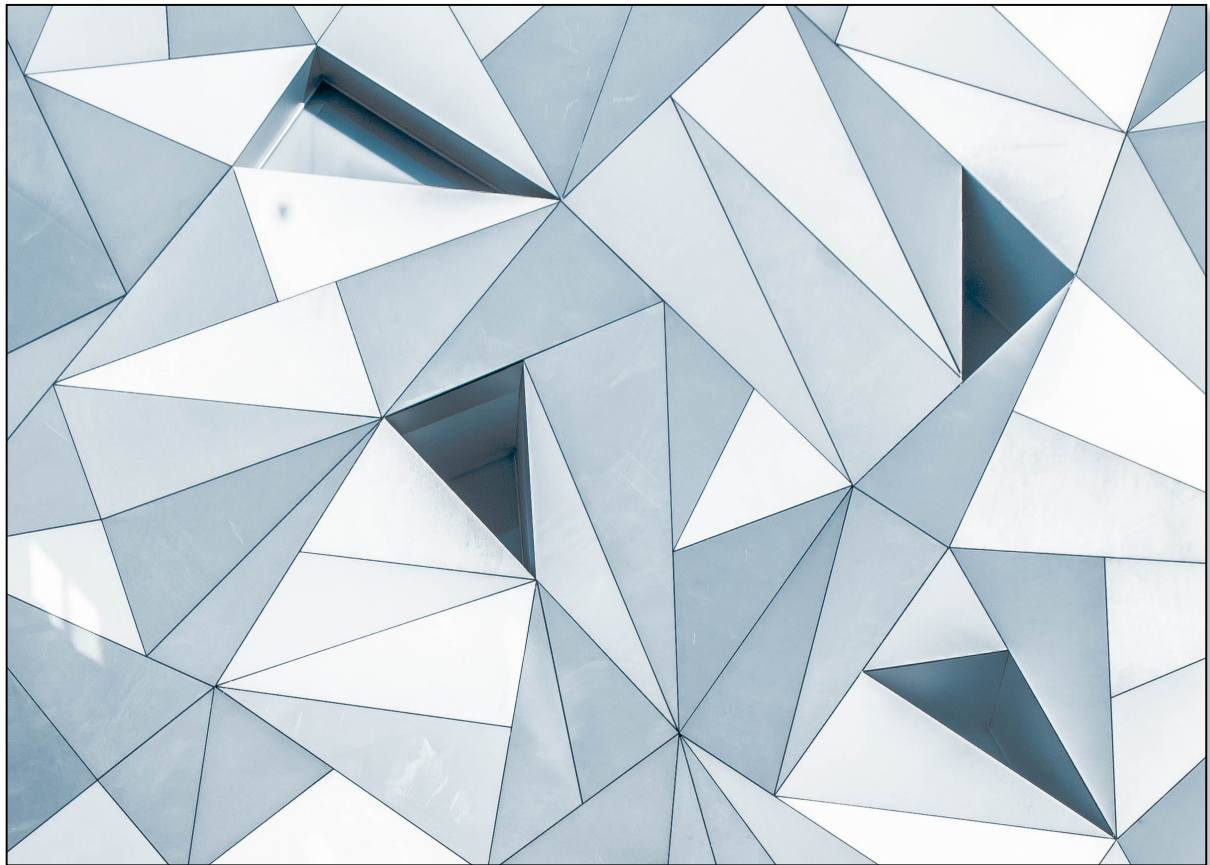


PSI Early Graduate Group Conference 2017

Communicating Psychology: Getting the message out there



Abstracts



- A -

Oral Presentation

Cultural relevance among Asian minority groups of an online CBT intervention

R. Al-Houssan

There is consistent research in the literature suggesting that most types of therapy, which are founded in Western societies and often heavily based upon individualistic Western values, need to be adapted in order to be culturally sensitive to those with differing values, especially those from Eastern collectivistic cultures. There has been little if any research conducted on the usage of internet-delivered cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT)-based interventions, particularly for non-acclulturated Asian minority groups living in the West. This study aimed to examine the cultural relevance, among Asian international students in Dublin, of an internet-delivered CBT intervention implemented by SilverCloud Health for depression and anxiety. A descriptive exploratory mixed-methods quantitative and qualitative approach was utilized. Eleven international students (Asian ethnicity and residing in Asia, which constituted a variety of countries from the Asian continent) were recruited using an advertisement poster distributed around Trinity College Dublin. A cultural relevance questionnaire provided to participants intended to measure the cultural sensitivity and ecological validity of the CBT intervention, followed by an open-ended semi-structured focus group discussion guided by the items from the questionnaire and providing in-depth qualitative feedback. The study, conducted for the MSc in Applied Psychology, is currently in progress.

- B -

Poster Presentation

Clinical psychologists' perspectives of mental health screening of adolescents and children: a qualitative study

H. Behan & S. Guerin, UCD School of Psychology, University College Dublin, Dublin

Introduction The onset of mental illness in youth is a concern because of the tendency of these problems to develop into chronic pathologies in adolescence and adulthood. Mental health screening at schools and primary care visits has been advanced as an early preventative intervention, which can be used to endorse a referral or route a young person to mental health services for treatment.

Method This exploratory qualitative study assessed the perspectives of 7 clinical psychologists on the implementation of a mental health screening protocol for adolescents and children at schools and during primary care visits. A thematic analysis identified a number of key themes and subthemes.

Results Although most psychologists endorsed the idea of screening, many raised a barrier in terms of presently under-resourced mental health services for treatment access and ability to provide a comprehensive assessment. The question of expertise in individuals administering a prospective screen was another issue, as was stigma related to mental health treatment.

Conclusions Recommendations included the development of existing service provisions, involvement of key individuals in the

process, the need to maintain a user-friendly presentation to mitigate stigma, and the inclusion of a positive mental health component.

Poster Presentation

“I’m not racist but...” - Measuring implicit racism in a multicultural society

A.M. Brandon & M. O’Connell, School of Psychology, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4

Introduction: This study aimed to develop the first measurement of implicit racism for use in a multi-ethno-cultural society; the Racial Argument Scale-Minorities (RAS-M), based on the Racial Argument Scale. It was hypothesised that RAS-M scores would be insusceptible to social desirability bias and significantly correlated with ingroup bias, negative attitudes towards minorities, self-reported levels of racism and racially-motivated behaviour.

Method: Irish citizens (N = 404) completed three anonymous, online questionnaires – the RASM, a 13-item Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale and a questionnaire assessing attitudes towards minorities.

Results: The RAS-M reported good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.796$), good convergent validity with self-report measures of racism, a statistically significant relationship with ingroup bias and negative attitudes towards minorities, the ability to predict explicit prejudicial behaviour and an insusceptibility to social desirability bias. No relationship was observed between gender or socioeconomic status and RAS-M scores.

Conclusion: We conclude that RAS-M may be considered to be a valid and reliable measure of implicit racism in multi-ethno-cultural societies. While research to date has largely sought to investigate racism in a Black/White context, the development of a measure shifting beyond a two-group paradigm may prove to be of substantial worth in the increasingly ethno-culturally diverse European community.

- C -

Oral Presentation

Use mindfulness to destress? The effects of mindfulness interventions on physiological stress and perceived stress

E. Cadogan & S. Dockray, School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland.

Introduction: Mindfulness practice for stress reduction is remarkably popular in the lay community. The research community provides cautious support, for example, invoking the Broaden-and-Build theory, and the ‘undoing’ of negative effects of stress, although the effects of mindfulness on psychobiological systems remains under-examined. This study investigates the efficacy of a Mindfulness Intervention vs. a control in reducing psychobiological stress after a stressful event.

Method: Participants (N=47) were randomly allocated to a Mindfulness Intervention or Jigsaw Control task. Participants completed a standardised stress task before completing a mindfulness or control activity. Continuous measures of Galvanic Skin Response (GSR) were obtained, and perceived stress (PS) recorded at 3 intervals. Analysis examined changes in GSR and PS within and between experimental groups.

Results: There was a significant physiological response to the stress challenge. A significant main effect of time was found for PS ($p < .001$), such that PS decreased across time, however intervention type had no effect on PS. A significant time by intervention interaction was found for physiological stress ($p < .01$) with the control group showing a larger decrease in physiological stress.

Conclusion: Mindfulness may not be the best tool for physiological stress-reduction. A one-size-fits all approach to positive psychology interventions must be reconsidered.

Oral Presentation

Places to recharge the brain: investigating the outdoor environment as a contributor to cognitive health in ageing.

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2 School of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork, Cork city

Introduction – In an increasingly older and urbanised world, identifying environmental factors that contribute to cognitive health in ageing is a current priority for research and policy. Using outdoor spaces benefits mental and physical health as we grow old; however, little is yet known on which specific environmental characteristics (e.g., presence of green, walkability, legibility) provide positive mental stimulation for an older person and help to contrast cognitive decline. This multi-disciplinary project defines and measures the subjective and objective characteristics of the outdoor lived environment that support cognitive well-being in older age.

Methods – A mixed-methods design is employed: Epidemiological investigations map places where older people are more or less cognitively healthy; walking interviews, focus groups and surveys capture older people's experiences of environmental sources of support for cognition in their day-to-day interaction with outdoor spaces; environmental audits evaluate objective neighbourhood quality; experimental testing and neurophysiological assessments explore cognitive and brain responses to more or less supportive environments.

Conclusions – The project will advance the knowledge on ecological models of healthy cognitive ageing by linking quantitative and qualitative approaches. The findings will inform policy-makers and urban designers on optimisation strategies for outdoor spaces to help older people to age better.

Oral Presentation

Positives through Participation: Examining the psychological well-being benefits of Men's Sheds for men with intellectual disabilities

Conor Connolly (UCD), Dr. Kevin Treacy (St. Michael's house), Dr. Suzanne Guerin (UCD School of Psychology and Centre for Disability Studies)

Background: Psychological well-being can prove a challenging pursuit, particularly for those from vulnerable populations. The current study aims to explore the psychological well-being benefits for men who participate in the Men's Shed movement, with a particular focus on the benefits and transferability of the model and its associated benefits to a male population for men with intellectual disabilities (ID).

Methods: Using a qualitative design, nine semi-structured interviews were carried out with two groups of participants; current community-based Men's Sheds facilitators and

professionals working with men with intellectual disabilities in a specific service for this group. Data were subjected to a thematic analysis to examine underlying and recurring themes relating to psychological well-being.

Results: The psychological well-being benefits of participation in Men's Sheds largely mirrored those suggested by Ryff and Keyes (1995) across both community and ID specific populations. Challenges were also reported in the transferability of the model to an ID population, including concerns regarding risk management.

Conclusions: While challenges exist in applying this model in ID, the benefits of participation in Men's Sheds appear to outweigh potential barriers. For ID populations, Men's Sheds are perceived to offer an enabling environment where the social determinants and sense of disabled masculinity that can often be experienced by this group can be challenged and counteracted.

Oral Presentation

Young people's attention to social media food posts: exploring the effect of content and source of post using eyetracking.

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Introduction Online advertising is a significant platform for exposure to food items from a variety of sources. Attention to food items on social media has been shown to influence eating patterns but little is known about the effects of image types and sources. This study is novel in its inclusion of ecologically valid Facebook profile stimuli depicting healthy, unhealthy and non-food content, along with peer, celebrity and sponsor sourced posts. Importantly, this study is also novel in its use of eye-tracking to monitor gaze behaviour and the recruitment of young people.

Methods 79 young people aged 13 to 17 were recruited to take part. Eye-tracking equipment was used to measure fixation duration and count towards fictional Facebook new feeds of 9 conditions (3 content x 3 source).

Results Healthy food items are consistently paid less attention than unhealthy and non-food items. This effect is stronger when presented by peers (over celebrities and sponsors). Age also

significantly affects young people's attention with older participants looking more across all conditions.

Conclusion Peers and unhealthy foods are extremely influential in predicting young people's attention to food posts on social media. These results are important in combatting the growth of obesity in young people by monitoring and limiting exposure on social media.

Oral Presentation

An investigation of the use of standardised leaving certificate performance as a potential method of estimating pre-morbid intelligence

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² Department of Psychology, Beaumont Hospital, Dublin 9, Ireland.

Introduction: This study aims to evaluate the extent to which standardised Leaving Certificate (LC) performance can predict intellectual functioning in a healthy cohort. If LC performance can predict current functioning in healthy individuals, it might prove useful in estimating pre-morbid functioning in patients with brain injury/pathology.

Methods: A sample of university students was recruited on a voluntary basis (N=51) to provide details of their LC results, year of completion and some basic demographic information. They then completed two cognitive tasks assessing current functioning [Vocabulary and Matrix Reasoning subtests – Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence 2nd Edition (WASI-II)] and a test of pre-morbid intelligence [Spot-the-Word Test from the Speed and Capacity of Language Processing (SCOLP)]. Separately, LC results were standardised, using a computer application designed specifically for this project.

Results: Linear regression analysis revealed that standardised LC performance and Spot-the-Word significantly predicted current intellect. Demographic-based-regression-formula did not. CAO points had a superior accuracy in classifying IQ ranges over Spot-the-Word scores. Furthermore, gender standardised English and Irish results significantly predicted Vocabulary performance while Mathematics significantly predicted Matrix Reasoning.

Conclusions: These results suggest that standardised LC performance may represent a useful resource for clinicians when estimating pre-morbid intelligence. Further research is, however, required to determine the extent to which these data might be useful in other study samples.

Poster Presentation

Irish siblings experiences of living with autism

A. Creavin & M. Spies, School of Psychology, Trinity College Dublin

Introduction In Ireland, little is known about how siblings experience living with a brother or sister who has a diagnosis of autism (ASD). Research from other countries suggest that siblings can be affected in a positive way whereby they demonstrate having higher levels of emotional intelligence. In contrast, other reports claim that siblings take on compensatory roles in order to secure parental support. The findings remain inconsistent. The current study aims to explore the perceptions and experiences typically developing Irish children have of their sibling with ASD.

Method Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven participants aged 8-12 years who had a non-verbal sibling with a diagnosis of ASD. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyse the data.

Results Three main themes emerged from the analysis which impacted the sibling relationship: (i) understanding of autism (ii) interpersonal relationship with sibling (iii) psycho-social impact of autism.

Conclusions Participants experiences were shaped by whether or not they received a formal explanation of their sibling's diagnosis of ASD. Results reflect the need for enhancing the quality of support and information given to parents or guardians as primary educators, as well as developing support services for siblings.

Poster Presentation

The effect of a relaxing biofeedback intervention on absentmindedness

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Introduction: Absentmindedness has been suggested to be mediated by certain cognitive actions such as sustained attention. Recently, the locus coeruleus-noradrenergic (LC-NE) neuromodulatory system has been highlighted with regards to its role in task engagement and performance optimization as part of adaptive gain theory. Previous studies have demonstrated a relationship between task-engagement and arousal that is reflective of the classic Yerkes Dodson arousal curve. This study aimed to investigate the efficacy of a biofeedback intervention at reducing arousal and the effect this may have on one's sustained attention.

Method: A mixed-factorial design was used, whereby participants were assigned to the biofeedback intervention or a control intervention. Repeated measures of sustained attention, heart rate, and EDA were recorded at baseline, following a stress induction paradigm, and post-intervention.

Results: The biofeedback group showed significantly higher levels of EDA reduction post-intervention when compared to the controls. A steady loss of vigilance appeared in both groups across time, indicating that the biofeedback intervention did not impact the sustained attention of the participants.

Conclusion: The pattern of results suggests the biofeedback intervention resulted in a reduction in EDA activity, which did not have an effect on the sustained attention of the participants.

Poster Presentation

The impact of family functioning on executive skills in junior and senior infants

E. Cullen¹, M. Downes¹ ¹School of Psychology, University College Dublin

Introduction: Executive skills are complex cognitive abilities that are crucial for school readiness, social interaction, and academic success. Significant advances have been made in the understanding of the development of executive skills in the past two decades. However, there is little knowledge on how family functioning (domains such as family strengths, difficulties, and communication) can impact the development of executive skills in early childhood. The present study examines the associations between family functioning and executive skills in children aged four to six years. **Method:** The executive skills of 103 children ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 0.67$) were assessed using the Preschool Executive Task Assessment (PETA), an ecological measure of executive functioning. Parents of the children completed the Systematic Clinical Outcome Routine Evaluation-28 (SCORE-28) to assess their family functioning. **Results:** Overall, total executive functioning scores were significantly associated with family functioning ($F(1, 102) = 7.22$, $p = .008$, $R^2 = .067$). In particular, family communication was associated with the executive domains of initiation, organisation and learning. **Conclusions:** Results highlight the importance of positive family functioning, particularly family communication, in the development of executive skills and the need for the development of family communication interventions for those children at risk for poor executive functioning.

Oral Presentation

Explicitly questioning implicit assumptions: an outline of assumptions and issues in the field of implicit testing

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Implicit psychological measures are purported as more effective alternatives to attitude measurement than conventional self-report measures. While self-reports tend to be susceptible to social desirability responding, implicit measures utilise a more covert methodology, thereby overcoming such difficulties. However, a number of alternative conceptual issues exist regarding these implicit metrics. The concept of implicit attitudes was developed in tandem with the Implicit Association Test (IAT) for identifying these attitudes; it is arguable, therefore, that the construct of implicit attitudes is purely reified. Further, the ecological validity of implicit tests has been mixed, and the relative amorphousness of the construct's definition may be the cause of this. Further still, the scoring technique of many of these procedures incorporates inaccurate responses in the form of an arbitrary time penalty analogue, with weak conceptual grounding to justify this penalty. The current presentation will discuss some such conceptual limitations of implicit testing paradigms, and provide an alternative account of these procedures from a behaviour-analytic perspective. A behavior-analytic form of implicit test, known as the Function Acquisition Speed Test (FAST), will be outlined. It is hoped that this presentation will illustrate the importance of a conceptually-coherent ontological paradigm for future research.

- D -

Oral Presentation

The effects of task speed on behavioural responses and mind-wandering in the sustained attention to response task.

A. Davies & C. M. Greene, School of Psychology, University College Dublin

Introduction: Mind-wandering is increasingly being recognised as an important cognitive phenomenon. In attention tasks, researchers often attribute errors and associated reaction times to episodes of mind-wandering. The aims of this study were to establish a version of the sustained attention to response task (SART) that would optimally induce mind-wandering and to determine the exact types of behavioural responses associated with periods of mind-wandering versus periods of focus.

Methods: 25 Participants completed four SART conditions adapted to capture more instances of mind-wandering. The duration of stimulus presentation increased across conditions and participants intermittently responded to thought probes assessing mind-wandering and focus.

Results: Error rates and reaction times decreased in proportion to the decrease in stimulus duration rate while reaction time variability and mind-wandering related errors increased. Distinct reaction time patterns around an error, dependent on level of focus (high/low) and level of mind-wandering (high/low) were also observed.

Discussion: This study established the optimal duration of stimulus presentation for inducing mind-wandering in the SART and provided evidence that different attention states occur within the SART. In the standard SART, most errors occurred during periods of focus, which raised significant questions about our current understanding of mind-wandering and attention.

Oral Presentation

Psychological factors related to intrusive thoughts in an Irish student population

C. Donaghey, J. Egan and P. Súilleabháin, School of Psychology, National University of Ireland, Galway

Introduction: Intrusive thoughts are a relatively common experience in community samples. They are also commonly reported in patients who present with a range of psychiatric diagnoses.

Method: In order to examine psychological correlates of intrusive thoughts a sample of 186 undergraduate students were asked to complete a battery of questionnaires to develop a predictive model.

Results: Analysis involved a multiple hierarchical regression, which showed the presence of current depressive mood, high absorption, previous experiences of trauma, low openness to experience and extraversion to account for 32 percent of the variance in relation to current experiences of intrusive thoughts.

Conclusion: These findings can be used in assessing clients for psychotherapy or clinical therapy. In effect, those who experience intrusive thoughts are more likely to have them if they are prone to dissociation, have had a personal traumatic experience, are in a current depressive mood and are low in openness to experience and extraversion.

Oral Presentation

An investigation into the relationship between recognition of emotional expressions, empathy and mind reading

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Introduction: This study measures the recognition of emotional expressions and asks how this skill correlates with certain aspects of social intelligence, namely empathy and theory of mind. Method: Eighty-nine university students (43 female) completed the Empathy Quotient (EQ), the Mind in the Eyes Test, and an experimental task which measured both speed and accuracy in recognizing facial expressions as they morphed from neutral to one of five full expressions: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, and sadness. Results: Consistent with previous research, scores on the EQ and Eyes test were positively associated. While males and females did not differ in their Eyes Test scores, females scored significantly higher on the EQ and they also outperformed males in both speed and accuracy on the emotions task. Finally, scores on the EQ were negatively associated with speed on the emotions task, participants being quicker to correctly recognize emotional expressions the higher their empathy score. Conclusions: Our data offer early evidence of an association between behavioral measures of sensitivity to emotional expressions and self-reported measures of empathy in young, neurotypical people. We suggest that this approach be extended to the study of neurodevelopmental conditions characterized by anomalies in theory of mind and empathy test scores.

Oral Presentation

Self-esteem, self-concept and body-image in adolescents with and without type-1 diabetes mellitus

N. Doody, Maynooth University, Kildare, Ireland

Introduction: This study examined the body image, self-esteem and self-concept of adolescents with type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM). These results were compared to a comparison group of adolescents without a life-long medical condition. The secondary aim was to examine the influence of these psychological factors, length of diagnosis, insulin regime, age, gender, and perceived control on glycaemic control.

Methods: A total of 192 individuals participated in this study (51.6% = females, 48.4% males). The sample consisted of two groups; the diabetes group (41 males and 40 female participants), and the comparison group (52 male and 59 female participants).

Discussion: There were no statistically significant differences between the self-concept, self-esteem and body image scores between the diabetes and comparison group.

However, consistent with the literature, males scores were significantly higher on each of these concepts than the female participants. Of eight control measures employed in a stepwise regression, only two were statistically significant. These were the self-reported measures of diabetes control ($\beta = .44$, $p < .001$) and the insulin regime the individual uses ($\beta = -.27$, $p < .001$).

Conclusion: Given that adolescents with T1DM are at risk of developing psychological problems, these findings show that adolescents with T1DM have a very positive view of themselves compared to their peers who do not have a life-long medical condition.

Oral Presentation

Reflections on the process of conducting a systematic review.

H. Duff, F. Craddock & A. Carr. UCD School of Psychology, University College Dublin

Systematic reviews are recognised as an effective means of analysing and synthesising the data from several studies on a particular topic. They are especially helpful for practitioners looking to gain an insight into the current state of the evidence. Conducting a systematic review requires compliance with a specific methodology, however, guidance on this methodology can sometimes be vague. As a team, we have learned a lot about this process while conducting three systematic reviews on the outcomes of child abuse across the lifespan. We aim to outline our experiences of conducting these reviews. We will describe the procedure for conducting a systematic review and reflect on how this works in practice. We hope these insights can provide some guidance for others embarking on this process.

Oral Presentation

The path towards evaluating Cosán

H. Duff & C. Wheeler; Department of Psychology, St Michael's House, Dublin.

Cosán is an assessment and planning tool developed by St Michael's House; a support service for people with Intellectual Disabilities in Dublin. Cosán is used by staff working with adults with significant disabilities. Cosán centres around enhancing skills, skills development, and the application of skills in meaningful ways in community settings. The aim of this research is to evaluate the Cosán process and better understand how it works

in practise. As such, a process evaluation is being conducted, to evaluate its implementation, and the experiences of stakeholders (6 clinicians/management, 6 persons in charge, 6 frontline staff, and 10 service users). This study includes elements of both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. This involves staff members taking part in focus groups, and service users taking part in supported interviews or video observation in accordance to their needs. Qualitative data will be analysed using thematic analysis. Frequency data from video observation will be analysed and described. It is hoped that this information will help to adapt and improve practise. Findings will also guide a future outcome evaluation of Cosán.

- F -

Oral Presentation

LGBT students' adjustment to university life

M. Fahy

Summary of the proposed research It is well documented that young people in the LGBT+ community tend to experience greater levels of stress than their heterosexual counterparts due to stigma from others, internalised stigma and victimisation. However, little is known about how these experiences develop longitudinally and how they interact with crucial life transitions such as adjustment to university life. Crucially, this is a time and a context in which LGBT+ students tend to explore their identity. This study will take a longitudinal approach to the study of the experiences of first-year LGBT+ university students in comparison to heterosexual students during their adjustment to university life with a focus on key developmental outcomes. Taking an ecological model of development approach, and informed by minority stress theory, we will test a pathways model of adjustment to university focusing on the roles of support and victimisation in moderating outcomes related to academic success, wellbeing and identity.

Oral Presentation

Stereotype threat in older adults and the effects on sustained attention

F. Fawsitt, A. Setti, School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork, Cork

Introduction: Older adults are susceptible to the effects of stereotype threat on performance in clinical tests such as those for detecting mild cognitive impairment or dementia. Regulatory fit theory is a potential explanation for this effect, another possible mechanism is withdrawal of attention leading to executive dysfunction. The literature on stereotype threat offers paradigms to contrast these theories and determine which is more likely to cause the negative effects of stereotypes on performance in older people. Methods: We are in the process of testing older adults using the Sustained Attention to Response Task (Sart) and a memory span task after exposing them to a stereotype threat or no stereotype threat condition, as well as creating a promotion or prevention focus to the task using regulatory fit theory. This creates a 2X2 design with two outcome variables, Performance on the memory span task, and the Sart.

Conclusions: The literature suggests that older adults' performance on the memory span task will be most negatively impacted when there is a lack of regulatory fit. If sustained attention is affected independently from regulatory fit it will add support to the hypothesis that the negative effects of threat are due to a temporary executive dysfunction

Poster Presentation

Exploring musical activities and their relationship to emotional well-being in elderly people across Europe

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Music is a powerful, pleasurable stimulus that can induce positive feelings and is utilised in emotional self-regulation. Musical activities such as listening to music, playing an instrument, and singing or dancing are also an important source for social contact; promoting interaction and the sense of belonging with others. Recent evidence has suggested that after retirement, other functions of music, such as self-conceptual processing related to autobiographical memories, become more salient. However, few studies have addressed the meaningfulness of music in the elderly. This study aims to investigate elderly people's habits and preferences related to music, and explore the relationship between musical activities and emotional well-being across Europe countries. A survey will be administered to elderly people over the age of 65 from five different European countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Germany, Ireland, and the UK) and to a control group of young adults. Participants will be asked about basic sociodemographic information, habits and preferences for musical activities, and emotional well-being. Overall, the aim of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the role of music in the elderly. This advanced knowledge could help to develop therapeutic applications, such as musical recreational programs for healthy older people.

Oral Presentation

Mental health, student experience and support needs of student carers

M. Forde, School of Psychology, Faculty of Life and Health Sciences, Ulster University, Magee Campus, Derry – Londonderry, Northern Ireland

Introduction: Student carers are students who, alongside their studies, provide unpaid support to family members who could not manage without this help. This qualitative study sought to explore the mental health, student experience and support needs of student carers.

Methods: To examine whether student carers' experiences of their dual roles of student and carer have influenced their mental health and their student experience and to identify the types of supports needed to better support student carers, semi-structured interviews were used. Thematic analysis was used to identify the main themes in the collected data.

Findings: Both the student and carer roles were found to impact negatively on mental health, with stress being the dominant theme across both roles. The carer role was also found to impact negatively on the student experience, affecting primarily attendance rates and likelihood of withdrawal. In terms of support needs, themes identified included better signposting of available supports, a more streamlined process for accessing supports and the need for a process for disclosing student carer status to the university. Conclusions: To positively influence their university experience and reduce attrition among student carers, it is imperative that universities take into account the unique support needs of student carers.

- G -

Oral Presentation

Sibling sexual abuse: an exploratory study

Leanne Gibney ¹, Leanne Gregory ¹, Brenda Kirley ¹, St. Louise's Unit, OLCHC1, Dublin

INTRODUCTION: Sibling sexual abuse (SSA) constitutes a neglected area of research, despite universal agreement it is the most common type of intra-familial CSA. Existing literature highlights family dysfunction, conceptual difficulties, and ubiquitous endorsement of myths regarding SSA as salient themes. The present epidemiological study aims to enhance understanding of SSA by presenting data pertaining to a clinical sample of children with a history of SSA, in an Irish context.

METHOD: Descriptive data was gathered via retrospective file review of SSA cases referred to a specialist CSA service. Data was analysed using PSPP.

RESULTS: 87 children were referred (65 were harmed; 22 inflicted the harm). SSA was usually inflicted by brothers on sisters (57%), but brother to brother (31%) was not uncommon. Genital touching was the most common abusive behaviour, followed by exposure of genitals and oral to genital contact. Sibling relationships were often affectionate (35%) or controlling (31%). Attachment difficulties were suspected in most cases and family history of CSA, mental health concerns, and substance misuse were common. 80 per cent experienced other forms of maltreatment and indicators of distress and dysfunction were typical.

CONCLUSION: Families in which SSA occurs often present with high risks and diverse needs. Multi-level, multi-systemic responses are indicated.

Poster Presentation

Perceived benefits of a Distress Tolerance module within a Mental Health setting

E. Gillan ¹, R. McKenna ², K. Timulakova ² (1. School of Psychology, Trinity College Dublin; 2. Psychology Department, St. Vincent's Hospital, Fairview)

OBJECTIVE: To examine the efficacy and perceived benefit of a Distress Tolerance module, within a Mental Health outpatient setting, on self-reported global distress.

METHODS: Service users were outpatients attending a DBT informed outpatient group programme (encompassing the Distress Tolerance module) in a Psychology service in Dublin. The CORE-OM, a quantitative self-report measure of distress was administered before and after the module. Qualitative feedback from service users was also collected upon completion of the module.

RESULTS: There were no significant differences between scores on the CORE-OM at pre and post. Qualitative feedback revealed that most service users found the programme beneficial for coping with distress, that they would recommend it for others with similar difficulties and that they were planning to use acquired skills in the future.

CONCLUSION: Despite the CORE-OM scores moving in an encouraging direction after the Distress Tolerance module, the differences between pre and post scores were not significant. However, feedback received was positive, suggesting that the Distress Tolerance module was perceived as beneficial.

- H -

Poster Presentation

Cost and impact of arthritic conditions and osteoporosis in Ireland

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Introduction: Musculoskeletal disorders rank second only to mental and behavioural disorders for the proportion of global disability burden. As the most common cause of severe long term pain, musculoskeletal disorders can seriously affect the quality of life of those with the conditions and often lead to significant healthcare and social support costs. The aim of CIMPACO is to gain a better understanding of the impact that the most common forms of arthritis and osteoporosis have on patients' lives and the direct and indirect financial costs of the diseases.

Methods: Patients attending rheumatology clinics in Merlin Park Hospital Galway and Manorhamilton Clinic Leitrim were invited to fill out the study questionnaire in the clinic or by post. The questionnaire contained a number of different sections which asked: 1) Information about the patient, 2) Information about the patient's disease and how it affects them, 3) Information about the patient's medications and other illnesses.

Results: The results of this study will help us to understand more about the health of people with arthritic conditions and osteoporosis and how they use health services and alternative treatments. It is hoped that obtaining this information will enable us to improve services to better meet patient needs.

Poster Presentation

An evaluation of psychotherapeutic interventions delivered online and in person for chronic pain: protocol for systematic review and network meta-analysis

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Introduction: Chronic pain is a highly prevalent condition which can significantly impact the sufferer's quality of life. Although there is a wealth of information supporting the effectiveness of face-to-face psychotherapies for chronic pain sufferers, economic and social barriers exist which can prevent access to such facilities. Internet-delivered psychological interventions are thus increasingly seen as a way of circumventing these obstacles. The objective of the current systematic review and network-meta-analysis is to

evaluate in-person and internet-delivered psychotherapeutic interventions for chronic pain.

Methods: Databases to be searched include MEDLINE, EMBASE, CENTRAL and PsycINFO. We will search for randomised control trials (RCTs) published in a peer reviewed journal where the psychological intervention is delivered either face to face or online. Initially, papers will be sorted based on title and abstract with 10% sorted in duplicate. Two reviewers will then independently assess the remaining papers to determine whether they satisfy eligibility criteria. Data will be extracted in duplicate and risk of bias will be assessed. Exploratory meta-analyses will be undertaken and a network meta-analysis will be conducted to generate indirect comparisons between all relevant nodes.

Conclusions: The findings from this study will help inform patients, researchers and clinicians on the most effective mode of delivery for psychotherapeutic interventions for chronic pain.

Oral Presentation

General practitioners' views on the follow-up care of post-treatment cancer survivors: a qualitative study.

M. Hammond & M. Ivers, School of Psychology, University College Dublin.

Background: Many cancer survivors experience ongoing physical, cognitive and emotional issues during the survivorship period. However, given the significant increase in the number of individuals surviving cancer in recent times, it is no longer feasible for oncologists to provide long-term follow-up care to this population. Thus, general practitioners (GPs) have been proposed as an appropriate alternative model of care. The overall aim of this study is to explore the views of GPs in Ireland on the follow-up care of post-treatment cancer survivors in their practice and to identify their training needs.

Methods: Qualitative semi-structured interviews were carried out with GPs (n = 12) based in either urban or rural practices in the Republic of Ireland. Interviews were carried out face-to-face or via a phone call.

Results: Thematic analysis will be carried out on the data in order to identify and analyse themes within the data.

Conclusion: Findings will be discussed in terms of their contribution to understanding GPs' views on their role in providing follow-up care to post-treatment cancer survivors and their training needs. These findings may inform the development of any future educational interventions for GPs in the area of cancer survivorship.

Oral Presentation

Independent computerised cognitive remediation for psychosis: an investigation of patient experiences

A. Hargreaves, N. Daly-Ryan, R. Dillon & G. Donohoe, Department of Psychiatry, Trinity Centre for Health Sciences, St. James's Hospital, James's Street, Dublin 8

Introduction: Cognitive remediation (CR) training is an effective therapy, shown to improve cognitive performance and functioning in patients with psychosis. We recently conducted a randomised control trial (RCT) demonstrating the effectiveness of a new computer based training program, requiring only limited (one hour weekly) therapist

support. This study aims to assess the subjective experience of the participants in this trial.

Methods: Twenty people with psychosis conducted a post-RCT questionnaire facilitated interview, which assessed their satisfaction with CR. Thematic analysis was then employed to identify common themes.

Results: Three broad themes were identified, with participants reporting a predominantly positive experience of taking part in the therapy. In particular, participants reported improved cognition, improved positive self-regard, a development of life skills and a transfer of benefits to everyday life. Whilst there were reports of the therapy being difficult and tiring, patients expressed a positive attitude towards their therapist and often a reluctance to see the therapy come to a close.

Conclusions: It is acceptable and beneficial for patients with psychosis to undertake independent CR therapy with reduced therapist contact.

Oral Presentation

Improving pitch perception: reopening critical-period-like learning through auditory and visual disinhibition tasks in adult musicians.

Healy, M. & Roche, R. Maynooth University Psychology Department. Maynooth University. Maynooth.

Background: Absolute pitch (AP), also known as perfect pitch, is the auditory ability to identify pitch class in the absence of an external reference tone. The ability is extremely rare, occurring in an estimated 0.01% of the general population. Many studies have found an association between AP possession and early musical training, leading to the critical period hypothesis. This research aims to determine whether pitch perception can be improved by reopening critical-period-like learning in adult musicians.

Method: Twenty-three people without AP participated in a four-week training programme consisting of two disinhibition tasks: an auditory-visual Stroop task and an auditory 2-back task. A classic AP pitch-naming task was used as both an inclusion criterion, to ensure participants did not already possess AP, and as a benchmarking assessment, to measure any transfer effects of training.

Results: Training was found to improve pitch perception compared with a non-active group.

Conclusion: Understanding of the neural basis of critical or sensitive periods of brain development could enlighten strategies for improved learning into adulthood. Continued studies on AP could potentially enrich our understanding of inducing neuroplasticity in the human brain. It also provides a unique model for understanding the interactions between genetic factors and experience, especially during a sensitive period. Further research is required to enhance our understanding of inducing neuroplasticity in the human brain.

Oral Presentation

Knowledge and confidence of clinicians in an Irish CAMHS service when working with transgender youth; and the factors clinicians report will assist them in this work

S. Hodgins

Background: In 2016, the Health Service Executive (HSE) Quality Improvement Division released a report stating that Transgender youth may require significant support in the

Irish Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) due to their significant level of risk. However, it is unknown if clinicians are or feel fully equipped to support these young people.

Method: This mixed methods study evaluated the knowledge and confidence levels of clinicians in CAMHS in supporting transgender youth and to assess what would assist them in their work. A validated scale 'Counselor Knowledge about Transgender Issues Scale' and a survey was distributed to all clinicians in five Irish-based CAMHS clinics (N=71) using an online platform for anonymity. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six CAMHS clinicians from a variety of disciplines. Quantitative, content and thematic analysis were performed and integrated.

Results: Pending the start of August.

Outcome: It is hoped that this research will further the understanding into clinician knowledge and confidence in working with transgender youth. Ideally clinicians will be additionally supported by this research being able to provide recommendations on further competency development for supporting transgender youth accessing CAMHS.

Oral Presentation

Experiences of community living for adults with an intellectual disability

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Introduction The move towards deinstitutionalisation began following Wolfensberger's principle of normalisation and has since received further attention following the enactment of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 19 of this convention, outlines the right for those with a disability to live in the community with choices equal to others and the right to support services aimed at facilitating community integration and general personal assistance.

Method Semi structured interviews were conducted with residents and frontline staff who have transitioned to a single community residential setting for those with an intellectual disability. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

Results Five themes were identified; personal independence, circle of support, social activities, happy home life, and deficits in optimum care.

Conclusion While staff perceptions provide insight into potential barriers to the provision of high quality care such as those hindering a resident's ability to age in place, the transition to community living can be considered a success. A person centred ethos is to the fore and residents are, for the most part, content with their life in the community where they experience increased autonomy, independence, community integration, choice, and a high quality of life.

Poster Presentation

The effect of early adaptive schemas on theory of mind in psychosis & healthy participants, as moderated by childhood trauma.

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Introduction: Theory of mind (ToM), the ability to infer the mental states of others, is significantly impaired in psychosis. Early adaptive schemas (EAS), cognitive heuristics for how one interacts with the world, provide a promising means through which positive social environment may alter ToM.

Method: A moderation analysis was conducted to investigate the extent to which CT moderates the influence of EAS on ToM (18 patients & 38 healthy participants). To investigate the association of EAS on BOLD response during ToM, an exploratory fMRI analysis of whole brain multiple regression was performed.

Results: The effect of CT on the relationship between EAS and ToM was significant in patients, reducing the effect if EAS on ToM. However, at high CT and high EAS, the effect of EAS on ToM was reversed. The fMRI analysis resulted in significant EAS associated BOLD response in participants.

Conclusion: CT's effect on the relationship between EAS & ToM relates well with previous literature on its negative impact on social cognition. However, the antagonistic effect at high levels of EAS and CT is unexpected. It could be speculated that there is some form of corruption of EAS in the presence of the two-opposing social environmental factors.

- K -

Oral Presentation

An investigation of perspective taking and theory of mind in the general population and the impact of autism tendencies and psychosis proneness

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Introduction: The aim of the study was to examine the effect of co-occurrence of traits for autism and psychosis on mentalising abilities in a subclinical population.

Methods: 115 adults took part in this study, with an age range of 18-66 years (M= 28.17, SD= 14.54). Participants' psychosis proneness was assessed using the Community Assessment of Psychic Experiences Positive subscale (CAPE-P). Autism tendencies was measured using the Autism Quotient (AQ). Participants also completed two tasks measuring theory of mind; the Hinting task and the Reading the Mind in the Eyes task.

Results: Correlations were conducted for all four measures, and a negative binomial regression was carried out to determine whether AQ or CAPE-P scores were predictive of error scores on the two theory of mind tasks. A further negative binomial regression was carried out to determine whether gender also has an effect on AQ or CAPE-P scores.

Results show that there is a significant correlation between AQ and CAPE-P scores, but neither AQ nor CAPE-P scores were predictive of theory of mind abilities.

Conclusion: The findings are discussed in terms of the models of the relationship between autism and psychosis. Results are also considered in terms of previous findings and the wider literature on the relationship between ASD and SSD. The findings are addressed with reference to the methodological strengths and limitations of the study. The implication of the results and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

Poster Presentation

A Cross Cultural investigation of Experiential Avoidance-Individualism Collectivism and Religious Commitment

R. Kelleher

Aims: This study explored relationships between Experiential Avoidance (EA), religious commitment (RC) and individualism-collectivism (IC) in a cross-cultural female sample. EA is defined as

avoidance of internal experiences, feelings and thoughts, and apparently underlies a plethora of psychological suffering.

Method: 180 female participants from student populations at Zayed University, United Arab Emirates; and Trinity College Dublin, completed a set of online questionnaires.

Measures assessed EA

(MEAQ), individualism-collectivism (COS), religious commitment (RC-10) and depression (BDI-II).

Results: Emirati women scored higher in several subscales of EA, scored more highly in Total Individualism and Vertical Individualism, and were higher in RC than Irish females.

Emirati women were slightly higher in Total Collectivism and Vertical Collectivism. The Irish sample demonstrated a small relationship between one EA subscale and RC.

Moderate BDI scores were also related to

MEAQ scales.

Conclusion: The results support the use of the MEAQ as a clinical assessment tool for investigating EA, and contradict the assumption that the UAE is collectivistic. Recent DSM-V changes underline

the importance of these findings in highlighting the link between culture and psychology.

Clinical applications of the findings and research limitations are discussed with respect to the current literature, and recommendations for further explorations are made.



Oral Presentation

The effect of power on working memory in older adults

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Introduction: A lack of power impairs working memory. However, it is unclear whether this affects older adults. Working memory is one of the aspects of cognition that declines most with age. Older adults are often disempowered in many contexts. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate whether power affects the working memory of older adults.

Methods: To examine this, 64 older adults (22 males, $M = 72.45$ years) were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions; low-power or high-power, primed using a role-based manipulation. Participants carried out a working memory task, the n-back task, which consisted of recalling letters of varying distances apart in a sequence.

Results: An ANOVA revealed a statistically significant main effect of power on n-back results ($\eta_p^2 = .04$), demonstrating that low-power impairs working memory in older adults.

An interaction effect without statistical significance between power and level of n-back ($p = .74$) was found.

Conclusions: This showed that low-power impairs working memory. This also showed that power does not affect the working memory of older adults in complex working memory tasks more than simple working memory tasks. Results indicate change is required in public perception of older adults.

Oral Presentation

Dynamics of Father's Infant Directed Speech: Influence on Infant Language Development.

Sarah Lawson, H.Dip in Psychology, Trinity College Dublin

Infant directed speech (IDS) is thought to play an important role in infant language development however it is still widely unknown how it contributes to language development. Research has primarily focused on maternal IDS, with the limited paternal research yielding mixed findings. Methodological differences between studies are explored in this study in an attempt to identify why research analysing fathers' IDS has been so inconclusive. The present study aims to contribute to the body of research analysing fathers' IDS, to identify if fathers and mothers make the same prosodic changes to their speech when addressing infants. Infant language ability was also assessed to identify if fathers' IDS is linked to child language ability. This research was conducted as part of a larger longitudinal study in the Infant and Child Research Lab in Trinity College. 48 fathers and 45 mothers were included in this study. Audio recordings were made during semi-structured dyadic interaction between parents and their 2-year-old children. Results indicated that fathers' IDS is less dynamic in prosodic features than mother IDS. Fathers' IDS was linked to different language outcome measures than mothers' IDS. Results are discussed in the context of previous research findings, and recommendations for further research are made.

Oral Presentation

LGB experiences of the 2015 same-sex marriage referendum

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Introduction: In 2015, Ireland became the first country to legalize same-sex marriage by popular vote. To date, there have been few studies on the effects that gay, lesbian, and bisexual (LGB) centric legislation and campaigns have on LGB people.

Method: For this qualitative study, 13 LGB people participated in semi-structured interviews about their experiences during the referendum and its associated campaigns. A thematic analysis was conducted on the collected data.

Results: Identified core themes included: the referendum's symbolic nature, anxiety and fear, a changed Ireland, negative LGB associated rhetoric, taking risks, "straight-washing" the LGBT community, support structures, and the future of the LGBT community. Findings highlighted that while anti-LGB campaigns caused distress in participants, support from close personal relationships, from society, and inner resilience helped buffer against negative rhetoric, and against fears the referendum would not pass.

Conclusion: We recommend these findings be used in conjunction with previous research to inform current and future applications in the areas of therapeutic practices, research, training, education, and social policy for LGB individuals.

Poster Presentation

Exploring the Impact of Choral Singing on Mindfulness

J. Lynch & C. Wilson, School of Psychology, Trinity College Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2.

Introduction: Myriad academic research has demonstrated an empirical link between choral singing and well-being. This study investigated the construct of state mindfulness as a potential generative mechanism by which this link exists.

Method: A within-subject design measured levels of state mindfulness in choristers before and after a choir rehearsal. Assessing state mindfulness before and after listening to a piece of music at home acted as the control condition. State mindfulness was assessed by the Mindful State Questionnaire (MSQ) among a sample of 83 adult amateur choristers (65 females, mean age 51.9 years). The development and psychometric properties of the MSQ are described.

Results: Paired t-tests revealed significant increases in levels of state mindfulness for both conditions (choir singing; $t=10.82$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.58$; listening to music; $t=4.48$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.21$), however the effect sizes and confidence intervals indicated a far greater effect for the choral singing condition.

Conclusions: Findings support the hypothesis that eliciting a mindful state is a plausible generative mechanism between choral singing and well-being. Results would indicate that the MSQ is an appropriate new tool for assessing the presence or absence of a mindful state in the general population. Examples of opportunities to incorporate these findings into the promotion of mental health nationwide are discussed.

- M -

Oral Presentation

Diabetes distress and quality of life in young adults with type 1 diabetes

Áine Mahon, Department of Psychology, Maynooth University

Introduction: Research examining diabetes distress in young adults with type 1 diabetes is needed, particularly in the Irish context. This is the first quantitative study investigating diabetes distress and quality of life in young adults with type 1 diabetes. The aims of the current study were to examine the relationship between sources of diabetes distress and quality of life and to determine if such sources were effective predictors of quality of life.

Method: This study also aimed to assess overall quality of life in males and females.

Individuals aged between 18 and 30, and with type 1 diabetes were recruited.

Participants ($N = 50$) completed an online questionnaire, which incorporated a socio-demographic questionnaire, the T1 Diabetes Distress Scale and the WHO Quality of Life-BREF Scale. **Results:** Higher scores in management distress, eating distress and physician distress were associated with lower scores in psychological health, physical health and environmental functioning. Gender-related analyses showed that females reported lower overall quality of life compared to males. **Discussion:** Management distress was the only significant predictor of physical health, psychological health and environmental functioning. The current findings suggest that higher diabetes-distress scores, management distress in particular, are associated with lower quality of life.

Poster Presentation

Exploring the relationship between spirituality and self-reported levels of stress

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A significant body of quantitative research has since long established a modest but meaningful association between spiritual and religious inclinations and health. Spirituality and religiosity compose the fundamentals of who we are, and therefore should inherently be included in the investigation of the human mind. In world where people increasingly identify themselves as spiritual but not religious, the extrinsic and intrinsic aspects have been distinguished. The Spiritual Experience Index by Genia defines two key dimensions of mature faith; spiritual support (dogmatic dimension) and spiritual openness (spiritual searching), concluding that balance between these two constructs fills the criterion for mature faith. Therefore, it was hypothesized that, apart from a significant negative relationship between the perceived stress scores and the support subscale and spiritual openness subscale, there would be an interactional effect of the support and openness. The study involved eighty-seven participants with an age range of 18-63 years ($M = 28.45$; $SD = 10.60$). Ultimately, the results did not support the hypotheses stated; in fact, the participants with the mature faith disposition showed marginally elevated levels of stress compared with the other groups. Consequently, the findings were examined further and their implications considered in the light of the prevalent literature and future research.

Oral Presentation

Reactions to depression: Exploring facial cues to depression using the implicit association test

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Introduction: Studies have repeatedly shown that individuals experiencing depression elicit negative evaluations and rejection from others. Such reactions can exacerbate depression, indicating that a vicious cycle of depression may exist. The exact behaviours prompting these reactions are not clear. Recent research has indicated a role for facial cues to depression in a vicious cycle, demonstrating that such cues exist, are detectable by others and elicit negative evaluations on measures of socially-relevant traits. The current study builds on these findings.

Methods: Fifty-five students completed and Implicit Association Test (IAT). Two composite facial images, consisting of averaged faces of individuals, were used in the IAT. One composite reflected high levels of depression, the other reflected low levels. Six attribute stimuli were also used, three negative and three positive.

Results: A negative bias towards the high-depression composite was found, with participants more strongly associating it with negative attributes than with positive attributes.

Conclusions: The current findings indicate facial cues to depression can be implicitly detected by others and further support a role for them in a vicious cycle of depression. Automatic associations are also implicated in the cycle. Practical implications of these findings, and forms and origins of facial cues are discussed.

Poster Presentation

Effectiveness of a computerised cognitive rehabilitation package on restoring healthy adult cognitive functioning following acquired brain injury.

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Introduction: The efficacy of computer-based cognitive rehabilitation is inconsistently reported and hindered by a number of methodological issues, namely, a lack of adequate control groups and limited outcome measures. As such, this study investigating the effectiveness of RehaCom in remediating acquired brain injury (ABI)-related working memory and attention deficits sought to overcome these issues. Methods: Eleven individuals with ABI and 11 healthy adults were recruited. Each participant underwent nine sessions of RehaCom training making this the first study to investigate the effect of RehaCom on a normative population. Cognitive performance was assessed before and after training on goal standard measures of attention and working memory and on a measure of general cognitive functioning. Brain injury severity and levels of anxiety and depression were also analysed as potential mediators. Results: Results suggest that neither group significantly improved on any of the outcome measures and that none of the potential mediators influenced these effects. Two case-study analyses using Crawford, Garthwaite, and Porters' (2010) statistical procedure also suggested that RehaCom did not improve participants' attention and working memory. Discussion: RehaCom does not appear to be effective in remediating ABI-related cognitive deficits and the reasons and implications of this are discussed.

Oral Presentation

The Relationship between Traumatic Experiences and Alcohol/Drug Use as Reported by Young People Admitted to Youth Detention in Ireland

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Exposure to trauma is a "fact of life for delinquent youth" (Abram et al., 2004) and young people admitted to youth detention show extremely high rates of alcohol/drug use. This study examines the Traumatic Experiences (TE) and Alcohol/Drug Use (AD) as measured by the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument – Version 2 (MAYSI-2) for each young person (317 males, 18 females, aged 13 to 17) admitted to youth detention in Ireland during the period July 2014 - December 2016. Chi-square analysis was used to investigate the relationship between the young people's scores on the TE and AD subscales and showed a statistically significant association. Binary logistic regression showed that as the number of traumatic experiences increases, so too do the odds of scoring above the clinical cut-off on the AD scale. The findings underscore the link between trauma and alcohol/drug use in youth detainees and reinforce the importance of providing trauma informed care and interventions to address the multiple, complex needs of young people in youth detention.

Oral Presentation

Exploring the experiences of bereaved parents with no surviving children

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Introduction: This study explored the experiences of bereaved parents who had no surviving children (NSC) with particular reference to; how do bereaved parents reconstruct their sense of identity when they have NSC; what are the experiences of bereaved parents with NSC of seeking out and engaging with bereavement support services?

Method: A secondary data analysis was conducted using interviews from participants who had experienced the death of a child and had NSC. There were six participants with a gender ratio of 2:4. This was a qualitative phenomenological study and thematic analysis was used to analyse the data from semi-structured interviews.

Results: Themes of self-identity, legacy, benchmarking grief, connections and facilitating environment featured prominently within the corresponding master themes of 'identity', 'meaning making', 'formal bereavement supports', and 'informal bereavement supports'.

Conclusion: The bereaved parents who participated in this study displayed a strong consensus on the most significant aspects of their bereavement experience.

Recommendations in relation to specialized supports for bereaved parents with NSC were highlighted. Researcher bias was a potential limitation of this study and this was examined reflexively. Implications for further research and practice are discussed.

Oral Presentation

The INCA TM (inhaler compliance assessment TM): a comparison with established measures of adherence

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Introduction Suboptimal adherence is common in Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). The Inhaler Compliance AssessmentTM (INCA TM), a novel audio-recording device, objectively measures timing and proficiency of inhaler use. This study aimed to validate INCA TM against established adherence measures, and explore discriminant and predictive validity.

Methods Prospective observational study; 184 COPD patients used INCA TM-enabled salmeterol/fluticasone inhaler for one-month post-discharge. Area-under-the-curve metric calculated for INCATM Attempted, Attempted Interval and Actual adherence. Correlations with dose-counter, self-report and prescription refill for concurrent validity. Discriminant

validity for known-groups (t-tests) and predictive validity for health-status and quality-of-life (regressions).

Results Rates of Attempted, Attempted Interval and Actual adherence were 59%, 47% and 23%, respectively. Only 7% participants had Actual adherence >80%. INCA TM variables significantly correlated with dose counter, but not self-report. Attempted and Attempted Interval were weakly associated with prescription refill. Higher cognitive and lung functioning groups had better INCA TM adherence. Attempted and Attempted Interval predicted health status; the dose counter predicted quality-of-life.

Conclusions Actual adherence, incorporating timing and technique, was poor. INCA TM did not strongly correlate with self-report or prescription refill. The discriminant and predictive validity demonstrated by INCA TM suggests its utility as a method to identify intentional/unintentional adherence to inhaled medication and facilitate targeted intervention.

Poster Presentation

Investigating the psychosocial impact of adolescent idiopathic scoliosis

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Introduction: Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis (AIS) is a musculoskeletal condition involving sideways curvature of the spine that is typically diagnosed in young adolescent females. Acquiring a chronic health condition during adolescence presents psychological and social challenges, and adjustment to such conditions is variable. Poor body image is reported as a significant issue among females with AIS, yet more research is needed investigating the nature of their appearance concerns, and to understand the wider psychosocial impact of the condition.

Methods: This research will follow a sequential exploratory design, consisting of an initial qualitative phase that will inform a subsequent quantitative phase. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with adolescent females who have a diagnosis of AIS and are attending out-patient hospital appointments. Separate interviews will also be conducted with their parent/guardian (N=28), and interview data will be thematically analysed. Findings will inform the development of a questionnaire by generating new items and guiding the selection of relevant standardised measures. This questionnaire will subsequently be completed by a larger sample of girls with AIS.

Conclusions: The findings of this research will increase understanding of the psychosocial impact that scoliosis can have on adolescent girls, and will inform the care and support of these patients.

Oral Presentation

Enhanced attention to context: an intervention that increases perceived control in mild depression.

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Introduction: People perceive that they have control over events to the extent that the same events do not occur outside of their control, randomly, in the environment or context. Therefore, perceived control should be enhanced if there is a large contrast

between one's own control and the control that the context itself seems to exert over events. Given that depression is associated with low perceived control, we tested the hypothesis that enhanced attentional focus to context will increase perceived control in people with and without depression.

Method: A total of 106 non-depressed and mildly depressed participants completed a no control zero-contingency task with low and high outcome probability conditions. In the experimental context-focus group, participants were instructed to attend to the context, whereas in the control group, participants were instructed to attend to their thoughts.

Results: Irrespective of attentional focus, non-depressed participants displayed illusory control. However, people with mild depression responded strongly to the attention focus manipulation. In the control group, they evidenced low perceived control with classic depressive realism effects. In the experimental group, when asked to focus on the context in which events took place, participants with mild depression displayed enhanced perceived control or illusory control, similar to non-depressed participants.

Conclusion: Contextual information is a critical conditional against which people evaluate their own control and, importantly, a key discriminator between those who do and do not show signs of depression. In summary, these findings provide evidence for the critical conditional role of context in contingency learning and healthy levels of perceived control. Attention to context not only shifts attention away from self-referent and negative thoughts, but also allows one to contextualize one's own control over outcomes against those that occur randomly in the environment. Our findings may also have implications for interventions for depression (e.g., mindfulness-based cognitive therapy), which promote an increasing awareness of contextual information in the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) and thus give access to a broader stream of information to enhance perceived control.

Oral Presentation

The core features and outcomes of a specialised camp programme for children with life-limiting conditions and their families: a qualitative multi-perspective approach

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Introduction: Previous research has reported that the families of children with enduring health conditions are at risk of negative psychosocial affect. Specialised camp programmes have been proposed as a complementary intervention to support familial adjustment, however limited research has been carried out in this area.

Objective: The aim of this study was to understand and represent the core features and outcomes of a specialised camp programme for children with life-limiting conditions and their family as described by those involved in the programme.

Method: The study employed a qualitative approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four professionals (three female, one male) and three volunteers (two female, one male) involved in facilitating the programme and two mothers representing families that attended the programme. Multiple perspectives were sought to gain a detailed understanding of the programme and outcomes. Data were analysed through an inductive thematic approach.

Results: Results indicated that there was considerable overlap between participant groups with regard to views and experiences of the core features of the programme. Prominent themes included familial togetherness, safety, a positive experience and peer interaction. Memories, continued peer relations and the development of the familial relationships with the organisation were noted outcomes among participants.

Conclusion: Findings suggest that specialised camp programmes may be a beneficial complementary intervention for the families of children with life-limiting conditions, a unique group that face many difficulties and typically do not get to partake in many areas of life that are often taken for granted.

- N -

Oral Presentation

Qualitative exploration of Irish primary-school teachers' experiences of working with children who have Special Education Needs.

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Introduction: Applications of behavioural modifications have been effectively applied for children with special educational needs (SEN). Also, the new and old general allocation model has implications for how the resources are given to students, and also the level of support teacher receives when working with children with SEN. This research aims to explore primary school teachers' in Ireland awareness of behavioural modifications and the change that the new allocation model of resources entails for children with SEN and for teachers. Methods: Thematic analysis was applied to the four interviews of the teachers, and 6 themes were created. Results and Conclusion: Teachers reported low confidence in applying behavioural strategies, they were not using the behavioural modifications as prescribed as they did not identify targeted behaviours, the consequences were not delivered appropriately, interventions were not monitored for progress and there were no procedures used for phasing out the intervention. Teachers do not receive enough training within school support for managing children with SEN, and they had low awareness of the new allocation model.



Oral Presentation

Time to draw the line on visual memory tests? Clarifying the clinical utility of visual memory tests in predicting laterality in temporal lobe epilepsy (tle)

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Introduction: Neuropsychological assessment (NPax) is an integral component of pre-surgical temporal lobe epilepsy (TLE) patient workup, and provides a comprehensive and objective measure of an individual's cognitive and psychological functioning. NPax can also offer support for the lateralisation of important functions such as speech and memory. Verbal tests have been quite successful in predicting left TLE onset, while the utility of visual tests and right TLE onset remains unclear.

Methods: 44 patients were included in this study, who had undergone a comprehensive pre-surgical neuropsychological assessment.

Results: Statistically significant differences were found between left and right TLE groups on three subtests of the RCFT. Logistic regression analyses demonstrated the RCFT to be superior to the WMS-IV VR in predicting right TLE ($p < 0.005$).

Conclusion: Patients with right TLE score significantly lower than left TLE patients on the Copy, Immediate and Delayed recall tests of the RCFT. These tests can also be used to classify 70.5% of right TLE patients ($p < 0.005$). These results can inform the interpretation of visual memory tests in the pre-surgical neuropsychological assessment of epilepsy.

Oral Presentation

How can we communicate research more effectively in psychology?

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Background The process of using knowledge and making research evidence more accessible has been described as 'knowledge translation' (KT). The present study is part of the ENRICH programme (Evaluation of WRaparound in Ireland for CHildren and Families) which aims to evaluate two 'wraparound-inspired' models designed to promote child health and family well-being in the early years. The main aim of this sub-study is to identify how to improve the uptake of research evidence in the field of child and family early intervention and prevention, in a way that informs policy and practice; and to use the ENRICH programme as a KT case study.

Method This study employs a mixed-method design and includes: a realist review; documentary analysis; surveys/interviews; and the implementation and monitoring of KT activities (e.g. ENRICH e-newsletter, website). Participants primarily include policymakers, practitioners, and researchers.

Results Survey data have been collected and are currently undergoing analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data will be analysed using documentary and Framework analysis.

Conclusions Preliminary results suggest a need for greater understanding amongst researchers and community partners, of the differing KT perspectives within early intervention and prevention in Ireland. Further findings will illuminate the key mechanisms underpinning the KT process.

Oral Presentation

Environmental influences on chronic biological stress in 12-month old infants

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Chronic stress in infants has adverse effects on development (Dozier et al., 2006). Salivary cortisol, a diurnal measure of physiological stress, is linked to environmental factors. Less is known about how these factors relate to chronic biological stress as indexed by hair cortisol. This study measured infant hair cortisol over a three-month period, investigating the role of environmental risk factors such as SES, household chaos, and parental social support on chronic biological stress in 12-month-old infants. Fifty-four mother-infant dyads participated in the study. Hair samples (30cm) were collected from the posterior vertex of the infant's scalp and assayed. Income to needs ratio (ITN) was calculated and parents completed the Confusion, Hubbub and Order Scale (CHAOS), and a Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. Independent samples t-tests revealed that: ITN was significantly lower for infants with high hair cortisol [$t(52)=2.721$, $p=.009$], and household chaos was significantly higher for children with high hair cortisol [$t(51)=-2.24$, $p=0.029$]. Parental perceived social support was not related to hair cortisol in infants. The findings suggest that early adverse experiences, such as growing up in a low-income environment and chaotic households, can affect chronic biological stress in children as young as 12-months old.

Poster Presentation

Stress and anxiety of Irish based fire fighters and their coping mechanisms

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Stress perception and mechanisms for coping are two important determinants in managing stressful situations. The Irish Fire Service uses Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) to manage particularly stressful or traumatic events. The aim of the current study was to explore the CISM protocol with a sample of Irish firefighters, with a particular focus on coping mechanisms employed, and association with stress and anxiety. Other demographic variables such as age and longitude of service were also considered. A mixed method survey design was employed, with participants completing a battery of measures such as the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) and

the DASS-21. Single item questions also asked about Psychological Debriefing/Defusing after a stressful incident and stress management techniques employed, as well as if participation should be mandatory. Participants (n=72) were sampled from both an urban based station which used Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and five retained stations. A moderate positive correlation between stress and avoidance and a weak positive correlation between stress and social diversion was found. There was a significant association in stress and avoidance distraction and also in stress and emotion orientated coping. Results also suggest that 'Problem-focused' coping is the predominant coping mechanism used for Irish firefighters.

Oral Presentation

Behavioural subgroups in ASD – Insights into aggression

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Introduction: Aggressive behaviour is reportedly common for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Individuals with ASD can also have varying cognitive and adaptive presentations in addition to their aggression, making individualised treatment difficult. Identifying behavioural subgroups may achieve better insights into the behavioural mechanisms underlying aggression.

Method: Latent Class Analysis (LCA) was applied to a dataset derived from the Simons Simplex Collection (SSC) (N = 2184). Behavioural, adaptive and cognitive data were analysed to yield a latent class model outlining behavioural subgroups. Examination of relative fit statistics determined the final model chosen.

Results: A 10-class solution emerged as best fit for the dataset. Three classes presented as relatively more likely to be aggressive. These classes differed in IQ, autism severity and adaptive behaviour. Aggression was most likely where anxiety was also likely, however, classes also emerged descriptive of individuals with anxiety only.

Conclusions: The latent class model identifies possible complex interactions taking place among the broader autism clinical phenotype. IQ and adaptive behaviour may mediate aggression and anxiety. Aggression symptoms varying between subgroups may reflect varying executive function impairments.

- P -

Oral Presentation

Examining a relational frame theory (RFT) account of materialism using the implicit relational assessment procedure (IRAP).

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The research investigated contextual effects of mood on implicit and explicit measures of materialism, and investigated the mechanisms underpinning 'wanting more'. Sixty university students were recruited to participate. Participants were exposed to either a positive (n = 21), negative (n = 20) or neutral (n = 19) mood induction procedure; an Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure (IRAP) examining biases towards wanting more or less; and questionnaires assessing life satisfaction (Satisfaction with Life Scale; SWLS), materialism (Material Values Scale; MVS), and positive and negative affect (Positive and Negative Affect Schedule; PANAS). On the IRAP, shorter mean response latencies across consistent (more-positive/less-negative) compared to inconsistent (more-negative/less-

positive) trial-blocks were interpreted as an implicit bias towards wanting more. Measures of negative affect and reduced life satisfaction were significantly associated with an implicit bias towards wanting more (p 's ranging from .027 to .01, r 's ranging from -.507 to -.565). Compared to the neutral mood condition, participants in the positive mood condition demonstrated an increased bias towards wanting less ($p = .028$). The findings provide preliminary support for the IRAP as an implicit measure of 'wanting more'; and suggest that changes in mood may influence this effect. Findings are discussed from a Relational Frame Theory (RFT) perspective.

- R -

Oral Presentation

The effectiveness, feasibility and acceptability of a mindfulness-based intervention in two Irish primary schools.

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Introduction: Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have demonstrated effectiveness among children. However, in Ireland, there seems to be much practice-based evidence, yet little evidence-based practice. Therefore, this research examined the effectiveness, feasibility and acceptability of an MBI in two Irish primary schools.

Methods: Data was collected from children ($N = 155$) and teachers ($N = 9$) from one urban school and one rural school. Participants from 3rd to 6th class were assigned either to the intervention ($n = 85$) or to a control group ($n = 70$) using convenience sampling. The MBI was administered over six weeks and consisted of typical mindfulness strategies taught by the researcher and further conducted by class teachers. The control consisted of information sheets regarding the same strategies. Baseline and post testing measures included questionnaires and qualitative surveys.

Results: Preliminary analysis indicate no significant main or interaction effects between the groups. However, both quantitative and qualitative data suggest high feasibility and acceptability of this MBI.

Conclusions: Findings regarding effectiveness were inconsistent with previous literature yet feasibility and acceptability findings were consistent with empirical research. This study adds to the growing evidence for mindfulness in education in an Irish setting.

Limitations, implications and recommendations are discussed.

Oral Presentation

"What works?" Factors that determine a positive outcome from secure residential care; a young person's perspective.

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Introduction Young people in the care system typically endure higher rates of maltreatment and are at a heightened risk for an array of developmental, behavioural and psychosocial sequelae. Despite evidence of this, little information is available on the effectiveness of interventions and services addressing the complex needs of youth in residential treatment settings, particularly from the young person's perspective.

Method A qualitative study grounded in Consensual Qualitative Research was employed to delineate what elements contribute to a 'good outcome' for young people in residential care. Six young adults with experience of secure care placements were interviewed about

what, for them, defined a good outcome, what factors contributed towards this outcome and their recommendations for the service.

Results Factors that determined a good outcome included relational continuity, security, development of coping strategies and being listened to. A good outcome was defined by independent living/return to the family home, an abstinence from destructive behaviours, a progression/continuation of education, and positive relationships.

Conclusions There is an urgent need for the establishment of stable placements. A structured climate with ample supervision affords opportunities for the nurturing, caring relationships which facilitate a safety net of accessible trustworthy relationships that are crucial as the young person progresses to aftercare.

Poster Presentation

An Examination of Autism Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic Procedures within an Early Intervention Team

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INTRODUCTION: There has been significant work on the development of assessment procedures for the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders (ASD), both nationally and internationally. This assessment procedure is a resource-intensive process, which has implications for both families and under-resourced services, with increasing waiting times, and children undergoing lengthy assessments. This audit explores the tools and methods used by psychologists to diagnose children with ASD within the local early intervention service.

METHOD: Descriptive data was gathered via retrospective file review on all children in the local EIT who received an ASD diagnosis in 2015. The data was analysed using Excel.

RESULTS: A variety of different pathways were used in the assessment process, which was adapted to the needs and presentations of each child. Forty-two children received a diagnosis of ASD, ten of these children received a stream-lined diagnostic process, with the diagnosis being made within the multi-disciplinary team assessment. All the assessments involved a variety of psychometric tools. Despite the adaptability of the assessment procedure, waiting times were still above that of recommended time-frames.

CONCLUSION: The implications of this study highlight the need for flexibility and clinical judgement within diagnostic procedures to manage waiting times and to provide a high quality, and family-focused service.

- S -

Poster Presentation

Staff and public attitudes towards sexuality, marriage and parenting regarding people with intellectual disabilities

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Introduction: The aim of this study was to explore differences between staff and public attitudes towards sexuality, marriage and parenting in relation to people with intellectual disabilities (PWID) and to explore the impact of age groups and religious beliefs.

Methods: A mixed method cross sectional design was employed with a qualitative and quantitative aspect. There were 222 participants (120 staff and 102 public) who

completed online the Attitudes to Sexuality Questionnaire (Individuals with an Intellectual Disabilities [ASQ-ID] by Cuskelly and Gilmore (2007).

Results: Significant differences were found between staff and public attitudes towards sexuality. Participants reporting non-religious beliefs were slightly more positive in their attitudes towards sexuality and marriage. Analysing attitudes towards marriage is an addition to the research. Staff were more aware of the law pertaining to PWID and their sexuality. Five themes emerged from thematic analysis regarding awareness of the law. It was found the law needs reform.

Conclusions: Future research is needed in the area of sexuality and PWID as there is mixed findings in the literature. There were limited studies conducted on religious beliefs. There was no research found discussing marriage as a separate topic. Awareness should be raised regarding the law pertaining to PWID.

Oral Presentation

An investigation into the protective factors against mental ill-health which are available to women on the autism spectrum in Ireland

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Introduction: Few studies explore the subjective experience of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), with fewer still focusing on the experiences of women. This gap in research impacts on the psychological practices tailored for people with a diagnosis. This study thus seeks to examine the protective factors which are available to women on the autism spectrum in Ireland.

Method: Ten women with a diagnosis of ASD participated in semi-structured interviews. The interviews focused specifically on general coping strategies employed by participants, their utilisation of social supports and their experiences as service users. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the resulting data.

Results: Social and personal factors which promote mental wellbeing amongst women with ASD were identified, as were areas for development in existing services. Initial themes included: the impact of age at diagnosis on coping, the service-user as the expert and the importance of relationships.

Conclusion: The findings of the study will contribute to changes in the nature of community-based therapy provision for females on the autism spectrum and advocate for an individualized, patient centered approach to mental health care for individuals with ASD.

Oral Presentation

Musical bumps: a preliminary study of music-evoked autobiographical memories in adults with hydrocephalus

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Introduction Autobiographical memory, describing the personal memories we hold of ourselves and our experiences, is a complex cognitive function, serving several purposes crucial for daily life. Damaged autobiographical memory can have devastating consequences. Memory impairments are characteristic in individuals with hydrocephalus. What remains unclear is whether these impairments extend to affect autobiographical

memory. This research aimed to investigate autobiographical memory in individuals with hydrocephalus compared to a control cohort of healthy participants.

Methods Natural autobiographical memories were elicited through the use of musical cues. The temporal distribution of participants' memories, associated with each song, were examined. Memory content and frequency for each song choice were also analysed.

Results Significant differences were found in the temporal distribution of hydrocephalus participants' memories across the lifespan compared to the control cohort. The standard 'reminiscence bump' pattern was not seen for participants with hydrocephalus. Analyses of memory content revealed that participants with hydrocephalus reported fewer memories overall, with reduced memory specificity, and a higher number of personal semantic memories compared to control participants.

Conclusions This study demonstrated a level of autobiographical memory impairment associated with hydrocephalus. These results generate new insights into the area of autobiographical memory in individuals with hydrocephalus.

- T -

Oral Presentation

Predictors of Job Satisfaction in Irish Based Teachers

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Introduction: This research explores the job satisfaction of Irish teachers and its predictors. Specifically, self-efficacy, motivation, perceived stress, and years of service were hypothesised to predict job satisfaction amongst primary and post-primary teachers. The current study was undertaken in light of the potential effects of recent changes in teachers' working conditions including changes to pay scales, proposed curriculum reform and imposed professional obligations.

Methods: An online cross-sectional, correlational study was used to collect data from Irish based primary and post-primary school teachers. Data was gathered using non-probability and snowball sampling. A convenience sample of two hundred and sixty-two participants was employed to gather data. Four different quantitative measurements were used: Perceived Stress Scale, Job Satisfaction Scale, Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale and Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale. Qualitative and quantitative data was analysed using thematic analysis and SPSS.

Results: Perceived stress, amotivation and intrinsic motivation were significant predictors of job satisfaction. Both primary and post-primary school teachers had scores in the Perceived Stress Scale that reflect high stress.

Conclusions: Perceived stress, amotivation and intrinsic motivation were significant predictors of job satisfaction. Stress alleviating courses, CPD courses and changes to teachers' workload are recommended to reduce perceived stress in Irish based teachers.

- W -

Oral Presentation

Creating good lives: an application of the good lives model to individuals with intellectual disabilities and sexual offending behaviour

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Introduction: When an individual with an intellectual disability (ID) commits a criminal act, such as a sexual offense, for many reasons they may not be dealt with through the criminal justice system. As such, the responsibility of managing the level of risk they pose to others lies with those who support them, including organisations such as the Brothers of Charity (BOC). Typically, in such instances a risk management approach is utilised whereby the level of risk is assessed and an extensive list of protocols which may include restrictive practices, are developed and implemented. In line with best practice with non-ID offender populations, the BOC Galway aims to extend the single faceted risk management approach to include a more strengths based approach such as Wards Good Lives Model (GLM). This model of rehabilitation seeks to equip the individual with the skills, beliefs, and values needed to develop a life that is healthy, self-determined and free from the risk of offending. Method: This will be piloted with three men with ID who have engaged in sexually harmful behaviours toward others. An adapted GLM workbook has been developed and will be completed by staff and the men in conjunction with Psychology department. Conclusion: It is hoped that this model will lead to a reduction in risk and associated restrictive practices for these men.

Oral Presentation

The children metacognitive task (CMCT): developing an assessment tool measuring children's metacognition of emotion.

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Introduction The aim of the present study is to develop a scale that measures children's metacognition, identify the psychometric properties of the scale and explore the relationship between CMCT and intelligence.

Methods The study was quantitative in nature. To calculate results Cronbach's Alpha, Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Pearson's Product Moment Correlations were performed. There were 288 participants'; 140 boys and 148 girls, ages ranged between 7 and 13 (M= 10.32, SD= 1.82).

Results In line with hypothesis 1, CMCT is an appropriate measure for assessing children's metacognition ($\alpha = 0.73$), however its psychometric properties are not clearly identifiable. PCA revealed three components that had eigenvalues greater than one, which explained the 29.17%, 11.67% and 10.87% variances. The second hypothesis, partially proven as responses to CMCT Intuition 2 questions ($r = 0.22$, $p = 0.01$) were influenced by intelligence, whereas CMCT Intuition 1 and Afraid I1 responses were not ($r = 0.15$, $p = 0.06$).

Conclusions An appropriate measure assessing metacognition, in line with aim of this study, was developed. The unexpected outcomes of the study, such as the relationship between fear and metacognition, should be addressed in future research. It is hoped that the CMCT will be used for this purpose and developed further in future.