

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Dr Ingrid Harrington

To cite this article: Dr Ingrid Harrington. (2024). Message from the Editor-in-Chief. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 13(2), p0-1. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v13n2p0>

doi:10.5430/ijhe.v13n2p0

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v13n2p0>

The IJHE continues to be the choice of journal for many global researchers. As such, the strength of the IJHE journal is reflected in this issue's eight research articles from South Africa, America, China, and Sweden. This issue has a strong focus on student approaches to learning, language development and developing an understanding of how victims of natural disasters cope post-trauma. Whilst societies and communities are challenged by global events, the IJHE provides an important platform for the development of theory, the addressing of policy questions, and the dissemination of innovative practice in the field of tertiary education, specifically widening participation and lifelong learning.

The first article by *Bele and colleagues* explored the benefits of Service Learning (SL), a practice that links community service with learning activities to promote substantive learning, to third-year Bachelor of Education students at a rural-based South African University. This study aimed to explore whether third-year student teachers could benefit from helping first-year student university students acquire literacy skills through SL. Their results confirmed that exposing students to SL made them gain academic knowledge, cognitive and interpersonal skills, and self-confidence as they endeavoured to put theoretical knowledge into practice. The next article by Rutledge and colleagues measured 30 real-world features remotely using drone imagery, point cloud data, pictometry data, and the Google Earth Pro online interface. Real-world measurements were compared to remote sensing measurements taken by students, to calculate the root mean square error (RMSE). The RMSE results indicate that the pictometry measurements were the most accurate, with an RMSE of 0.68 meters, and that the point cloud data were the least accurate.

The third article is from Dickey, Noel and Ai, who researched the impact of American residents exposed to floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes, specifically hurricanes Katrina and Rita. They explored if there were any differences in the volunteer's mental health symptoms by race, and to determine if years of experience with previous trauma predicts and has a relationship with, the development of mental health symptoms. They found that the depression scores among Black participants were significantly higher compared to White participants, and that participants of a younger age were more likely to experience depression. The findings indicate the importance of providing adequate training and mental health resources for volunteers and particularly Black volunteers, in an effort to prevent the occurrence of depression, which could potentially decrease their overall mental health after a natural hazard. The fourth article by Huang and colleagues sought to improve medical residents' analysis of the electrocardiogram (ECG) diagnostic test in clinical practice. They applied a three-stage strengthening mode based on a massive open online course (MOOC) to improve students' competence in ECG interpretation skills. Their research found that a blend of online and offline teaching strategies was superior to the traditional lecture method, and that repeated practice was necessary for improving ECG interpretation competence.

The next article by Kone and Hongde investigated the dynamics between smartphone addiction and the well-being of college students, specifically examining its moderating effects on the relationships between life satisfaction, sleep quality, and academic achievement. Their findings showed that life satisfaction was positively associated with perceived academic achievement, and sleep quality was positively associated with the initial level of pre-sleep cognitive arousal, leading to good academic performance. In contrast, Smartphone addiction was positively associated

with daytime sleepiness and school disengagement, while also negatively associated with Grade Point Average (GPA). Therefore, their study showed that the excessive use of smartphones among youth affected the relationship between their life satisfaction, sleep quality and academic achievement.

The sixth article by Frederick Bondesam explored the consequences of gender-based violence in the European Research Area (ERA) academic culture for individuals, the study and work climate, and the quality of research and education. He presents a critique and solution to specific dilemmas and contestations immanent in transforming ERA wide policy development, into effective actions on the institutional level. The seventh article is from Jim Rost who provides practitioners with a simple, yet powerful option for analysing student success outcome variables utilizing the Chi-square test of independence. He used a case study approach to illustrate how Chi-squares can be used to specifically analyse the association between an experiential learning high impact practice and graduation rates among undergraduate students. The final article from Li and Ai employed a Bayesian approach, a means with advantages in small samples and dichotomized endpoints, as a longitudinal investigation tool on factors related to resilience/lower traumatization for populations exposed to collective trauma. Their study addressed these needs with a two-wave survey on hurricane volunteers to demonstrate pathways to traumatization after deadly natural disasters. Their findings indicate that the Bayesian structural equation modelling was performed to evaluate the role of altruism and using substances to cope with Wave-2 PTSD. Traumatization was identified in participants showing a significant increase in Wave-1 and a decrease in Wave-2. These findings emphasize the importance of longitudinal post-disaster research. Given the new evidence on volunteers' traumatization, altruism, and substance use during times of crisis with limited resources, further investigation among volunteers is crucial. The absence of identified protective factors in volunteers raises concerns for future implications in trauma psychology theory, research, and practice.

I sincerely hope that the broad range of topics and information shared are of benefit to our readers. Importantly, I would like to thank all contributors and reviewers who continue to make the timely publication of the current issue possible. I look forward to receiving more contributions from researchers and practitioners for our future issues. Wishing all readers all the very best with their research studies.

Warm regards,

Dr Ingrid Harrington

Senior Lecturer, Classroom Behaviour Management

Coordinator, Commencing Student Success Program

School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences, Education (HASSE)

University of New England, Australia

& Editor-in-Chief, International Journal of Higher Education

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1898-4795>