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# INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS

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## Report on the Advanced Research and Training Seminars (ARTS) 2004

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The Advanced Research Training Seminars (ARTS) program, co-sponsored by the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP), the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS) and the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP) provides intensive, short term training in research methodologies and new directions in psychological science to scientists from low income countries. ARTS seminars are held every two years in conjunction with and near the location of international congresses of psychology.

### Objectives of the ARTS program

The ARTS program has two main objectives:

- (i) to bring to international congresses scholars from low-income countries who might otherwise be financially unable to attend
- (ii) to enhance their research and the knowledge they may take back to colleagues and students within their countries through advanced research training.

At the root of these objectives is the belief that international psychology has the responsibility to promote the development of the discipline of psychology around the world. In addition the ARTS program coincidentally:

- (iii) provides an almost equally important but rare opportunity for interaction and shared experiences among colleagues from low-income countries
- (iv) ensures the representation of psychology from all countries at our international congresses and
- (v) provides developed-world scholars with the insights that these scholars may bring to our culture-bound theories and methods

### Selection of topics and conveners

The general aim of ARTS is to provide three different but complementary seminars, with one focusing on basic science or methodology, and two on substantive topics of relevance to potential participants. A further consideration is to include seminars that have not been offered in recent ARTS.

In the two years prior to ARTS 2004 we solicited applications from potential conveners. As was typical for recent years, a number of persons expressed interest in convening an ARTS seminar in 2004. We received 13 inquiries/proposals to convene an ARTS seminar on a range of topics. In recent years more than one person has volunteered to convene a seminar on the same topic that the Coordinators have selected as a seminar topic. This occurred in 2004 with two volunteers for a seminar on environmental psychology. In such circumstances, the practice has been to convene an ARTS advisory committee, comprised of previous ARTS Coordinators who independently review and provide advice for the Coordinators. Coordinators dislike having to turn down the offer of a volunteer to convene a

seminar, so extra care and external advice is sought before a decision is reached. It is rewarding to have so many persons willing to make this substantial professional commitment.

The final program was:

- “Environmental Psychology in Developing Countries: A Multimethod Approach.” The seminar was held in Xi’an, China, July 30–August 1. Dr. Barry Ruback (Pennsylvania State University) was convener.
- “Introduction & Evaluation of Psychological Interventions in Health and Disease.” This seminar was held in Beijing, China, August 6–8, just prior to the International Congress. Professor Stan Maes (Leiden, The Netherlands), was convener and was assisted by three instructors.
- “Survey Research Methods”, Beijing, China, August 14–16, immediately following the Congress. Professor Peter Mohler and Dr. Janet Harkness from the Centre for Survey Research and Methodology (Mannheim, Germany) were the conveners.

### Advertising

Advertising for ARTS conveners and then for participant applications was carried out through the usual media: *International Psychology* (APA), *IAAP Newsletter*, *IACCP Bulletin*, and this year, in a new location, the *Newsletter* of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD). These publications were helpful in disseminating word about ARTS to potential applicants.

These advertisements were augmented by announcements on the websites of participating organizations, as well as on the Congress websites (International Congress of Psychology, International Congress for Cross-Cultural Psychology). For 2004, prominent placement of the ARTS announcement and links to information on the homepage for the International Congress of Psychology website was particularly useful. Web-based dissemination is essential for future ARTS. The ARTS announcements need to be prominently displayed on each Congress homepage and each participating organization homepage, as a stand-alone link, not grouped with other congress events.

A new feature that will enhance disseminating information about ARTS is the development of a permanent ARTS site on the IUPsyS webpage. Each of the sponsoring organizations can link to this webpage, which will provide potential conveners

and applicants with a stable and reliable source of information about ARTS. The ARTS website will also provide a vehicle for ongoing prominence and visibility to the ARTS program donors. The permanent ARTS webpage was first on-line shortly before the 2004 Congress, and will be developed further to enhance visibility for ARTS 2006 (see <http://www.iupsys.org/arts/arts-home.html>).

### Contributions to ARTS and fund raising

The success of the ARTS program rests on donations from individuals and organizations. We gratefully acknowledge the following organizations for their generous financial contributions. Without their assistance the excellent program for ARTS 2004 would not have been possible.

#### Sponsoring Organizations:

- International Union of Psychological Science
- International Association of Applied Psychology
- International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology

#### Contributing Organizations:

- American Psychological Foundation
- The Royal Society (UK)
- British Psychological Society
- Canadian Psychological Association
- Chinese Psychological Society (ICP organizers)
- French Psychological Society
- Japanese Psychological Association
- Norwegian Psychological Association
- Netherlands Institute of Psychologists
- UNESCO via the International Social Sciences Council

#### Contributing Institutions:

- University of Manitoba, Department of Psychology, Winnipeg, Canada
- Institute of Education, University of London, UK
- Centre for Survey Research and Methodology (ZUMA), Mannheim, Germany

Although the number and level of contributions were comparable to past years, particular problems were encountered in the ARTS funding logistics because funding amounts were not known until very late in the planning stages. For future ARTS, it is important that the funding level be known earlier in the process. This will require coordination in assuring that contact information for soliciting contributions be up-to-date early in

the process. This is especially important for solicitations sent to national psychology associations, whose officers often change and whose decision-making boards meet at different times throughout the year. It will be important for ARTS coordinators to send letters soliciting support for ARTS early in the process, accompanied by an explanation of the need to learn of the Association's commitment to ARTS by early in the spring of the year ARTS will be given (e.g., in March).

The funding process for 2004 illustrates the need for early solicitation. Requests for funding reached association officers late because contact information was not always current. Levels of commitment to ARTS remained unclear until close to the summer.

This led to two problems for the planning and administration of ARTS 2004. First, uncertainty in the funding level leads to cautious budgeting and planning because funds cannot be committed until pledged. Although budget decisions should be made in the spring when participant and travel allocations are determined, some of these decisions could not be made until very late in the process. Second, the volunteer ARTS coordinators follow a tight schedule in identifying conveners, advertising the program, soliciting funding, assisting in the selection of participants, and coordinating local arrangements. Spending time soliciting funding in the late spring and early summer conflicts with other activities of finalizing travel grant allocations and local arrangements. The proposed change in practice for 2006 should resolve this problem.

### **Selection of participants for ARTS 2004**

Conveners generated a short list of applicants based primarily on their evaluation of the appropriateness of the applicant to the seminar in interest, background, application, and, if less directly measurable, their judgment of whether the participant would be likely to benefit from the seminar or impact on others (colleagues and students) on return to their home country. Guidance was given by the Coordinators on prior participation in ARTS, geographical distribution across all three seminars, when criteria clashed or other considerations arose where prior experience in administering ARTS could be helpful. Once the Coordinators and conveners concurred on a final list, conveners emailed acceptances.

This year because some conveners did not have an established acquaintance with the International

Congress of Psychology, and the budget available to ARTS was not known until quite late, it seemed wise to encourage conveners to select participants primarily on their qualifications and close fit to the seminar topic rather than suggest that the seminar might simply be a means of facilitating congress attendance. This had the effect of keeping the numbers of participants closer to the level of finances that seemed likely to be available. This strategy also made qualifications and fit to the seminar topic salient, and led one convener at the conclusion of his seminar to observe that persons selected simply to encourage their attendance at the congress seemed at least equally well prepared, engaged in the topic, and likely to benefit from the seminar as those who were selected because they seemed to have a closer fit to the topic. This strategy also resulted in fewer applicants being accepted and led some to observe that greater numbers would have promoted interaction and hence a better seminar experience.

Within the Executive Committee of the IUPsyS, a question arose about the age of the applicants to which the program was directed because of an accepted participant who was known to be over 40 years of age. Although it has been said that the program has been designed for younger psychologists, and age has been a selection criterion, it is necessary to ask the normative age for applicants and participants. To answer this question, a study of the age distributions for each of the three seminars was undertaken. The age distribution was found to be similar for the three seminars and revealed that few of the applicants were what many would call young psychologists. Fewer than 10% of the applicants were under age 30, and while substantial numbers were in their 30s, the modal age was in the 40–49 age bracket. The emphasis on younger age as a criterion for acceptance resulted in the median age for participants being substantially below that of applicants. Scholars who are younger in chronological age do not apply in larger numbers likely because psychologists in the process of establishing their careers have not yet begun to think of participation in international psychology. However, ARTS is aimed at scholars who are 'young' in terms of their research experience or position at the university, and is thus filling a genuine capacity building need. As noted elsewhere in this report, listing on the Congress website seems to be one of most effective means of reaching potential participants, thereby confirming that interest in the International Congress is a likely precursor to their knowledge of and interest in the ARTS program.

## ARTS support for participants

The ARTS contribution to seminar participants is substantial though no one is ever fully funded. Each participant receives accommodation and airport transfer expenses at the seminar site, as well as meals during the seminar and a travel grant for partial reimbursement of travel expenses (including extra nights' lodging if required for travel connections). Seminar costs, including course materials and tea and bottled water for twice-daily breaks are covered. No support is provided for accommodation or meals during the international congresses, but every participant is encouraged to submit a paper or poster and to attend at least one of the congresses.

The policy regarding registration fees for the congresses has varied for each congress. In 1992 (Brussels) ARTS covered the registration fees for its participants. In the next congresses—1994 (Madrid), 1996 (Montreal), 1998 (San Francisco), 2000 (Stockholm)—complimentary registration was provided by the congress organizers. In 2002 (Singapore), ARTS participants were allowed to pay the early registration fee regardless of when they registered, a procedure also followed in 2004 at the International Congress of Psychology (Beijing). ARTS participants who attended the 2004 International Congress for Cross-Cultural Psychology in Xi'an were allowed to register at the student rate, a practice that has been followed in some past IACCP congresses.

Waiver of registration fees or greatly reduced registration fees is highly desirable, as this extends the funds available within the ARTS budget. When a Congress is held in less affluent countries, it may not be possible to waive registration completely. A recommendation to the three sponsoring associations (IUPsyS, IAAP, and IACCP) is to agree on a registration concession policy that would apply to future congress organizers. Without such a policy, ARTS must consider congress attendance costs as part of its budget.

In addition to benefiting from general fee policies applicable to all ARTS participants, some individual ARTS participants in 2004 (and earlier congresses) successfully applied to the Congress organizers for scholarship support that may have covered registration and accommodation costs during the congress.

## Local arrangements

Although ARTS has always had good support from previous congress organizers, this year it was

exceptional. The organizers in Beijing and Xi'an facilitated the ARTS program and immediately sought solutions when the inevitable problems arose. Because the ARTS program is intense and because coordinating participants from many countries can be complex, smooth local arrangements require detailed elaboration of the ARTS program to the Congress Organizers.

## ARTS event at the International Congress of Psychology

Following a suggestion from participants at the 2002 Singapore ARTS, the first ARTS social gathering/informal meeting was held for instructors, participants and donors during the International Congress of Psychology. The early morning session was attended by about 35 persons (unfortunately invitations to donors were sent too late for them to attend) who had an opportunity to interact and share their enthusiasm and ideas for the ARTS program. This successful event will be repeated in 2006 at the International Congress of Applied Psychology in Athens, with more advance preparation and at a more convenient time for attendees. Invitations will also be extended to ARTS 'alumni' to attend and renew acquaintances and experiences that were so valued in the past. We anticipate that this supplementary activity for the ARTS program will become a regular feature of international congresses to foster networking and interaction of participants from different cultures and countries, an important objective of ARTS.

## Evaluation of ARTS 2004

Evaluations on the final day of each seminar by means of a questionnaire with objective and open-ended items provided feedback about general ARTS program functioning and about each specific ARTS seminar. Evaluations were completed by twenty-six participants. The program and each seminar were evaluated as *good* to *excellent* on a 4-point scale. Participants responded that they were primarily informed about the ARTS program from internet sites or from the Congress organizers, presumably from the information on the Congress website, showing the importance of websites for advertising the program.

Participants indicated that the ARTS program had met each of its stated objectives in the following order of effectiveness: (1) research training, (2) gaining knowledge to share with

colleagues and students back home, (3) networking with colleagues, and (4) facilitating attendance at the international congresses. Although ranked last, more than 80% of respondents indicated they attended the 2004 ICP and/or the 2004 IACCP congresses. For most participants (96.2%), the primary source of funding was grants from ARTS for travel assistance, whereas only 5 participants (19.2%) indicated they had received travel funds from a university or an agency within their own country. Additional funding for ARTS and the congresses came from personal funds (61.5%), up considerably from previous years. As in previous years, most participants (65.7%) indicated that the seminar topics related in a general way to their interests, rather than exactly to the topic on which they were working (22.9%). This reinforces the view that selection criteria should include both fit to the seminar topic and the potential for broader impact when participants take the knowledge they have gained back to students or colleagues in their department or country.

Participants' suggestions of the way in which ARTS could be improved included the following: acceptance notification, diversity, interaction. For example, participants indicated it was important to be notified of their acceptance to ARTS before the deadlines for paper submissions to the associated congresses. Earlier acceptance notification could also result in cheaper air tickets. Some participants suggested increasing the number of ARTS participants to "have a more diverse and representative group" and to increase interaction and knowledge. A further suggestion was the arrangement of group activities in the evenings after the seminars to contribute to interaction and camaraderie, and to enhance the atmosphere for instruction. The Coordinators will take these helpful suggestions under advice in the preparation of ARTS 2006.

Other suggestions raised new ideas and questions for the Coordinators to contemplate. These included: the benefits of a mixed group of developed world and developing country participants in ARTS seminars; the development of mechanisms to identify and encourage participation by younger and upcoming scholars; the value of the present limits on the number of times a person can participate in ARTS, suggesting that investing in one person's education may have greater long term impact than spreading opportunities around.

Coordinators, conveners and instructors regularly hear the appreciation expressed by participants in their seminars. A sampling of comments from the evaluation questionnaires includes:

"I think it is perfect. It is just what I needed."

"It was indeed my privilege to be selected for this programme."

"All in all, a first class opportunity and experience. Many, many thanks!"

"ARTS gave me a chance to learn a lot of elementary and important knowledge to help my research."

"I think that this was an extraordinary opportunity and I really do appreciate this learning opportunity and also the opportunity of meeting and sharing with both instructors and our learning partners. I am grateful!"

"Thanks for ARTS giving me the chance."

"Best experience I ever had in acquiring specialized knowledge on survey research methods."

### **Suggested topics for future ARTS**

Several participants expressed a need for seminars on statistical analysis/research methodology including such topics as: data analysis, documentation and interpretation, the use of statistical packages, research methodology in general, and various specific techniques, such as qualitative methods, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling. A related suggestion was for a seminar on research management skills such as data management and writing for publication, book reviews, and grant applications. Clusters of other topics mentioned included (a) organizational behaviour, developing leadership, and integrating research into decision-making processes; (b) cross-cultural counseling, stress, behaviour change and better self-efficacy; and (c) emic test construction and test development. The difficult task for Coordinators is to match the skills and interests of volunteer conveners with the topics of interest to potential participants.

### **Coordinators for ARTS 2006**

John Adair and Ingrid Lunt were Coordinators for ARTS 2004. John Adair took primary responsibility for coordinating tasks and orchestrating the program with specific tasks performed by Ingrid and communication and decisions being a joint activity. All communications were copied to the other person, so that, as second Coordinator Ingrid Lunt gained a full understanding of the process, sequence of events, and problems to anticipate in preparation for coordinating ARTS 2006. Working through this process together made it possible to see a clearer division of tasks that would promote an evenly shared load of

administering ARTS in 2006 as a new second Coordinator is brought on board. It was agreed that a system with one person with primary responsibility for the program and a second person to assist as second Coordinator is the most effective. Ingrid Lunt has agreed to be the primary Coordinator for ARTS 2006. Heidi Keller,

University of Osnabrück, Germany was endorsed by the sponsoring organizations as second Coordinator for ARTS 2006. She is a long-standing member of the IACCP, convened an ARTS seminar in 2000, and is committed to the ARTS program. She will continue as one of the Coordinators until the Berlin Congress in 2008.

## **Report on the Advanced Research and Training Seminar ARTS on Environmental Psychology in Developing Countries: A Multimethod Approach, Xi'an, China, July 30–August 1, 2004**

**Barry Ruback**

*Pennsylvania State University, USA*

The seminar on environmental psychology was held at Shaanxi Normal University in Xi'an, China. The purpose of the seminar was to present an overview of the major content areas in environmental psychology, with special attention to environmental issues that face developing countries: crowding, urbanization, and disasters. Particular emphasis was placed on the need for multiple methods to examine issues in environmental psychology. The seven participants in the seminar came from China, India, Pakistan, and Swaziland. All participants were given packets containing the PowerPoint slides used in the presentation, so that they could follow the lectures more easily and would have the complete set of materials when they returned to their home institutions. In addition to the participants, two faculty members and more than 20 undergraduates from Shaanxi Normal University sat in on at least some of the lectures.

The first day of the seminar focused on theory and research methods. It began with a discussion of how climate and culture affect perception of the environment and continued with a discussion of the role of perceived control in dealing with environmental stressors. The middle third of the day was spent on describing the strengths and weaknesses of nine research methods, with a focus on experimentation, surveys, observation, and unobtrusive methods. The day ended with the presentation, discussion, and critique of results from an observational study assignment that participants had conducted in their own countries prior to the seminar.

The second day focused on three environmental stressors: heat, noise, and disasters. The material for

this discussion came from research literatures in geography, criminology, and disaster mitigation and response, as well as psychology. The final three hours of the day involved participants' presentations of their own environmental research on such topics as pollution control, deforestation, and urban environments, together with group discussion of the presentations and suggestions for future research.

The third day began with detailed examples from the convener's multimethod research programs on territoriality. These studies, which were conducted in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the United States, were used to illustrate three issues: (a) the benefits of a program of research in systematically testing research questions; (b) the necessity of using multiple methods in order to overcome the weaknesses of any one method; and (c) the importance of cross-cultural research for testing the generalizability of findings. The middle part of the day was devoted to research and theory on crowding and urbanization. The final part of the day was devoted to discussion of how psychological research and theory on environmental issues can be made more relevant to and useful for policy makers.

Overall, the seminar was successful in three ways. First, participants increased their knowledge of both environmental psychology and research methods. Second, they became more aware of the common problems that researchers face, as well as the unique problems posed by the cultural beliefs and specific conditions of a particular country. Third, they became more attuned to the needs of policy makers for research that is accessible, understandable, and useful.

# **Report on the Advanced Research and Training Seminar (ARTS) on the Development and Evaluation of Psychological Interventions in Health and Disease, Beijing, China, August 6–8, 2004**

**Stan Maes**

*University of Leiden, The Netherlands*

This seminar was convened by Prof. Stan Maes (Leiden University, The Netherlands), and held on the premises of Beijing Culture and Language University. The teaching staff also included Dr. Susan Pick (Mexico), Dr. Kyoko Noguchi (Japan), Prof. Esther Greenglass (Canada) and Dr. Véronique De Gucht (The Netherlands). The main objective of the seminar was to illustrate approaches for the evaluation of psychological interventions in health promotion settings and in patients suffering from chronic disease. Out of 34 applicants, 11 interested and highly qualified colleagues were selected to participate, coming from seven economically less developed countries (India, Nigeria, Iran, Yemen, Uganda, Pakistan, and Kenya).

The first day began with a lecture on principles of psychological interventions in health care settings, followed by group work in which the participants used these principles to evaluate a worksite health promotion project. In the afternoon common evaluation designs in health care settings were introduced in a short lecture, followed by group work where the participants were asked to identify and discuss these designs in published journal articles. It was fascinating to see how motivated and agile participants were applying the newly acquired knowledge to more specific projects.

The second day was devoted to the description of a children rights and health programme in

Mexico. In a workshop the participants were asked to evaluate the programme on the basis of the intervention principles which were introduced the first day and to discuss which evaluation design should be used to evaluate the programme. In the afternoon a short lecture introduced the participants to psychological factors related to physical rehabilitation following joint replacement surgery. The participants were then asked to develop a psychological intervention for this patient group (using the intervention principles) and to select an appropriate evaluation design.

The third day was devoted to a short lecture explaining how to conduct a meta-analysis, followed by group work based on a published meta-analysis. In the afternoon the participants were introduced to a Japanese approach to stress management, followed by a discussion in which they were asked whether the principles of intervention and the evaluation designs, which they acquired during the seminar could also be used to evaluate this non-western approach. The seminar was concluded with a general discussion on the relevance of the seminar for the careers of the participants. The participants proved to be very pleased by the content and format (mix of theory and application) of the seminar, as well as by the interaction with each other and by the cultural differences within the teaching staff, which was recruited from various parts of the world.

# Report on the Advanced Research and Training Seminar (ARTS) on Survey Research Methods, Beijing, August 14–16, 2004

**Janet A. Harkness and Peter Ph. Mohler**  
*ZUMA, Mannheim, Germany*

This seminar was held on the excellent premises of the Beijing Culture and Language University (BLCU) and was led by Dr. Janet Harkness and Professor Peter Ph. Mohler, both of ZUMA, The Centre for Survey Research and Methodology, Mannheim, Germany. Beth-Ellen Pennell and Stephen Heeringa, both of the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan, contributed to the material presented at the seminar. The aim of the seminar was to provide an overview of current best practice on key methodological issues in survey research of relevance to the research work and teaching needs of participants. Altogether nine motivated and highly qualified colleagues from seven economically less developed countries participated in the seminar (Bolivia, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Philippines, P.R.China, and Puerto Rico). A tenth person accepted for the course was unfortunately unable to attend at the last minute.

The first day began with introductions of seminar presenters and participants, followed by discussion of survey characteristics versus tests and experiments, key sampling issues for surveys and a presentation and discussion of current data collection methods in a rapidly changing survey landscape. On the second day attention turned to design and adaptation of questionnaires and instruments beginning with question design issues, tied each time to different kinds of studies (such as behaviour, attitudes, so-called facts, moving on to

questionnaire design for cross-cultural projects and finally discussing translation and adaptation issues for different cultural contexts. New topics presented and discussed on the third day were data documentation, metadata, instrument assessment and testing and analysis.

While each day provided opportunities for (lively) discussion, more time could be given on the third day to putting principles and procedures presented in the course into practice. Participants translated and commented on questions, critiqued questions from a monocultural and cross-cultural standpoint and made a general appraisal of the evaluation questionnaire used in the course.

Judging by the output on the last day, this intensive mix of best and good practice principles, advice on what and how to do given common constraints, and hands-on practice seemed to be highly effective. Most of the participants were experienced researchers in areas related to psychology and health. By the end of the seminar, they had decided to embark on a joint project, that of developing a survey instrument to identify emotional fatigue in health care (burn out). The project intends to design and develop the instrument afresh from a non-western perspective. The participants appointed a coordinator to facilitate the project. Peter Mohler and Janet Harkness have offered to be involved in the project as it develops should this prove useful and appropriate.