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About Drugs, Tickle and Laughter

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This work aims, with some daily and clinical situations, a reflection on laughter mainstreamed by certain Freudian references, especially those on the joke and humor, pointing the furtive presence of death drive even when it seems at stake is the joy, the relief, consolation.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, death drive, drugs, laughing, tickling

To introduce the theme indicated initially I want to present two situations. The first is a banal scene: I was telling a friend some misfortune that happened to me recently to which he replied roaring with laughter. In fact the events bordered the disaster, then I wondered, where has he found reasons to laugh? The second is a clinical situation: an alcohol abuser patient invited to reflect on his insistence on the pursuit of the ultimate dose (The final one! Now the last drink! One more to finish the night) at the time he became aware that he has been guided by a desire for death, he laughed like a lost.

Let's highlight from these scenes this aspect: the discovery of a death wish, as well as the encounter with the tragic dimension can make someone laugh!

This banality, that is laughter, cannot be sufficiently understood by most of us, although it is a common presence in our daily lives and psychoanalysis has something to say about the phenomenon. Then I will dedicate myself to discuss some of that.

Freud did not carry out this work—although his interest in the joke—because he was satisfied with the theory of a neurologist of his time, named Spencer. This theory—initially adopted by the founder of psychoanalysis without much criticism—says that laughter is the release of a certain amount of energy whose accumulation proved to be useless.

Maybe Freud has accepted this explanation because it was a biological metaphor and an approximate causal hypothesis of a psychic phenomenon. But this way, we'd laugh because we've made provisions of "psychic energy" which proved to be useless and that is released into laughter. We would run more or less like a pressure cooker and its safety valve. Everything would be fine because with this explanation we would have the cause of laughter. But we lose its meaning, that by which psychoanalysis is more radically interested.

Interestingly, however, it is that the note 3 in Chapter VI of *Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), we can read:

Many of my patients while under psychoanalytic treatment are wont to prove regularly by their laughter that I have succeeded in demonstrating faithfully to their conscious perception the veiled unconscious; they laugh also when the content of what is disclosed does not at all justify this laughter. To be sure, it is conditional that they have approached this unconscious closely enough to grasp it when the physician has conjectured it and presented it to them.

But having “approached this unconscious closely enough to grasp it” will be enough to laugh? And what to think about the fact that “they laugh also when the content of what is disclosed does not at all justify this laughter”?

Freud indices hardly give us references to the word laughter. If I’m not mistaken, almost all of them refer to the text of the Wit.

We know that a lapse produces a kind of restlessness when we do not disclose its meaning and that if we guess its meaning, it can make us laugh. Hence we can think of a relief, a tension that stops and makes from laughter the safety valve.

However, some other authors think that this can be explained even better for an annulment: evidenced specifically in compulsive acts and obsessive ceremonials of the *Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis* (1909), the retroactive annulment mechanism was explained by Freud in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926 [1925]). He has two times, and the second is the deletion of the first, tending to transform an event as if it had not happened. Also involved in the repetition compulsion, which is made an effort to undo the traumatic experience, the purpose of cancellation refers therefore to the drives of destruction, or the death drive, to the extent that it would seek the annulment of tensions .

Thus, the attempt to eliminate the traces of a history or to erase a conflict may become a cancellation threat of the subject—via the signifier deletion that inscribed him. But when the desire comes into play through the transformation of passive into active (underlined by Freud on *Female Sexuality* (1931), as the children’s game in which the subject actively repeat the experiences suffered passively), another route may open to the conflict instead of canceling it, it’ll be able to present itself in a new way (Kaufmann, 1996, p. 44).

So we can think that anxiety and restlessness and anger when they are without justification, they metabolize into laughter. Here we have now an advantage over the safety valve approach because we enter into the problem of meaning, of the signified.¹

Let us take a simple game pointed out by Freud—an opportunity for him to prove the existence of infantile sexuality—that is the laughter of tickling. If we do not doubt of infantile sexuality, we may doubt that tickles are a good example of its existence—after all, if it’s all about sex, sex does not explain anything!

Of course there is a relationship between laughter and sex: the literature does not cease to produce examples, however, it is something very different: It is the ridiculous! Imagine the scene: a beautiful, manly guy comes into a nightclub with his girlfriend pulled by hand... gives an overall look, goes to a table and already calls on and starts struggling if she looks around, because he has already located, according to its own criteria of taste, the rival she will certainly flirt with and he will have to overcome strutting! If we laugh at that scene is more because of a sort of defense against megalomaniacal overvaluation of the phallus... comic by itself!

But maybe we can take the laughter of tickling as the first model of laughter, or as pointed out by Mannoni (1992, p. 68), all the causes that provoke it would foreshadow all other vicissitudes of laughter. Because there are also aggressive and defensive drives in tickles! They generate an ambiguous pleasure, mixed with a kind of anxiety—the child asks to stop before she has a painful convulsive reaction! But then the tickle resembles precisely the aggression... to laugh. And the child understands it so, that’s why she laughs and defends herself at the same time.

¹ We are using the words “signifier” (signifiant), and “signified” (signifié), according to Saussure’s theory of the sign (1857-1913), reviewed by J. Lacan.

Let's take a simple example: If we put a pet on your lap and do tickled, it reacts like this: he grasps, without biting the hand that caresses, shows the claws if it is a cat! It's its way of saying "Enough! Stop!", a form of threat that opposes the threat... both to laugh about! It is not deceived that it is an aggression to laugh, and responds by inhibiting its aggression without, however, failing to express it! It is a beginning of communication, since it presupposes a further retention of a discharge excitation.

The important thing is that it can make us dismiss the idea that laughter was a reflex action. Note that a threat to tickle a child is enough to make her start laughing. And you cannot tickle yourself: this must be an interpersonal situation. The same does not occur, for example, with the knee-jerk reflex: the mere threat does not causes it and I cannot produce it in myself.

I mean, then, that the possibility that someone might respond with a defense of laughter (without mockery, although this is not very different) is something that, in a way, resembles the laughter of tickling: you cannot ward off feeling of danger, while knowing that the danger does not exist. Thus, the unrestrained laughter of the patient, to which I referred earlier, reveals that the unconscious death wishes never hurts anyone (except those who gives them shelter) and laughter at that revelation must have a meaning.

If the "rat man" (1909) had no desire to laugh when Freud addressed this issue, it is because he was too terrified at the unknown that Freud showed him and because the insistence of Freud at this point made the issue too serious!

We know there are laughs that are paradoxical, compulsive and frantic, embarrassing for those who are victims of them, scandalous for those who witness them, though often contagious: everyone must have heard Hebe Camargo telling how she, Lolita Rodrigues and Nair Bello, always find a silly thing in a funeral that makes them laugh compulsively, in a way that the three of them end up having to withdraw the exequies.²

What Mannoni (1992, p. 72) considers in the quoted text is that the desire for death becomes innocent when it becomes conscious. Even unconscious it was harmless, but it changes its nature, or place, when aware of it, to the point of making people laugh. It can be said that becoming aware of it, it becomes imaginary, it reveals its unreality.

But we have to understand well: the sense of the word "imaginary" is not the same when I identify myself with someone and feel embarrassed and when I imagine a friend coming for a visit long promised! The first "imaginary" refers to the order of speculation, it is unconscious and tends to the regulation of narcissistic fluctuations. The second depends on the fantasy, conscious fantasy and relates to the common situation of formulating ideas about the possibilities of the future.

Thus, when we say that the desire for death, when it becomes aware it becomes imaginary, it means that it is driven to that kind of existence that is the conscious fantasy, namely that reveals its unreality.

We know that Freud, in a letter to Fliess dated on September 21, 1897, writes that "there is no indication of reality in the unconscious". But this means that, for us, the death wish in the patient's unconscious is considered imaginary because it is not our unconscious, but his. The simple fact that the unconscious is unable to distinguish between the real and the imaginary, so that this distinction appears only at the expense of an awareness, which resembles the unconscious to a not criticized reality. Thus, an unconscious death wish is very different from a conscious desire of death, because for the last one, it is possible the management.

² The author refers to three starlets from Brazilian television that always made reference to the situation in interviews about their friendship.

Let's take a look at another situation: a playful uncle covers himself with a sheet to scare his nephews. The children are frightened indeed. But the boldest pulls the sheet out and the uncle appears, so they burst out laughing. We could say that their fear was imaginary and that it was the discovery of the reality that freed them? But are there imaginary fears for those who feel fear? Or indeed, that's the opinion of one who is not afraid? If children were terrified is because the "ghost" was accepted as a not criticized reality... the fear was imaginary for the adults.

So, a death wish, as it is taken as unconscious can be considered a reality—and it becomes imaginary when we get aware of it. This is why the patient, quoted at the beginning of this text, laughed: the analyst tickled on his death wish. As the puppy laughs, in its way, when it considers that the distress or fear we cause it is not to be taken seriously, and starts defending itself with tooth and nail without harming...

If we generalize this idea, we can find that the anguish, tears, fear, anger, seem to form a group with laughter. They become—by annulment—each other. Any situation that may provoke them may raise laughter if it is recognized as a different thing that we believed before! And we laugh at our tears, fear and anger, at our misfortune and at someone's else.

And we think that, even for wits analyzed by Freud: just admit that the lapse, the apparent error, the nonsense initially presented to a listener produce a primary defense, which is the will to be indignant or to correct, or even to get irritated and the laughter that will be replacing the negative reaction is like abandoning this defense, the pressure resolution—and that's not all, because it also involves going from the opposition to complicity: to laugh with others, as the little animal playing the game of reciprocal threats!

Perhaps if we passed in review all the opportunities we have to laugh, we would find that laughter is always a reaction to something negative, hostile, frightening or distressing, but in such a way that we can accept all this as a trifling hoax!

There is always a way—even when things go wrong and nothing can be done—to resort to laughter, and this desperate measure is called humor: that makes others laugh, but not the humorist, or rarely.³

And here we reach a last point I would like to highlight. If we understand the constitution of the psychic apparatus in Freud we might think that there is no more precise vector drive than the superego, because what speaks for this instance—living heir of parental instance—would be the voice, as alive as devitalized, of the drive. The superego, then, would not only be a severe master, but in itself, despite its austerity and its ferocity, an instinctual operator as it is with the power of the Id that it reinvests the utterances heard before. What can we say of humor, when it fills the self consolation function? In fact, who speaks by the humoristic utterance—"Look! Here's the world that seems so dangerous! It's nothing more than just a game for children, worthy only for making a joke"—but the superego, that we usually think that never derides, never mocks, it is never kidding?

With the humorous attitude, then, Freud writes, we refuse citizenship to pain without leaving the field of mental health. The humor is inserted, therefore, "in the great number of methods that the psychic life of man built in order to escape from the oppression of pain, series that opens with the neurosis and madness, and also covers drunkenness, closing in itself, ecstasy" (*Humor*, 1927).

Finally, I think, then, that we may understand that the laughter of a patient or of an analyst during a session

³ There are several studies on laughter related to humor: We can name a few as an example: Kupermann, D. (2003). *Ousar rir: humor, criação e psicanálise*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira e Kupermann, D. & Slavutsky, A. (orgs.). (2005). *Seria trágico... se não fosse cômico: humor e psicanálise*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

at the time that it reveals the meaning of a speech that releases something of the unconscious is a sign that an obstacle was removed.

And the very serious man, the one who goes down or puts the analyst in a position of control and the patient, it can be said, in a position of eager anticipation, does not have the same virtues—I think. Knowledge, in its relation to the unconscious, cannot have the same effect and would also not provide the same proofs—not to mention that often seems to me emotionally ineffective.

None of us ever had or will miss someone purporting to be a master of himself and of the situation... They can be found anywhere, in droves, daily... but if there is one thing that the psychoanalyst should avoid it is precisely being taken by a lord and master of this kind.

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The Curative Power of Play: The Voices of Therapists around the World*

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It is important for all therapists to be culturally sensitive to children and their eco-systems as well as to be aware of the current trends and the changing application of play as a healing agent. The focus of this study is on the development of a current description of play by therapists from a global perspective through a thematic analysis of focus groups resulting in an explanation of how play contributes to healing and the practice of therapy. In this study, the naturalistic method of qualitative research (Bowers, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was applied to the study of play around the world, resulting in a new description of “play”. The analyses of focus group meetings in Morocco, Singapore, Hong Kong, Canada and Europe resulted in the emergence of 8 themes: productivity through play, contribution to development, facilitation of the relationship through play, honouring diversity, collaboration between children and caregivers, stimulation through technology-based play, relaxation provided by play, and the devaluation of play. These themes, which are presented through the “voices of the participants”, together with the literature review, serve to enrich the changing description of play. With participants from all continents, a current global perspective highlights the changes that play, both as a concept and as a healing agent, has undergone and will continue to do so. New information emerged suggesting that technology has become a worldwide focus for children but has a paradoxical effect on their relationships.

Keywords: collaboration with play, global perspective, productivity, technology, relaxation

Introduction

Therapists serve a vital function in the lives of children who experience psycho-social difficulties. It helps vulnerable children deal with their developmental issues, to regain mastery and to be able to function normally again (O'Connor, 2000). The Ecosystemic Play Therapy (EPT) model highlights the focus for healing on “the total child within the context of the child’s ecosystem” (O'Connor, 2000, p. 87). This model integrates many

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treatment modalities and theories into a single model (Boyer, 2010) and considers the impact of the whole ecosystem of a child—the biological, economic and psychological factors—observing how the interactions between the clients and their family and/or the cultural social system affect the development and pathological behaviours of the clients.

O'Connor (2000) calls upon therapists to develop cultural competency, so that they will be sensitive to cultural variation in play practices and will develop culturally related awareness, skill and knowledge of their clients. Therapists must have knowledge about the historical, psychological, sociological and political background of their clients, so that the treatment approach is in harmony with the belief and values of their clients, their families and communities, without creating further distress to them (Boyer, 2010). To be effective, therapists must be aware that the definition of play continues to evolve relative to changing times and cultural changes.

The study at hand provides a new description of play through the data collection and analysis of focus and individual interviews consisting of play therapists around the globe. The results of the thematic analysis stress the need for sensitivity to diversity by all therapists who work within the ecosystemic context of the nested systems. Therapists can impact the “total child” within the context of the child’s ecosystem (O'Connor, 2000, p. 87) when they understand the perspectives of caregivers, school, society and culture on play vis a vis the child.

Meanings of Play: Past and Present

Play is a common activity and universal activity for children around the world (Russ, Fiorelli, & Spannagel, 2011), and yet a precise operational meaning of play has historically been difficult to achieve. Brian Sutton-Smith devoted his career to the scholarly works on play and after six decades of the study of play, his work was recently represented in the *New York Times* suggesting that there is no single definition that captures what the meaning of play entails (Fox, 2015). However, there has been sporadic attention devoted to this phenomenon over the past 75 years and the concept of play continues to be defined in many ways, and continues to be discussed within a variety of contexts, with enhanced attention by the media and public viewing.

The profound importance of play to the child’s growth and transition to adulthood, as well as to human growth and emotional healing, has become increasingly understood (Brown, 2010; Perry & Szalavitz, 2007). The recognition of the effects of play on brain development is currently creating excitement as to how play impacts and is impacted by brain activity across the lifespan. Young children grow naturally through play with their “voice” being represented through play. Considering the “restrictions of verbal interactions with young children” (Goodman, Reed, & Athey-Lloyd, 2015, p. 34), play, as part of their natural development, is intrinsically associated with children and historically connected with early education and learning in childhood (D'Angour, 2013).

An examination of the history of play reveals that play has been innate to many generations of civilization. In ancient Greece, play (“paidia”) was intrinsically associated with children (“paidēs”). Plato recognized “that play influenced the way children developed as adults” (D'Angour, 2013, p. 293). Furthermore, Meares (1993) comments on the implication of play in the development of the person through the statement:

Artifacts from the earliest civilizations include miniature representations of people and animals, presumably used as toys. It is difficult not to conclude that the capacity of play is part of our genetic endowment, just as the potential for language creation is biologically given... this capacity depends upon the responsiveness of the environment (p. 151).

Play is significant to human development. Children acquire new experiences and skills through play. It builds up their character, teaches them how to cooperate, and helps them develop social, emotional and

intellectual skills that assist in their integration into a complex society. These are skills they could not be acquired in other ways but through play (Elkind, 2008; Sutton-Smith, 2008) as play is the natural medium of express for the child (Axline, 1947).

Further examination of the meaning of the concept “play” offers an explanation of its value in the growth of the child. The etymology of this term originates within the context of fighting and game playing. Mahon (1993) reviews the origin of the word “play”:

Whereas the modern definition of play as “games, diversion” captures the lucid nature of the activity, the word derives from the Old English *plega*, which implied a less sportive intent-to strike a blow (*asc-plega* = playing with spears, that is, fighting with spears; or *sword-plega* = fighting with swords (Skeat, 1910))... If we follow these etymological leads, play would seem to have begun with actions that were anything but “playful” in the modern usage of the word (p. 173).

Further examination of the origin of the word “play” is presented in old/middle English, the earliest known in 1225, as recorded in an 1873 manuscript, *Old English Homilies* (Morris, 1981). Earlier citations in AD973 and AD1150 are noted in old Germanic root words. With limited access to accurate translations, the recognized early representation of the concept of play is noted as part of the development of the human being. Play was a contributor to the evolution of education, which was not evident until the beginning of the Hellenistic period.

Modern dictionaries have offered a variety of definitions over the past many years that incorporate the game aspect of play implied in the original meaning of the word play along with other variations on this theme. Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1989) suggests that the meaning of play is “the spontaneous activity of children” (p. 902). The Oxford English Dictionary (1989) emphasizes play “as exercise, brisk or free movement or action” (p. 1011) and as “unimpeded movement” (p. 1012). Merriam-Webster.com (2012) suggests that play is “a state of being active; operative and relevant; free and unimpeded motion” and as “relaxation” (Merriam-Webster.com, 2015). These definitions, along with other current ones, highlight the “freedom” afforded by the process of play as well as “spontaneity” and relaxation as recurring description associated to the meaning of play.

It is difficult to attain a unifying definition of what play is because of the complexity of human behaviours involved in the act of play. The form and process of play is unpredictable, there is a diversity of the cultural values that inform play, and there are a wide variety of objects that people play with (Henricks, 2008). Technology, the economic climate, changes in the role of women, work patterns, demands of school and work, and parental and caregivers’ involvements further reinforce the difficulty of how we come to define play (Roopnarine & Davidson, 2015). There is an ever-changing nature and unpredictability to the process and meaning of play.

Sutton-Smith (2008) defines play as a dynamic, ever-changing process that is filled with ambiguity and surprise. Henricks (2008) describes it as “a subtle, elusive phenomenon that seems to appear without notice and then disappears just as quickly” (p. 160). Therapists require an awareness that play evolves as time, culture and technology changes when utilizing play in the treatment process.

Play is evolving, with the player having freedom to make choices as to how they play; they can do things in play that may not be allowed in the real world, which in turn makes life more creative and bearable (Henricks, 2008; Sutton-Smith, 2008). It is becoming clear that play allows children to “find ways to show their interests and talents, express their feelings, practice growing up, experience their own identities, develop a sense of self and others, rehearse social roles and strive to understand their real world” (Gold, Grothues,

Jossberger, Gruber, & Melter, 2014, p. 147). To this end, technology has taken on a whole new meaning in the application of play for healing.

The Impact of Technology on Play and Therapy

Computer technology has become an integral part of our lives, and it impacts the form of play, the development of children and how therapy is conducted. Many children have mastered devices like the iPhone, iPad and handheld gaming consoles. Video games and technological resources can teach children complex tasks and skills, such as enhancing vision, learning, and brain plasticity (Eichenbaum, Bavelier, & Green, 2014). Facebook has helped young people connect and develop their ability to use apps in order to enhance their development and personal agency (Boyd, 2014). Social media allows them to experiment and work out their identities and to deal with personal hardships (Boyd, 2014; Gardner & Davis, 2013). Between 2004 and 2009, there was a dramatic increase in media use by consumers due to the burgeoning abundance of online and mobile media (Rideout et al., 2010). In 2012, the market for video games brought in more than sixty billion dollars in global revenue, and this is forecasted to grow to \$82 billion by 2017 (Gaudiosi, 2012). Researchers have found that 8 to 18 year-olds spend more time consuming electronic media than any other activity, except for sleeping (Rideout et al., 2010). They average more than 7 ½ hours a day of media consumption, seven days a week. This number of hours increases for children who multitask across multiple devices. They pack a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes worth of media content into their daily 7 ½ hours of media consumption (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010). However, the inclusion of technological play within the daily lives of children and families varies worldwide.

In a cross-national study of twenty-four hundred children in sixteen countries across five continents, caregivers expressed concern that their children were lacking time spent engaging in outdoor and imaginary play with 27% of mothers reporting that their children engaged in imaginative play (Singer, Singer, D'Agostino, & DeLong, 2009). Fear about issues of privacy and confidentiality around technological play was expressed (Gardner & Davis, 2013) contributing to a growing concern and paradoxical effect of technology.

Researchers, parents, policy makers and play therapists are interested to know more about how interaction with technology shapes children's development, structures their relationship to their caregivers, and whether caregivers should enable or limit children's involvement with technological play (Boyd, 2014; Gardner & Davis, 2013). In May, 2012, 113 members of the Association of Play Therapy responded to a survey "Technology: Will Play Therapy Harness It or Be Mindlessly Driven by It" conducted by Association of Play Therapy and its Technology Task Force to investigate the use of technology in the play room. Participants acknowledged that technology has become an integral part of children's lives. It provides good resources, but there are concerns of privacy and confidentiality and de-personalization.

Pykhtina (2014) asserts that "trying to keep technologies out of the therapy setting is unrealistic and will ultimately be counterproductive" (Pykhtina, 2014, p. 4). Using iPad and associated apps within the playroom is a new concept and, at the same time, leaves concerns by some that technology can interfere with the therapeutic process. Technology has a potential to exclude the therapist or prevent the therapist from building alliance with the child (Pykhtina, 2014, p. 4), although Snow and colleagues (2012) posit that age appropriate apps can give children the freedom to make choices. For example, a computer tablet can help children express difficult and painful feelings (Snow, Winburn, Crumrine, Jackson, & Killian, 2012) leaving the idea that there are creative and helpful usages of technology in education and healing.

Involvement of Caregivers in the Treatment Process

Ecosystemic play therapy includes caregivers in the therapeutic process in order to ensure solid change over time (Boyer, 2010). However, the attitudes of caregivers around the world can be very different. Some caregivers think play is just for fun or a “waste of time” (Elkind, 2008, p. 3). They are preoccupied with “real-life” and neglect to consider the benefits of leisurely play on the social, emotional, and cognitive development of their children (Elkind, 2008; Roopnarine & Davidson, 2015). According to Lancy (2007), caregivers consider play as an opportunity to jump start academic preparedness. They see play as a means for children to acquire skills that prepare them for future academic achievement and success. They are increasingly using social media and technology to facilitate this process as a way of or as opposed to joining in the learning process by engaging in play with their children. Therapists face obstacles when engaging caregivers in the therapeutic process with their children through play.

As seen in the application of healing through play around the world, whether it is through psychotherapy, counselling, or community and group play therapy, there is a need for awareness in the area of cultural competency (Penn & Post, 2014). Therapists have to acquire knowledge of the ecosystems of the children, their families, communities and skills to work with them, in order to foster healthy development and well-being (Boyer, 2010). The study at hand was designed with this query in mind. Specifically, how is “play” seen around the world, what values does it promote for the life of the child within the family and systems, how is the current description of play changing, and how will the new description impact the practice of therapy?

Methods

The research questions posed for this study are: (1) What are the themes of play from the global perspective? (2) How is play being described around the world? (3) How does the new description of play contribute to healing in the practice of therapy?

To answer these research questions, thereby providing a better description of play from a global perspective, the naturalistic inquiry method was applied. This qualitative approach to data analysis as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) was chosen for this study to provide a better description of the curative powers of play around the world and new definitions of play. The mutual interaction of the interviewers (play therapists) and participants (play therapists) is encouraged through this methodology. The grand tour question, “What is play in your part of the world and how does it contribute to healing?” was posed by interviewers in each location. Transcriptions of each focus group interview then took place. Coding and thematic analysis followed, and the “new information” that emerged through the data was summarized to reveal participant narratives.

Participants

The study began with the Research Ethics Board of Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada approval to conduct a focus group of voluntary participants at an international conference of play therapists in Marrakesh, Morocco. The group occurred at a time and place convenient to all those who responded to a poster asking for interested play therapists to participate in this research study. The 10 members of the group represented 5 continents of the world, and consisted of 8 women and 2 men. All were similarly trained in play therapy and all received the ethics letter indicating the intentions of the study, the researcher and supervisor’s information, and indications of confidentiality of all data at all times.

Data Collection

The snowball approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of locating participants for this study led to interviews in Africa, Asia and North America providing for a rich data collection process. Additional ethics approval was sought and received to expand the study to Singapore and Hong Kong where similar focus groups took place. The final step of the data collection process involved individual and telephone/skype interviews, which took place to test the reliability saturation of data results.

The focus groups in each location were scheduled for 3 to 10 people, with a combination of male and female representation, but all were play therapists. The interviews were 1 to 2 hours in length, all taped for transcription purposes with permission obtained from all participants. Trustworthiness or “accuracy of the account” (Creswell, 1994, p. 156) was addressed through triangulation, member checks, and peer debriefing.

Data Analysis

Transcripts of interviews were prepared by neutral people to ensure objectivity with the acquired data. Attempts were made to find convergence among the sources of information through the discovery of codes, categories, and emerging themes that “identify recurring ideas or language and patterns of belief (that) link people and settings together” (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 116). The process was additive, combining codes into typologies (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Through repeated readings of the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and with hand done notation throughout these readings, a familiarization with the data was accomplished in conjunction with the development a unique data analysis system. Within this study, an eventual emergence of themes and theory developed (Cho & Lee, 2014), allowing for the discovery of “new information” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Extended immersion in the data over a number of months following the final interviews allowed for a saturation point to be reached.

Results & Discussion

Eight themes arose from the coding and categorization of the focus groups’ transcripts based on the responses from the “grand tour question”: What is play in your part of the world, how does it contribute to healing and how is the description changing? The evolving discussions in the form of focus groups and individual interviews took place in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America with eventual themes developing from the data. As explained by Braun and Clarke (2008), “A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of ‘patterned’ response or meaning within the data set” (p. 82). The themes that emerged from the data collected worldwide are herein presented with “verbatim accounts” incorporated in italics with incorporation of the aforementioned literature along with newly acquired references as the themes emerged.

Productivity through Play

Play is considered by many scholars to be an opportunity for children to learn and develop themselves (Taylor et al., 2004; Krakowski, 2012). Through play, children learn to make sense of their world and everything in it. Due to various pressures from school and work, many caregivers focus on productivity, believing this to be the functional aspect of play. This is especially true for those who consider play to be for slackers (Elkind, 2008). Play is viewed as children’s work because it supports their cognitive, social and emotional development (Gaskin, Haight, & Lancy, 2007). It becomes an opportunity for them to learn and develop skills for self-advancement, personal and social progress (Henricks, 2008; Elkind, 2008). In this study,

participants expressed that engaging in play is for functional and productive purposes, such as to learn some knowledge, to have a good result in academic, to gain a sense of mastery, to increase the level of confidence and self-esteem, to promote self-expression and to improve self-regulation. The focuses of the caregivers in regard to play are on their children's performance, accomplishment, and productivity, because without these, play would be "a waste of time". With parental control, the play that their children involved are directed, controlled, and organized by adults. The children are playing what the adults play. It can be labelled as "play work" by the research participants. "Play work" involves activities that are educational, helping children to improve literacy skills or numeracy skills without spontaneous play. Spontaneous play is a kind of play that is spontaneous, just happens, comes from within the child, and is innate. Children are born to play; they engage in play very quickly.

Participants expressed that many caregivers that they have encountered were inclined to have their children participate in structured learning activities to boost productivity, such as ballet, hockey, soccer, baseball and piano, etc. The aim is to get more credentials or certificates. There is a strong emphasis on cognitive learning and competitive skills but less for free play with engagement of imagination and fantasy. Play becomes games of skill and achievement training (Sutton-Smith, 2008). Leisure play in healthy development has become an unaffordable luxury (Elkind, 2008). Participants expressed that spontaneous play is lost in our world.

Contribution to Development

Participants asserted that the "non-structured play" provides children the opportunity to learn negotiation skills. They learn who is going to take charge; who is taking turn sharing resources, which are important for their developmental growth. They also learn risk taking by sharing play materials and interacting socially. Play also encourages exploration, and team work. It promotes social skills, problem-solving skills and develops self-awareness. Children learn to play by the rules, building on each other's strengths in building forts, playing ball in the park, which engages everyone. It stimulates their brain processing.

In therapy, not all children that come are team players. Many struggle and do not know how to be part of the team. Some would rather work on their own, which gravitate toward isolation, without interacting with others. Some children have not been to school. They are stuck in parallel play. They play beside the next person, but do not want to interact.

When children engage in play, they gain new skills, experiences, and knowledge as part of their age appropriate social, emotional, cognitive, intellectual, and language developments. Play fosters their character and assists them in the development of skills that improve their integration into a complex society (Elkind, 2008; Sutton-Smith, 2008).

Facilitation of the Relationship through Play

Three sub-themes of relationship enhancement through play are evident from the data in this global study. Relationship is a time of "connecting", facilitating engagement with a diverse context vis a vis the attachments that play affords within communities around the world. Using direct quotations, the game to connect... a way to engage (children and families) is seen by some as particularly useful for healing relationships while at the same time, in the same communities, parents do not see the importance of engaging in play activities with their children. Rather, they offer technological connectors to provide stimulation and to pass time. The paradox of technology with some advanced and enticing video games is that (electronics) are helping children make

connections... something they can talk to, albeit without connecting face to face. Essential to the development of children is the development of negotiation skills... self-awareness, around rules and strengths. For the minds of many, this can be accomplished through viral relationships. For some, play is relational... establishing relationships, encouragement to get (children) to take risks... it takes a lot of encouragement to get them to risk, using play materials that are around them... or play materials that interact with social. Attachments are formed around the world through play, as is indicated by all participants but it is done through different means and for different reasons. Play represents the voice of the child (Bowers, 2013), while facilitating social, emotional, and intellectual skills (Elkind, 2008; Sutton-Smith, 2008).

Participants expressed that in therapeutic settings, some therapists are comfortable in establishing relationships with the clients, whereas others are struggling with it. Participants believe that relationship has to be part of that healing process because many clients were rejected throughout their lives. Clients came back because they felt safe with the therapists. Therapists provide safety and hold the experience and journey with clients, trusting that they are going to work through their issues. For some clients, it took a long time for healing. Sometimes, something big came up in the middle of processing, which was hard for (therapists) to watch. The therapeutic process was not a smooth journey. Nevertheless, with authenticity, honesty, maintaining good boundary, through supervision, good self-care and play, therapists are able to hold those experiences.

Honouring Diversity

The concept of diversity is pivotal and essential in any conversation about the meaning of play (Henricks, 2008), because we live in the ever-changing world. The meaning of play is contextualized and incorporated into the lifestyle of communities around the world (Roopnarine & Davidson, 2015). O'Connor (2000) asserts that pathological behaviours of the clients can be influenced by their interaction with their family, the larger diverse cultural and social system.

The theme of diversity is evident throughout this research. Play is expressed in different forms and different activities among different age groups, communities and cultures. Adults engage in play such as woodworking, quilting and the gym, for purposes of fun, relaxation and accomplishment. Men and women dealing with grief, stress or anxiety turn to play to help. Hospice, shelters and hospitals have playrooms for children, offering a play environment to facilitate healing.

Over the last 25 years, there is wider acceptance and knowledge of play therapy as a means of helping children work through difficult problems, strengthening individuals' self-esteem and their community identity. Sandtray brings healing to children who have experienced trauma as it allows them to externalize their experiences and to find resolution to their difficult problems and traumas instead of having repetitive play. Play serves a function for vulnerable individuals, making life more fun, creative and bearable (Hendricks, 2008; Sutton-Smith, 2008).

Play evolves with time, culture, and technology. There is diversity in the objects of play (Hendricks, 2008). Play may involve toys, but these are not essential. Play can be spontaneous or well-planned, indoor or outdoor, structured or non-structured. It can involve a wide variety of objects and activities, including board games, sports, nature, music, art, pets, and video games.

Play brings healing to a diverse population. In groups such as sports teams, individuals find belonging, acceptance and value for their contributions. Playing in a group is viewed as an important step in childhood socialization as this builds relationships and a sense of security.

Hendricks (2008) asserts that the diversity of cultural values informs what play looks like, influencing how children and adults engage in the playing process. Play therapists must find congruence between the clients' cultural experience and the therapeutic treatment goals and intervention (Boyer, 2010). The choices of play and toys in the therapeutic session must be compatible to the clients' cultural background, their values and beliefs in order to promote healing.

Collaboration between Children and Caregivers

Therapists may consider engaging caregivers in the therapeutic process in order to ensure solid, lasting change (Boyer, 2010). So the attitude and personal views of caregivers on play is important, for they have direct impact on their children in the therapeutic process.

Some caregivers consider play as solely a child's activity, leaving children alone to play with "very little" adult involvement. Other caregivers consider play as a way to improve cognitive and social abilities that are crucial for achieving academic success at school (Chessa, Lis, Riso, Delvecchio, Mazzeschi, Russ, & Dillon, 2013; Parmar, Harkness, & Super, 2004). Play without direct involvement from caregivers limits the opportunity for direct eye-to-eye communication. The chance to exchange affection, care, and intimacy become scarce. This condition is exacerbated when both caregivers have a full and busy work schedule, limiting opportunities for children to build secure attachments and develop their identity and self-esteem. For caregivers who play with their children, play is often structured rather than free play—seeing play times as opportunities to educate children. Consequently, caregivers and their children are often not on equal ground. Thus, it may hinder the treatment process. Participants consider feelings and experiences contained within one room, one time period with one person not as healing. Play therapy experience is rich; it cannot be isolated in that one little room... It is not the healing power expressed eco-systematically. A participant in one location expressed that she would not do therapy without parents in the room, unless the parents are the source of the problem. Parents know their child better than the therapist would. Therapists would have parents in the room, so they would align with them. Parents then benefit from modeling with the therapist. It is very positive.

Stimulation through Technology-Based Play

In this study, electronic games have become the first choice of play activity for most children because of their enticing qualities. Players can play independently and, at the same time, connect with strangers. Those who are socially inept can communicate and engage with others in games, giving them a sense of belonging. However, there are concerns with technology-based play. Electronic games captivate players' continuous attention, put players in a passive role, and can become a child's single focus and primary activity. This kind of play could foster dependency on electronic games which have an addictive quality. Technological play may also replace pretend play—important for development of social skills in children (Chessa et al., 2013)—and reduce opportunities to learn relationship building, social skills, and negotiation skills. Furthermore, children may gravitate towards passive entertainment instead of active face-to-face play experiences. Many caregivers were concerned about the violence in some of these video games and the amount of time their children spend playing them. Elkind (2008) argues that nothing can replace human contact and the need for relationships. It is important to remember that technology has its merits. It can be useful in helping children disclose their abuse and pain in the therapy room (Snow et al., 2012). To date, few studies have examined technological play and its impact on children and teens (Pykhtina, 2014).

Relaxation Provided by Play

Participants acknowledged the role of play in making people relaxed. Moving one's body whether through free play, retreating to nature/bodies of water, or building/creating was noted as bringing relaxation in addition to a sense of accomplishment. Playing with others through organized sports or activities was highlighted as building relationships and a sense of security. Play in which there were no demands (e.g., playing with pets) was seen as facilitating peace and maintaining an orientation towards the present. Furthermore, participants noted the role of play in finding balance with the too hectic pace of life and that some cultures encourage or mandate relaxation and breaks from employment.

A second feature highlighted by participants was that play provides children a chance to be creative and express feelings and views of his or her world. Play in a non-judgemental and safe environment allows the child to express emotions and concerns freely, which leads to greater feelings of relaxation. For hospitalized children, play allows for self-expression, procedural coping, and comfort through familiar and safe activities (Jessee & Gaynard, 2009).

The Devaluation of Play

The results of this study indicate that some caregivers from the Eastern cultural background consider play as useless, a waste of time, and not productive. They want their children to engage in play only when there is extra time, because doing homework is more important than play. Play is used by some to kill time. These caregivers downplay the importance of play because of cultural beliefs as supported by Kief and Casbergue (2000) who assert that the meaning and value of play are embedded in individuals' knowledge about play, their past experience with play, and their cultural values regarding play. Culture has a strong influence on how play developed in children, and how emotions are expressed and experienced during play (Chessa et al., 2013). Chessa and colleagues (2013) argue that some cultures diminish the importance of play, and it may not be an integral part of the life of the children. Children are taught to work productively and become responsible individuals. Therapists will face obstacles in their attempt to convince caregivers of the value of play when cultural beliefs are part of the equation, for caregivers prioritize study over play, academic success is more important. Play has to serve a function, in order to assert its significance.

Conclusion & Limitations

Through current research interviewing play therapists worldwide regarding a global view of play, a new related description of play has developed. This definition highlights the importance of the power of play and its contribution to the evolving practice of therapy. The themes of global play that emerged (productivity, development, relationship, diversity, collaboration, technology, relaxation and devaluation) from the data, focus groups, and interviews from around the world can be used to inform future researchers and therapists, who study the value of play in the daily lives of children and their systems. Inherent within the methodological approach of naturalistic inquiry is the understanding that the results, both the substantive and formal grounded theories, are applicable to this study. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicate, "The only generalization is: there is no generalization... the trouble with generalizations is that they don't apply to particulars" (p. 110). However, this study provides results and discussions that can be used for further investigation, conceptualization, and inquiry into the issue of how diverse play is, and the application of play to the regular lives of people and their systems from a global perspective.

The results of this study conclude that play is evolving, particularly because of the constant development of new technology. The complexity and evolving process of play has been observed on different continents, yet they exhibit similar characteristics as indicated through the thematic descriptions of this study. However, there are different lenses as to how play contributes to and is impeded by advancements in technology and structured play. “New information” found in this study suggests that with a devaluation of play in some locations, technology carries a negative connotation and yet, for other diverse groups, it is seen as enhancing productivity and attachment. Further studies will continue to answer the effects of technology on play and its effects on the freedom, relaxation and spontaneity of children’s play.

It is important to understand the lens of each diverse location and group before concluding how play is seen and described in various communities across the globe. Furthermore, therapists must develop cultural competency in order to understand and address the “total child” within the context of child’s ecosystem (O’Connor, 2000, p. 87). Caregivers’ availability for play and involvement in therapy not only improves the child’s environment, but also provides a better transition from the therapist’s care. Caregivers need psychoeducation on the importance and values of play, so that children can learn social and negotiation skills; how to be a team player and to build attachments; to develop their imagination, creativity and unique identity; and to be de-stressed through play.

There are concerns about the appropriate use of technological applications in therapy. Technology can impact how therapy should be conducted and how therapists might be supervised. More research should be done on the use of multi-touch technologies, specifically in therapy with children. The paradoxical effect of technological play, however, suggests that a sense of being connected may be realized and yet one might experience a distance and feeling of disconnectedness without the face-to-face relationship.

Above all, therapists are wise to embrace a firm belief on the values and the healing power of play within the context of the ecosystem in order to truly know the child. With training and supervision, therapists can develop cultural competency, working with the total person from diverse communities.

Around the world children are thriving and others are merely surviving.... In different parts of the world children are encouraged to play, whether it be running in the streets of the Medina in Marrakech, playing with the latest technological tablets for self-expression, rolling a ball on a flat piece of land, or finding refuge in the hills. Play can facilitate relationships that are within the context of the environment of the child (p. 1)... How families facilitate a playful environment for relationship purposes and healing is as variable as the types of families around the world (p. 34) (Bowers, 2013).

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The Stigmatisation of Obesity by University Students Who Will be the Future Counsellors, Educators, and Psychologists*

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To investigate the attitudes of prospective counsellors, psychologists, and educators, Obesity Prejudice Scale was used. Participants are ninety university students, thirty from each mentioned department. Founded mean score 82,422 ($SD = 1,091$) is very close to 85 which indicates prejudicial attitudes. Even for the group of participants who informed they have no prejudicial bias toward people with obesity, total mean scores was not below 68 which means unstigmatising attitudes. Participants who attribute personal responsibility for obesity condition are more biased toward people with obesity than participants who does not. Mean scores above three (on five point likert) at item level accepted as indicators of the participants' biased attitudes. According to mentioned findings, people with obesity conceptualised as “unhealthy” people, who “doesn't like to move”, “has restricted ability to move”, “moves slowly”, “quickly get tired”, “vulnerable to illnesses”, “smelling sweat”, “unattractive”, “unhappy”, “unesthetic”, “lazy people”, who doesn't have “self confidence” or “will power”, “unfavorable for sentimental relationships”, “seem older than they really are”. Stigmatising attitudes towards people with obesity held by authority figures at school settings dangerously depletes the potential for early detection and prevention for obesity and eating disorders. Therefore findings implies a need to plan educational intervention programs for prospective counsellors, educators and psychologists to shape more positive, more indiscriminative attitudes.

Keywords: obesity stigma, attitudes, stereotypes, people with obesity, stigmatisation

Introduction

The word “Stigma” is such a concept which can be explained with “negative labeling”, “stereotyping” and many other concepts which implies negativity. It is a study area which has become topic of interest for many researchers (Jorm, Christensen, & Griffiths, 2005; Link & Phelan, 2001; Corrigan, 2005). The word “Stigma” accomodates ignorance, prejudice, negative attitudes and discrimination too (Thornicroft, Rose, Kassam, & Sartorius, 2007). Stigma includes stereotypes which relates the target person with a set of negative characteristics and these stereotypes are resistant to change (Jacoby, Snape, & Baker, 2005). People can be stigmatised because of many different reasons and one of these reasons is obesity. People who has Body Mass Index greater than 30 ($BMI \geq 30$) are accepted as having obesity (Ogden, 2007; WHO, 2013). Obesity is accepted as a global epidemic; a pandemic (Ogden, 2014; WHO, 1997). Therefore, there are lots of studies

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about stigmatisation of individuals with obesity which reflects existence of weight bias (Harriger, Calogero, Witherington, & Smith, 2010; Link, Yang, Phelan, & Collins, 2004; O'Brien et al., 2008; Sayce, 1998). According to Carr and Friedman (2005), the discrimination that people with obesity encounter is one of the worst a person can encounter in social context.

Stigmatisation hosts many disadvantages for people with obesity and leads to negative consequences in multiple areas of lives of people with obesity including health (Major & O'Brien, 2005). Stigmatisation and related negative consequences may arise in many different settings and in many different forms. Sikorski et al. (2013), emphasized the negative attitudes of health workers toward people with obesity and they explained how harmful this could be through preventing help seeking behavior. Even perceived discrimination effects people's lives and treatment results (Sikorski et al., 2011). Stigmatising attitudes, intolerant and negative attitudes toward people who are fighting with obesity have a link with low self-esteem (Puhl & Brownell, 2006), social isolation, depression and future eating disorders (Tang-Peronard & Heitmann, 2008) for stigmatised one. Thereby stigmatisation deteriorates physical and psychological well being of the targeted person.

When students with obesity or overweight encounter with negative, stigmatising attitudes, their psychological well being and participation to school activities being affected unfavourable (Bauer, Yang, & Austin, 2004). When the target of the negative attitudes and discrimination is young students, it is obvious that all mentioned negative effects of stigmatisation will be maximized.

The potential of school setting for early detection and prevention efforts for obesity or eating disorders is huge. School setting also has potential for prevention of development of negative attitudes toward the "other" including weight based discrimination. Under the light of related literature, it is obvious that negative attitudes held by authority figures who work with students at school settings has crucial importance. Thereby the aim of this study was investigation of stigmatised attitudes toward people with obesity at a group of prospective counsellors, psychologists, and educators. Therefore, in this study weight based prejudicial attitudes of a group of future counsellors, psychologists, and educators have been investigated.

Method

Participants

Participants are ninety university students from fourth grades of various departments of various universities. Fourth grades have chosen since they are close to perform their job. The students are from Psychology Departments, Psychological Counselling and Guidance Departments and from other departments of Education Faculties which raise teachers for intermediate level schools. Thirty university students from each of the mentioned departments were reached according to convenience principle till equal groups are handled. There is 39 women and 51 men. The percentages of women and men in groups are approximately matched (see Table 1). Age range is between 18 to 27 ($M = 20.366$, $SD = 1.725$). Participants' Body Mass Index (BMI) which was calculated through division of weight by the square of height is between 15.62 kg/m² to 32.49 kg/m² ($M = 22.435$, $SD = 2.954$). 75.55% of the participants' BMI is in "normal" range ($18 \geq \text{normal BMI} \leq 24.9$). In terms of BMI there is no statistically meaningful difference among groups. Participants are from various parts of Turkey (13 from Marmara Region, 18 from Aegean Region, 27 from Mediterranean Region and 32 from Eastern Anatolia region).

Table 1
Crosstabulation for Sex among Groups

Groups		Psychologists		Counsellors		Teachers		Total	
		<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Sex	Women	13	43.3	14	46.7	12	40	39	43.3
	Men	17	56.7	16	53.3	18	60	51	56.7

Tools

The Obesity Prejudice Scale and Demographic Information Form were performed.

Obesity Prejudice Scale

For assesment of discriminative, prejudicial attitudes of participants, the Obesity Prejudice Scale which was developed by Ercan, Akçil Ok, Kızıltan, and Altun (2015) was used. It is a 27 item, 5 point likert type scale. Possible scores which participants can get from this scale are between 27 to 135. Higher scores mean higher prejudice. According to Ercan et al. (2015) Obesity Prejudice Scale scores which are ≤ 68.00 indicate unprejudiced attitudes. Scores between 68.01-84.99 reveal inclination to prejudicial attitudes and scores ≥ 85 means having prejudicial attitudes.

Demographic Information Form

By this form which was prepared by investigator participants' demographics like sex, age, department, and home city were recorded. Participants' attributions about personal responsibility of individuals with obesity and participants self perceptions about their own weight were also asked. Also participants self informed weight and height were handled and BMI was calculated through this data.

Procedure

Ethical rules followed, each participant was volunteer. After informed consent and anonimity guaranty were provided by the investigator, scales were administered to the participants who volunteered to enrol.

Statistical Analysis

Data analysis was performed by Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS-16). Statistical signifance level was choosen as 0.05.

Since the main aim of this study is handling data about prejudice level of prospective professionals who will work at school settings, descriptive statistics of total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores were performed to handle total stigmatisation level of participants and to get item level biased conceptualisations of participants. Also descriptive statistics carried out to see sample demographics.

Also, in order to investigate attitude differences among groups, one way variance analysis (ANOVA) were performed. Participants' total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores were used as dependent variables and groups as independent variables. Groups were formed according to departments of participants. Beside this, groups were formed through personal responsibility attribution for obesity condition, self reported prejudicial attitudes, sex, self perception about their own weight, and home city.

Results

Descriptive Statistics of Total Obesity Prejudice Scale Scores

According to descriptive statistical analysis, the range of participants Obesity Prejudice Scale scores is

between 58 to 122 ($M = 82.422$, $SD = 1.091$). Mean score 82,422 reveal inclination to prejudicial attitudes.

According to Ercan et al. (2015), Obesity Prejudice Scale scores which are ≤ 68.00 points out unprejudiced attitudes. Scores between 68.01-84.99 reveal inclination to prejudicial attitudes and scores ≥ 85 means prejudicial attitudes.

According to means for each item which are above three on the five point likert scale at least most of the participants attitudes for certain items are biased like this: Participants generally have a tendency to think that people with obesity “don’t like to move” and “have restricted ability to move”. They think people with obesity are “unhealthy” people, who “move slowly”, “quickly get tired”, “vulnerable to illnesses”, “smell sweat”, “unattractive”, “unhappy”, “unesthetic”, “lazy” people. They think people with obesity “don’t have self confidence” or “will power”, “unfavourable for sentimental relationships” and “seem older than they really are” (see Table 2).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Obesity Prejudice Scale Items by Ascending Means

Items	People with obesity...	Mean for item	Std. Deviation
ObPrejudice 12	Restricted Ability to move	3.8667	1.13375
ObPrejudice 15	Unhealthy	3.7778	1.11957
ObPrejudice 23	Slow	3.7667	1.17129
ObPrejudice 21	Get tired easily	3.7333	1.26135
ObPrejudice 6	Vulnerable to illnesses	3.7000	1.08566
ObPrejudice 11	Unattractive	3.5667	1.01727
ObPrejudice 16	Do not like to move	3.4000	1.32224
ObPrejudice 7	Unhappy	3.2444	0.96350
ObPrejudice 3	Unesthetic	3.2222	1.13946
ObPrejudice 24	Lazy	3.2111	1.24967
ObPrejudice 17	Do not have self confidence	3.2000	0.99662
ObPrejudice 13	Smell sweat	3.1667	1.11426
ObPrejudice 5	Do not have will power	3.0889	1.22378
ObPrejudice 26	Unfavourable for sentimental relationships	3.0778	1.09368
ObPrejudice 19	Seem older then they are	3.0667	1.12978
ObPrejudice 18	Have low quality of life	2.9889	1.13667
ObPrejudice 20	Strong at social relations	2.8000	1.01892
ObPrejudice 8	Do not like to eat in public	2.7778	1.23414
ObPrejudice 22	Good listeners	2.7667	0.96045
ObPrejudice 25	Cook well	2.7333	1.10971
ObPrejudice 10	Hospitable	2.6778	0.94605
ObPrejudice 2	Have beautiful face	2.6667	1.01671
ObPrejudice 4	Good humored	2.5889	1.02655
ObPrejudice 9	Coward	2.4667	0.99662
ObPrejudice 27	Outgoing	2.4556	0.97337
ObPrejudice 14	Sympathetic	2.4222	1.00535
ObPrejudice 1	Selfish	1.9889	0.96564

Note. Obesity Prejudice Scale items were rated on a five point likert.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

(1) One way ANOVA between groups based on personal responsibility attribution to people with obesity for their condition and total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores

Participants grouped according to informed attributions about personal responsibility of individuals with obesity for their condition. The number of participants who informed that they believe people with obesity are responsible for their condition is 57 and 33 participants informed they do not think people with obesity have personal responsibility for their condition. Variance analysis between these two groups revealed a statistically significant difference ($F(1, 88) = 94.553, p < 0.05, \mu^2 = 0.518$). According to this result, participants who attribute personal responsibility ($M = 88.368, SD = 8.557$) are more biased toward people with obesity than participants who does not ($M = 72.151, SD = 5.629$).

(2) One way ANOVA between groups based on participants' departments and total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores

Analysis revealed no statistically significant differences among departments in terms of total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores ($F(2, 87) = 0.266, p > 0.05$).

(3) One way ANOVA between groups based on self reported prejudicial attitudes and total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores

Participants were asked to inform either they have prejudicial attitudes towards people with obesity or not. The percentage of participants informed they have no prejudicial attitude toward people with obesity is 88.88% ($M = 81.687, SD = 10.253$) and 11.11% informed they have prejudicial attitude ($M = 88.300, SD = 14.598$). Depending on existence and non-existence of self reported prejudicial attitudes two groups were formed. One Way ANOVA between these two groups and total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores revealed no statistically significant differences among mentioned groups ($F(1, 88) = 3.346, p > 0.05$).

(4) One way ANOVA between total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores and Sex

Analysis which performed to see differences among males and females in terms of Obesity Prejudice Scale scores depending on sex showed no statistically significant differences ($F(1, 88) = 2.44, p > 0.05$).

(5) One way ANOVA between groups based on self perception about own weight and total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores

Participants were asked to inform how they percept their own weight by choosing from given words as "thin", "medium/normal" and "overweight". Variance analysis among these groups which determined according to self perceived weight revealed no statistically significant differences among groups in terms of total Obesity Prejudice Scale scores ($F(2, 87) = 2.014, p > 0.05$). Since informed weight is "medium/normal" for 71 of the participants over 90, group sizes are uneven.

(6) One way ANOVA between participants departments and BMI scores

Participants weight and height were asked and Body Mass Index (BMI) was calculated through this data. Analysis revealed no statistically meaninfull differences among department groups in terms of BMI ($F(1, 87) = 0.53, p > 0.05$) which indicates groups are matching in terms of BMI.

Discussion and Conclusion

The main aim of this study was investigation of stigmatising attitudes toward obesity among prospective professionals who will work at school settings. Founded general mean score 82,422 reveal a tendency to prejudicial attitudes. This score is close but higher than the mean ($M = 76.394$) which was founded by Ercan et al. (2015). When it is thought that having scores which are equal to or greater than 85 indicates prejudicial attitudes, it became obvious that this founded "moderate" tendency to prejudicial attitudes is very strong.

Results of this study point out a general tendency of participants to have biased attitudes toward people with obesity to conceptualize them as individuals who “does not like to move” and “have restricted ability to move”. Participants tend to think people with obesity as “unhealthy” people, who “move slowly”, “quickly get tired”, “vulnerable to illnesses”, “smelling sweat”, “unattractive”, “unhappy”, “unesthetic”, and “lazy”. They tend to think people with obesity “do not have self confidence” or “will power”, “do not preferred for sentimental relationships” and “seem older than they really are”. Findings are parallel with other studies which pointed out negative attitudes toward people with obesity (Chambliss, Finley, & Blair, 2004; Harris, Sandoval, & Cortese, 1998; Sikorski et al., 2011, 2013).

Analysis revealed that even participants who informed they have no prejudicial bias toward people with obesity does not have mean scores below 68 ($M = 81.687$, $SD = 10.253$) which means having non-prejudicial attitudes. It means people have no insight about their biased attitudes toward people with obesity as mentioned in Miller et al.'s study (2013).

The participants who attribute personal responsibility for obesity condition ($M = 88.368$, $SD = 8.557$) are found more biased toward people with obesity than participants who does not ($M = 72.151$, $SD = 5.629$). It is parallel with the literature which relates stigmatising attitudes and rejection with personal responsibility attribution (Crandall et al., 2001; Weiner, Perry, & Magnusson, 1988).

School setting has potential to increase the risk factors which creates vulnerability for any kind of psychological disturbance like eating disorders and obesity. School setting is also important in terms of early detection and prevention efforts for obesity and for eating disorders, and for any kind of psychological disturbance. Even perceived discrimination effects people's lives (Sikorski et al., 2011). Therefore, it is obvious that discriminative prejudicial attitudes by authority figures will effect all these areas negatively, will make things worst. These facts increase the importance of negative attitudes held by authority figures at school settings.

Beside possible effects to self esteem and psychological well being of students with obesity, attitudes of counsellors, psychologists, and teachers who work with students have potential to shape students' attitudes towards obesity, therefore findings of present study seems alarming.

As pointed out (Puhl, Chelsea, & Heuer, 2010), the stigmatisation of obesity creates barriers for promotion of effective intervention efforts beside having undesired consequences in terms of health. Because of all possible negative consequences, findings of this study implies a serious need to shape indiscriminative attitudes to promote acceptance about weight diversity. The findings of present study implies a need for comprehensive educational interventions which can challenge existing stereotypes for university students who will be the future counsellors, educators and psychologists.

Results also points out a need for future research about the factors effecting weight stigma in order to be able to plan future educational intervention programs that adressing to these aspects. Because of sample size there might be limitations in terms of generalisability, therefore results of present study can be accepted as a pilot study for guidelines to design future studies with bigger sample sizes to study prevalence of weight stigma among prospective professionals of school settings.

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Neighborhood Effects on Hispanic Young Adult Outcomes*

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The present study explored the implications of neighborhood effects and parent-child relationships upon young adulthood attainment among Hispanic adolescents. Examining the social contexts in which Hispanic adolescents develop, such as neighborhoods, allows researchers a greater depth of understanding the processes and potential risks that influence young adulthood attainment. Utilizing The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health), the current study examined neighborhood effects, specifically neighborhood disorganization and perceptions of neighborhood safety, in relation to education and career attainment outcomes in young-adulthood among a representative sample of 1,814 Hispanics. Results of the current study illuminate the mechanisms of neighborhood quality and academic belonging as influencing young adulthood outcome attainment. These findings inform current research and future policy to more effectively support development of Hispanic adolescents.

Keywords: Hispanic adolescents, neighborhood disorganization, acculturation, parent-child connectedness

By 2060, the U.S. population will consist of nearly 12.8 million Hispanic persons and will constitute nearly a third of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Examining the social contexts in which Hispanic adolescents develop, such as neighborhoods, allows researchers a greater depth of understanding of the processes and potential risks that influence young adulthood attainment, such as education and career outcomes (Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002). The present study incorporates the role acculturation among Hispanic adolescents as they navigate social environments during adolescence. The current study examined neighborhood effects during adolescence as associated with Hispanic young adult outcomes, such as post-secondary education and career attainment. Adolescents' reports of neighborhood cohesion and their parent's perception of neighborhood safety were used to gain an insight into neighborhood disorganization and elements of collective efficacy to combat negative neighborhood elements. These environmental features were assessed in conjunction with additional social influences, such as parent-child relationships, which have been shown to function as a potent role in young adulthood outcome. Parent-child

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relationships are of particular note with regards to cultural aspects relevant to Hispanic youth (i.e., “familismo”, Perez-Brena, Updegraff, & Umana-Taylor, 2014).

Social disorganization theory (see Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002; see also Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000) suggests that specific characteristics of neighborhoods, such as poverty, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential instability, play an active role in increasing the risk of hazardous outcomes such as violence and crime. In disadvantaged neighborhoods, formal social institutions (i.e., formally organized activities which serve to maintain social order within the neighborhood) that would ordinarily bolster the community and promote healthy, prosocial neighborhood activity are either deficient or altogether absent. Informal structures refer to interactions among neighbors such as the propensity for neighborhood adults to monitor the behavior of adolescents in order to preserve social control (assessed in the present study by perceptions of neighborhood cohesion).

Additionally, the life course perspective (see Elder & Rockwell, 1979) offers a supplementary framework for conceptualizing social role transitions precipitated by exposure to neighborhood crime. This perspective frames the development of individuals within their cohort, transitioning between social contexts based upon physical age and social development throughout the life course (Bengston & Allen, 1992). Further, this perspective acknowledges the significance of sociohistorical context within which individuals exist.

As the life course perspective suggests, individual, social, and sociohistoric factors function together to guide individuals from one social context to another. With regard to young adulthood attainment, the present study posited that the environment of the neighborhood played a vital role in the life of developing adolescents. From a theoretical perspective, a neighborhood should be a context within which adolescents can form healthy peer relationships and gain from interactions with adult residents. However, if the neighborhood is disorganized (that is, it is not a safe environment with quality social connections), then adolescents would experience a deficit of support in a context that is crucial for access to social capital. This would inhibit adolescents’ ability to reach certain goals necessary to reach markers of young adult attainment (for example, career and education outcomes). It is necessary to examine neighborhood factors, as well as individual factors. Acculturation levels and parent-child relationships are of particular interest when considering Hispanic adolescents.

Acculturation

Acculturation is the process in which the individual confronts, adapts to, and modifies their identity and affiliation in the face of dominant social and cultural values which vary from their cultural heritage (Lee & Hahn, 2009; Schwartz et al., 2014). This process involves a transition during which individuals come to identify themselves within their new cultural setting while simultaneously bringing values of their culture of origin. This can be a stressful experience and potentially reduces access to sources of support (Rivera, 2007). It is also a particularly arduous experience for adolescents to navigate, as adolescence is already a time of struggle for identity and belonging.

Migrant experiences present a unique purview for examining the social world of developing adolescents. Hispanic social and cultural values generally differ from those of the United States (US), particularly with regards to familial emphasis, or “familismo” (Ayón, Marsiglia, & Bernudez-Parsai, 2010). Latin-American culture places an emphasis on collectivism, whereas US culture generally promotes individual independence (Schwartz et al., 2014). In collectivist cultures, the self is perceived as being integrated with the identities of other individuals; however, in the US the “self” is typically thought of as an autonomous, separate entity

(Gilovich, Keltner, & Nisbett, 2011). An example of collectivistic culture's familial emphasis is multigenerational cohabitation in which three or four generations will reside within a single household. Multigenerational cohabitation is a means of bolstering support among family members and is a common feature in Latin-American households (Djajic, 2003; Ishizawa, 2004).

The influence of immigration timing has been reflected in educational behaviors. For example, cultural factors due to generation location (i.e., 1st generation, 2nd generation immigrant; 1.5 generation being minors who immigrate with their parents, see Farley & Alba, 2002) may play a vital role in post-secondary enrollment and persistence. For example, previous research indicates that those adolescents who are more acculturated exhibited greater tendencies both with respect to pursuing and persisting in post-secondary education (Castillo, López-Arenas, & Saldivar, 2010; see also Flores, Ojeda, Huang, Gee, & Lee, 2006).

It is important to understand how the acculturation process may be related to the development of Hispanic adolescents' emergence into the cultural landscape and norms of the US. As adolescence is a time during which individuals are exposed exceedingly more to others outside of the household, there may be strain upon the adolescent's relationships within the family. Acculturative transitions, such as adolescents' use of English over Spanish, may enhance the stresses of their changing social world, but may also aid in their mobility within the majority culture (i.e., the US). It is important to recognize the process of Hispanic adolescents' sociocultural transitions at the nexus of adolescent identity formation and cultural identity negotiation.

Parent-Family Connectedness

Family relationships are identified as the primary source of social support which fosters resilience for adolescents (Ali, Dwyer, Vanner, & Lopez, 2010). Bronfenbrenner (1979) states that as an individual matures and expands their social world, the family remains the "most stable and enduring base throughout this process" (p. 232). The family unit is a source of social support which provides a multitude of protective factors for individuals, such as increasing self-concept (Mueller & Haines, 2012). The family unit acts as a foundation by which the individual prepares for engagement with the world. Moreover, the protective factor of the family has been shown to decrease a multitude of health-risk behaviors, such as initiation of violent behavior, depression, and substance abuse (Brookmeyer, Fanti, & Henrich, 2006; Henrich, Brookmeyer, & Shahar, 2005; Mueller & Haines, 2012; Resnick, Harris, & Shew, 1997).

Once again "familismo" may serve a vital protective function in the lives of developing and acculturating Hispanic youth in the US. However, as is evidenced in previous literature (Gonzales et al., 2008), the role of immigrant generational-status causes shifts in motivation towards certain goals, for example adolescents of later generations experiencing a reduction in likelihood to obtain a post-secondary degree. While family remains an important social support system, the manifestation of "familismo's" influence in the lives of Hispanic youth alters as a result of the acculturation process. For example, if the cultural messages and norms embedded in "familismo" become less important to acculturating Hispanic youth, their behavior may reflect these cultural identity changes by reducing their motivation to seek higher education. This may be particularly true when considering specific Hispanic groups. For example, Mexican-origin Americans and Cuban Americans more closely resemble two-parent, single-earner households, while Hispanics of other ethnic groups (e.g., Dominicans) belong to a matrifocal culture (i.e., female-headed households; Cherlin, 2010). Hispanics of Dominican descent are also more likely than other Hispanic groups to live in households headed by females, similar to African American households. These similar feature (matrifocal cultural influence and female-headed

households) may also increase the likelihood that adolescent Hispanics of Dominican descent will reside in lower socioeconomic status environments (and therefore more likely to be disorganized neighborhoods) due to living in female-headed households.

It is important to identify how the parent-child connectedness might be associated with the acculturation process. It may be the case that as an adolescent becomes more integrated into the dominant culture, the connection with their family wanes. This is speculated to be particularly true among families in which there exists greater cultural incongruence. That is, if an acculturating Hispanic adolescent is identifying more with the dominant culture while their parents identify more with the traditional values of their culture of origin, this may stress the parent-child relationship (Perez-Brena et al., 2014).

Neighborhoods

Human development literature contains a rich history of research identifying and examining the contexts in which development takes place. Neighborhoods have been at the center of such contexts. Past research suggests that the neighborhood environment plays an increasingly important role in the lives of children as they grow older (Woolley et al., 2008). As the social world of a developing individual expands, they begin to rely on individuals outside of their household. This transition emphasizes the importance of social capital available within the neighborhood. Features of such neighborhood social capital include sharing responsibilities with others and receiving advice from individuals outside of one's family (Woolley et al., 2008).

Although the literature is rather dense, meta-analyses (see Sampson et al., 2002) indicate that the complexities involved in identifying specific factors of neighborhoods and their implications upon development require further attention. Examining neighborhood effects involves sifting through a variety of neighborhood characteristics and identifying how these characteristics function together to impact development and outcomes later in life. Characteristics of the neighborhood have major implications upon a variety of issues such as overall social capital, parent-child relationships, academic achievement, sexual behaviors, mental health, and more (Bowen, Bowen, & Ware, 2002; Campos, 2006; Cubin, Santelli, Brindis, & Braveman, 2005; Vega, Ang, Rodriguez, & Finch, 2011; Woolley et al., 2008).

Neighborhood Disorganization

With the increasing number of Hispanic immigrants living in the United States, researchers have begun examining the impact of ethnic concentration and cultural influences upon neighborhood effects. Past research demonstrates that non-Caucasian and low-income families are at greater risk for living in socially disorganized neighborhoods (Bowen et al., 2002). Neighborhood disorganization refers to dissolution of prosocial elements within the neighborhood, such as clubs or other organized activities that promote interaction and social support, and the increased risk of deviant behavior (i.e., substance problems and violence; Bowen Bowen et al., 2002). Bowen et al.'s (2002) research revealed that perceptions of parenting practices are influenced by the level of neighborhood disorganization. This is further evidence that socially disorganized neighborhoods negatively influence parenting styles by hindering parents' ability to tend to the needs of their children. Middle school and high school age children reported perceiving their parents as less supportive and in turn this negatively affected children's perception of education support received from their parents. This provides further support for the notion that neighborhood effects influence academic outcomes by influencing parent-child relationships (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010).

Studies that highlight the importance of cultural values suggest ethnic background and the interchange between dominant and minority cultures may have both positive and negative implications. Behavioral expectations imbedded in Hispanic culture may be protective against risky behaviors for adolescents. For example, Hispanic female adolescents living in neighborhoods with a high concentration of Hispanic families report lower levels of initiating sex during adolescence (Cubbin, Santelli, Brindis, & Braveman, 2005). This outcome is considered to be a result of positive cultural influences such as sharing cultural norms and having access to intergenerational networks of support.

Additional studies illuminate the protective nature of Hispanic cultural influences against mental health issues. Living in high poverty census tracts, which is a common experience among many Hispanic individuals, increases depression levels. Vega et al. (2011) provided evidence that living in a household with high linguistic isolation may reduce depression. "Linguistic isolation" refers to those settings wherein the native language of immigrants is the predominate language spoken. Vega and colleagues (2011) found that depression levels were lower among Hispanics living in high linguistic isolation households in comparison to those living in low linguistic isolation households. This is evidence of cultural homogeneity within one's home buffering against environmental disadvantages outside one's household.

Alternatively, living in a high linguistic isolation household was also associated with feeling less close to one's neighbors. The authors posit that as individuals learn English, the social utility of being in a household that predominately speaks a minority language may be reduced. For example, the positive influence of cultural homogeneity inside the home may begin to shift downwards as an acculturating adolescent acquires a mastery of the English language. This may suggest that their household environment is then inhibiting the adolescent developing mobility within the majority culture. These findings further explicate the complex experience of the acculturation process. Rather than conceptualizing the acculturation process as an on/off switch experience, the process is a graduated experience of easing into the majority culture. The acculturation process is impacted by social environments and, likewise, experiencing a shift in cultural identity involves a give and take relationship between one's social environments and the support they may offer or inhibit.

Neighborhood safety. Previous research assessing the negative outcomes of neighborhood violence provides grim outcomes of living in dangerous neighborhoods. The detriments of dangerous neighborhoods not only affect individual factors but also affect interpersonal relationships, such as family and peer relationship quality (Harding, 2008; White & Roosa, 2012). White and Roosa (2012) described the effects of increased levels of perceived neighborhood danger among Mexican-origin fathers. The results of this study indicated that as the perception of neighborhood danger increased, family cohesion decreased. These circumstances served to increase family stress, which resulted in adolescent internalizing symptoms. Other studies supported these findings and identified additional repercussions of other components of neighborhood disorganization, such as perceptions of safety, cohesion, and socioeconomic status (SES). Neighborhood disorganization is related to increased negative school behaviors, such as poor grades and attrition (Bowen et al., 2002). The same research discovered neighborhood disorganization decreased youths' perceptions of their parents as being supportive of their education. Neighborhood disorganization, specifically threats to neighborhood safety, has the potential to cause significant breaches in the parent-child relationship.

Neighborhood cohesion. Neighborhoods and schools have a complex relationship. Neighborhood characteristics strongly predict students' education outcomes on multiple levels. Utilizing Add Health data (Owens, 2010), SES has been found to be one of the strongest neighborhood characteristics for predicting both

high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment. Specifically, students who live in high SES neighborhoods may have more people in this environment who have experience with postsecondary education. This concept exemplifies the importance of social capital and having access to other people in the immediate environment who are able to transfer useful information to developing individuals. Owens (2010) accentuates the role of the neighborhood as a context which continues to play an influential social role even after previous school peer groups dissolved once an adolescent graduates from secondary school.

In accordance with social disorganization theory, additional studies have shown that living in disadvantaged neighborhoods affects internalizing behaviors. Residents in disadvantaged neighborhoods are less likely to view themselves as being capable of achieving a postsecondary education (Stewart, Stewart, & Simons, 2007). However, in a study examining neighborhood cohesion among African American adolescents, Stewart et al. (2007) found that neighborhood cohesion increased the likelihood that adolescents would express confident postsecondary aspirations, such as believing that they would attend college. The results of this study illuminated the role of neighborhood cohesion as a protective mechanism despite other elements of neighborhood disorganization, such as a lack of safety.

In a study examining neighborhood influences on parental involvement in adolescents' education, researchers identified Hispanic American parents to be overall less involved than their white peers (Crosnoe, 2001). Neighborhood characteristics, such as maternal employment and education level, proved to be more instrumental than school characteristics for predicting parental education involvement. Hispanic individuals are more likely to live in disorganized neighborhoods and therefore Hispanic adolescents are more likely to experience a deficit in parental education involvement. Moreover, the overall education level of neighborhood residents influences the tendency that neighborhood parents will attend school functions. This suggests a collaborative element of the neighborhood functioning as a collective unit to influence the lives of child residents. This is perhaps similar to when neighborhood children interact with neighborhood adults and use them as resources by relying on adults' experiences (i.e., social capital), such as academic or career attainment, to learn more about possible goals to work towards. This is suggestive of neighborhood environments influencing individual factors, for example parental involvement or interactions with other, as attributes of an overall cohesive feature of the neighborhood.

These results may accentuate the utility of neighborhood social cohesion to protect developing adolescents from certain social disadvantages. Again, these results support the concept that an adolescent's relationship with other individuals in their neighborhood may be crucial for bolstering success. This indicates that neighborhood cohesion is important for protecting neighborhood children against neighborhood disadvantages and may also be important for promoting healthy behaviors which carry on into young adulthood.

The current study aimed to identify how neighborhood cohesion and safety for Hispanic adolescents functioned simultaneously as a substantial assessment of neighborhood characteristics with regards to predicting outcomes in young adulthood, above and beyond the effects of acculturation and parent-child connectedness. As such, the current study addressed gaps in the literature in isolating the role of neighborhood cohesion and safety in education and career development among Hispanic young adults. This study hypothesized higher neighborhood safety and cohesion would be positively associated with young adult outcomes (specifically, college enrollment and occupation status) for Hispanic individuals. Exploratory analyses also examined potential group differences in neighborhood experiences among Hispanic ethnic groups.

Method

Participants

Data were from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health; Harris, 2009; see Harris, Halpern, Whitsel, Hussey, Tabor, Entzel, & Udry, 2009, for design information), which is a school-based, nationally representative and longitudinal study that began in 1994 and assessed health-related behaviors of adolescents and later outcomes. This study used Wave I (1994-1995) that included Hispanic adolescent reports of parent-family connectedness, neighborhood cohesion, and their parents' (mostly mothers) perceptions of neighborhood safety, and also used Wave III (2001-2002) data that included the adolescents' education and career attainment outcomes during young adulthood. Participants included Hispanic adolescents (and their parents), $N = 1,814$ (51% girls), with a mean age of 15.5 at Wave I and 21.95 ($SD = 1.65$; Range 18-27) at Wave III. At Wave I, adolescents identified as Mexican American (51%), Chicano (5%), Cuban (14%), Puerto Rican (17%), Central/South American (10%), and other Hispanic-origin (9%).

Measures

Acculturation. The measure of acculturation in the Wave I In-Home Interview was the adolescent report of the language spoken at home (Lee & Hahm, 2009). Language was employed as a measurement of acculturation because it can serve as an indicator of ethnic identity (Kang, 2006). Regarding language, Hispanic adolescents were asked, "What language is usually spoken in your home?" and reported either 1 = "Spanish", 2 = "English". For this sample, 55% spoke English and 44% spoke Spanish.

Parent-family connectedness. The In-Home Interview included a six-item parent-family connectedness scale assessed in Wave I (Mueller, 2009). Hispanic adolescents were asked to report their perceptions of parent-family connectedness prompted by statements which included: "How close do you feel to your mother/father", "How much do you feel that your parents care about you", and "How much do you feel that your family pays attention to you" Each item was scored on a 5-point Likert ranging from 0 = "Not at all" to 5 = "Very much". These items were averaged into a single, internally consistent measure with a mean of 3.15 ($SD = 0.66$). Cronbach's alpha was equal to 0.80.

Neighborhood safety. The In-Home Interview included a seven-item neighborhood safety scale assessed in Wave I (Benson & Faas, 2014). Hispanic adolescents' "parents" were asked to report their perceptions of neighborhood safety prompted by several statements with varying Likert scale responses. These statements included questions such as: "You live here because there is less crime in this neighborhood than there is in other neighborhoods" and "You live here because there is less substance use and other illegal activity by adolescents in this neighborhood". These items required "No" = 1, or "Yes" = 2 responses. Additional questions such as: "In this neighborhood, how big a problem are drug dealers and substance abuse?" consisted of scaled responses ranging from "No problem at all" or "Not at all" = 3 to "A big problem" or "Very much" = 1. Each item was scored on a Likert scale. Items were reverse-scored and standardized into a single, internally consistent measure with a mean of 0.05 ($SD = 4.28$). The standardized Cronbach's alpha was equal to 0.74.

Neighborhood cohesion. Measures of neighborhood cohesion were assessed by combining six items composed of Hispanic adolescent perceptions and attitudes about the neighborhood and neighborhood interactions. These items were collected during the Wave I In-Home Interview. Similar to neighborhood safety measures, item responses were Likert scales that varied in scaling size. Questions, such as: "You know most of the people in your neighborhood" and "People in this neighborhood look out for each other" were answered in

the form of “True” = 2 or “False” = 1 ratings. These items were based upon previously combined-item measurements of neighborhood cohesion (Deutsch, Crockett, Wolff, & Russell, 2012); however, the current study found that Cronbach’s alpha increased by adding two additional items, such as: “On the whole, how happy are you with living in your neighborhood?” and “If, for any reason, you had to move from here to some other neighborhood, how happy or unhappy would you be?” Responses for these two additional measurements ranged from “Very much” or “Very unhappy” = 5 to “Not at all” or “Very happy” = 1. All items were standardized with an internal consistent measure with a mean of -0.32 ($SD = 3.75$). The standardized Cronbach’s alpha was equal to 0.66.

Education outcome. In Wave III, Hispanic young adults reported the highest grade or year of regular school they had completed. Responses were coded on a 0 to 3 scale: “No high school diploma” = 0, “Having a high school diploma” = 1, “Completing between one and five years of college” = 2, and “Completing one to five or more years of graduate school” = 3.

Career outcome. In Wave III, Hispanic young adults reported their current status of occupation. Participants were asked “Are you currently working for pay for at least 10 hours a week?” Responses were coded as either 0 = “No” or 1 = “Yes”.

Control variables. Additional control variables were utilized, which included parents’ level of education ($M = 0.87$, $SD = 0.94$, range: 0 indicating no high school attendance to 3 indicating graduate school and beyond), participant gender, age, and participant GPA averaged over Wave I and II ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 0.72$, range: 1 indicating a *D*-average or lower to 4 indicating an *A*-average). All study variables are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Study One Means and Standard Deviations (n = 1,814)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
Wave III Age	21.95	1.65	9
Parental education	0.87	0.94	3
GPA	2.60	0.72	3
Language	1.55	0.50	1
Connectedness	3.15	0.66	3.83
Cohesion	-0.32	3.75	16.60
Safety	0.05	4.28	17.20
Education	1.26	0.76	3
Employment	0.78	0.42	1

Results

Two hierarchical regression analyses were used to investigate factors influencing education and career outcomes among Hispanic young adults, as shown in Tables 2 and 3. Model one of the regression analysis predicting employment outcomes included control variables (participant age at Wave III, gender, GPA, and parental education). Participant age, gender, and GPA (but not parental education) were found to be significant predictors of employment status, as shown in Table 2. Language was added in the second model and accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in employment status over and above the effects of participant age at Wave III, gender, GPA, and parental education, $b = -0.07$, $SE = 0.02$, $p = 0.01$. Parent-family connectedness was added in the third model and was approaching significance in accounting for a proportion of the variance in employment status over and above the effects of participant age at Wave III, gender, GPA, parental education,

and language, $b = 0.03$, $SE = 0.02$, $p = 0.06$. Neighborhood cohesion and neighborhood safety were added in the final model, however neither variables accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in employment status over and above the other variables. Because there were no significant neighborhood effects, Hispanic group differences were not assessed.

Table 2

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Employment Status (n = 1,814)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Age	0.02	0.01	0.09***	0.02	0.01	0.08**	0.02	0.01	0.08	0.02	0.01	0.08**
Gender	-0.04	0.02	-0.05*	-0.04	0.02	-0.05*	-0.04	0.02	-0.05	-0.04	0.02	-0.05
Parental Education	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.00	0.01	-0.005	0.00	0.01	0.01	-0.00	0.01	-0.00
GPA	0.06	0.02	0.11***	0.06	0.02	0.11***	0.06	0.02	0.10***	0.06	0.02	0.10***
Language				-0.07	0.02	-0.08**	-0.06	0.02	-0.08**	-0.06	0.02	-0.07**
Connectedness							0.03	0.02	0.05~	0.03	0.02	0.05~
Cohesion										-0.002	0.00	-0.02
Safety										0.004	0.00	0.04
R ²	0.02			0.03			0.03			0.03		

Notes. This table shows the unstandardized and standardized coefficient for each variable added to the model; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; ~ indicates approaching significance.

Table 3

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Education Status (n = 1,814)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Age	0.03	0.01	0.06*	0.02	0.01	0.05*	0.03	0.01	0.06*	0.03	0.01	0.06*
Gender	0.09	0.04	0.06**	0.09	0.04	0.06**	0.10	0.04	0.07**	0.10	0.04	0.07**
Parental Education	0.17	0.02	0.21***	0.18	0.02	0.22***	0.18	0.02	0.22***	0.18	0.02	0.22***
GPA	0.34	0.03	0.32***	0.34	0.03	0.32***	0.33	0.03	0.32***	0.33	0.03	0.31***
Language				-0.06	0.04	-0.04	-0.06	0.04	-0.04	-0.05	0.04	-0.03
Connectedness							0.05	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.04
Cohesion										0.00	0.01	-0.01
Safety										0.02	0.00	0.10***
R ²	0.17			0.17			0.17			0.18		

Notes. This table shows the unstandardized and standardized coefficient for each variable added to the model; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

The second hierarchical regression analysis examined variables predicting education status. Model one of the regression analysis included control variables (participant age at Wave III, gender, GPA, and parental education). Language was added in the second model, however it did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in education status over and above the effects of participant age at Wave III, gender, GPA, and parental education. Parent-family connectedness was added in the third model, however it did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in education status. Neighborhood cohesion and neighborhood safety were added in the final model. Neighborhood cohesion did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in education status over and above the other variables. However, neighborhood safety did account for

a significant proportion of the variance in education status over and above the effects of participant age at Wave III, gender, GPA, parental education, language, and connectedness, $b = 0.02$, $SE = 0.00$, $p < 0.001$.

Regression analyses were run for each Hispanic ethnic group in effort to identify interactions between groups on neighborhood safety by group on the outcome of young adult educational attainment. Each Hispanic ethnic group was compared to each other Hispanic ethnic group (i.e., Mexican-American vs. Puerto Rican-American) using dummy codes, however, no significant differences emerged.

Discussion

The results of the current study suggested that neighborhood effects influence Hispanic young adulthood attainment in distinct ways. The only significant predictor beyond the control variables was neighborhood safety. This is particularly interesting when considering Bowen and colleagues' (2002) research which indicates that disorganized neighborhoods increase the likelihood of poor academic performance and attrition. In the current sample, parents' perception of neighborhood safety predicted post-secondary education attainment for young adult Hispanics. However, the reverse of this situation (i.e., living in a dangerous neighborhood) would imply detrimental outcomes for adolescents. The absence of neighborhood safety queues an adolescent up for compounded negative effects, such as not finishing high school or attending college. In other words, the risks associated with even "perceiving" that one's neighborhood is not safe can result in low academic performance and attrition in adolescence and therein an increase in the likelihood that an adolescent will be at risk for depression, anxiety, and substance use (Bond et al., 2007).

Neighborhood safety seems to be a particularly salient influence in predicting education outcomes, whereas this was not the case for employment status. Likewise, cohesion within an adolescent's neighborhood did not show evidence of impacting these outcomes within the present analyses. Participant age, gender, and GPA (but not parental education) were found to be significant predictors of employment in young adulthood. These findings indicated that older Hispanic males with higher high school GPA were more likely to be employed. With regards to acculturation, the current findings suggested that language exposure within one's household played an important role for employment outcomes. Living in a household in which Spanish was the primary language spoken was related to achieving employment. From the perspective of acculturation in relation to language-use, it may be the case that less acculturation is synonymous with more adherence to traditional Latino values. This may also explain the positive association between being male and being employed as values embedded in Latino culture, such as "familismo" or even aspects of "machismo", may proliferate masculine achievement, status, or drive to be the family "breadwinner". Further, these findings supported Vega and colleagues' (2011) research that linguistic isolation was a protective factor in general.

The current study utilized English as an assessment of acculturative status (Lee & Hahm, 2009). Households wherein Spanish was the dominate language spoken may have indicated less acculturated parents. Language and parent-family connectedness were both found to be significant predictors of employment status in this sample. If it is the case that the use of the Spanish language was a sign of lower acculturation status, then it may have been an indicator that language was acting as a protective agent of socialization. Issues of cultural incongruence between children and parents would require more refined measurements of language and acculturation (see Vega et al., 2011), and this was only found when predicting employment status. Again, these results suggested affiliation with Latino values functions as a protective feature rather than an opposing force with regard to young adulthood attainment.

Parent-family connectedness in adolescence predicted employment outcomes although neighborhood safety and cohesion were not found to be significant. This finding reinforced previous theory and research (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Brookmeyer, Fanti, & Henrich, 2006) stressing that a sense of connection and belonging within the family unit played a potent role in adolescent development and young adult outcomes. Future analysis may consider how these variables may be involved in employment trends specific to Hispanic young adults.

For education outcomes, participant age, gender, parental education, and GPA were all significant predictors of education status. Similar to employment status, results indicated that older Hispanic males with higher GPAs and whose parents were more educated were more likely to have better education outcomes.

Strengths, Limitations and Future Directions

Considerable strengths of the present study included factors of external validity. The Add Health is a nationally representative longitudinal study which provided the present study with a sample of nearly 2,000 Hispanic individuals and an even gender distribution. The use of Add Health data allowed for an examination of long-term effects of neighborhood effects among a representative sample of Hispanic adolescents. Likewise, although no significant group differences emerged, the sample consisted of a diverse, representative conglomeration of Hispanic ethnic groups in the US. Future neighborhood research should make an effort to more precisely identify which mechanisms within the neighborhood possess the strongest impact for influencing perceptions of safety and understanding the risks associated with both subjective and objective neighborhood safety and residual consequences. Further, the current and future findings may aid educators in evaluating at-risk adolescents.

With regards to assessments of outcome variables, the current study benefitted from being able to identify multiple levels of education attainment. With regards to predicting employment outcomes, some effects were quite small and should be understood as such. Small effects from large-scale surveys are a starting point for more targeted investigations. Alternatively, when predicting education outcomes, the present study produced greater effect sizes.

A limitation of the present study was the inability to comprehensively examine the issue of acculturation. The process of confrontation, adaptation, and modification to one's identity and affiliation with social and cultural values disparate from one's cultural heritage (Lee & Hahm, 2009; Schwartz et al., 2014) cannot be summed in a single measurement of language. Future examinations of acculturation status would benefit from considering multiple elements of this process, such as generational status, timing of immigration, affiliation with Latino cultural values, nativity of adolescent, and parental nativity and language. Additionally, neighborhood safety assessments would benefit from combining more specific measurements of neighborhood mechanisms that increase or decrease perceptions of neighborhood safety. Future neighborhood measures may also consider including both subjective and objective assessments of neighborhood risk (see Harding, 2008; see also White, Roosa, & Zeiders, 2012).

Future studies would benefit from identifying more aspects of occupational status. One direction which forthcoming research may consider are the types of jobs in which Hispanic young adults are employed. It will be crucial for future researchers to consider the role of immigrant experiences with regard to employment and education outcomes together, as a mere 67% of Hispanics 16 and older are employed, with nearly a quarter of the Hispanic population living below the poverty threshold and only 62% of having completed high school or

its equivalent, 23% having completed or enrolled in a two-year degree or some college, and a mere 14% having completed or been enrolled in a Bachelor's degree program (Pew Research Center, 2013).

The present study highlighted the influential role of neighborhoods among a representative sample of Hispanic adolescents living in the U.S. With the influx of this population in the U.S., the opportunity for future research to identify influential aspects of social contexts and inform policy is plentiful. Future studies have immense opportunity to gain insight into the experiences of a growing portion of the U.S.'s population and create opportunity for a young and developing ethnic group.

In conclusion, the current study reiterated the importance of contexts in the world of developing Hispanic adolescents. These results stressed the importance of a sense of belonging and connectedness of an adolescent to their family. Likewise, these results highlighted the influence of perceptions of safety within one's community and how it had the potential to impact later young adult behaviors, such as education.

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Research on the Strategies of Improving College Students' Learning Initiative in the Internet Environment*

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In this article, according to the deep needs of college students learning, I used the Internet thinking mode. Then we started college students learning personalized design and customized interactive and intelligent learning methods, and so on. Combined with the "Internet" environment and some related cases, we put forward three proposals: First, strengthen public building, to enhance the learning participation index of college students; Second, strengthen the hardware construction, to improve college students learning ability index; Third, strengthen cultural construction, to enhance the learning of college students happiness index.

Keywords: Internet, college students, learning initiative

The Internet has entered a new development situation. With the development of social economy and the upgrading of digital technology, the Internet, mobile phone, TV and other information networks will gradually affect the daily life and learning method. College students are one of the largest groups of Internet users in China. In order to further explore how to enhance the enthusiasm of college students based on the Internet environment and promoting the construction of study style in colleges. We conducted a sample survey of TC university students, and the used the qualitative and quantitative analysis. We take a comprehensive analysis of the results, so it has theoretical and practical significance.

Method

Research Ideas

The most important is to strengthen the construction of college study style and the effective integration of the Internet. We can carry out hidden education by through the QQ group, Weibo, WeChat and other methods. Use the "Internet" thinking to extend the traditional classroom. On the basis of adhering to the traditional teaching mode and expand the second classroom (practice classroom), the third classroom (network classroom). So that we can make up for the lack of emotional communication between teachers and students, and meet the needs of student's personalized and diverse learning.

Research Methods

During the process of the study, I used three kinds of research methods. First is the literature research

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method. Reading a large amount of literature and information that are related to the research. In this way, we can understand the history and current situation of the study on the improvement of students' learning enthusiasm, and provide support for research.

The second method is the investigating method. Every coin has two sides, the Internet is a "double-edged sword". For college students, learning is not only opportunity but also challenge. The Internet brings more opportunities and challenges for college students, but also provides a reference for the improvement of university study style construction.

The third method is the case summarized method: Being combined with the current academic research on the "Internet", as well as on the study of the construction of academic study. We hope that through the summary of the scholars' excellent educational experience, so that we can put the focus on improving students' learning enthusiasm.

Research Principles

During the research, we have three principles.

The first principle is the integration of traditional media and new media. Specifically speaking, there are many traditional media in colleges, such as newspapers, radio, lectures, conferences, classroom teaching and so on. Under the modern education idea, we are not going to abandon the traditional media, but to combine the traditional media and new media, use the advantage of the new media, and to build a new model of education in the new media platform.

The second principle is the integration of positive guidance and prevention. With the popularity of the Internet media, we should actively guide students to obtain the necessary information from the Internet, and establish the correct network learning motivation. In the network virtual society, students will encounter more problems and challenges, so the students need to effectively carry on self-discipline and self-management, so that they will establish the network security awareness and learning awareness.

The third principle is the integration of the explicit education and the implicit influence. In this principle, the most important thing is to combine the conscious and unconscious, to carry out a two-way communication by unconsciously influenced, to continuously innovate in working methods, paying more attention on guiding students, and to reform the traditional education mode, paying more attention to the interaction between teachers and students in the new education mode. So that we can change the traditional mode of education into a kind of infiltration education mode.

College Students' Learning Characteristics Analysis in the "Internet" Environment

During the process of investigation and study, we issued 271 questionnaires, 267 questionnaires were recovered, among which 263 questionnaires were valid. According to the data of the questionnaire, we analyzed the students' learning attitudes, habits and methods, based on the "Internet" environment. And carry out an in-depth investigation on how to develop the mining of learning resources. Therefore, we believe that the main characteristics of college students based on the "Internet" environment are:

(1) Learning motivation needs to be further excavated. There are 87% of students said they are using the Internet and other new media, 69% of the students said they often use the Internet, 35% of the students said they can use the Internet and the new media to exchange interaction. Study in university is relatively democratic and the learning time is relatively free. In general, students can master the learning content. But to a

certain extent, the students are easily affected by the virtual network, so the university students learning psychology will easily come to negative situations.

(2) Learning platform is to show a variety of developing trends. Internet era has arrived, students tend to care about social model, social celebrities, star idols and family members or other students in the new media platform, at the same time, they are also interesting in communicating with friends. In the survey, we found that 13.5% of the students said they would often participate in online discussions, 57.6% of the students said they would occasionally participate in network discussion, and most of the students said they would like to participate in the Internet based learning discussion, and they have a certain tendency to discuss topics which they are interest in.

(3) Learning methods become diversified. New media era has arrived, we can easily use mobile phone, WeChat and blogs to publish directly personal point of view directly. Compared to the traditional media, its freedom and autonomy greatly improved. To a certain extent, there has been a growing phenomenon of grassroots media from the media, and gradually dilute the elite consciousness. From the survey data, the impact of these new media platforms on college students' ideological influence is gradually strengthened.

Enhancing the Learning Enthusiasm of College Students in the “Internet” Environment

In our survey, in order to stimulate the learning enthusiasm of the students, TC University construct a new Internet platform through the QQ group, WeChat group and so on.

(1) Insist on holding the annual exhibition of outstanding graduates to promote students to help each other. In the exhibition, the graduating class students to introduce their original content and production process, to share their creative experience, than the lower grade students will ask questions and exchange their ideals, so the exhibition will enhance the interaction of students. In this way, graduates could show their ideas, and the students in the lower grades can learn a lot of creative experience. Therefore, the university is very willing to hold such activities, because this will easily improve student's learning initiative.

Such as in this year, in order to further strengthen the graduates' style display, promote exchanges between students learning experience and to enhance students' learning initiative which based on the “Internet” thinking, TC University held 2016 session of the animation professional and excellent works exhibition in June 2016.

(2) Use two platforms to display the excellent graduation works that major in animation. On the one hand, registered specialized Wechat public platform. On the other hand, the college uploaded students' original works to Tencent video. Through these two ways to promote graduates outstanding works. Among them, Tencent video included more than 20 excellent graduation works. In addition, many of these works have been included in the university graduation collection album, which will strengthen the original and copyright protection.

(3) Select outstanding graduates to participate in high-level professional exhibition. Participate in the competition not only can improve the students' learning enthusiasm, but also can promote the improvement of students' scores, and it will also form a good competitive atmosphere among the students.

Discussion

We should strengthen “Public building construction”, and enhance college students' “Participation index”.

(1) Insist on the “heart to heart” work method. In the network environment, the work method of “heart to heart” can strengthen the interaction between students and teachers. This is also an important way to insist the construction about style of study in the network environment, and this is the inevitable requirement to promote

the educational practice. In addition, there are network survey methods and other communication methods that we can use. And during the theme class meeting, we can form a good learning atmosphere through the "Internet" thinking.

Era is continuing progressing, the contemporary university students learning enthusiasm cannot improve without teacher's supervision. But the university educational environment is different from the senior high school, students have more freedom in university. Combined with the thinking of the Internet, teachers can communicate with students by many new media.

(2) Carry out the "one help one" work method. Use the Internet to innovate the construction of the study style of university, expand the campus network, WeChat group and other college students study style construction positions; Insist on the basic way of combining guidance and prevention. In the complex and ever-changing contemporary society, colleges and universities are also faced with a variety of complex problems. We should establish the "prevention" concept in the usual work.

For example, the classes could held regularly learning experience exchange meeting, inviting outstanding students to introduce their process of growth and learning methods, enable students to further clarify the learning purpose and learning attitude, and it can improve students' learning methods, making them consciously participate in learning. In this way, it will create a superior learning atmosphere.

(3) Develop the common cooperation method. In the current new media, the "Baidu Tieba" is a very good learning platform. In this platform, we can design a new cooperative learning platform, so that cooperative learning is not only between teachers and students, but can also be communicating between students and students. This learning method will strengthen the cooperation between schools and parents, parents can participate in the discussion and release of information feedback in this cooperative learning platform. We should coordinate the relationship between school, society and family, and emphasize the role and function of the school, the society and the family in the improvement of the students' learning enthusiasm.

In the past, because the university study environment is different from the senior high school, the school and the parent connection is not convenient. Many parents do not understand their children's real grades in school. But in the Internet age, schools can easily send an Email to parents, and tell them the students' real situation. This method allows parents cooperate with the school's work, and urge students to study hard at home on vacation.

We should strengthen the "hardware construction" and enhance the learning ability of college students.

The combination of theory and practice: TC University developed a teaching reform program of the studio system. They plan to open a studio in each major from the beginning of the third grade. The purpose is to cultivate students' awareness of the project and team awareness. This can not only improve the students' practical ability, but also can improve teachers' teaching quality and the teaching level.

(2) Integration of traditional media and the Internet. Creating a learning context to stimulate students' interest in learning. This can help students to understand knowledge and acquire skills, and make the students psychological function developed. Making learning activities as a student's initiative and conscious activity. Providing free choice space based on the students' interests and concerns. In addition, we can also develop the network classroom, tap the potential of online education, and allow teachers and students to carry out online reviews and learning exchanges, open and share the real integration of online and offline.

Although the Internet has been developing for many years, but still has great potential. Development of online education has become an inevitable trend. We still have a lot of work to do in network education. We

can build the network civilization volunteer groups. Through the development of the network civilization volunteer activities, we can promote students to play a greater role in the service network of struggle work, and lead students to actively participate in the construction of network civilization volunteer service. Therefore, in the future, we can transfer positive energy by this method.

Conclusion

With the rapid development of science and technology, the human being is facing a new era. Under the background of the whole entrepreneurial environment, that universities should promote the construction of the style of study has become the inevitable demand of the new times. In the context of the current innovation, we need to adopt a modern way to promote the construction of college learning atmosphere. Let the outstanding students to exert their influence, and share the knowledge and practice experience of the university.

In a word, as far as I am concerned, combined with the current situation and according to the problems of some college students in learning enthusiasm, we still have a lot of work to do. Colleges should use the Internet thinking model to strengthen the development of the Internet in many ways. At the same time, take the advantage of new media. And allow students to discuss in the network, than carry out various exchanges and communication in the Internet, so that the construction of network media and learning style will become more attractive. Finally, we can improve the enthusiasm of college students. Although there are some problems in college education, I believe that as long as educators continue to work hard, we will promote the development of Chinese education.

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Effect of Different Training Methods on Forearm and Reception Pass Techniques in Males Volleyball Players*

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The purpose of this research was to evaluate the forearm and reception-pass score changes after both visual and verbal pass equipment training in male volleyball players. The major hypothesis of this research was that visually enhanced feedback would be more effective than verbal feedback. Forty-eight volleyball male players at the age of 21.3 ± 4.70 , height 187.50 ± 9.70 , body weight 76.20 ± 5.10 and sport experience 5.0 volunteered to take part in the investigation after having explained to them the purposes of the study. The participants were randomly separated into two groups: Visual-Feedback Group (VFG, $n = 8$) and Verbal-Feedback Group (VRFG, $n = 8$). The groups were measure forearm and reception pass scores before training season. During 12 weeks training season, VFG and VRFG participants had trained three times a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday). The measurements of participants pass performance evaluated that was developed by researcher with a scale. The scale measured pass score of participants each successful pass 10 points and each unsuccessful pass -5 points at specific target. Participants were implemented 20 passes that both forearm pass (10) for number of two zone and reception pass (10) for number of six zones in volleyball respectively. Analyses showed that significant differences between two different feedback method of groups ($p < 0.05$). Differences in mean rating of forearm and reception-pass test in VFG were significantly different between pre- and post-test ($p < 0.05$). Measurements of forearm and reception pass values were significant found in favor of post-tests values of VRFG ($p < 0.05$). Finally, differences in mean rating of forearm and reception-pass test were found out significant in favor of VFG between VFG and VRFG. This study finding also showed that the specific apparatus had effect on learning of forearm and reception pass tasks. This research concluded that differences in performance of forearm and reception pass tasks might be related to the provision of visual feedback.

Keywords: feedback, forearm, reception, and volleyball

Introduction

Feedback is taken into one of the most important teaching functions (Rink, 2002). When feedback is provided in a suitable manner, motor skill acquisition enhances substantially (Schmidt & Lee, 2005). The term “feedback” generically describes; “information a person receives about his or her performance during or after

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execution". Feedbacks coming from the person's own sensory-perceptual system (intrinsic feedback) is a natural consequence of movement. Feedback coming from a source that is external to the performer (augmented feedback) supplies intrinsic feedback and adds information to that naturally available (Magill, 2001). Trainers and teachers generally ensure their athletes and pupils with increased feedback to help them correct errors, reinforce proper execution, and motivate them to persevere and improve in the face of difficulties and setbacks (Bortoli, Bertollo, Messina, Chiariotti, & Robazza, 2010; Coker, Fischman, & Oxendine, 2006; Smith, 2006). Coaching is highly competitive and trainers usually search ways of reaching an added advantage over the competition. Getting an advantage over an opposing team can come in a variety of ways: through developed practice, better drills, improved communication with players, and instruction in advanced techniques (Rhoads, 2012). Numerous studies have examined variations in these coaching practices. Early studies examined traditional approaches to coaching whereby verbal instruction was provided followed by verbal feedback. The research on using verbal cues as a way to direct learning overwhelmingly shows this to be an effective method of instruction (Kountouris & Laios, 2007). The importance of visual information in the learning process is well known. Consider that, on average, people learn 1% through what they taste, 1.5% through what they touch, 3.5% through what they smell, 11% through what they hear, but 83% through what they see. Research also finds that individuals retain 10% of what they write, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they see and hear, and 70% of what they discuss (Simatos, 2000).

The choice of pass techniques for this research was based upon its substantial to the sport of volleyball. The overhead pass techniques commonly performed to setter, and the forearm pass is the primary skill utilized to reception a serve. Rydberg (2011) stated that being successful in a match, they should side out (win a rally initiated by the opponents' serve) better than 60% of the time. The first step to siding out is the pass. If the first contact (the pass) is good, the second contact (the set) is more possibly to be effective and the third contact (the attack) is more likely to be successful in attaining a kill (an attack that cannot be returned by the opponents). Zetou, Moustakidis, Tsigilis, and Komninakidou (2007) strongly confirms these assertion, they found that statistically perfect and near perfect passes were key to teams' accomplishment in competitions analyzing the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. That is true because, for elite players, set quality rely on pass quality, and attack quality depends on set quality (Daniel & Hughes, 2003). The effects on skill learning of different types of increased feedback and instructional patterns have been researched extensively in laboratory settings and in the context of schools. But, more investigation is needed into the communication patterns in the real-world sporting environment. In the literature, no study examined the forearm and reception-pass score changes after both visual and verbal pass equipment training in male volleyball players. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to evaluate the forearm and reception-pass score changes after both visual and verbal pass equipment training in male volleyball players. The major hypothesis of this research (1) regular forearm and reception pass training would improve forearm and reception pass scores; (2) was that visually-enhanced feedback would be more effective than verbal feedback.

Methods

Participants

Forty-eight volleyball male players at the age of 21.3 ± 4.70 , height 187.50 ± 9.70 , body weight 76.20 ± 5.10 and sport experience 5.0 volunteered to take part in the investigation after having explained to them the purposes of the study. Informed consent was obtained from them prior to their participation in the study.

Participants were college volleyball players. A sample size of 48 was deemed adequate for this study using a sample size calculator for a crossover design. According to the sample size calculator, a minimum of 19 participants was necessary to detect significance at a one-sided 0.05 significance level with power set at 90% (G-Power 3.1.7). Players faced the risk of injury and fatigue; these risks were addressed by having participants warm up before each training session and cool down and stretch after each session. All participants have been sufficiently informed about the importance of the study and of the risks involved. All procedures implemented in the study comply with the Helsinki declaration.

Training Procedure

The participants were randomly separated into two groups: Visual-Feedback Group (VFG, $n = 8$) and Verbal-Feedback Group (VRFG, $n = 8$). The groups were measure forearm and reception pass scores before training season. During 12 weeks training season, VFG and VRFG participants had trained three times a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday). All participants carried out 10 sets \times 30 repetitions forearm and reception passes. All participants were made to warm up before starting the pass training sessions. Two coaches made all test and training session and all participants were motivated verbally during the study. All participants were made to perform cooling exercises for 10 min of their training session period at the end of working out (see Table 1).

Table 1

Training Procedure Schedule

Sessions	Practices	Set \times Repetition	Duration
Warm up	Stretching, Slowly running or jogging, Slightly stretching and flexibility exercise, Specific volleyball drills (throw ball, pass etc.)	None	15 min
Main course	Forearm pass, Reception pass.	10 \times 30	45 min
Cool down	Stretching.	None	10 min

Measurements of Pass Performance

The measurements of participants pass performance evaluated that was developed by researcher with a scale. The scale measured pass score of participants each successful pass 10 points. Participants were implemented 20 passes which both forearm pass (10) for two number zone and reception pass (10) for six number zones in volleyball respectively. All measurements recorded by two video cameras (Sony, Handycam, Japan). These records viewed and after test sessions were recorded. Data of participants were assessed available a scale developed by researchers (see Table 2).

Table 2

Developed Score Scale

Score	Level
165-200	Excellent
130-164	Good
95-129	Average
60-94	Poor
0-59	Very poor

Equipment

Target challenger. Adjustable pole height and target ring allow for multi-purpose use to accommodate any volleyball techniques. Strong net pick ops balls for easy retrieval. Target challenger has included 10 kg weight for stability and 2 wheels for easy portability. Adjustable to 3.65 feet, target ring measures 30". Target challenger is ideal for pass, setting, or shooting.

Bask it. The talents of pass, setting, serving and spiking have been need constant perfecting. For this reason we developed the "Bask It". The "Bask It" is an adjustable target that collects balls for more efficient use in drills. The "Bask It" multiple adjustments make it ideal for refining the skills of pass, serving, spiking and setting. The "Bask It" is the perfect motivational tool for your volleyball drills.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analyses were implemented with the aid of a package program (SPSS, version 17.0). Data are presented as mean \pm standard deviation. Statistical analysis procedures started with "Skewness and Kurtosis" scores, visual explanations of histogram plots. Later was used "Shapiro Wilk Test" (for the number of sample is smaller than 50) in order to test whether data were homogenous. As variances show not a normal distribution, the testing times of groups were analyzed by "Mann Whitney U Test", analysis was used to test for significant differences between groups. In addition to the statistical significance levels of the pre and post- training values were determined by "Wilcoxon Rank Test". A significance level $p < 0.05$ was used in all statistical analyses. The reliability of each forearm and reception pass test was assessed by intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC) as suggested by Weir (2005). The results indicated that these tests were highly repeatable: ICC of forearm passes was (ICC = 0.91) and reception passes (ICC = 0.90).

Results

Baseline and twelve weeks forearm pass values were showed in Figure 1. Analyses showed that significant differences between two the different feedback method of groups ($p < 0.05$). Measurements of forearm pass values were significant found in favor of post-tests values of VRFG ($p = 0.001$). As shown in Figure 1, the post-test of forearm pass scores were remarkably greater than pre-test pass scores for VRFG.

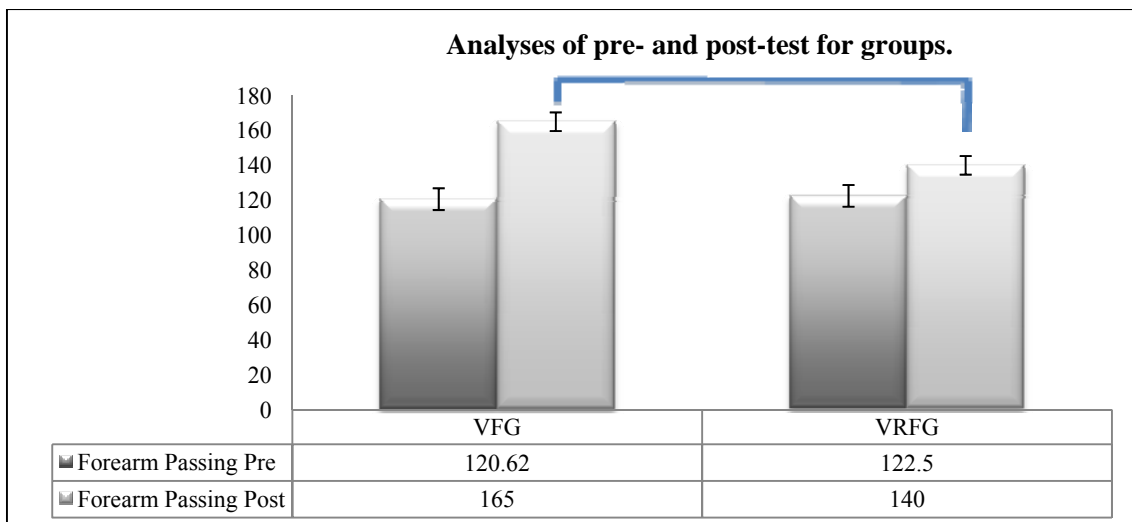


Figure 1. Analyses of pre- and post-test for forearm pass (VFG: visual feedback group, VRFG: verbal feedback group, ^a: significantly difference between pre- and post-test, ^b: significantly difference between VFG and VRFG).

Baseline and twelve weeks reception pass values were showed in Figure 2. The Figure 2 indicated that significant differences between two the different feedback method of groups ($p < 0.05$). Measurements of reception pass values were significant found in favor of post-tests values of VRFG ($p = 0.001$). As shown in Figure 2, the post-test of reception pass scores were remarkably greater than pre-test pass scores for VFRG.

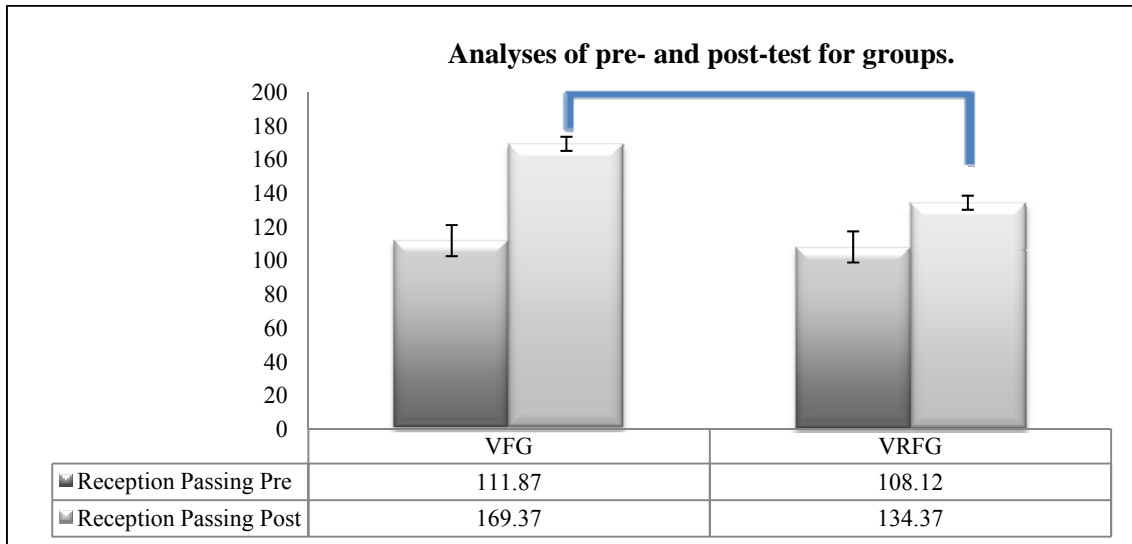


Figure 2. Analyses of pre- and post-test for reception pass (VFG: visual feedback group, VRFG: verbal feedback group, ^a: significantly difference between pre- and post-test, ^b: significantly difference between VFG and VRFG).

Discussion and Conclusions

The primary aim of this research was to investigate the effectiveness visual feedback in learning motor talents. It is a well-establish fact that both visual and verbal feedbacks play a very substantial role in motor learning and control (Kirazci, 2013; Coker, Fischman, & Oxendine, 2006; Kawasima et al., 2000). In addition to the amount of feedback can influential learning a skill in several ways, because frequent feedback has been found to improve acquisition of the ability but less frequent feedback improve constraint of talent (Akpinar, Devrilmez, & Kirazci, 2012). Various different apparatus were used in the application of visual feedback, which is getting progressively substantial considering a scarcity of experimental evidence that backups such utilize. Along with this necessity, a number of variants that might improve the effectiveness of visual feedback guarantee further researches. Besides, few studies have researched the learner's thoughts whilst learning with visual feedback on volleyball players (Rhoads, 2012). This research was to determine statistically if visual feedback was superior to verbal feedback when training volleyball players to forearm and reception pass. Volleyball players in this research had a background of similar volleyball experience. Therefore, the effect of visual and verbal feedback on the learning of the task was accepted to be the similar both feedback groups. To evaluate differences between verbal and visual feedback, an experimental crossover design was implemented. To address study hypotheses, based on an ANOVA contrast, it was explored that volleyball players enhanced significantly from the pre- to posttest measurements. The outcomes of this study were incoherent with previous researches. Previous studies showed that both visual and verbal feedback at the same time to the volleyball players in an experimental group and have observed improvement of learning (Campenalla, Mattacola, & Kimura, 2000; Kirazci, 2013). In a meta-analysis examining studies that compared verbal and visual feedback,

was showing a slight advantage for the use of visual feedback (Rhodes & Anastasia 2012). Another investigation also compared these two types of procedures and obtained a trivial advantage from using visual feedback (Rhoads, 2012). But, Carroll and Bandura (1987) suggested a more sensible reason was that visual feedback administrated to knowledge overload for the learner and ensured more information than the learner was able to process. The wider quantity of common, affirmative, reformative feedback ensured to single individuals after performance most probably mirrored the volleyball players' aims to toward the right understanding and practice of volleyball tasks. These conditions were not astonishing because this was fundamentally the point of the role played by trainers as simplifiers of motor talent ascertain and improvement (Bortoli et al., 2010; Coker, Fischman, & Oxendine, 2006). Astonishing differences were found between visual and verbal feedback, in that the visual feedback may utilized more effective, correct, performance feedback and self-control. The most of striking finding my study is visual feedback more beneficial than verbal feedback. So, especially forearm pass very important is for volleyball teams. In the literature, the most of important two technics have addressed reception and forearm pass for volleyball matches. In the last Olympic Games revealed that if the first pass is good then second pass is more possible to be effect. Lastly, if setters throw good forearm pass, the offences are more possible to may affect. Therefore, these study findings are both important and original in terms of volleyball training. The study finding also showed that the specific apparatus had effect on learning of forearm and reception pass tasks. This research concluded that differences in performance of forearm and reception pass tasks might be related to the provision of visual feedback. Our study aided to understand the relative value of visual feedback compared to verbal feedback in teaching motor skills. We found that visual feedback more effective for volleyball players in our research. In light of the research findings, visual feedback pass teaching method would benefit the development of forearm and reception pass technique. Also, volleyball coaches would be able to improve the success rate of forearm and reception pass with different training apparatus ("bask it and target challenger"). But, after completing the research, a number of limitations as well as suggestions for future study are worth debating. Initially, the low sample size was an area of concern. A larger sample size would permit for more definitively generalizable results. Later, volleyball players in the experiment were not diverse. All volleyball players were male and all of them were white and came from low or middle class backgrounds. Future researches should examine use greater numbers of players and individuals from both genders from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and income levels.

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MoU System in India: A Study on Corporate Governance Practices

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With the advent of globalization, the dominance of corporate entities has increased tremendously. In this paper we discuss about the corporations which are significantly controlled by the state through full, majority, or significant minority ownership and they are called the state owned enterprises (SOEs) (PWC, 2015). These SOEs have emerged as a strong global force and have proved this by their presence among the Fortune Global 500 companies growing from 9% in 2005 to 23% in 2014, including a greater presence in the top rankings (Laxmi, 2015). Some of the countries which are characterized by strong SOE presence apart from India are China, United Arab Emirates, Russia, Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore, to name a few. The SOEs in these countries are powerful tools to better the position of their country in the global economy.

Keywords: public sector, public enterprises, globalization, state owned enterprises, memorandum of understanding, corporate governance, performance contracts

Introduction

The state owned enterprises (SOEs) have gained the attention of the global community as they have made a significant place for themselves in the growth story of many countries. India is no exception to this trend. SOEs which are also termed as public enterprises (PEs) in India have spread far and wide and many SOEs belonging to different sectors have made their way into the global arena. The SOEs emerged stronger with the onset of global financial crisis in 2008. For the emerging economies especially those with huge natural resources, the SOEs became the saving grace and were the main source of capital. They forged ahead with internationalization despite odds and became an important source of international investment. Many developing countries today such as Brazil, China, Mexico, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, to name a few have a sizable section of power generation, transport and communication and irrigation systems belonging to the SOE sectors under the state ownership. For example, in India, Nigeria, and Ghana more than 90% electricity generation is done by the SOE sector which is a benchmark in itself (PWC, 2015).

In this paper, we attempt to understand two vital policy elements which are under implementation in Indian SOEs—the system of MoU (memorandum of understanding) and corporate governance. The MoU is a performance enhancement tool used in SOEs to aid in performance improvements, while corporate governance is a policy framework of the government, which helps in creating an enabling environment for business in India and the provisions of the framework are applicable to the SOEs. Both these interventions bring the SOEs on par

with an international business organization as it facilitates the SOEs to strengthen their internal processes, enhance performance accountability and promote transparency mechanisms while making the SOEs ready for work with other enterprises in the global arena.

SOEs (PEs) in India

SOEs in India were established during the post independence era and have since played a very critical role in growth and development of the country. They have been instrumental in promoting a new socio-economic order wherein the natural resources of the nation have been utilised in a transparent, accountable and participative manner for benefit of all its citizens. From the very beginning since their inception PEs were established in strategic key sectors like roads, railways, telecommunications, defence, power etc., which were vital for economic regeneration of the country and these sectors were entrusted to the public sector. Private sector has also been provided their due in the growth and development of the country from time to time. Gradually, the role and importance of public enterprises changed considerably from being mere tools of fulfilling social objectives to being growth engines and contributing to economic prosperity of a nation. While there were some inherent problems that went along with the working of these enterprises especially their large size and multiple control and accountability points created major hurdles in their operational decision making and governance processes, there were some global best practices available during the time when the Indian government started looking for solutions to fix these problems (Mishra & Geeta, 2015).

There are about 250 central public sector enterprises (CPSEs). Majority of these CPSEs, including Maharatnas, Navratnas and Miniratnas, are earning profit and have improved their financial performance over the years. In the context of the policy of the government to grant more autonomy to the CPSEs and encourage them to access the capital markets for their fund requirement, Corporate Governance has become even more important. Under the recently introduced Maharatna Scheme, CPSEs are expected to expand international operations and become global giants, for which effective Corporate Governance is imperative (Mishra & Geeta, 2015).

Reforms in Indian SOEs

The Indian government made consistent efforts to enhance the performance of SOEs and many reforms have been ushered in from time to time. The two major reforms which swept the Indian SOEs include: (1) the system of MoU (Memorandum of Understanding or the Performance Contracts); and (2) the introduction of Corporate Governance practices.

The MoU system was introduced in SOEs due to the recommendations from the Arjun Sengupta Committee report in 1984 which highlighted the importance of MoU system for enhancing the performance of SOEs. There were some best practices globally available with the performance contracting or MoU system. During 1960s, the French government experimented with Performance Contracting (PC) system as a tool to improve the functioning of SOEs. The French model of performance contracting system with necessary modifications was adopted by countries like Bangladesh, China, Korea, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Ghana, Gambia, Brazil, Argentina and many others. This was the time when the Indian government faced a lot of trouble in managing performance of SOEs and the expectations from them were also increasing. A high level Committee known as the Arjun Sengupta Committee was set up in 1984, to analyze the performance of SOEs, and identify problems that they face and suggest measures for improving their functioning. The Committee observed that the SOEs increased steadily in terms of numbers and spread all over the country and diversified from their focus on basic and heavy industry sector to areas of consumer goods, electronics, tourism and others (Mishra &

Geeta, 2015). Though there was a positive growth in terms of social objective, the fact remained that these enterprises were not performing well in terms of revenue generation and profits which became a matter of concern. The system of MoU was adopted by government of India in mid-1980s to streamline performance of SOEs (Mishra & Geeta, 2015).

A survey conducted by Price Waterhouse Cooper's CEO Pulse survey which took the views from CEOs of private sector indicated that they believe that government ownership has advantages in certain circumstances for, e.g., furthering social outcomes, providing physical infrastructure and creating stability in times of crisis within and across supply chains. But at the same time they had a view that there is a risk that state ownership can destroy value if best practices in ownership and management are not applied: of most concern to CEOs in our Pulse survey are issues of corruption, bribery and inefficiency.

The MoU is a mutually negotiated agreement between the management of the SOEs and the Government of India/Holding SOE. The MoU system involves goal setting in Financial and Non Financial areas and performance evaluation of these goals. A high powered committee under the Cabinet Secretary oversees the functioning of this system. The objectives of MoU are to improve the performance of SOEs by increasing autonomy and accountability of management; fixing of targets in accordance with the goals and objectives of SOEs; enable performance evaluation through objective criteria and provides a mechanism of rewarding and incentivizing performance. The MoU system was started with four SOEs signing MoU in the year 1986-1987 increased its coverage to 196 SOEs in the year 2012-2013. In the year 2012-2013, as per the performance evaluation report, 75 SOEs were rated excellent, 39 SOEs were good, 38 SOEs good and 36 SOEs poor and 2 SOEs were fair (Crane & Matten, 2007).

Box: 1: The highlights of the current MoU system:

MoU is an annual assessment method;

It's a performance agreement between the enterprise and its concerned administrative ministry;

Main criteria for assessment of performance are financial and non-financial parameters;

Targets are set at the beginning of the year (both financial and non-financial) based on which the enterprises are evaluated at the end of the year;

Assessment is done on a 5 point rating scale;

An institutional machinery in place to oversee the implementation of MoU;

Incentives linked with the MoU performance (PRP).

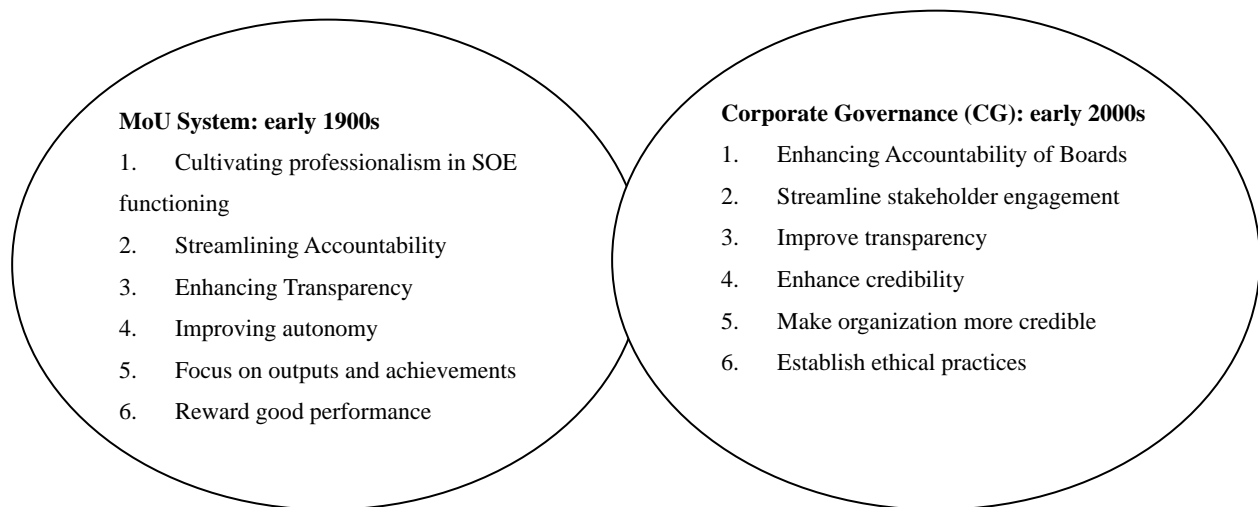


Figure 1. MoU & CG Reforms in India SOEs.

Emergence of Corporate Governance

With the advent of globalization and with the control of the government on market regulation slowly reducing, the element of mistrust crept in and the shareholders were seen to be losing trust and clearly there was a greater need for accountability (Narayana Murthy, 2000). There were a series of incidents which took place in the year 2002 in the US which further led to the drop in trust:

- (1) WorldCom (phone company)—inflated profits and financial misappropriation;
- (2) Enron (Energy firm)—millions of dollars were made by its executives, supported by Anderson its accounting firm which facilitated by destroying papers/evidences;
- (3) Dynergy (Energy firm)—got embroiled in accounting fraud;
- (4) Adelphia (Communication firm)—funds siphoned by founder family members;
- (5) Peregrine System (Software firm)—overstated revenues;
- (6) Rite Aid (Drugstore)—embroiled in accounting fraud.

All these incidents led to the emergence of contemporary corporate governance which formally started in 1992 with the Cadbury report, which was primarily to protect weak and widely dispersed shareholders against self-interested Directors and managers. A Committee chaired by Adrian Cadbury was set up in UK to study the working of company boards and accounting systems to mitigate corporate governance risks and failures. The Cadbury report is also know as a report on *Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance*. The report's recommendations have been used to varying degrees to establish other codes such as those of the European Union, the United States, World Bank, etc..

The other major milestone has been the adoption of Sarbanes-Oxley Act, informally referred to as Sarbox or Sox, by the federal government of United States. An attempt was made to legislate several of the principles recommended in the Cadbury and OECD reports. The United Kingdom took punitive measures against companies which indulged in financial frauds. The Sarbanes Oxley Act was passed which mandated that the CEO and CFO should swear in front of the notary that their annual and quarterly statements contain no untrue information. The CEO and the CFO has to certify their financial statements of their companies. Primarily concerned with public listed companies, i.e., those listed on a Stock Exchange.

The Indian businesses were in no way untouched by these developments and we saw many scams coming out in open:

- (1) Harshad Mehta (stock exchange)—a former stock broker from Mumbai, India, who was convicted for his involvement in the Indian stock market manipulation scam;
- (2) Ketan Mehta—a former stock broker from Mumbai, India, who was convicted for his involvement in the Indian stock market manipulation scam;
- (3) Ramalinga Raju (IT company)—was the chairman of Satyam computers limited and was convicted for misappropriation of funds.

The Government of India set up many Committees to recommend best practices to be adapted by businesses to bring in greater accountability, transparency and improve corporate governance. Some of the key committees that were set up Government of India include:

- (1) The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) set up a National Task Force Chaired by Rahul Bajaj in 1997;
- (2) Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI) set up a task Force in 2000 chaired by Kumara Mangalam Birla;

(3) Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI) set up another task force in 2003 chaired by Narayana Murthy;

(4) Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) set up a National Task Force Chaired by Rahul Bajaj in 2009.

Box item: 2: Excerpts from the Report on CG

A high level committee was constituted by Security Exchange Board of India to look into the need for corporate governance practices and facilitating global business. The highlights of committee report: "Strong corporate governance is indispensable to resilient and vibrant capital markets and is an important instrument of investor protection. It is the blood that fills the veins of transparent corporate disclosure and high quality accounting practices. It is the muscle that moves a viable and accessible financial reporting structure". (Source: Kumar Mangalam Birla Committee Report, 2000, SEBI, India)

The Department of Public Enterprise (DPE) in the Government of India issues guidelines on Corporate Governance with the objective that the CPSEs follow the guidelines in their functioning. The main objective is that the proper implementation of these guidelines would protect the interest of shareholders and relevant stakeholders. The DPE issues guidelines on various crucial aspects of corporate governance including composition of Board of Directors of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), professionalizing Boards by inducting adequate number of non-official Directors, setting up of Audit Committees, remuneration committee, disclosures, developing and implementing risk mitigation plan, disclosures, annual reporting, etc..

A legal framework has been developed by Indian Government to promote corporate governance practices in India. The Companies Act of 2013 is an Act of the Parliament of India which regulates incorporation of a company, responsibilities of a company, directors, and dissolution of a company.

- (1) The Act introduces significant changes to the composition of the boards of directors;
- (2) Every company is required to appoint 1 (one) resident director on its board;
- (3) Nominee directors shall no longer be treated as independent directors;
- (4) Listed companies and specified classes of public companies are required to appoint independent directors and women directors on their boards;
- (5) The Act for the first time codifies the duties of directors;
- (6) SEBI amends the Listing Agreement (with prospective effect from October 01, 2014) to align it with CA 2013.

The Act requires companies to have the following classes of directors (see Figure 2).

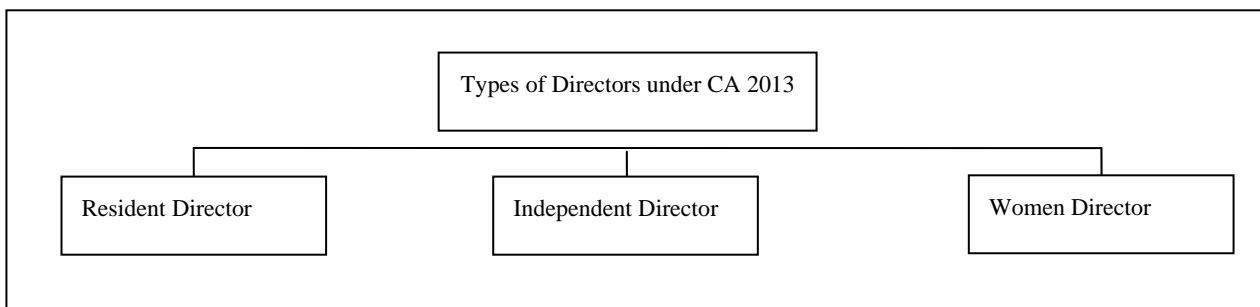


Figure 2. Types of Directors as Mandated by the Companies Act, 2013 of Government of India.

Corporate governance has become an important factor in managing organizations in the current global and complex environment (see Figure 3).

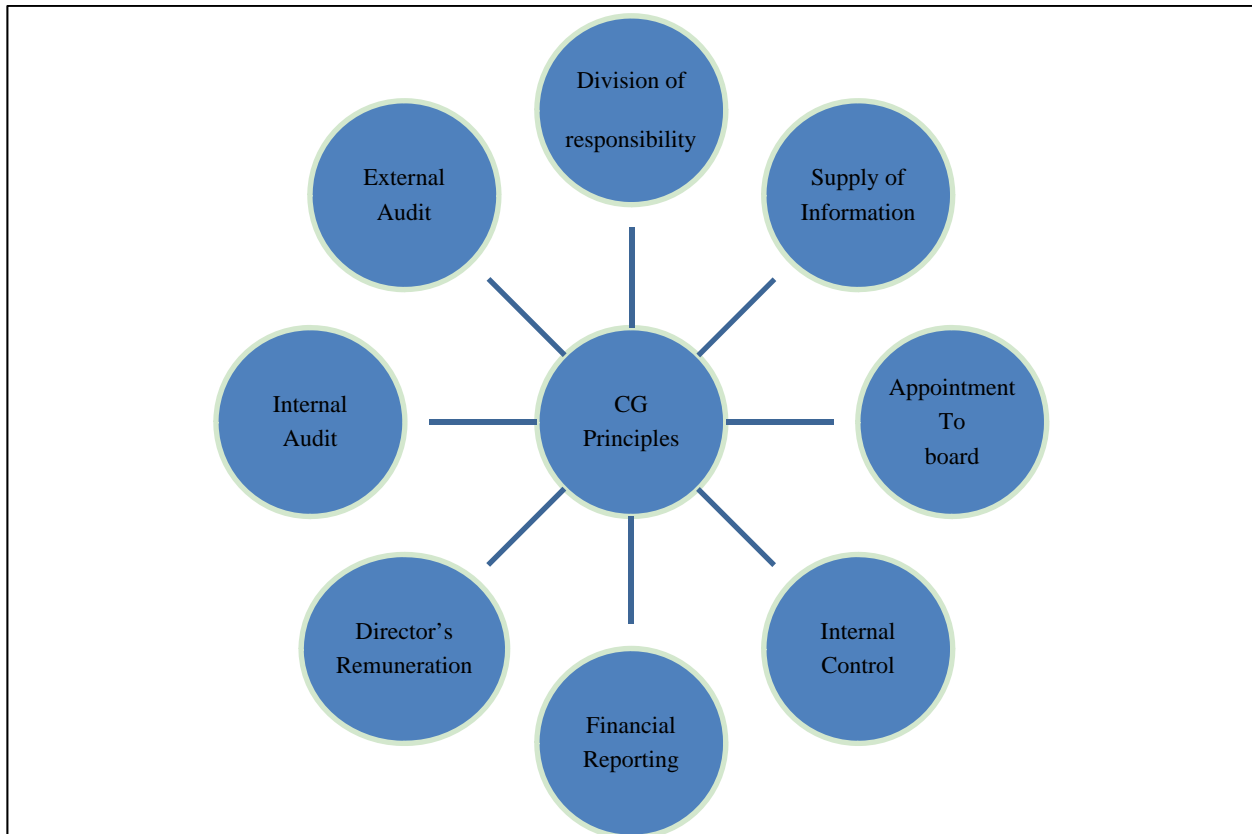


Figure 3. Key Principles of Corporate Governance.

MoU & CG: Complementary Systems

The MoU system was adopted at a time when the SOEs in India were facing the existential challenge and the Government was looking out for a mechanism to salvage the SOEs out of trouble. Therefore, MoU/PC system was adopted as a strategic tool to bring the enterprise working closer to the international standards. While corporate governance came about as a requirement due to the extent to which SOEs were going as a global force and many, if not most, large SOEs were actively engaged in international business. Therefore governments started pursuing explicit policies of SOE internationalization, to be able to compete with firms in an international space. The SOEs have made great strides to adapt internationally accepted governance practices and processes. We try to analyse and examine some of the key features of both these systems and how they have complimented each other in improving the functioning of SOEs and making them truly global.

Strengthening Organizational Performance

The Government of India realized that despite the important achievements of the public sector in terms of increase in production, development of strong industrial base, enhanced technological skills, all the contributions and achievements of the SOE sector to the Indian economy and Indian manufacturing, the overall performance of the various enterprises remained unsatisfactory and failed to fulfill some of its main objectives namely, generation of resources and financial profitability. The SOEs were expected to generate resources through manufacturing and other activities to further establish more industries. But they were unable to fulfill

this demand to the expected level. Financially, the SOE sector was expected to be a significant source of revenue for the state, revenue, which would in turn be used by the government for further development of fresh fields, which it did not fulfill.

MoU was introduced as a tool for the SOE to plan its performance strategy and develop appropriate measures for self-assessment at the end of the year. With this tool the SOE was equipped to plan its performance based on its capacity, external environment and resources available. It also helped the SOE to set measurable targets and reward managers for good performance at the end of the year. The MoU system helped SOE to identify issues at the operational level which contribute to the non-performance of SOEs and contribute for non-achievement of targets. By identifying these key challenges the SOEs improved their efficiency and performance and became more competitive.

In the complex global environment, corporate governance is an important factor in managing organizations. It deals with the set of processes and structures which control and direct the SOEs. The corporate governance principle desires that all the various stakeholders involved in an SOE including shareholders, employees, managers, suppliers, lenders, government, people at large have to be taken along in the process. The Government has brought in necessary laws to make corporate governance an integral part of an SOE which will help to bring them on par with the international processes of various firms and help to revitalize public sector companies by initiating measures for improving corporate governance mechanisms, bringing in greater accountability and transparency and improving human resource management, technology up-gradation, etc..

The Department of Public Enterprise (DPE) in the Government of India issues guidelines on Corporate Governance with the objective that the CPSEs follow the guidelines in their functioning. The main objective is that the proper implementation of these guidelines would protect the interest of shareholders and relevant stakeholders. The DPE issues guidelines on various crucial aspects of corporate governance including composition of Board of Directors of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), professionalizing Boards by inducting adequate number of non-official Directors, setting up of Audit Committees, remuneration committee, disclosures, developing and implementing risk mitigation plan, disclosures, annual reporting, etc.. A legal framework has been developed and the Companies Act of 2013 has been promulgated, which provides guidelines on corporate governance practices for business entities in India.

Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms

Corporate governance is about maintaining an appropriate balance of accountability between three key players the corporation's owners, the directors whom the owners elect, and the managers whom the directors select. The system of corporate governance provides for an overarching framework for doing business with enhanced accountability, transparency and participation. It enables accountability among various stakeholders such as the board, managers, shareholders and other stakeholders who participate in the working of SOEs and it thereby specifies the distribution of rights and responsibilities among those different participants in the corporation. It also spells out the rules and procedures for making decisions on corporate affairs. Therefore corporate governance is the acceptance by management of the inalienable rights of the shareholders as the true owners of the corporation and of their own role as trustees on behalf of the shareholders. It is about commitment to values, about ethical business conduct and about making a distinction between personal and corporate funds in the Management of the Company" (Narayana Murthy, 2000). This clarity provides for clearer accountability roles and more transparency in the functioning of the system.

The system of MoU was set up with the idea of increasing the accountability of SOEs for their performance in the form of a signed MOU. This MOU was to be signed between the enterprise managers and the administrative ministry concerned before the commencement of the financial year. The system of MoU came about as a tool which could provide the top management to bring in greater professionalism to their approach in managing their enterprise. The MoU system mandated enterprises to develop a strategic performance plan for 5 years based on the benchmarks available in the sector nationally and internationally. It also mandated the SOEs to look at their previous year's performance and plan for better results.

Disclosure and Transparency

As per the corporate governance requirements, the SOEs are required to share the financial information and other crucial information necessary for the investor to decide on his investments. With a strong MoU system, it is much easier for the SOE to be able to upload information on their websites and other means of communication. The Key elements of CG-Organizations should clarify and make publicly known the roles and responsibilities of board and management to provide stakeholders with a level of accountability. They should also implement procedures to independently verify and safeguard the integrity of the company's financial reporting. Disclosure of material matters concerning the organization should be timely and balanced to ensure that all investors have access to clear, factual information.

More and more business organisations are attaining a global edge and expanding in size. The companies listed on stock exchange have been forced to disclose mandatory information in their annual reports as set out by the statutory requirements. Reporting information voluntarily has become a norm for large companies. In fact, a large proportion of corporate disclosures made through annual reporting concern an agenda of visualising the company's core values, mission statement, business concept, and social responsibility. Annual reporting plays a central role in legitimising the company's existence.

Traditionally the main medium for communicating Corporate Governance (CG) practices has been through company annual reports. The internet provides an additional communication tool to augment traditional corporate reporting practices. Internationally, web-based communication has been promoted to enhance traditional communication practices by "enabling equitable access to information for all interested stakeholders. A strong, informative and transparent system of corporate disclosure is of paramount importance for the efficient and effective allocation of resources as well as integrity of financial markets. High-quality corporate disclosure helps investors and other capital market participants by enabling them to make proper assessment of the potential risks and rewards of alternative investments. Well-informed investment decision-making by capital market participants leads to efficient allocation of capital, which promotes productivity and economic growth.

Accountability requires not only good transparency, but also an effective means to take action for poor performance or bad decisions. More and more business organisations are attaining a global edge and expanding in size. The companies listed on stock exchange have been forced to disclose mandatory information in their annual reports as set out by the statutory requirements. Reporting information voluntarily has become a norm for large companies. In fact, a large proportion of corporate disclosures made through annual reporting concern an agenda of visualising the company's core values, mission statement, business concept, and social responsibility. Annual reporting plays a central role in legitimising the company's existence.

Improving Professional Performance Standards

One of the expectations from the public sector enterprises was that they would operate on the lines of a

private business and generate revenue which could be further invested in growth and development. The PEs were not successful as commercial ventures and so could not augment the revenue stream of the government. Efficiency in operation was an expectation that was not fulfilled by the PEs where both commercial and non-commercial enterprises saw a deterioration of efficiency.

There were many reasons for the failure. The SOEs were not provided with the freedom for operational decision making and this freedom was curtailed in a lot of cases or there was interference from the government in an unofficial manner. There were three essential questions raised regarding the public sector: (1) why the state was operating PEs; (2) What was expected from the PEs in the context of the Indian economy; and (3) How they were to operate in order to meet the expectation of the State.

The Industrial Policy Resolution 1991 suggested for enhancing autonomy to SOEs for taking speedy decisions for SOEs to be successful, decentralization of power and authority of SOEs along the line of a business or a private company was also suggested as one of the key measures of reforms. This led to the introduction the policy providing SOEs with the largest possible measure of freedom in their functioning and operations for improving their performance on lines of private businesses. Financial and administrative freedom was given to SOEs based on the nature of profitability of the enterprise.

Enhancing Organizational Credibility

A strong, informative and transparent system of corporate disclosure is of paramount importance for the efficient and effective allocation of resources as well as integrity of financial markets. High-quality corporate disclosure helps investors and other capital market participants by enabling them to make proper assessment of the potential risks and rewards of alternative investments. Well-informed investment decision-making by capital market participants leads to efficient allocation of capital, which promotes productivity and economic growth.

The public sector was facing issues like multiple accountability channels, information asymmetry, lack of autonomy and quick decision making, red tape and so on. The MoU system provided a level playing field for both the enterprise managers and ministries to negotiate the performance targets. There were also other problems of information asymmetry between the SOE and the government which the MoU system attempted to correct. One important expected change that came about with MoU was that SOEs were granted increased decision making authority over resource allocation, including cross-border mergers and overseas acquisitions. In addition, the authorities were expected to set up investment holding companies, introduce performance-based compensation schemes and—for SOEs deemed to be in non-sensitive sectors—allow non-state investment in government controlled firms.

The three basic components of MoU system are—Performance Information System, a Performance Evaluation System and a Performance Incentive System. The Arjun Sengupta Committee report recommended the need for a strong Management Information System (MIS).

The system of MoU has been under implementation since early 1990s and has facilitated the enterprises to develop information regarding their own firm and has also given them a reason to benchmark their own performance with similar companies across the globe and learn best practices from them. MoU has over the last many decades created the culture of performance orientation and professionalism and have tuned the SOE managers to be motivated and performance driven, thus giving them a level playing field in the international arena.

More and more SOEs are entering the global arena and there is a pressing need for companies to adapt international standards of governance and organizational systems. Corporate governance is one such requirement that Indian companies are fast adapting so that they will be able to compete and collaborate with the international firms. According to the Transparency International Survey, India has the most transparent companies while Chinese firms are the most opaque. The survey, released by the Transparency International on Monday, covered 100 companies in 15 emerging market countries that also included Brazil, Mexico and Russia. India led the way, with all 19 of its companies in the study achieving a score of 75% or more in being open about their company structures and holdings which was attributed to the country's Companies Act (2016).

The Transparency International study took into account three different ways in which companies can address corruption. These included the reporting of anti-corruption programmes such as policies to ban bribes or "facilitation payments", the disclosure of company structures and holdings, and the disclosure of key financial information in each individual country where they operate, such as tax payments. Transparency International researchers said this information was gathered from corporate websites and other publicly available sources.

Summing up

The adoption of MoU as a tool to enhance performance of SOEs provided the much needed professional approach to the functioning of these enterprises. It provided the environment much needed by the SOEs to strategize, plan, organize, measure and incentivize good performance. During the time when the SOEs faced intense competition from the private sector, this system provided the much needed introduction of performance culture usually adopted by a private sector firm and thus set in the change of SOEs and made them more competitive and result oriented. The MoU system has grown over the years by tuning into mechanisms like balanced score cards and other progressive techniques.

The introduction of corporate governance for the SOEs provided an overarching framework for managing the enterprises in a global arena. More and more SOEs were getting opened up to global competition and with the companies getting listed on the stock exchanges they had to make themselves more investor friendly and opaque. The companies listed on stock exchange were mandated to disclose in their annual reports as set out by the statutory requirements. With the introduction of corporate governance in SOEs a strong, informative and transparent system of corporate disclosure was brought in which is of paramount importance for the efficient and effective allocation of resources as well as integrity of financial markets. High-quality corporate disclosure helps investors and other capital market participants by enabling them to make proper assessment of the potential risks and rewards of alternative investments. Well-informed investment decision-making by capital market participants leads to efficient allocation of capital, which promotes productivity and economic growth.

Both the systems—MoU and CG systems contributed in a very holistic manner and have made Indian SOEs ready to penetrate the global competitive space.

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Several Psychological Theories and Methods to Persuade and Educate the Followers of Heretic Sects

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How to let the persons who join heretic sects wrongly break away from the cults is regarded as a difficult problem in the world. This authors sum up the four kinds of effective methods through their over 10 years' experiences that they had persuaded and educated the followers of heretic sects through psychology principles in mainland China. The methods include cognitive disorder, debate method, psychological hint method and psychological diagnosis method.

Keywords: heretic sects, cognitive disorder, debate method, psychological hint

When a person joins a cult mistakenly, it is an extremely hard mission to separate him or her from the heretic sect when he or she has been brainwashed. It is true for the cult followers in mainland China and is also for the ones in different countries in the world, especially the followers who believe in Falun Gong movement. Therefore, what kinds of reasons make the followers unable to break away from the manipulation of the heresy? The experiences have proved that it is mainly psychological. So, after years' exploration, we have summed up 19 kinds of psychological relief methods of persuasion and education, and four ones are introduced in this paper.

Cognitive Disorder

This paper tries to take the followers of Falun Gong movement for an example. They turn a deaf or laugh at contemptuously to peoples' persuasion and education. In their vies, what you say is the low-level opinions of ordinary people and people cannot understand their beliefs and truths. These followers have formed such mental set: the words of the mentor are absolutely right and the reason that people cannot understand is your low levels. To let them go out of the mental circle constructed by Falun Gong needs the truth as steel to cause their cognitive disorders. The below is an example.

Case 1: Change Cognition with Real Facts

Ms Gao, female and 45 years old, has received the education of technical secondary school and is a Chinese Communist Party member, as well as a firm believer and a practitioner of Falun Gong. She left the cult through several real facts, from which she realized that Li Hongzhi is not honest and cheated others, so the her wake-up was achieved by her cognitive disorder. The first was that Li Hongzhi said the April 25 Event had nothing to do him, when he was in the trip from the United States to Australia, and he totally had no idea of it.

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Ms Gao thought it could tell that Li Hongzhi was lying, because there were numerous little bodies almost everywhere. The bodies followed each follower all the time and he knew clearly what his disciples did. But, there were so many disciples gathering in Sea Palaces. Why did Li Hongzhi not know? His words were fake obviously.

The second event was the report on Minghui Website that Peng Min was beaten to death by the policeman in mainland China. When she heard this forged report, she thought the Chinese Communist Party was extreme bad and believed it was not right to treat the believers of Falun Gong in such a cruel way. In her eyes, the website was the representative of Li Hongzhi in Mainland China just like the *People's Daily* as the mouthpiece of the Communist Party. So, she believed it highly. But when Lu Jianhong told her that Peng Min was not murdered by the policeman, who has spent a long time with the dead man. The fact was that he hit the wall and broke his skull, the policemen of the mainland China were afraid of his death and being framed by Falun Gong, so they sent him to hospital immediately. At last, he was died of invalid cure at last. Cheng Jianhong and Peng Min were best friends, the speeches of Cheng Jianhong was believable. So, Ms Gao found that Li Hongzhi was not sincere and honest and cheated other, was a cunning man. Based on it as a breakthrough, she didn't believe Falun Gong any longer.

Debate Method

Among the large number of followers of Falun Gong, some are good at debate and arguing with persuaders. These people all think highly of themselves and believe they have the truth. They firmly believe that the truth, goodness and tolerance of Falun Gong and other beliefs, which are not overthrown by anyone in the universe. They extremely despised their debate rivals subconsciously and felt confident to face the debate opponents. For such those followers, the regular persuasion has almost zero effect on them. In such condition, debate method is more suitable for them.

The so-called debate method means that the persuaders have the face-to-face, equal and open argument with cult believers in some questions. While the referee is present, the both parties don't fight badly, don't push each other, don't pester each other endlessly, strictly comply with rules of debate and take the principle of persuasion peacefully until one party abandons its ideas and is convinced by another one. If the wrong ideas are defected one by one in repeated arguments, the mind of followers will change in quality in the accumulation of quantity. So, her divorce with Falun Gong will come soon.

However, to make the debate valid, the both parties should decide the debate rules and set up the justice of the referees argue recognized by both parties, the methods and skills of debate are a lot, the Socratic polemics (also known as maieutic Forensics) is regarded as a better choice.

Case 2: The Dialogue Between a Persuader and a Follower of Galun Gong

A female follower of Falun Gong built the dam with some villagers. The site had a landslide and the soil buried her both legs, and she could not move at all. The villages rushed to rescue her and dug out some mud. One of her leg was pulled out, when the villagers were about to help her with another leg, she suddenly thought that she was a disciple of Li Hongzhi. When she was in danger, she spoke one sentence that the Falun Gong Law was good and the truth, goodness and tolerance was good, and the miracle would show up. So she refused the rescue provided by the villagers, and tried the rule. She repeated the sentences again and again. She used the leg outside of mud hardly and pulled the leg in soil. The leg was pulled out unexpectedly, so she believed the Falun Gong was amazing. The small bodies of Li Hongzhi really protected her from dangers and bad lucks.

Persuader: Why do you think you will be out of danger in the soil?

Follower of Falun Gong: Thanks to the Master and his power is endless, his small bodies will protect his disciples. Whenever we are and what disasters we will face, we are all free from the dangers.

Persuader: When Li Hongzhi was in the foreign country, did he know that there would have a landslide here?

Follower of Falun Gong: Yes, of course, his small bodies are with each follower.

Persuader: Really? Have you ever seen the small body of Li Hongzhi in person?

Follower of Falun Gong: No, I didn't. But when I shouted out the sentence, I felt that his body helped me pull another leg.

Persuader: Could you please tell me how many people were buried in site? Were you the only buried person? Weren't they building with you?

Follower of Falun Gong: When the slide happened, I was the only person in the soil. There were some people, but they were not disciples of Li Hongzhi.

Persuader: How it could be? Why are you buried, rather than others when the landslide happened?

Follower of Falun Gong: why?

Persuader: Because they are normal people and have no protection of Master Li. You are a disciple, with his protection, how could you were buried in the soil?! When the land slide happened, where was your master? Where was his small body? You said he is the Lord Buddha with infinite forces. He knows everything in air, earth, past and future things and is in charge of everything. Why did he instruct you to hide or stop the landslide if he knew you were in there?

Followers of Falun Gong: I...

Psychological Hint Method

Everyone implies. Studies have shown that the cult followers or believers have higher hints than normal people, among which female one is higher than the male one. The role of psychological hints of many people are caught by heretic sects, which gives us a suggestion that cults use psychological hints to draw people and make them become the firm followers. Why can we use the hint to save them? So we made exploration in this aspect and had a good results. The below is two examples of psychological hints.

Environmental Hint

In a tall building, it happened there were more than 10 cult followers, which might cause by the proximity of interpersonal attraction. A group of volunteers persuaded these believers intensively. In the period, when each follower finally announced the breakup with the cult after being hardly persuaded and educated, a small party will be held in his or her house. Volunteers, cult followers and their families all sung songs together, related persons came to celebrate. The cheering up words and laughter were from the house. At the moment, the victory environment will fill in the whole building. When the followers heard the familiar songs and laughter, they would know another person separated from the cult. In the days of intensive education and persuasion, such songs and laughter would be happened several times a day, sometimes at night. Don't think it was just for victory and celebration, it had an more important meaning that they gave the hints to the followers who firmly believed the cult: You cannot adhere in the long term, other followers like you were persuaded, aren't they? The facts have proved that, in such psychological hints, some followers left the cult without much struggles.

Typical Hint

Focusing on the favorable forces in the education and persuasion, first hold the followers who are poisoned most and most stubborn, persuade and convince the followers with biggest influences and most representative, use psychological hints to persuade.

A follower of Falun Gong who was disconnected with the cult said to the persuading volunteers that he was relieved when he saw Wang in the list of persuaded cult followers. Everyone knew Wang was the best

learner of Falun Gong and his position was firmest among other the followers. So he thought if the person could insist, he can hold on. He waited to see what kinds of methods the volunteers use to persuade him. He never thought the person was successfully persuaded within a few days. He could not believe at first, when he found it was true, so his mind was crushed down. He always wondered what the volunteers used to convince people like Wang, so a sense of admiring feeling came out naturally. So he began to wonder whether he could adhere or not and where there was a reason that he could persist in. After one sentence of volunteers, he began to swing. Obviously, the persuasion of Wang was a wordless hint for him. Wang was such a firm believer and follower, he was educated to left the cult. The volunteers must have methods to let him disconnect with Falun Gong.

Psychological Diagnosis Method

While talking with the cult followers who cannot left the cult, volunteers shall start from the perspective of spiritual medicine and abnormal psychology, some followers may suffer from serious mental disorders or severe psychopath, who cannot be persuaded out of the cult through persuasion and education. Different from the typical severe mental illness or abnormal psychology in psychiatry and abnormal psychology, although their symptoms, severity and duration of disease have met the diagnosis standards of mental disorders, their speeches, deeds and behaviors are heretic. They are usually regarded as the stubborn cult followers and believers after the invalid persuasion and education. The corrective ways to treat such followers are:

First, according to followers' unified principle of the subjective and the objective world, the internal coordination principle of mental activities, personality relative stability principle, diagnose their self-conscience on their diseases and check whether they have the psychiatric symptoms like delusions, hallucinations, confusion and other of cardiac diagnosis, and judge whether they suffer from severe mental illness. If they have the mental disorders, verbal persuasion and education is invalid, and they should be treated medically.

Second, for the followers who have minor mental disease in the non-onset period, they can receive persuasion and education while having the logic minds and understanding ability and having medical treatment. For those who have some kinds of psychological disorder like hysteria, they can receive the same treatment.

Case 3: She Is a Woman Who Suffers from Schizophrenic

Ms Wu, female and 53 years old, has the education of middle school and is unemployed, living in the city. She has been exercised Falun Gong for five years. After persuasion and education, she expressed that she would break away from the cult and asked someone to write the materials in paper. But later, she announced that the materials written before was invalid and she could not separate from Falun Gong and her master. She told the persuaders that her 81-year-old mother was the daughter of Li Hongzhi, and she has been the wife of Li Hongzhi for 3 lives. Li Hongzhi told her for many times that she had connection with him and her two children were kids of Li Hongzhi and she. After she announced that she could not leave Falun Gong and her master, she often said she was sorry for him and she could not betray him or something like these, her mood was very upset. She felt being monitored all the time and something really bad would happen to her. In a conversation with a volunteer, she first stood up humbly and answered what she was asked. But in the middle of conversation, she turned very nervous and panic, her body began to shake, and she had asked to stop the talk for several times. She said her master was behind her back and he was hardly blaming her betrayal. Then she left the room gingerly and hastily to escape from her master, while passing several rooms, she looked back with a extremely

panic manner. After more than one year's persuasion and education, she still could not disconnect with Falun Gong.

Through observation, Ms Wu had a clear mind, expect a large number of speeches about Falun Gong, she also had the phonism, heteroptics, beziehungswahn, delusion of persecution, delusion of self-accusation, paralogi thinking and other psychotic symptoms, she was diagnosed as schizophrenia caused by Falun Gong and she needs to medical treatment first and then the persuasion and education.

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