

Editorial

Welcome to this issue which showcases different forms of groupwork from a range of regions across the globe.

In the first article 'Groupwork and social enterprise: Using group members' skills for social and economic development', Reineth Prinsloo illustrates the use of groupwork in South Africa to facilitate a collective enterprise involved in micro-economic activity which aims to tackle poverty and exclusion. The project described in the article drew on the potential of groupwork approaches to foster and support mutual aid and social cohesion among group members. For the group participants their journey as a group through the stages of the project also instilled hope for their economic future and provided a tangible means of achieving their goals.

Thilo Boeck and Jennie Fleming's article 'Working with a women's group in Titilaca, Peru to form a knitting association: An example of value based groupwork' provides an excellent example of what can be achieved by supporting local development and sustainability in community settings through the facilitation of social action groups.

In a second article from South Africa, 'Strengthening Students' Employability Skills: The Development and First Evaluation of Multiple Approaches to Group Work', Salomien Boshoff presents her study of the use of groups in classroom settings. She shows how different ways of composing or selecting the student groups was found to assist students in different ways. The research design adopted in this study will be of interest to researchers regarding this type of investigation. The findings also confirm the benefits of group activities for students and the study will equip teachers with better knowledge on how to use groupwork effectively in their curriculum.

Donna Guy's article, 'Māori student perceptions of group work in their social work degree', also examines the use of groupwork in educational settings. This article offers helpful insights into factors which can support or obstruct the effective use of group approaches in classroom and program settings. She reveals how some factors related

to the assignment of students into particular groups where students are expected to work together towards a common end, can either enhance or interfere with student learning. She draws on evaluations from a social work program in New Zealand, where students provided mixed feedback regarding their experiences of working together in groups. Distilling the key points from the student feedback, Donna Guy shows how group composition and peer interactions, such as non-participative group members and dominant personalities, can reduce the effectiveness of student groups as a supportive learning environment. It is interesting to see that group composition and how members are assigned to groups features in this article, as this resonates with the points made in the article by Salomien Boshoff in this issue. A key issue raised by Donna Guy is the management of diversity in groups and her article provides useful insights on the views and experiences of students in relation to this issue.

The Groupwork in Practice article for this issue is from two US-based authors, Paul Kelly and Olga Konyakova. In 'Group Work Practice Principles for Substance Use Disorder Treatment' the authors consider the wide range of opportunities for groupwork within the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) field. This paper captures the main principles which underpin groupwork in SUD treatment contexts and this paper will be a resource to educators and practitioners interested in the use of groupwork in this field.

This issue includes two book reviews, one by Joyce Webster and the other by Mark Doel.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the contributors for submitting this excellent set of articles.

Gloria Kirwan