

Annual Report - Greece

George Koulierakis Academic development

National School of Public Health

Besides the post graduate program in Health Psychology at the University of Crete, modules concerning health psychology are also offered in post graduates courses in Clinical Psychology, as well as in Medical Schools and Public Health Institutes. Moreover, there are plans for establishing at least one more post-graduate program in health psychology within the next few years. Additionally, health psychologists are appointed to Universities and the already appointed colleagues obtain higher levels of academic rungs/ positions. Finally, during the last years, a fast growing number of young scientists are applying for PhD programs in Health Psychology.

At present, there is no national law regulating the role of a Health Psychologist, although the title and the practice of a Psychologist are regulated. In general, tasks and responsibilities depend on a complex array of national or setting-related needs and customs. However, a close collaboration between the Hellenic Association of Hospital Psychologists and the Division of Clinical and Health Psychology of the HPS has been established. This collaboration aims at determining the appropriate conditions and procedures regarding the training and supervision of post-graduate students in Health and Clinical Psychology, as well as professionals in the field. In this regard, a leaflet that includes relevant suggestions made by a joint committee was published. Also, an informal task force has been created in order to promote the implementation of these suggestions.

Applied developments - Research

Several research teams exist across Greek Universities. The research work in health psychology carried out in Greece is noteworthy considering the short history of health psychology in the country and the shortage of resources. At the same time, a significant number of Greek health psychologists work as educators and researchers at academic and research institutions overseas:

1) Dr. Evangelos Karademas, Associate Professor in Clinical Health Psychology, Psychology Department, University of Crete

Two large studies are now taking place. The first is a longitudinal study conducted by the University of Crete, Departments of Medicine and Psychology, aims in examining the long-term psychological, cognitive and biological adaptation of patients with autoimmune disorders. The second one, is a clinical trial of a new programme for the psychological management of chronic pain. It is conducted by the University of Cyprus, Department of Psychology and the University of Crete, Department of Psychology.

2) Dr. Christina Karamanidou, MSc Program Leader in Organizational Psychology, the MSc in Psychology (conversion course) and the MA in Counselling and Psychotherapy, the University of East London (UEL) in Greece.

She also teaches at the Health Institutions and Policies Master's course offered by the Social and Educational Policy Department, University of Peloponnese. Furthermore, she is a guest lecturer in various postgraduate programs organized by the University of Athens (MSc in Research into Female Fertility and Reproduction) and the National School of Public Health in Athens (MSc in Hospital

Management, MSc in Public Health, MSc in Applied Public Health).

Since 2008 she has been involved in several European research projects in the areas of health, education and science communication (e.g. AVSA: Audio Visual Science Audiences concerned public's representation of science in 5 European countries and was funded by the E.C as part of the 7th framework Science in Society, EUGATE: European Best Practices in Access, Quality and Appropriateness of Health Services for Immigrants in Europe conducted in collaboration with the National School of Public Health and concerned health services and migrants in 16 European countries and was funded by the E.C., WEBWISE: conducted in collaboration with the National School of Public Health and concerned the evaluation of innovative educational methods and tools e.g. WEB 2.0, e-learning, in public health professional's training). She has established scientific collaborations with the Department of Psychology and the Quality of Life programme in Eginition Hospital, University of Athens and the Infectious Diseases department of the Alpha Institute of Biomedical Sciences, in Athens.

In 2012, she received a post-doctoral research grant from the General Secretariat for Science and Technology, Greek Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs for her project: 'Knowledge, attitudes and communication preferences of different segments of the Greek public with regards to cervical cancer and the HPV vaccine', which was successfully completed in 2014.

This year, she developed an e-learning course on Health Promotion within the School Context hosted by the University of Athens.

3) Dr. Antonia Paschali, Ass. Professor, Faculty of Nursing, Department of Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens.

Funded Research Projects (2013-2014): "The role of patient-physician communication illness representations and coping behaviors with chronic

patients suffering from diabetes mellitus. Special Account for Research Grants of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Grant no: 1896/4-4-2013. "Empathy & the Theory of mind in bipolar patients and their families" Special Account for Research Grants of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Grant no: 1921/10-4-2013. (2014-2015): Principal Investigator: Vassilatis, D. (Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens). Collaborator: Paschali, A. (National & Kapodistrian University of Athens) "Behavioral analysis of Parkinson's disease models". The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (pending).

She is a reviewer of the official journal of the Hellenic Psychological Society: "Psychology" (<http://www.elpse.gr/el/periodiko.html>), for the Hippokratia Journal and for the Journal of Health Psychology.

For 2014, she was coordinator of the Clinical & Health Psychology Scientific Society, a division of the Hellenic Psychological Society (ELPSE); she is a member of the scientific committee of the Journal of Cognitive Behavior Research & Treatment (http://ibrt.gr/edu/sites/default/files/profil_periodikou.pdf); from 2014 to date she is member of the Editorial Board, for the Journal "Health Psychology Research".

4) Dr. Cleo Protogerou, CPsychol AFBPsS. Senior Research Fellow, Liverpool Reviews & Implementation Group, Health Services Research, University of Liverpool, UK.

Research has focused on the investigation of factors and psychosocial determinants shaping HIV-risk behavior (especially non-condom use) among young people across cultural settings - South Africa (University of Cape Town), UK (Universities of Bath and Liverpool), the States (University of Connecticut), and Greece (PANTEION). She is currently involved in an international project, with the Universities of Sydney and Botswana, investigating the impact of personal and parental religiosity in young Botswana Pentecostal Church

goers. She conducts primary, review, and 'meta-review' research, combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies. She has also worked for the Greek Organization against Drugs, training teachers into delivering substance prevention interventions for school students

5) Dr. Natasha Soureti, Organisational Health Psychologist, Department of Defense, Part-time lecturer (Cardiff University; Greenwich University). Coordinator of a smoking cessation clinic (www.quit-smoking.gr).

Research interests include: a) use of social cognition models in changing health behaviours in an online or offline setting; b) application of self-regulatory strategies in getting individuals at high risk of developing heart-disease (i.e. overweight, smokers) to eat more healthily and to increase the performance of special populations such as elite athletes; c) testing the impact of different type of risk communication messages on motivation to change; d) at the current job at the police, studying the protective effects of personality traits on depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder; e) comparison of different type of therapies in helping out unemployed, Greek individuals with elevated levels of depression and anxiety.

Selected Health Psychology Publications

- Karademas, E. C., Paschali, A., Hadjulis, M., & Papadimitriou, A. (2014). Maladaptive health beliefs, illness-related self-regulation and the role of the information provided by physicians. *Journal of Health Psychology*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/1359105314544072
- Protogerou, C., & Johnson, B. T. (2014). Factors underlying the success of behavioral HIV-prevention interventions for adolescents: A meta-review. *AIDS and Behavior*, 18, 1847-1863. doi:10.1007/s10461-014-0807-y

- Protogerou, C., Flisher, A. J., & Wild, L. G. (2014). Factors shaping condom use among South African university students: A thematic analysis. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 24, 215-224. doi:10.1080/14330237.2014.906081
- Karademas, E. C. (2014). The psychological well-being of couples experiencing a chronic illness: A matter of personal and partner illness cognitions and the role of marital quality. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 19, 1347-1357. doi:10.1177/1359105313488983
- Karademas, E. C., & Tsaousis, I. (2014). The relationship of patient and spouse personality to cardiac patients' health: Two observational studies of mediation and moderation. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 47, 79-91. doi:10.1007/s12160-013-9523-5
- Dimitraki, G., & Karademas, E. C. (2014). The association of Type 2 Diabetes patient and spouse illness representations with their well-being: A dyadic approach. *International Journal of Behavioural Medicine*, 21, 230-239. doi:10.1007/s12529-013-9296-z.
- Ktistaki, M., Papadaki-Michailidi, E., & Karademas, E. (2014). The relationship between attachment patterns and parenting style. *Attachment: New Directions in Psychotherapy and Relational Psychoanalysis Journal*, 8, 172-191.
- Karademas, E. C., & Tsaousis, I. (2014). Adaptation to illness in couples dealing with a cardiovascular disease: The dyadic effects of personality. *Zeitschrift fur Gesundheitspsychologie*, 22, 185-193. doi:10.1026/0943-8149/a000128 (Invited paper, on a special Issue: Personality, Social Relationship, and Health)



George Koulierakis

Department of Sociology, National School of Public Health, Athens, Greece

gkoulierakis@esdy.edu.gr