



REPORT OF THE

# EARA-EADP-SRA

SUMMER SCHOOL

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AUGUST 20TH - 24TH, 2022 - WICKLOW, IRELAND



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The 2022 edition of the EARA-EADP-SRA Summer School took place in Wicklow, Ireland from Saturday, August 20th until Wednesday, August 24th afternoon. Eight senior scholars and 24 junior scholars joined together for this research-intensive experience. The eight seniors who attended were Professors: Toon Cillessen (Radboud Universiteit, Netherlands), Candace Currie (Glasgow Caledonian University, United Kingdom), Nancy Hill (Harvard Graduate School of Education, United States), Lisa Kiang (Wake Forest University, United States), Noona Kiuru (University of Jyväskylä, Finland), Andreas Neubauer (Leibniz Institute for Research and Information in Education, Germany), Stefanos Mastrotheodoros (University of Crete, Greece), and Susan Branje (Utrecht University, Netherlands).

The program was packed with many didactic sessions including workshops from senior scholars with interactive assignments for junior scholars as well as professional development roundtable discussions. Junior scholars also presented their current dissertation work and were able to receive meaningful feedback from fellow student colleagues and senior scholars. Finally, the summer school organized social activities that encouraged international networking and community bonding. In the following report, a group of junior scholars elaborate on how the different opportunities from the summer school were received and experienced. The summer school provided a unique opportunity that was irreplaceable and invaluable to the professional and personal development of the junior scholars. Taken together, professional bonds were built, research ideas were shared, and guidance was given.

## Seniors'

# LECTURES

A core element of the summer school was the senior scholar presentations, each followed by collaborative activity among the junior scholars. Despite their common interest in the developmental stage of adolescence, each senior presented different facets and topics of their research program. These engaging presentations enriched our understanding of adolescence research and highlighted critical concerns in the study of youth development, relationships, and adjustment.

The first full day of summer school (i.e., Sunday) started with Prof. Candace Currie's presentation, which focused on the dynamic concept of socio-economic status (SES). We learned that SES research—an important antecedent of adolescents' health and adjustment—requires continuously evolving theoretical and methodological approaches within the context of society to best capture this construct. Additionally, Prof. Currie highlighted the significance of operationalizing adolescents' SES as separate from their caregivers' SES since some adolescents may be financially independent of their families. Following her presentation, junior scholars were divided into different groups and discussed ways to conceptually and methodologically define the changing concept of SES in the post-pandemic world. The same day, students attended Prof. Lisa Kiang's talk about identity and purpose. This thought-provoking presentation supported students' self-reflection about the driving forces that guide their work and encouraged continued exploration of the purpose they intend for research. During the collaborative activity, each junior scholar was invited to draft a positionality statement and to reflect on the meaning of their work. These presentations were particularly meaningful in aiding junior scholars' development of qualitative research.



## Seniors'

# LECTURES

On the second day of the summer school, both senior and junior scholars attended Prof. Andreas Neubauer's methodological workshop on how to use statistical softwares such as R and Mplus to enhance modeling of within-person differences over time. Afterwards, each participant was invited to get familiar with the multilevel modeling R codes and either apply it to their own data or the ones provided by Prof. Neubauer. During the afternoon, Prof. Noona Kiuru presented Pekrun's theory of achievement emotions and invited students to build upon this theoretical framework by designing an intervention to examine the underpinnings of adolescents' academic functioning and well-being. Further, Prof. Kiuru reviewed the role of temperament in school adjustment and how they intersect pupils' emotions. These two presentations encouraged junior scholars to grapple with developmental theory in the context of study design, statistical analyses, and applied science.

Prof. Nancy Hill presented her senior scholar presentation on Tuesday. Her intriguing talk revolved around issues regarding the stage of "emerging adulthood," which has often been conceptualized as a different developmental period compared to adolescence and adulthood. Based on recent evidence, Prof. Nancy Hill discussed the role of social, economic, and historical features in shaping adolescence and how adolescents' are often plagued by trying to meet the "traditional" markers of adulthood such as getting married or raising a family. She presented thought-provoking qualitative data that have been published in her book, *The End of Adolescence*. During the student activity, junior scholars were challenged with finding a definition of adulthood and designing a research or intervention program aimed at supporting youth in this crucial transition.



## Seniors' LECTURES

The final senior scholar presentation was provided by Prof. Toon Cillesen who first presented the theories and methodologies adopted in the study of peer relationship network analysis and then highlighted the missing link with health outcomes after primary school. He noted how while extensive peer-group research is being conducted among primary and secondary school students, studying peer acceptance and popularity in the college and occupational environment provides researchers with new methodological challenges and questions. During the student activity session, junior scholars were therefore invited to think creatively about a research question revolving around the topic of youth peer acceptance and popularity in primary school and plan a study to examine various physical and mental health outcomes in later life stages.

Overall, the senior scholar presentations offered a broader and deeper insight into the field of adolescence research and challenged each junior scholar to step outside their core research topic while reflecting on other applicable theories and research challenges. The collaborative activities also fostered creativity and opened up new research questions and ideas. However, the most intriguing element was the opportunity to work together with people with very diverse cultural and academic backgrounds with related, yet independent, research interests. Ultimately, one of the driving forces that contributed to such fruitful and innovative research discussions was that each junior/senior scholar brought unique research expertise and cultural perspective—factors that provided rich discussions, ideas, and feedback that may have otherwise not been highlighted within other particular research programs.



## Juniors'

# PRESENTATIONS

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During summer school, every junior scholar had the chance to present their doctoral studies or other projects they were currently working on in order to receive constructive feedback from peers and senior scholars. For one hour, two senior scholars and five other junior scholars kindly listened and gave useful feedback and reflections regarding student projects. We were impressed by the level of interest and commitment shown by all.



Together, we created a safe space to think collectively about how our results could be interpreted or how our study designs could be improved. Every junior scholar generously shared their own ideas and hopes for their research projects and others' research projects, which provided an opportunity to act as a leader and practice the skill of giving constructive feedback to others. The process was very inspiring, and some senior scholars mentioned that hearing about the junior scholars' research was their favourite part of summer school! The junior presentations also allowed us to identify colleagues with similar interests with whom we could eventually collaborate at the international level. We exchanged resources such as statistical advice and relevant scientific papers. We identified the strengths of our colleagues and realized how lucky we were to share an intellectually stimulating experience among a group with multiple levels of experience and various research interests.



## Juniors' PRESENTATIONS

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For the junior scholars, preparing our presentations was a learning experience in itself. This presentation provided an opportunity to step back from our projects and reflect upon all the studies, background research, and theories that are included in the dissertation. It also let us conceptualize our project's overarching themes and key messages that were important to communicate to our audience. The senior scholars provided invaluable feedback about the clarity and justification for students' research programs, dissertations, and future directions of students' work.

This feedback and process connected nicely to the senior lecture of Prof. Lisa Kiang because it invited us to reflect upon our research purpose and how it shapes our research aims, methods, and interpretation of findings. Senior scholars also provided clear guidelines for how students might continue to strengthen the cohesive nature of their dissertation projects whether that be connections between individual empirical articles, the background of the project, or methodology/analysis plans.

**Undeniably, the student presentations were an invaluable and irreplaceable portion of the summer school.**

## Informal and fun **ACTIVITIES**

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Countless memories from the 2022 summer school were created during informal meetings between junior and senior scholars. During our days in beautiful Wicklow, we ate every meal together, went on walks in nature, and visited Greystones to see the coastline, some juniors even went swimming in the Irish Sea! We had many opportunities to get to know each other on a more personal level and realized how much our experiences were similar and, at the same time, very different. Participants came from North America, Europe, but also Asia, which allowed for enriching discussions about life in general and how it is shaped by our cultural backgrounds. True professional bonds were made between scholars that will continue to foster our research programs and resources within our field.

This edition was quite special because we were 24 women in science. On the last day of the summer school, we discussed together how this experience differs from those of our male colleagues and how we can thrive as women in STEM. Moreover, it was quite significant for all scholars to reflect on the intersection of our gender and racial/ethnic identities and how folks from any underrepresented background often face challenges within academia due to systemic racism, sexism, and classism. In all, we were surprised at how in a short amount of time, we created strong relationships with many colleagues who, sometimes on the other end of the world, lived similar experiences navigating this field. We also found colleagues who were interested in similar research topics, and we are very excited to see how future collaborations will arise from the summer school. We created shared documents to stay in touch as well as a Whatsapp group, in which we shared pictures, social events after the summer school, and future plans for conference attendance. Discussions about what we loved about academia and what we find more challenging truly allowed us to strengthen our relationships and trust that whenever we will go to international conferences, research visits, or travel, we will have friends to visit!





# THANK YOU!

Altogether, we enjoyed the extremely valuable learning experience that we had and the opportunities to connect with fellow scholars (junior and senior). This summer school highly contributed to our development as young scholars. We left with new knowledge, research ideas and inspiration, and a bunch of new friends that we hope to stay connected to—and possibly even work with—for the rest of our careers and lives. We would like to take the opportunity to thank the organizing committee for putting together such an amazing program and all of the seniors for sharing their expertise, enthusiasm, and time with our group of junior scholars. As the Irish would say: The 2022 summer school was great craic!

On behalf of the 2022 summer school participants,

Tugce Aral (University of Potsdam, Germany)  
 Mariachiara Basilici (University of Florence, Italy)  
 Annabelle Christiaens (Utrecht University, Netherlands)  
 Anna-Maria Mayer (University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany)  
 Anne Buelow (Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands)  
 Annie Maheux (University of Delaware, United States)  
 Azza Warraitsch (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland)  
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 Dainora Šakinytė (Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania)  
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 Eadaion Whelan (University College Cork, Ireland)  
 Julia Tesolin (McGill University, Canada)  
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