiium). In the years that followed, many countries would be added to the project through snowballing contacts and communications, as well as through collaboration on joint initiatives and products. Today, CN-PYD involves over 40 research partners from countries across the globe, located in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe, as well as Australia, New Zealand, and the Middle East.

Affiliated Department and Partners' Institutions

CN-PYD research activities are managed from the Department of Psychosocial Science (In Norwegian: Institttut for samfunnspsykologi; ISP), which is one of five departments at the Faculty of Psychology, University of Bergen, Norway. The department offers courses in psychology at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as coordinates research in different areas in psychology. Specifically, ISP is responsible for a one-year study programme in psychology, a bachelor's, and a master's programme in work- and organizational psychology, a bachelor's programme in general psychology and a master's programme in psychology. The department is also responsible for a 5-year professional study in psychology together with two other departments at the Faculty of Psychology. The department's ongoing research projects reflect both basic and applied psychology and range from themes related to lifelong developmental processes to human influences in critical situations.

Figures 1 and 2. PDY-Project Members.

Research partners of CN-PYD are primarily scholars affiliated with universities or research institutes in their respective countries. Most of them hold a PhD degree in their respective scientific fields, while a few are PhD candidates.

To join CN-PYD, research partners, and sometimes their affiliated institutions sign an agreement form, which dictates the terms of collaboration and use of data. CN-PYD partners have log in information, provided by the University of Bergen, that gives them access to a secured space where all project documents are stored. On the Faculty of Psychology's homepage, a website has been created to report the scientific outputs of CN-PYD and other activities of the project (https://www.uib.no/en/rg/sipa/pydcrossnational). Funding sources of the project have been ISP's small scale funding scheme, strategic funding from the Faculty of Psychology, the University of Bergen's Strategic Programme for International Research and Education (SPIRE) grant as well as Bergen University Funds.

CN-PYD Research, Scientific Activities and Students' Engagement

Scientific Research Publications

With diverse expertise in human development as well as intervention and implementation science, and ongoing data collection involving over 20,000 minority and majority youth and emerging adults (aged 16 to 29), the goal of CN-PYD is twofold: 1) to explore positive development and its determinants in diverse youth and emerging adults, where we increase the potential for substantial theoretical innovation, while also contributing to better representation in the global youth evidence base; and 2) to identify and advance the resources and opportunities that facilitate thriving and contribution in diverse youth and emerging adults, through intervention development, policy formulation, partnership with stakeholders, and young people themselves. Our ultimate goal is to make a global impact in the work we do by involving the many underrepresented voices located in the 89 – 95 percent majority world that has often been neglected from top psychological journals (Arnett, 2008; Thalmayer et al., 2021).

To accomplish our goal, CN-PYD partners have coordinated and completed several writing projects that include special issues in refereed journals, a handbook, and individual articles, as well as having organized several scientific activities in the form of workshops and conferences. For example, in 2019, we completed a Special Issue on Positive Youth Development across Cultures in the journal Child & Youth Care Forum (Wiium & Dimitrova, 2019). Six articles in addition to one introductory paper and two commentaries generated new insights into positive youth development and positive adaptation of youth living in underrepresented cultures. In this special issue, authors were research partners from CN-PYD as well as invited colleagues (https://link.springer.com/journal/10566/volumes-and-issues/48-2). In the most substantial and wide-ranging writing project to date, in 2021, our handbook on positive youth development was published (https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783030702618). The handbook, which has thirty-seven chapters, adopted a global perspective of the strengths and resources for optimal development and well-being in youth and emerging adults, sampled across diverse and in some cases unrepresented (in the adolescent research literature) geographical regions (Dimitrova & Wiium, 2021).

Recently, CN-PYD partners and other international research colleagues (invited through an open call for papers) completed a writing project on the Research Topic: "Positive Youth Development, Mental Health, and Psychological Well-Being in Diverse Youth" (https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/12073/positive-youth-development-mental-health-and-psychological-well-being-in-diverse-youth#articles) published in the journal Frontiers in Psychology: Developmental Psychology section. Here, a collection of thirty articles reported on how personal resources related to competencies, skills, and self-perception as well as environmental, contextual, and relational features of the social contexts of diverse youth, directly or indirectly are important to their mental health and psychological well-being. A second Research Topic on "Youth, Health and Development in Diverse Cultures and Contexts" (https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/30952/youth-health-and-development-in-diverse-cultures-and-contexts) also published in Frontiers in Psychology (Developmental Psychology section), seeks to bring together a collection of studies examining personal and contextual factors and their role in the health along with the developmental processes and outcomes in youth and emerging adults. This project is currently ongoing and expected to be completed by the end of 2023. Finally, the group is also working on another ongoing journal Special Issue on the topic of "Cross-National Evidence of Positive Youth Development and Contribution to Society and Environment" in the journal entitled YOUTH (https://www.mdpi.com/journal/youth/special_issues/CNEPYDCSE), which is also expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

Besides the aforementioned articles, book, and journal special issues, CN-PYD partners have also engaged in several writing projects on topics related to youth health and development with support for publication from partners' institutions. These include "Positive Development in Youth Contexts", published by the Educational Research Institute, Slovenia (https://www.pei.si/en/publishing/digital-library/), "Theoretical and empirical contributions to the study of Positive Youth Development", published by EREBEA, Revista de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales (Universidad de Huelva, Spain; http://www.uhu.es) and "Evidencias internacionales en la investigación y en la práctica del desarrollo positivo juvenil" (In English: International evidence in research and practice of positive youth development), published by Análisis Y Modificación De Conducta (Universidad de Huelva, Spain; http://www.uhu.es). These publications are particularly vital as a way to reach out to and connect with researchers and practitioners to raise awareness about PYD research and theory in languages including but also going beyond English. Bilateral research collaborations between partners have also been encouraged and we have recently completed a research collaboration between CN-PYD partners in Albania and Canada on the topic of "Unrepresented voices: Promoting inclusion, positive youth development and well-being in Roma and Egyptian adolescent minorities in Albania" (https://www.uib.no/sites/w3.uib.no/files/attachments/pyd_in_albania_dissemination_report_dec._2021_002_0.pdf).

Scientific Activities

While the CN-PYD team have published a significant body of scholarly works, we have also organized scientific activities, such as a 3-day workshop (in-person and virtual during the pandemic) once a year in Bergen, since 2016, to discuss issues pertaining to data collection, writing projects and the vision of the team. As part of these workshops, public lectures have been held for students and staff at the Faculty of Psychology, University of Bergen, where findings from the CN-PYD project are presented. The team has also organized workshops at secondary schools in Bergen whenever feasible. In 2022, the CN-PYD team organized its first international conference on the theme of: "Bridging Research & Practice Cross-Nationally: A PYD Approach to Social Justice", which focused on the cross-national and global facets of PYD research and intervention, and how the PYD framework can inform and promote social justice in a rapidly evolving and sometimes socially polarized world, and in the context of the recent COVID-19 pandemic and increasing inequalities. The conference was an opportunity to bring together experts who work within a PYD framework in terms of research, intervention and policy making, with the aim of bridging research and practice to contribute to the building of a more just society for young people and for all. Preconference workshops on methodology and intervention, linked to the PYD framework were also organized. As an extension of the conference, the team is putting together a conference book where several participants, with topics directly addressing the conference theme are invited to contribute with a book chapter.

Our research and scientific activities have attracted master and PhD students as well as Fulbright and other scientific scholars from different regions of the world for research stays and internships. These visits have often brought new ideas to our scope of research, thus extending our research reach and impact on the health and development of youth and emerging adults.

Engaging Students Through Teaching Programmes and Research Activities

In many of our partner institutions, data collected as part of the CN-PYD project has often been made available to students for their thesis in the bachelor, professional or master's program. Our aim with this step is to introduce students to the PYD perspective and to provide them with tools that can be used in their professional interactions with young people. To achieve this aim as well, several of the CN-PYD partners have either created separate courses on the theoretical and practical aspects of PYD or integrated PYD-related topics into existing courses to train many students. Moreover, students have often been invited to our research activities where they get to work on writing projects with existing data, or data they have collected with our PYD questionnaire.

Lessons Learned

Through our collaborations across countries and diverse expertise, CN-PYD partners have learnt several lessons that have been both positive and constructive. For example, in our engagement in the different writing projects, we have learnt to build trust, strong relationships and effective communication, as we get to know each other better, both academically and socially. Capitalising on the trust among partners, we are able to respect, and consequently draw on each other's expertise in our scientific writings. This has improved the quality and number of our publications that reflect our group's diverse expertise and perspectives.

Another lesson the team has learnt is related to the shared vision we have. At the beginning of CN-PYD, partners put together a strategic document that contained our shared mission and vision, a necessary step that has been essential in our collaboration. Moreover, taking advantage of the different social, cultural, and economic structures of our countries and contexts, our shared vision has enabled us to carry out comparative studies, where the aim has been to cooperatively capture different perspectives of the factors and progress of youth development.

Furthermore, to incorporate our different interests into CN-PYD, a level of flexibility needed to be introduced with respect to the themes we focus on. Allowing partners to include themes from their research areas has not only broadened the scope of CN-PYD, but has also strengthened partners' commitment to the project as they also are able to bring their own voice and focus into the collaboration. As the team grows in number, we have had to be strategic in our collaborations, and encouraging all to fully engage as well as sharing the responsibilities that come with such diverse collaboration.

Methodological Challenges, Cross-National Research Problems and Solutions

In our CN-PYD research, we have used scales, such as Geldhof and colleagues' (2014) 5Cs of PYD (Competence, Confidence, Character, Connection and Caring), Search Institute's Developmental Assets Profile, Keyes et al.'s (2008) Mental Health Continuum, Reisman and colleagues' (2016) creativity scale and other scales constructed to assess youth health and developmental outcomes. Many of these assessment scales have been developed in U.S. contexts with U.S. youth samples. While the generalization to other non-U.S. contexts and samples have been confirmed, both by earlier studies at large, and our own research studies, some scales have been problematic in our research. For example, we have repeatedly registered poor psychometric properties for the *constructive use of time* subscale in the Developmental Assets Profile (Dost-Gözkan et al., 2021; Wiium et al., 2021).

Items included in *constructive use of time* relate to being involved in a religious group one or more hours in a week, engagement in creative activities like music, theatre, and other arts, as well as being involved in sport, a youth club or other youth groups. Although all these arenas are important developmental asset contexts, in our research, we have discovered that the assets can be socially and culturally dependent; in line with Benson's (2007) perspective on asset building community and asset building society, where not only attitudes and behaviours, but also programmes and policies can determine the extent to which developmental assets are nurtured. While the item on religion works very well in developing contexts like Ghana, due to the attributed cultural

importance to religion, very few report on this item in the Norwegian context as religion is not at the forefront in Norway as it is in Ghana. Also, with the 5Cs of PYD, items in the subscale of Character, which relates to conduct behaviour, for example, have not always conformed to the theoretical factor structure in our network's research studies.

To resolve the said methodological issues and other concerns in our research, items or sometimes an entire subscale were not considered in subsequent analyses. However, on occasion, we have gone ahead to maintain certain scale in our analyses, in line with the practices of other studies, or when it did not make any statistical difference to exclude the scales or items and we rather included a thorough discussion of its limitations in our papers. In the future, we would also like to take advantage of the recently revised versions of the developmental assets that consider contemporary issues pertaining to youth (Syvertsen et al., 2021). Moreover, due to the comparative nature of our research studies, we have often conducted measurement invariance testing for our scales to be able to make meaningful comparisons of the findings across groups or contexts.

Another challenge for the CN-PYD team has been related to the thorough ethical clearance process that is needed in every research study. Most of our partner institutions are able to secure this process while the process is not always possible to do in some institutions. Using existing statutory collaboration, especially between countries in Europe, we are able to secure ethical approval at the University of Bergen that can cover our research in many countries in Europe. In addition, to share data and other research information between CN-PYD partners in a safe and secure manner, a database is created for the project, which can only be accessed by partners with log in information provided by the University of Bergen.

As a growing group and with no specific large scale external funding driving our scientific activities, a challenge that we have had to face has been how to come together to pursue our goal. One of the things we have been able to do is to conduct foundational research in the area, publish this research and advance theory, and organize yearly workshops with some partial funding from the University of Bergen. These workshops have strengthened both academic and social bonds among CN-PYD partners, which has often led to additional collaborations on writing projects between partners. Our engagement in special issues and writing projects hase been the glue that keeps us together and communicating in-between our yearly workshops.

CN-PYD's Next steps

As the CN-PYD team grows, so does our ambition to represent the many voices in the majority world yet to be heard. Our research activities have mainly focused on the first aspect of our twofold goal, namely, to explore positive development and its determinants in diverse children, adolescents, and emerging adults, in our attempt to increase the potential for substantial theoretical innovation, while also contributing to better representation in the global youth evidence base. To pursue the second aspect of our goal, which is to identify and advance the resources and opportunities that facilitate thriving and contribution in diverse youth and emerging adults, through intervention development, policy formulation, partnership with stakeholders, and young people themselves, CN-PYD is making structural changes to that effect.

Considering the expertise in the team, our group will work in the future as a whole but also in workgroups/committees focused on teaching and education, research, policy, and within group networking. Collectively, these committees allow us to advance the group's agenda into the future with a prioritization of steps that support early career colleagues interested in PYD in their education, training and professional transitions; increase community impact and collaboration; develop avenues towards consistent substantial research funding that allows the group to expand the depth and diversity of the research we can conduct; and to make stronger and clear links between PYD and the pressing social issues of the day such as: how PYD connects to the pursuit of equality (in all its forms), youth activism, climate change, and ensuring better transitions into adulthood.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Minutes of the ISSBD Executive Committee (EC) Meeting

October 28, 2022, 9 AM -10:30 AM EST (Eastern Standard Time) (online)

Present at the Meeting

Tina Malti	President
Luc Goossens	Secretary General
Toni Antonucci	Past President
Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck	Treasurer
Julie Bowker	Membership Secretary
Antonella Marchetti	EC member
Marc Bornstein	EC member
Kristin Ajrouch	EC member
Manuela Verissimo	EC member and 2024 conference organizer
Silvia Koller	EC member
Amina Abubakar	EC member
Liqi Zhu	EC member
Cinzia di Dio	Early Career Scholar (ECS) representative

1. Approval of the minutes of the EC meetings of June 19, 2002, and June 23, 2022

The meetings of the in-person Executive Committee (EC) meetings held on June 19, 2022, and June 23, 2022, both held at the 2022 Biennial Conference on the island of Rhodes (Greece) are approved unanimously.

2. Organizational structure and governance

President Tina Malti gives a PowerPoint presentation on the organizational structure and governance of the Society. In the current structure, the Steering Committee (i.e., the President, Secretary General, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary) work closely with the Executive Committee (EC) and the other committees (i.e., the Membership, Finance, Publications, Early Career Scholars (ECS), Awards, Nominations, and Communications committees).

The President intends to appoint ex-officio members from the Executive Committee (EC) in the other committees; she wants to start up four new committees (i.e., the Strategic Planning, Conference Planning, Capacity Building, and Global Social Policy committees), and invites the EC to assess which committees are worthwhile to keep as they currently are and which should be integrated into other committees and initiatives. As a result of the ensuing discussion, the EC concludes that the Early Career Travel Grants Committee should stay as is, that we keep the Early Career Scholar (ECS) Committee, and that the ISSBD Fellows Committee can be integrated with the existing Awards committee. **President Tina Malti will ask Marcel van Aken whether the Preconference Workshop committee can be integrated with the Early Career Travel Grants committee.**

3. Strategic planning processes

President Tina Malti presents her vision and mission statement, again using PowerPoint. She wants to create a developmental science that cares, based on the three P's, that is, People, Places, and Practice. She also wants to launch new initiatives that will grow global policy links. She is aware of both the challenges and opportunities associated with this project in terms of the Society's organization, governance and finances, membership management, maintenance and growth, and knowledge translation and impact.

She plans to launch a new Strategic Planning committee (composed of herself as President, the EC, and select committee chairs). The proposed time line for this new committee comprises three phases: (1) identification of core priorities (Year 1), (2) implementation of core priorities (Years 2-3), and (3) evaluation and expansion of core priorities (Year 4). The EC supports this new initiative and concludes that the Society is in a process of renewal.

4. Staff hires

The EC agrees that the Society would benefit from hiring both a Membership and Network Manager and a Communications Specialist who will take care of the new website and enhance our public reach. The EC members briefly discuss experiences with such positions in similar learned societies and potential approaches in recruiting suitable candidates. The salaries for these new positions will have to be discussed at a later point in time.

5. Presidential initiatives

President Tina Malti wants to concentrate on growing our global network of developmentalists and facilitating strategic

planning processes. She intends to organize a global office hour (during which she can be reached online by all members who wish to do so) and six global town halls that rotate across time zones to elicit comments from the membership on the strategic plan.

A first example of a presidential initiative is the creation of a Global Planning Committee that is meant to increase our contacts with organizations with similar objectives such as UNICEF or UNESCO and to forge formal links with them in an effort to extend our Society's reach and impact. A second example of such an initiative are the '2 x 2 grants'. These are small stipends of 3,000 US $ per year for Early Career Scholars (ECS) for which two ECS from two different continents or countries, one at the PhD level and the other at the post-doc level, submit a joint application.

The EC briefly discusses the opportunities and challenges of the proposed grant scheme. Applicants' CVs typically differ based on the income level of their countries (i.e., Low and middle income vs. high income countries) and these differences might affect who is selected for the grants. One should also be mindful of how it might be difficult for Early Career Scholars (ECS) from low and middle income countries to find a young scholar from another country. One possibility here is to consider some kind of matching or pairing process that may involve seniors or ISSBD Fellows (such as SRCD's mentor-mentee program). Following this discussion, the EC approves the motion to award three '2 x 2 grants' moving forward.

6. ISSBD Bulletin

The EC approves the motion to increase the stipends for the ISSBD Bulletin editorial team for 2023 (from 2,500 US $ to 3,500 US $ for Lucy Hahn and Karina Weichold and from 2,000 US $ to 3,000 US $ for Deepali Sharma). **Treasurer Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck will inform Rick Burdick and the editorial team of the ISSBD Bulletin about these stipend increases.**

7. Website update and membership management

As discussed at earlier EC meetings, there is a clear and urgent need to update the Society's website and integrate the membership system into that website. President Tina Malti extends her gratitude to Josafa da Cunha and the Communications committee who served as an advisory group in this important matter. Two proposals were received, one from an individual (Jan Boom) and the other one from a professional company (Podium and the associated Conference Management). The EC discusses the pros and cons of both proposals and the inherent challenges of membership migration (e.g., multi-year payments), based in part on experiences in learned societies with objectives similar to our own. The ideal situation (to avoid losing members in the membership migration) would be to transfer all members over to the new system and simply have them reset their passwords. **President Tina Malti will check with both Jan Boom and Podium whether such a form of simplified transfer is possible.** Another challenge will be managing and accepting member payments from international locations (e.g., from Africa, Asia, Australia, and North America). **President Tina Malti will check with Jan Boom and Treasurer Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck to ensure that Jan will be able to handle such international transactions.**

8. 2023 Elections

Elections will be held in 2023 for incoming President-Elect, three new members of the Executive Committee (EC) and one Early Career Scholar (ECS) representative. The EC will serve as nominations committee for these elections. A total of 10 candidates are needed: two for the President-Elect position, six for the EC member positions and two for the Early Career Scholar (ECS) representative position. Candidates should be prepared to take up their positions at the next ISSBD Biennial Conference in 2024. **All EC members are invited to send recommendations for possible candidates to President Tina Malti or Secretary General Luc Goossens. Candidates will be discussed at the January 2023 meeting of the EC.**

9. 2024 ISSBD Biennial Conference

The next ISSBD Biennial Meeting will be held in Lisbon, Portugal, from Sunday June 16, 2024 to Thursday June 20, 2024 (dates slightly adapted to fit the typical pattern of ISSBD biennial conferences). There is a broad consensus within the EC to have an in-person meeting rather than a hybrid one. Preparations are in full swing with the down payment for the venue being completed and arrangements with hotels in progress. The members of the Conference Planning committee are Manuela Verissimo (Conference organizer), Tina Malti (ISSBD President), Luc Goossens (Secretary General), Rita Zukauskiene, Frosso Motti, and Julie Bowker (Membership Secretary). The conference organizers are encouraged to explore what resources, sponsorships or grants might be available to support the meeting.

10. ISSBD 2026 Biennial Conference

At earlier EC meetings, suggestions were made to organize the 2026 ISSBD Biennial Meeting somewhere in Asia (e.g., Singapore or Seoul), Africa, South America (e.g., Santiago, Chile), New Zealand, or Canada. The EC is open to other suggestions and recommendations for scholars in those regions of the world who could assist with the organization and planning of the meeting.

11. Next EC meetings

The **next online** EC meeting will be held on Thursday **January 19, 2023 at 9 AM EST** (i.e., Eastern Standard Time or Toronto time).

Another, **in-person** EC meeting will be held on **April 13 or 14, 2023** (day-long meeting), at the **SRA** (Society for Research on Adolescence) conference in San Diego, California.

Luc Goossens, ISSBD Secretary General

News from the ISSBD ECS Committee

Introductory message from the outgoing ECS Representatives Cinzia Di Dio and Given Hapunda

The ISSBD Early Career Scholars Committee works in line with the vision and goal of creating cohesion and strengthening the network of relationships among the Society's young members. To date, these intentions have been translated and concretized into several initiatives that have been welcomed by ECSs. Given the results achieved, the Committee is determined to persevere and invest in these and additional initiatives for the coming year as well.

Historical summary of the ECS activities

Special lectures/webinars

May/June 2020: Due to the pandemic, in-person meetings could not be held. The Early Career Scholars Committee organized therefore three special lectures dedicated to ECSs. The lecture "Putting development in its place" held by Prof. William Bukowski (Concordia University, Canada) was online. The lecture "Child-Robot Interaction and Theory of Mind" held by Prof. Antonella Marchetti (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan) was recorded and made available on streaming. The event was promoted online via the ISSBD newsletter and e-mail.

Dec 2020: call for applications to the Jacobs Foundation Research Fellowship Program 2021. The meeting was organized and involved the participation of Dr. Anne Petersen (past board member of Jacobs) and Pamela Adende (current fellow), who provided suggestions regarding best practices for joining and participating in the call.

Apr 2021: Prof. Qi Wang, Cornell University. Scholars were lectured about methodological issues associated with carrying out international projects.

Sep 2021: Prof. Semira Tagliabue, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Italy). She teaches Research Methods at the bachelor, master and PhD levels. The keynote topic was "Measurement invariance: different kinds of comparisons in complex research designs". The topic was selected because it was in line with the idea of supporting a methodological training path that allows deepening knowledge related to psychology and development, with an eye to international partnerships.

Accomplishments in 2022

A webinar was then held on May10th. This time, the lecture anticipated the Biennial meeting. To this end, the webinar covered how to deliver an effective oral presentation in English. The lecture was given by Pierfranca Forchini, Associate Professor of English language and Linguistics at Università Cattolica, Milan (Italy). The talk focused on a specific mode of communication in English, namely, oral presentations. In particular, given the need to be effective and convincing while communicating, detailed suggestions on how to outline an effective presentation and connect with the audience were offered. Special considerations were given to cultural, linguistic and psychological components involved in international communication.

Biennial Meeting in Rhodes

For the Biennial 2022, travel grants were allocated to enable resource-constrained ECS to attend conferences and participate in the pre-conference. For the pre-biennial meeting, applications from the ECS were accepted based on research interests and, during the meeting, networking was facilitated which included a face to face community meeting, ECS reception, and lunch with the mentors to enable the scholars to have the opportunity to know each other and exchange thoughts in an informal context.

For the preconference, a number of sessions/lectures were organized for the Early Scholars on a variety of thematic issues, including publication and methodological issues. Also, two lunch workshops were organized which involved Prof. Maayan Davidov from Israel who spoke on the topic, "What kind of developmental scholar would you like to become, and how to get there?" and Prof. Kofi Marfo (from Ghana) "Still learning after all these years". A reception paid for by ISSBD was also organized.

The ECS Committee was very active in attempts to speed up and facilitate communication with the organizers, the secretary Julie Bowker and the ECSs. The ECS Committee also facilitated contacts between the scholars who needed to find someone to share accommodation with.

The new Committee

After the Biennial, ISSBD has undergone some important restructuring. The ECS Committee has been expanded with the addition of new members (Lilian Ayiro, Ella Daniel, Rachel Han, Yao Sun, Zelma Mokobane) representing diverse cultural realities internationally. Josafa Cunha left the Committee to become the new representative of the ISSBD Communication Committee. We thank Josafa for his significant contribution to the activities of the ECS Committee.

In its new representation, the ECS Committee has designed a survey for ECSs to understand what are their expectations and needs related to ISSBD activities and, based on the responses, prioritize the planning of forthcoming activities.

An interesting finding from the survey is that all early career scholars, regardless of region of origin and cultural or educational background, expressed the need to create

international relationships for sharing ideas and projects. In addition, a need emerged, at various levels, for training related to the research approach in terms of communication (e.g., how to apply for funding) and statistical expertise.

Projects ahead

In light of the findings above, the Committee is currently developing at least two proposals to be implemented in the short to medium term:

1) Meet new collaborators

The ECS Committee is planning to organize a workshop for the establishment of international collaborations. This will solicit ISSBD members to submit proposals for research projects they would like to carry out in collaboration with scholars from other countries. A number of proposals will then be selected based on criteria to be determined. Proposals from early-career members will be given priority and will receive some support in training if needed. Interested ECSs will prepare short presentations outlining the research program they plan to initiate and the type of collaborations they are seeking.

In an online workshop, all ISSBD members will be invited to listen to the proposals and contact the presenters if they are interested in forming a collaboration. We hope that ISSBD will be able to offer seed funds to establish the research group.

2) Meet with funders

The ECS Committee aims to invite representatives from various funding programs to present to ISSBD members, with a focus on ECS, and especially early career. During an online webinar, funders will present their programs and explain to members who are eligible, what the key tips are for applying, their priorities, etc.

Finally, previous meetings between the early career scholars and ECS Committee highlighted the need among the scholars to create a network between the scholars themselves and seniors, a network that is easy to manage and that would enable streamlined communication. Aware of this quest, the ECS Committee together with the ISSBD Board Members are working on the organization of a structure that enables functional and effective networking between the ECS and ISSBD senior members, who can provide support to the ECS's research.

In conclusion, the ECS Committee is highly engaged and actively working toward the overall plan of networking, facilitating activities, and giving a body and structure to the ECS Community. To this end, in addition to all the initiatives presented here, there will be no shortage of opportunities for thematic seminars and possibly the organization of ISSBD regional workshops (or similar events), to which also the ECSs have already been encouraged to reflect in order to possibly make proposals. Finally, the Society is very committed to supporting initiatives to encourage the research of young people, as well as of realities/contexts that may present difficulties in achieving objectives associated with promoting and publishing scientific research. In this spirit, the Committees are actively reflecting on concrete possibilities to support the research and publications of young scholars' work internationally.

With this positive attitude and a future outlook that is meant to truly encourage and support the creation of a community that operates internationally, we hope and wish all of our colleagues to face the time ahead with optimism and cohesion.

On behalf of the ECS Committee
Cinzia Di Dio and Given Hapunda

MAJOR CONFERENCES OF INTEREST

June 03 - June 04, 2023
International Conference on Defense Mechanisms in Dynamic Psychology ICDMDP
Location: Rome, Italy
Web: https://waset.org/defense-mechanisms-in-dynamic-psychology-conference

June 10 - June 11, 2023
International Conference on Big Data, Machine Learning and Psychology ICBDMLP
Location: Tokyo, Japan
Web: https://waset.org/big-data-machine-learning-and-psychology-conference

July 03 - July 04, 2023
International Conference on Developmental Psychology and Adolescence ICDPA
Location: Singapore, Singapore
Web: https://waset.org/developmental-psychology-and-adolescence-conference

August 09 - August 10, 2023
International Conference on Psychology of Emotions, Feelings and Thoughts ICPEFT
Location: Lagos, Nigeria
Web: https://waset.org/psychology-of-emotions-feelings-and-thoughts-conference

September 23 - September 24, 2023
International Conference on Psychology and Neuroimaging ICPN
Location: London, United Kingdom
Web: https://waset.org/psychology-and-neuroimaging-conference-in-september-2023-in-london

October 18 - October 19, 2023
International Conference on Counseling Psychology ICCP
Location: Shanghai, China
Web: https://waset.org/conferences-in-october-2023-in-shanghai/program