Dear RC49 Members, Colleagues and Friends

The previous months were busy for ISA executive committee’s decision regarding the upcoming ISA meetings. The Assembly of Councils of the ISA has reached the decision to postpone the XX ISA World Congress of Sociology to June 25-July 1, 2023 in Melbourne, Australia. Further decisions regarding the 2025 ISA Forum are pending. Thanks for your thoughts and contributions to these discussions. Please find detailed information on the preliminary results, processes and pros/cons in a recent letter from Geoffrey Pleyers, ISA Vice President for Research. The final decision on the Forum’s format (virtual or on-site) will be made by members of the ISA Executive Committee in the next months.

RC49 Board’s latest activities include the preparation of the RC49 Online Forum on November 19th 2021. For more details, please check the call for abstracts below.

Good news is that we received the second installment of the ISA activity grant after sending the final report to the ISA secretary.

Also, as one of the smaller RC's, we are happy to let you know that our initiative to recruit new members by Gifted Memberships was successful. A very warm welcome to our new members! In this issue, one of them, Ireen Manase Kabembo kindly introduces herself to the RC49 colleagues.

Kjeld Høgsbro shares his recent findings on rehabilitation of people with cognitive difficulties. Recent activities of other RC49 members are also included in this issue.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to an excellent Guardian article by RC49 member Dirk Richter and Lucy Foulkes dealing with the mental health consequences of COVID 19

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jul/05/lockdown-mental-health-pandemic

With very best wishes
Silvia Krumm
RC 49 President
Report on the result of the votes on the format of the 2025 ISA Forum

To Sari Hanafi, President of the ISA,
To Izabela Barlinska, ISA General Secretary,
To the presidents and delegates of the ISA Research Committees, Working Groups and Thematic Groups,
To the members of the ISA Research Coordination Committee and Executive Committee,

2025 ISA Forum: On-site or online?
Report on the deliberation and the vote by the ISA Research Council

After two weeks of fruitful exchanges of arguments and consultations of the RC/WG/TG members and boards, the ISA Research Council gathered on Saturday the 12th of June to decide if the next ISA Forum (2025) should be a virtual or a presential event.

51 votes were cast, resulting in the following vote:

- For an on-site/in-person forum: 19 votes, 37%
- For a virtual/online forum: 18 votes, 35%
- Equal support for both options: 14 votes, 27.5%

If we consider only the first two options, the split is 51% favouring an in-person Forum, 49% an online forum.

The vote is almost evenly split between the two options, with the tiniest majority favouring an on-site forum and a strong will by the RC/WG/TG to support the Forum process whatever format it takes. The Research Council decision is to send this result to the ISA Executive Committee and leave the final decision to the EC.

After being informed about the vote result, the Research Council assembly addressed the following messages to the ISA president and EC members:

- The vote was evenly split but not polarised. RC/WG/TG presidents and delegates express a strong support for both options. Several RCs were evenly split between the two options.
- The Research Council collected good arguments in favour of both options. After this deliberation process, our perspective was much better informed about the pros and cons of each option. We invite the members of the ISA Executive Committee to consider these arguments during their deliberation.

The main arguments for both options are listed below. The online version is a shared document to which the EC members may contribute with additional arguments.

https://mensuel.framapad.org/p/2025-isa-forum-online-or-on-site-frso?lang=en

- Whatever format the 2025 Forum will take, RC/WG/TG are keen to take an active part in its success and hope to be closely associated in its organisation and to benefit from some autonomy in setting up their program and schedule.

- The Research Council considers it essential to adapt the ISA Forum format to take better in consideration three crucial criteria: inclusiveness, environment (lowering our carbon footprint) and integrating online innovations (even for an on-site Forum).

Notes on the voting process:

- The Research Council assembly and the vote took place online. Votes were collected with the application "Doodle", with a possibility to vote 24 hours before the assembly and until the vote was declared closed during the assembly.
- As announced previously and in agreement with the RCC, the largest RCs (over 200 members) were given two votes. WG and TG (10) were allowed to cast one vote each.
- The result of the vote applying the ISA formal rules (1 vote by RC even for the largest ones, no vote for TG & WG) would have led to a very similar result: 14 for an on-site forum, 13 for a virtual forum, 13 supporting both options (43 votes cast in total).

The 14th of June 2021
Geoffrey Pleyers
ISA Vice-President for Research
The Sociology of Mental Health and Illness – Emerging issues and perspectives

The International Sociological Association’s Research Committee on mental health and illness (RC49) provides a space for sociologists from different countries to meet and discuss their work. The purpose of the group is to enable sustained discourse on mental health and illness, to support theoretical developments and transnational research. We welcome researchers from all approaches and traditions within sociology and are keen to support Phd and early career researchers as well as established academics.

We are holding a one-day online conference **Nov 19th 2021.** The aim of this conference is to showcase the work of Phd students and early career academics and to highlight new issues and perspectives in the study of mental health and illness.

We welcome papers on the following issues:

- Theoretical conceptualizations on the nature of mental health and illness
- Experiences of mental health
- Social relationships, mental health and illness
- Child and adolescent mental health
- The effects of Covid-19 on mental health and wellbeing
- Innovative research methods for the study of mental health and illness
- Mental health and the family
- Inequality, intersectionality and mental health
- Biographies / life courses and mental health
- Mental health and violence
- The management of risk and uncertainty within mental health services
- The development of mental health services in Latin America
- The development of mental health services in Asia.

Please send your abstract by Sept. 30

250 words at the maximum to

Silvia Krumm [silvia.krumm@uni-ulm.de](mailto:silvia.krumm@uni-ulm.de) and Jeremy Dixon [jd582@bath.ac.uk](mailto:jd582@bath.ac.uk)
Recovery and rehabilitation for people with serious cognitive difficulties – what are we talking about?

Kjeld Høgsbro

At Danish residential homes for people with serious cognitive difficulties, the professionals are now encouraged to implement a recovery perspective for the residents. This represents a development from a situation where the professional task were primarily to take care and make sure that they did not hurt themselves or others. However, how do we master to both protect the staff and the residents, prevent different forms of challenging behavior and at the same time support a kind of recovery process? In addition, what does recovery actually mean in this context?

I shall try to define some of the profound premises for these questions by examining some of the results from ethnographic studies of 13 different residential homes for people with autism, dementia and challenging behavior.

Roughly speaking, recovery from severe cognitive difficulties includes a kind of specialized social training. In other words: How do people learn to cope with cultural premises they do not really understand or at least do not master spontaneously.

Of course, cognitive difficulties related to schizophrenia, autism and different kinds of dementia are very different, but it is possible to list some common difficulties, which characterize some of the communicative problems which might dominate the interaction with ordinary people.

These could be defined in general as a weekend ability to:

1. Adjust to cultural norms for interaction.
2. Organize references to commonly known discourses, which makes it possible for other people to understand what you are talking about.
3. Cognitively organize impressions into a meaningful picture of the environment.
4. Cancel or ignore impulses, which are not culturally accepted in the specific cultural context of the situation.
5. Mobilize memory, impressions and experiences during interaction with other people.

At the most advanced residential homes, the professionals have an elaborated knowledge of these disadvantages and often an impressing tolerance, as it is seen in the following interview excerpt:

I: Do you all agree about how to approach her? How to help her?

Staff: Yes, generally we do. Also when she beats us, if we don’t do the things that prevents her from beating us or hitting us at least, stand beside her and wait or stand really close or keep her hand while you feed her. If you don’t do that, the result is that she is hitting us and we are getting mad at her, and she does not deserve that because we actually know what to do that prevents her from hitting us. So no one is to be blamed, and we always think this way. Not so much because I cannot stand a few chats, but I do not want to have her regarded as a violent person, because she does not deserve that. She just cannot do anything about it.

It is essential when dealing with and trying to understand people with some kind of cognitive disorder to acknowledge how difficult it is to manage such disorders. The calculations and adjustments to situations and expectations that ordinary people do without having to think much about it, seems to
be infinitely complicated for people with cognitive disorders. The emotional implications of this situation might be stress, uncertainty, anxiety, anger, sense of guilt, loneliness and nostalgia sometimes in an ever-shifting spectrum of feelings related to situations, interactions and memories. Accordingly, it is very difficult to get a true picture of the lifeworld. This is the essential challenge for professionals in the field.

Being aware of the communicative challenges and based on everyday experience, the staff members develop skills, which they sometimes take for granted and seldom explicitly articulate. When observing the interaction between staff members and residents, we were regularly impressed by the way they were able to decode the expressions of the residents, able to find the correct balance between needs for shielding and autonomy, and able to master meta-communication such as switching from a professional perspective to a user perspective and use humour as an entrance to meta-communication (question or contextualise the communicative relation).

When it comes to the paradigm for intervention, the professional paradigms in the field have a tendency to focus on the reduction of the magnitude of different stimuli. This stems from a biological determinism saying that the reduced ability to remember or to organise impressions must be compensated by a milieu, which does not provoke confusions or mentally overload. In continuation hereof, the aim of the complete institutional setup is to make the daily schedule simple and recognisable. In its extreme versions, the paradigm also involves the regulation of interaction between staff members and clients (patients, residents) to follow strict guidelines.

However, this paradigm is not unquestioned. Other paradigms emphasise normalization of demands and challenges, and this split between a normalisation strategy and a compensational strategy might be found in different forms within the whole field of social services for people with cognitive issues.

We thus found a high level of heterodoxy at the residential homes. This was disclosed in the following results from the questionnaires:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. To what degree do you agree with the following statements? (% of N=81)</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>To a certain degree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Certainly disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important that it is the same schedule every day.</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that every day has some new activities.</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that every day features a challenge for the residents.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that the residents are being protected from disturbing impressions.</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The residents generally lack challenges during the day.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the staff members emphasise the importance of an everyday, which follows the same schedule every day, while others emphasise the importance of new activities and challenges during
the day. The qualitative interviews showed the same conflict. At a residential home where the majority emphasised structure and protection from impulses, professionals who emphasised change and challenges would stand out as dissidents criticising the accepted doxa at the institutions.

One of the professionals told me that she once lost control and just scolded one of the residents and told her to get lost. She felt so unprofessional in the situation, but the residents just answered: “So you can be angry, too!” This illustrates how the controlled professional attitude can prevent the residents from learning how their behaviour has consequences for the interaction between people.

In other words:

Too many demands results in anxiety and stress.

Too less demands results in a weekend ability to cope with the cultural premises for social interaction.

Recovery are based on a difficult balance between demands and protection, between structure and daily challenges.

References


Høgsbro, Kjeld et al. (2012): *When limits are challenged – Staff mental workload and pedagogical challenges in residential care homes for people with general learning disabilities and developmental and behavioral disorders* (DK/E). AKF/Aalborg University.


DK: Danish text only; E: English text only, DK/E: Danish text and English Summary.
Welcome to new RC49 members

Ireen Manase Kabembo

PhD student in Sociology and Social Policy at Lingnan University, Hong Kong.

Her research interests are in Sociology of Health and Illness, and her current research focus is on caregiving for youth with substance use disorders in Zambia. Other research interests include mental health case management for children and adolescents with mental health and substance use disorders.

Introductions and activities of RC49 members

Lynn Tang

Currently being an Assistant Professor in Lingnan University, Hong Kong, I have been dedicated to mental health related research with a focus on individuals’ experiences and structural inequalities. My research journey on mental health began when I worked at the University of Birmingham’s Centre of Excellence for Interdisciplinary Mental Health. My PhD research on the recovery journeys of Chinese mental health service users in the UK was turned into numerous publications, including a book titled *Recovery, Mental Health and Inequality: Chinese Ethnic Minorities as Mental Health Service Users* (Routledge, 2017) and papers in journals such as *British Journal of Social Work, Community Development Journal, International Journal of Social Psychiatry, Mental Health Review Journal*. My book was the finalist for BSA Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness Book Prize. I joined the Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention at the University of Hong Kong in 2019 and worked on projects including online emotional support services for youth and mental health programmes in schools. My current project is on suicide and political crisis, which I hope can contribute to the understanding of rising suicide rates of youth in recent years in many countries.

https://www.ln.edu.hk/socsp/staff/lynnindex.php

  
  **NEW ABSTRACT:** Divorce is a life-changing event with financial implications for women. Although large-scale studies have examined the factors associated with financial coping after divorce, little attention has been paid to the lived experience of women over time. In this study, we used mixed methods to examine the financial well-being of divorced women over 20 years from 1996 to 2016. Using data from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health [ALSWH], we analyzed women’s ratings of their ability to manage on available income, and their narrative comments about financial coping over eight waves, beginning in midlife (ages 46–51). The ratings improved over time, particularly as women reached peak career in their 50s or 60s or entered retirement. Despite this upward trajectory, financial strain persisted for ~40% of the cohort who faced poor health or diminishing job prospects. We conclude that, although financial hardship often eases over time, women’s early ratings of financial coping predict levels of income security in older age.

  
  **NEW ABSTRACT:** The CARES Act of 2020 offered mortgage relief to distressed homeowners during Covid-19. Servicers of federally backed loans were banned from foreclosing on owner-occupied, single-family homes during the moratorium, although non-federally backed loans and non-lenders were exempted from the law. This case study examines foreclosure activity in a US Deep South setting, with a focus on Black owners who experienced higher rates of housing loss than other groups prior to Covid-19. Once the moratorium took effect, Black owners were less likely to face foreclosure, in part, because they had better access to loans that qualified for mortgage relief. Foreclosures that took place during moratorium had several features in common: they were preceded by bankruptcy, divorce, or death of a homeowner, or had been initiated by tax officials, homeowners’ associations, or utility providers after owners defaulted on non-mortgage debt. On balance, the Act proved to be effective for qualified owners and, despite gaps in protection, reduced foreclosure activity among low-income groups in the study area.

• **Lichtenstein, Bronwen** (Forthcoming, 2021; December issue). “The PRO-TEST Program: HIV and Hepatitis-C Services at the Parole Office.” *Journal of Correctional Health Care, 27.* NEW, I THINK.  
  
  **Abstract:** This article describes an on-site program for HIV and hepatitis C (hep-C) services at a parole office in an impoverished U.S. state. Both officers and their supervisees participated in the program. The officers attended workshops on the biology of HIV and hep-C and workplace safety, and collaborated in development and implementation of the services. The supervisees received HIV and hep-C education, voluntary testing, and referral for treatment after a positive diagnosis. Test results showed that few supervisees were positive for HIV and 16 percent of White individuals diagnosed with hep-C. These findings support the need for on-site services for at-risk supervisees in community corrections.

• **Lichtenstein, Bronwen.** (2020). “From ‘Coffin Dodger’ to ‘Boomer Remover’: Outbreaks of Ageism in Three Countries with Divergent Approaches to Coronavirus Control.” *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, Series B.* doi.org/10.1093/gerontnb/gbaa102. PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER?
Abstract: Many people view Covid-19 as an “older adult” problem (Fraser et al., 2020). From health advisories on age vulnerability, to the ghettoizing of older adults for risk mitigation, ageist rhetoric has been a dominant theme for pandemic control. As a social fact, ageism has roots in the postindustrial era, where age-graded subgroups (e.g., “employees” and “retirees”) emerged to meet the specialized demands of modern society (Hagestad and Uhlenberg, 2005; North and Fiske, 2012). The “us” and “them” narratives arising from this development prompted sociologist James Coleman (1982) to claim that age segregation is the root cause of ageism. This article analyzes Covid-19-related discourse in three countries in which age segregation is a core principle of mitigation policies and is a contested space in terms of “people first” or “economy first” responses to managing the pandemic.

Funded Grants


Alabama is one of five sites of the national CommuniVax initiative — a rapid ethnographic research project examining facilitators and barriers to vaccine uptake in historically underserved communities of color in the United States. Local research teams will listen to community members and work with them to develop suggestions on how to strengthen COVID-19 vaccine delivery and communication strategies.

James G. Linn

- James G. Linn & co-authors, Covid 19 and access to health services in Chile (in Spanish), forthcoming, in Contemporary Capitalism in Chile, Theory and Reality (in Spanish) pgs. 151-157.
- Jorge Chuaqui & James G. Linn. Ethical Principles in Childrens’ Social Inclusion as Related to Adults Social Inclusion, Presented at the Western Social Science Association Conference (virtual), April 17th, 2021.
- Associate Editor, Journal of AIDS and HIV Research
- Reviewer, International AIDS Association (virtual) annual conference
- Community AIDS Board Member of HIV/AIDS Vaccine Clinical Trials Center of Vanderbilt University.
- Translated, Estructura Social, Poder Y Persona (Social Structure, Power and the Individual) by Jorge Chuaqui & collaborators to English. English version is out for review.

- Visiting Professor University of Valparaiso, Chile (virtual activities).

- James G. Linn & co-authors. Covid 19 and access to health services in Chile (in Spanish) forthcoming, in Contemporary Capitalism in Chile, Theory and Reality (in Spanish) pgs. 151-157.


- Joaquin Matavel, Khatia Munguambia, James G. Linn & Osvaldo Loquiha, Cross-cultural adaptation of an intimate partner violence screening tool (WAST) for the Mozambican Context, Submitted to Inquiry.

Prof. Jorge Chuaqui

- Jorge Chuaqui is leading writing with sociologists of the Universidad de Valparaiso and James G. Linn the book: “EL CAPITALISMO EN EL CHILE ACTUAL (Teoría y Realidad) (Contemporary Capitalism in Chile: Theory and Reality), that will be published next year.

- Jorge Chuaqui has been designed by the principal of the Universidad de Valparaíso member of a Committee of Mental Health at the top of the university.

Chuaqui J. Social Structure, Power, and the Individual. 2019. GARTH UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM PUBLISHERS

Jeremy Dixon


Abstract: Dementia may make adults more susceptible to abuse and neglect and such mistreatment is recognised as a human rights violation. This article focusses on how the rights of people living with dementia might be protected through the use of supported decision-making within safeguarding work. The article begins by reviewing the aims and scope of adult safeguarding services. It then describes how the concept of ‘legal capacity’ is set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and how this differs from the concept of ‘mental capacity’ in the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Focussing on practice in England, it is argued that tensions between the CRPD and domestic law exist, but these can be brought into closer alignment by finding ways to maximise supported decision-making within existing legal and policy frameworks. The article concludes with suggested practice strategies which involve: (i) providing clear and accessible information about safeguarding; (ii) thinking about the location of safeguarding meetings; (iii) building relationships with people living with dementia; (iv) using flexible timescales; (v) tailoring information to meet the needs of people living with dementia and (v) respecting the person’s will and preferences in emergency situations.

Abstract: Drug strategies in Great Britain emphasize the notion of recovery, with the concept being central in England, Wales and Scotland. There are however tensions, with recovery being defined differently across jurisdictions. In this study we address this dilemma by critically interrogating how the term recovery is represented, how these presentations are shaped and what effects are subsequently had. We applied an adapted version of Bacchi's What's the Problem Represented to Be? (WPR) policy analysis approach to the 2017 UK Drug Strategy, the 2008–2018 Welsh Drug Strategy and the 2008 Scottish Drug Strategy notions of service user responsibility; (b) recovery as ‘a problem of product quality’, shaped by the implicit notion of service provider responsibility and the disease model of addiction; (c) recovery as ‘a problem of service collaboration and teamwork’, underpinned by the bio-psycho-social model of addiction. We conclude that the problematisations found in the UK’s current drug policies have the ability to shape the drug policy-making process which may limit mainstream knowledge of recovery, and thereby unintentionally contribute to a narrow understanding of how to effectively support the service user community in their recovery from problematic drug use.

Reinhold Kilian

- Tamara Waldmann, Tobias Staiger, Nicolas Ruesch, Reinhold Kilian Costs of Health Service Use among Unemployed and Underemployed People with Mental Health Problems J Ment Health Policy Econ 2021 Mar 1;24(1):31-41.

• Frederike Lunkenheimer, Matthias Domhardt, Agnes Geirhos, Reinhold Kilian, Annabel S. Mueller-Stierlin, Reinhard W. Holl, Thomas Meissner, Kirsten Minden, Morten Moshagen, Ramona Ranz, Cedric Sachser, Doris Staab, Petra Warschburger, Harald Baumeister and COACH consortium Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of guided Internet- and mobile-based CBT for adolescents and young adults with chronic somatic conditions and comorbid depression and anxiety symptoms (youthCOACHCD): study protocol for a multicentre randomized controlled trial. Trials (2020) 21:253

Silvia Krumm


