Author’s response to reviews

Title: A "Grantathon" Model to Mentor New Investigators in Mental Health Research

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dr. González-Block:

Thank you for your continued consideration of our manuscript for publication in Health Research Policy and Systems. We are pleased to resubmit this paper and believe we have fully addressed the reviewer’s concerns. In addition to underlining changes made in the body of the manuscript we describe the changes made to each suggestion point-by-point below.
In the manuscript "A "Grantathon" Model to Mentor New Investigators in Psychiatric Research", the authors provide a commentary on the feasibility of a "grantathon" model of psychiatric research training for low-resource areas such as LMICs. This represents a novel description of a quick, relatively feasible, and effective model for training healthcare professionals in research project planning and grant proposal writing. The authors are commended for their undertaking of this important effort to build research capacity in LMICs. A few comments and suggestions to enhance the clarity of the commentary.

Thank you for your support of this work.

Abstract

* No comments

Background

* Page 3, line 39 - might want to cite the WHO agenda if there is a specific one being referenced.

Thank you. This plan has been specified as requested and referenced.

* Page 4, paragraph beginning at line 34 - This section is a disjointed. It would be beneficial to restructure the paragraph to first present the prevalences and the prospective increase in disease and then discuss treatment to enhance clarity.
Excellent point; we have restructured this paragraph as requested.

* Page 5, line 6 - May explain more about how these community based services have reduced use of inpatient mental health, provide statistic, etc.

Thank you for this comment. After reviewing the extant research we acknowledge that outcomes data do not sufficiently support the reference to reduction of inpatient services so we have deleted this comment from our paper.

* Throughout - Be consistent with use of psychiatric v. mental health research; as well as whether it is general psychiatric research of specifically psychiatric service research.

We agree with this important distinction and appreciate the opportunity to address it. To clarify this point and in keeping with the emphasis of the Indian Council on Medical Research we consistently use the phrase “mental health” rather than “psychiatric” throughout the paper and have also changed the title in accordance with this effort.

Methods

* Participant Recruitment and Selection, page 7, line 29: might want to state upfront (i.e., in the first or second sentence of this section) that participants needed to apply and be accepted for the program.

This edit was made on p. 7 as requested, and we agree that it improves the reader’s understanding of the recruitment process.
* Participant Recruitment and Selection: It would be helpful to have a sense of the previous level
of research support of the participants. Where these individuals who have obtained funding in
the past or naïve to the grant submission process?

There was no requirement for prior research funding, but two participants had acquired research
funds before they attended the workshop. Indian universities require psychiatric residents to
complete research theses and post-graduate (MPhil) psychology students to complete a
dissertation. Details are provided on page 10 in the manuscript.

* State where the training was located and the cost to participants?

We have added this information on p. 8.

* Page 9, line 38 - Use the abbreviation NMHP as its already been referenced multiple times.

Corrected on p. 9 as requested.

* Program Evaluation, page 9, line 53 - Potentially add a title to these: e.g., Perceived Ability;
ICMR Funding; Participant Collaboration; also could be clearer about the actual outcome for 2
and 3, e.g., number of submitted proposals by 30 days, number of participant collaborations after
the workshop.

Thank you; we have added the subheadings on pp. 9-10 as suggested. We have also added detail
regarding outcomes 2 and 3 in the Results Section (p. 10) as requested.
Results

* Page 10, line 35 - Make it a bit more clear how to interpret this finding, is it referring to significant within participant improvements?

We have made this modification as requested and agree that this change improves interpretability for the reader.

Discussion

* Page 11, line 11 - Have any of these types of projects reported on their process or evaluated their models? If so, would be helpful to cite examples. If not, or if it has never been done in this setting/ topic, then should be stated that this is a first commentary and evaluation of a project of this kind.

To our knowledge, this type of process or its evaluation has not been conducted in India, or for that matter elsewhere in the world. We have made this point in the second paragraph of the discussion section of the manuscript (p.11).

* What capacity do the mentors take in the funded proposals in respect to the grantathon model? Are they still involved or were they mostly there to facilitate grant writing and planning of the projects? Another relevant outcome then might be the level of involvement and participation (beyond just continued communication) between the mentors and the participants related to their funded proposals.

This suggestion provides us with an important additional point, which we have added on p. 13.
* Although not a limitation to this project, not all efforts to implement this model will have funding agencies to allow funding of projects. Maybe address how this was a strength of the current project and how it might be a limitation to implementation particularly of future "grantathons"

Yes, this is a very important point. We have addressed this issue on p. 12 in the Discussion section, and also reordered this paragraph to improve the flow of this new content.

* Do the authors plan to continue monitoring the participant's research progress over the years? It would be interesting to know, not only whether participants continue to communicate, but also the degree to which they communicate (and hopefully collaborate) with their mentors and other participants, as well as whether the initial funding obtained leads to other successful finding opportunities.

This is proposed as part of our ongoing work (please see earlier question relating to this point).

Tables/Figures

* Table 1: Session numbers appear to be incorrect (no session 3 or 5). Also might want to collapse session 7 and 8 as it was in session 4 (e.g., include recap and review and evaluation Framework in day three am) in order to be consistent throughout.

Thank you for calling our attention to this oversight. We have made the appropriate corrections.
* Table 3: Label Paired T-Test for the p-values; standard deviations only need to have two decimal places; and may want to include more significant figures/label the p-vales as <.05 or <.01, etc. where they are presented as ".000".

Thank you for these suggestions; we have made the requested changes.