

## Editorial:

# Expanding Horizons: Multidisciplinary and International Approaches in Education, Health, and Welfare

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In a rapidly evolving educational and healthcare landscapes, the intersection of professional education, wellbeing research, and international development presents both opportunities and challenges. Recent studies on graduate-level nursing programs, international academic practices, and the creative engagement of older women provide valuable new insights into how diverse educational approaches can meet complex global needs. This editorial introduction summarises key lessons learnt and makes recommendations for future directions based on reflections from peer-reviewed studies in a variety of domains.

The rising focus on quality and inclusivity in higher education has led to a greater role for transnational education (TNE) as a vehicle for global development despite looming challenges arising from tightening immigration regimes across the board. The report on the Transformation by Innovation in Distance Education (TIDE) initiative in Myanmar offers a welcome diversion from recipient-focused narratives by highlighting the viewpoints of UK educators. The study highlights the complexity of cross-cultural pedagogy and affirms that international development programs must account for local educational needs as well as the evolving professional identities of educators working in foreign settings.

This educator-centred perspective adds originality to the field of international academic practice and responds to calls for more reflexive transnational partnerships (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). The multicultural composition of the UK academic team and their insights into cultural communication provide practical relevance for institutions involved in similar initiatives. Such research emphasises how important it is for academics working in international development to have access to continual support systems and training in intercultural competency.

Healthcare labour shortages are a pressing issue that runs parallel to the difficulties in global education. One important policy objective that is covered in the reviewed articles on Graduate Entry Nursing (GEN) programs is the acceleration of nursing education while maintaining quality and retention. Faster courses that enable graduates from a variety of areas to become registered nurses in as short as two years are provided by GEN programs in order to address this requirement (Neill, 2012; Macdiarmid et al., 2021).

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The analysis of GEN evaluations emphasises the necessity for specialist assessment methods that consider the diverse backgrounds of these pupils. However, the focus on retention highlights the multifaceted reasons for student attrition, such as financial hardship, personal responsibilities, and a lack of support (Kukkonen et al., 2019; Hamshire et al., 2019). The International GEN network's proposals to improve retention through all-encompassing, student-centered approaches are a reflection of best practices in inclusive curriculum design. These findings are particularly relevant in light of the WHO's projection of a 5.7 million nurse deficit by 2030 (WHO, 2020). GEN programs can make a substantial contribution to the resilience and capability of the global workforce by improving student assistance and creating context-specific teaching methods.

In a different but no less important area, the study on women over 65 who participate in arts and crafts provides a moving reminder of the healing potential of work. This study, which is framed within a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, highlights the social and personal benefits of creative involvement, especially in fostering social participation, welfare, and self-esteem (Reilly, 1962; Pöllänen, 2015). These qualitative studies offer an essential supplement to evidence-based interventions as occupational therapy increasingly embraces person-centred frameworks.

Importantly, utilisation of virtual interviews via various platforms provides insight into the evolving field of elder population research. This adaption raises important questions about internet access and inclusivity in addition to showcasing technological adaptability. Future research should look at how virtual platforms affect older persons' wider, more equitable engagement in health-promoting activities.

Together, these articles presented in this issue show a commitment to inclusive research methods and educational transformation. Cross-border academic collaboration, responsive healthcare education, and community-based arts programs all recognise the diversity of learners and the need for adaptable, context-sensitive approaches. To sustain and grow such projects, institutions need to invest in multidisciplinary research, international collaboration, and learner-informed pedagogy.

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