

Stress and Anxiety Biannuals

Official Newsletter of the Stress and Anxiety Research Society

Newsletter Editor:

Tobias Ringeisen
 Federal University of Applied Sciences (Germany)
 E-mail: tobias.ringeisen@bzms.bfinv.de

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Presidential’s and Secretary / Treasurer’s Note

Dear STAR colleagues,

We would like to warmly welcome you to our new STAR Newsletter “Stress & Anxiety Biannuals” in its completely new ‘outfit’ written by our new STAR Newsletter Editor Tobias Ringeisen. We are looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with Tobias and to receiving stunning news twice a year!



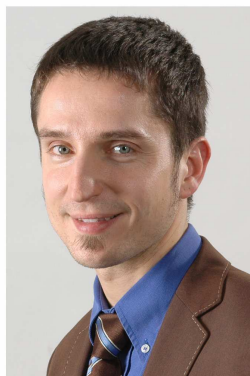
At this place we also would like to thank Cecil Hiraldo and everyone else who was involved in the arduous business of organizing the last STAR conference in the beautiful Dominican Republic! We got down to the business of communicating our research and ideas to each other, but we also did not forget to maintain the STAR tradition of having lots of fun as well!

Regards,

Michael Eysenck & Petra Buchwald

Newsletter Editor's Note

Reading this STAR Newsletter, you will notice a moderate face-lifting in editing, appearance and contents. These changes trace back to the latest STAR Board meeting (see p. 4), during which I was appointed as new STAR Newsletter Editor. During the meeting, it was also decided to provide you with a newsletter twice a year, and thus change its name to "Stress and Anxiety Biannuals". Depending on contributions, the Newsletter should include the following sections regularly:



- Reports in meetings of the STAR Board and the National Representatives
- A pre-/review on the upcoming / latest STAR conference
- A conference calendar on upcoming conferences
- A brief article on recent new research or interesting study reviews
- Miscellaneous (Book reviews, publication announcements, important links ...)
- STAR at a glance

In case you wish to share information with all STAR members or provide a contribution to any of these sections, please feel free to contact me. Especially, I want to encourage young scholars and students to indicate their interest for submitting an article for an upcoming edition of the Newsletter. For this issue, you will find a brief review on self-construals, coping and well-being, compiled by Petra Buchwald, Hanns Martin Trautner, and myself.

Finally, I briefly want to introduce myself. My main interests refer to antecedents and consequences of stress-related processes in education and the workplace, with a particular emphasis on cultural issues. I was the first recipient of the STAR Student Development Award in 2006, and recently completed my dissertation on a dissection of cultural variance in exam-related emotions and coping by means of self-construals. From August 15, 2007, I will be joining the Federal University of Applied Sciences in Münster, Germany, serving as a lecturer and researcher.

Tobias Ringeisen

Board Meeting Report

This year's Board Meeting of the STAR Society took place on July 18, 2007, during the 28th Stress and Anxiety Research Society Conference, held at Bavaro-Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic. The meeting was attended by the following Board Members:

- Michael Eysenck (President)
- Petra Buchwald (Secretary / Treasurer)
- Erica Frydenberg (Book Review Editor)
- Tobias Ringeisen (Newsletter Editor)
- Christine Schwarzer (Substitute for Past President Volker Hodapp)

Due to health problems, Volker Hodapp (Past President) and Kate Moore (President Elect) could not attend the conference.

The Board Meeting came to the following conclusions:

- In order to give Board decisions a broader democratic fundament, the traditional STAR Board can invite the members of the extended STAR Board for attendance and full participation. The extended Board consists of the STAR Journal Editors ("Anxiety Stress, and Coping"; Krys Kaniasty and Joachim Stoeber), the Book Review Editor (Erica Frydenberg), and the Newsletter Editor (Tobias Ringeisen).
- Representing a standard in international research societies, STAR is going to have a constitution. STAR President Michael Eysenck will provide the Board with a first constitutional draft which will then be discussed among the National Representatives and the STAR Board.
- In December 2007, an extraordinary Board meeting will take place in London to discuss details of the drafted constitution and support the local organizing committee of the next STAR conference in London and applicants for the second next STAR conference
- One important aspect of the constitution will define rights and duties of the National Representatives (NRs) in greater detail. It is suggested that NRs should attend the STAR conferences on a regular basis. In case they fail to do so for two years in a row, they will be replaced

- Considering the large amount of researchers in the area of stress, anxiety and coping in the United States, it was decided to have more than one NR for the US. David Manier (Lehman College, City University of New York) and Brian Hall (Kent State University, Ohio) were elected as new NRs.
- Those who contribute to and publish in the official Journal of the STAR Society, “Anxiety Stress, and Coping”, should be encouraged to become regular STAR members.
- Future STAR conference organizers will have to adhere to the conference guidelines (see www.star-society.org), by reporting to the Board. Details will be fixed in the constitution.
- Starting with the new Newsletter Editor Tobias Ringeisen, the modified STAR Newsletter will appear twice a year and was thus renamed “Stress and Anxiety Biannuals”. Depending on the contributions from the STAR members, upcoming editions of the Newsletter are planned to contain the following:
 - Reports of meetings of the STAR Board / National Representatives
 - A pre-/review on the upcoming / latest STAR conference
 - A conference calendar on upcoming conferences
 - A brief article on recent new research or interesting study reviews
 - Miscellaneous (Book reviews, publication announcements, important links ...)
 - STAR at a glance
- Candidates for the President Elect position have to present themselves on the STAR website and describe their goals and ideas for development of the STAR Society
- Future STAR conference keynotes should be published in “Anxiety Stress, and Coping”

Conference Review: 28th STAR conference Bavaro-Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

The 28th Stress and Anxiety Research Society Conference was held in Bavaro-Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, from July 19-22, 2007. For the first time, the STAR conference was launched in a Caribbean country of Latin America, which proved to be a beautiful spot full of warmth and hospitality. For his tremendous efforts in organizing the conference, a special thank goes to Cecil Hiraldo, who served as local organizer and NR of the Dominican Republic. The conference focused on a number of selected topics, including the evaluation of positive and negative emotions, stress and anxiety due to chronic illnesses and HIV-AIDS, treatment and intervention for negative emotions and stress, psychophysiological aspects, cross-cultural issues, and assessment of stress, anxiety and coping.

Complementarily to these topics, a number of distinguished key note speakers were invited. Charles Spielberger (University of South Florida, USA) gave an overview of his work on anger, relating its assessment to Type-A behavior and the risks of heart diseases. Introducing the perspective of an experienced clinical therapist, the former President of the American Psychological Association (APA), Gerald Koocher (Simmons College, USA), presented a therapeutic approach which helps parents to deal with a child's death. In his talk, Peter Lang (University of Florida) linked the psychophysiology of anxiety with neural imaging techniques, which enables a different of anxiety disorders based on emotional processing characteristics.



BREAKING CONFERENCE NEWS!!! During this year's STAR conference, Distinguished Professor Dr. Charles Spielberger (University of South Florida, USA) announced a very generous donation of \$25,000 US to the STAR Society. In the future, this money should be used for promoting young researchers, guest speakers and the development of the society. STAR wishes to express deep gratitude to Distinguished Professor Dr. Charles Spielberger for this generous contribution.

In terms of symposia, papers and posters, the great variety of contributions was worth noticing. A number of contributions focused on the consequences and coping efforts to deal with chronic illnesses in various age populations. Particular emphasis was given to HIV-AIDS, which represents a serious health issue in many countries world-wide. Also from a health psychological perspective, a great number of symposia and papers focused on the psycho-social consequences of trauma, may it terrorist attacks, abuse and violence or consequences of war exposure. Aside from impaired psychological well-being, a considerable proportion of papers focused on positive emotions and the search for meaning during in daily stressful circumstances. Examples comprised social processes and support at work, well-being of adolescents in relation to developmental challenges, or emotional intelligence in the workplace. To foster reception of the conference among the local research community, an entire symposium was organized in Spanish, dealing with the psychopathological consequences of the 2004 Madrid terrorist attacks.



At the conference dinner, the annual STAR Awards were presented. For her outstanding work on various topics in the area of stress and health such as burnout in education, stress in the elderly, test anxiety and Christine

Schwarzer (University of Düsseldorf, Germany) received the Lifetime Career Award. For his work on stress, anxiety and psychophysiological correlates, Brian Hughes (National University of Ireland in Galway) won the Early Career Award. Finally, Student Development Award went to Brian Hall (Kent State University) for his contribution to post-traumatic growth.

STAR Proceedings 2007 - CALL FOR PAPERS

STAR is going to publish proceedings from the last conference in the Dominican Republic. If you joined the conference and want to contribute please send your abstract to Petra Buchwald.

E-mail: buchwald@phil-fak.uni-duesseldorf.de

Self-construals, coping and well-being: A paradigm to dissect cultural variability in stress-related variables?

Petra Buchwald (University of Düsseldorf)

Tobias Ringeisen (Federal University of Applied Sciences, Münster)

Hanns Martin Trautner (University of Wuppertal)

In the recent past, the tripartite model of self-construal (SC) was suggested as a helpful tool to dissect cultural variability in stress-related emotions and coping within and between national samples (e.g., Cross et al., 2000; Kashima et al., 2002; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). SCs capture the degree to which the self is conceptualized as "... separate from [...] or [...] connected with others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). Depending on the nature of this connectedness, the three facets of independent, collective and relational self-construal can be differentiated. The independent self considers itself to be separate from others and thus emphasizes personal characteristics, abilities, and interests. Maintenance of autonomy is of primary importance. Collective selves define themselves by social roles or membership in formal networks and groups. Accordingly, collective selves aim at strengthening formal social ties by promoting mutual face saving and harmony maintenance (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). Relational selves define themselves by means of intimate relationships with one's spouse, family, or close friends. Being relational thus captures the intensity of personal connections one feels with significant others, with whom mutual exchange and commitment constitute primary goals (Cross et al., 2000; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001).

Each person is characterized by a stable pattern on these three dimensions, of which two are usually dominant. Within populations, a number of intensity patterns is possible, though only three to four types have consistently been found across sample of more than 20 countries (cf. e.g., Green et al., 2005; Kim et al., 1996; Ringeisen, in press; Yamada & Singelis, 1999). Accounting for systemic intensity differences in self-construals, cultural variability in stress-related emotions, well-being or coping can thus be dissected at different levels of analysis (individual, group or country level; cf. Kashima et al., 2002; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001; van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Examples include a comparison of (ethnic) groups at the group level within countries (for Germany, e.g., Hannover, 2002; Röder & Hannover, 2002; for the US, e.g., Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Burlinson & Mortenson, 2003; Lam & Zane, 2004), an analysis of within-national variance (e.g., Burlinson & Mortenson, 2003; Ringeisen & Buchwald, 2006), or a comparison of national samples at the country level (e.g., Abe, 2004; Bresnahan et al., 2004; Oishi & Diener, 2001; Ringeisen, in press).

In terms of key variables, a number of studies were conducted on the relations between SCs and dispositional and/or situational variables of the stress process. Among dispositional variables, coping styles and indicators of well-being like optimism or self-efficacy were of main interest, while situational variables focused mainly on coping reactions and state emotions. For dispositional variables, strong relations with SCs were found which varied only to a small extent across cultures (e.g., Cross et al., 2003; Moscovitch et al., 2005). For coping reactions and state emotions, however, the predictive strength of self-construals varied across situations, since the constellation of environmental conditions may accentuate a person's self-construal profile (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In accordance with such differences, research findings on the relation between coping and emotions are presented separately for traits (coping styles and well-being), and states (coping reactions and emotional responses) in the following.

For coping styles, the relation with SCs was found to be quite consistent at different levels of analysis (individual, group, and country level). In case the strength of relations varied across groups within national samples, SCs instead of ethnicity accounted for a great deal of variance (e.g., Lam & Zane, 2004). In essence, a high independent self fosters an active confrontational approach with little avoidant coping, which promotes maintenance of one's own face. Accordingly, communication varies between a dominating / accusing style and a constructive / emotionally adaptive approach, depending on relationship quality with the interaction partner (Kim et al., 2004; Oetzel, 2001; Sinclair & Fehr, 2005). For the sake of other-face maintenance, a high collective self mainly engages in passive and socially adaptive strategies which ensure a provision of support to others and maintain harmony within professional networks (e.g., Cross, 1995; Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995; Morling & Fiske, 1999). Examples comprise considerate action, indirect action, or avoidance. Complementary communication varies in terms of activity, ranging from enduring passivity to an active initiation of cooperation.

A high relational self-construal also precipitates the use of social coping styles, though the focus is opposite: Rather than providing social support, high relationals actively exchange support with significant others for mutual benefit, especially in highly individualistic environments like educational settings (Cross & Vick, 2001; Ringeisen & Buchwald, 2006). To date, however, research still lacks a comprehensive examination how relational interdependence is systematically linked to interpersonal communication during stress exposure. Extrapolating from the findings by Cross and colleagues (Cross et al., 2003; Cross & Gore, 2004), it seems likely that the quality of a specific relationship and its subjective relevance might affect communication in a significant way.

With regard to indicators of well-being, relation patterns with the three SCs were also found to be more or less universal across cultures. Initially, research identified an independent self to be conducive to well-being, while inverse patterns were found for collective and relational SCs. These findings were attributed to differential sensitivity levels among the three SCs for distress in the social environment - may it be for formal networks or for close others. Levels proved to be high for collective and relational but low for independent selves (e.g., McGrath et al., 1990; Singelis et al., 1999). Hannover and colleagues (Hannover & Kühnen, 2002; Pöhlmann et al., 2002) criticized such findings to represent a conceptual flaw since the majority of available studies used westernized measures of well-being which only addressed independent aspects of the self. To obtain a more differentiated picture of the relations between SCs and well-being, the authors suggested to use additional measures of contextual sensitivity which capture the consequences of own vs. other's face loss in the presence of an audience.

In support of this approach, the collective SC was found to be positively, and the independent SC to be negatively linked to social anxiety and embarrassability. The latter two constructs both characterize the consequences of own face loss occurring in the presence of others. Result patterns were equivalent across national samples at the country level (Dinnel et al., 2002; Okazaki, 2000; Singelis & Sharkey, 1995), as well across ethnic groups (Okazaki, 1997) and both sexes (Moscovitch et al., 2005) within the US. Conversely, neither the collective nor the relational SC were related to non-social measures of well-being like optimism or self-efficacy (Ringeisen, in press). Positive relations between the collective self and well-being emerged for communal mastery and collective self-esteem (Pöhlmann et al., 2002; Buchwald, 2004). The latter two relation patterns usually build up when others are consistently perceived to provide orientation for adequate reaction, reduce the risk of own face loss, or provide support if own face loss happens. As a consequence, collective selves tend to confront individualistic and competitive environments only in conjunction with others. In case these social networks are not available for compensation over prolonged periods, increasing levels of trait anxiety may be the consequence (Cross & Vick, 2001; Oishi & Diener, 2001).

For highly independent people, well-being obviously does not depend on activation of social networks or successful social adaptation, but is primarily fostered by internal resources like individual self-efficacy or self-esteem (cf. Pöhlmann et al., 2002; Singelis et al., 1999). Conversely, Cross and colleagues (2000, 2002, 2003) found no association between levels of relational interdependence and measures of internal well-being like life satisfaction, individual self-esteem or optimism, but positive relations with dyadic mastery, high relationship satisfaction, and positive relational self-concept.

Considering the relationships between coping responses, state emotions, and SCs, direction and strength of relations were found to vary with contextual characteristics and the cultural background of national samples. Aside from acknowledging differences in chronic self-construal profiles within and between national samples, Hardie et al. (2005) thus suggested to categorize stressor situations as independent (I), collective (C), and relational (R), and then explore the differential links between each SC facet and corresponding stressor categories. Research yielded inconsistent findings either supporting a self-stress incongruence model (a strong self-facet fostered impaired well-being in a mismatch stressor domain, e.g., Hardie et al., 2005), or a self-stress congruence model (ill-being was fostered by a strong self-facet if a matching stressor occurred, e.g. Bacon, 2001; Cross & Markus, 1991, Uskul, 2005). Though some of these studies incorporated cross-cultural comparisons, all suffered from single assessments of emotions and coping only for selected stressor categories. None of them dissected the differential relations between each of three SCs and I-stressors, C-stressors, and R-stressors at once.

To address these shortcomings, Ringeisen and colleagues (Ringeisen, 2007; Ringeisen & Trautner, 2007) conducted two 14-day diary studies on daily stressors with German adolescent and student samples. Applying content analysis, reported stressor events were categorized into I-, C-, and R-categories, and data points within each category were aggregated. Findings suggested that the (in-)congruence models are differentially valid for each self-construal facet across the three stressor domains. For collective and relational selves, a self-stress congruence model held for the matching social stress domain, while an incongruence model was valid for independent stressors. For the independent SC, a congruence model of well-being applied for all stressors, showing positive relations with positive emotions, and inverse relations with negative emotions. Obviously, a strong relational self enhanced ill-being for relational and independent stressors, but greater well-being for collective stressors. Conversely, a high collective self enhanced well-being for relational stressors, but fostered ill-being for collective and independent stressors. A high independent self only fostered well-being across all three stressor categories.

Overall, there is accumulating evidence that cultural variability in stress-related emotions and coping can effectively be dissected by means of the tripartite SC model at different levels of analysis. However, it should be noted that cultural variance in relation patterns among SCs and indicators of well-being was rather small for dispositional measures, while greater variability emerged for situational variables. For the latter, self-stress (in-) congruence models are obviously differentially valid for each of the three SCs. A meaningful dissection of cultural variability thus requires a systemic cross-cultural comparison of these relation patterns for the I-, the C-, and the R-facet and corresponding stressor categories in future studies.

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Upcoming conferences in the area of stress, anxiety and coping

2007

6-7 September, 2007

Fourth Annual IHPM European Health & Productivity Congress - "The Significance of Health in Human Capital Management"

Leixlip (Dublin), Ireland

http://www.ihpm.org/EU%20Congress%202007/EU%20Congress_2007.pdf

12-14 September, 2007

Annual Conference of the BPS Division of Health Psychology

Nottingham, UK

<http://www.dhp2007.org.uk/>

17-19 September, 2007

8th Biennial Conference of the DGPs, Division of Health Psychology

[8. Kongress für Gesundheitspsychologie]

Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany

<http://www.ph-gmuend.de/gesundheit/index.php>

7-8 November, 2007

Cross-Disciplinary research Group (CDRG) Conference:

Promoting and Facilitating Research Dialogue across the Disciplines:

Exploring Avenues to Cross-Disciplinary Research

The University of Nottingham, UK

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cdrp/conference2007/>

27-29 November, 2007

Men & Organisations: Health as the central issue in the enterprise

France and Luxembourg,

<http://ehps.net/news/other/Flyer.pdf>

December 10, 2007

Health and Behaviour: population or individual action for change?

UK Society for Behavioural Medicine Annual Scientific Meeting

Warwick, UK

<http://www.uksbm.org.uk/>

2008

27 June, 2008

THE Stress Conference 2008
The Institute of Child Health, Bloomsbury, London
<http://www.isma.org.uk/conf08.htm>

13-17 July 2008

20th Biennial ISSBD Meeting
Würzburg, Germany
<http://www.issbd2008.de/>

July 16-18, 2008

29th STAR conference
London, United Kingdom
www.bbk.ac.uk/psyc/star/

16-20 July 2008

14th European Conference on Personality (ECP14)
Tartu, Estonia
<http://www.ecp14.ee/>

July 20 - 25, 2008

XXIX International Congress of Psychology (ICP)
Berlin, Germany
<http://www.icp2008.de/>

27-31, July 2008

19th International Congress of the International Association for Cross- Cultural Psychology (IACCP)
Bremen, Germany
<http://www.jacobs-university.de/schools/shss/kboehnke/10526/>

9- 12, September, 2008

22nd Conference of the European Health Psychology Society
Bath, UK

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e-mail: M.Eysenck@rhul.ac.uk

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e-mail: J.Stoeber@kent.ac.uk

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e-mail: tobias.ringeisen@bzms.bfinv.de

STAR Forum

In the member section of the STAR website, you find the STAR Forum. All STAR members are kindly invited to use that platform for fruitful discussions and exchange about research and applied issues in the areas of anxiety, stress and coping.

29th STAR conference (July 16-18, 2008)

The next STAR conference will be held at the School of Psychology, Birkbeck College, University of London, UK. For the most recent information on registration abstract submission, please take a regular look at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/psyc/star/>.

For those of you, who plan to attend STAR and the XXIX International Congress of Psychology (ICP) in Berlin 2008, there a number of very cheap airlines which offer within-European service. Tickets can easily be purchased over the internet. A list of all airlines can be found and information on booking can be found at <http://www.cheap-flights-corner.com/de/billigflieger/>