
EDITORIAL

This issue of *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher* marks the end of Professor Jean Triegaardt's term as editor. Prof Jean took over from Professor Leila Patel from the start of 2010 and a dedicated editor for six years. She continued to advance the journal's high levels of academic and intellectual rigour, further establishing it as a leading source of research excellence in social work. In addition, Prof Jean championed the journal's focus on social development as the national welfare strategy that holds together social work, other social service professions, other disciplines and a wide range of role players in the welfare field. The Board of *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher* extends its heartfelt thanks to Prof Jean for her service to the social work community in South Africa and wishes her well in her 'retirement'.

We have not yet appointed a new editor for the journal. In the meantime, I will serve as interim editor. I take on this role primarily in my capacity as HOD of the department that hosts the journal, but also mindful of my recently acquired role as President of ASASWEI. This journal, together with *Social Work/Maatskaplikewerk*, is central to social work education in South Africa, and thus ASASWEI has a vested interest in ensuring the longevity and stature of both journals.

The Board of *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher* agreed in late 2015 to change the title to *Southern African Journal of Social Work and Social Development*. This change is motivated by two main considerations. First, the current title has proven to be a stumbling block for getting the journal listed with the IBSS or the ISI, which negatively impacts its stature. It appears that 'practitioner' is the troublesome term. Second, the Board wishes to more tightly align the title to the purpose of the journal, which is to "advance the theory and practice of social work and social development in Africa and in a changing global world". The incorporation of 'social development' alongside 'social work' focuses the journal's theoretical stance, while the specification of 'Southern African' helps to locate the journal within a sociopolitical-geographical space. Changing the title of a journal is not a quick process; we expect that the change will be formalised from 2017.

We as educators and researchers in social work and related disciplines have entered a time of flux in academia, with the #feesmustfall campaign and related calls for the indigenisation, decolonisation and Africanisation of higher education in South Africa. This is a time of threat, as our established patterns of operating are under scrutiny and review. We cannot continue as before and are required to interrogate what we do. We must be ready to discard outmoded or contextually inappropriate teaching material. On the other hand, this is also a time of great opportunity, as we work to reconceptualise what it is we do as social workers and as social work educators, and ensure that our work is deeply rooted in the African soil of human experience. This opens up space to both reclaim and critique our diverse heritages, which could lead to major innovations in social work thinking and practice. It is our hope that this journal will become a vibrant space for dialogue between social work academics regarding this important and ground-breaking project.

The first five articles in this first issue of 2016 centre around children, youth and families. The sixth article is based on the experiences of first-time researchers at a South African university.

De Goede and Greeff open the issue with a focus on the transition of young couples to parenthood, giving particular attention to the factors that sustain family routines. The findings of their grounded theory study shed light on the family resilience factors that facilitate this life stage transition.

Dykes continues with a resilience lens, focusing on the coping resources utilised by social work students who were exposed to adverse life events in childhood, and the kinds of life lessons these traumas generated. The findings contribute to a social work education that attends to the personal trauma of students.

Magidi, Schenk and Erasmus explore the impact of community gangsterism on the lives of adolescents who are not members of a gang. Their study points to the personal vulnerability resulting from a community risk, such as negative effects on schooling, mobility and family life.

Van Breda considers the theoretical debate between agency and structure in youth transitions. He applies this debate to research on the transition of South African youth out of residential care, showing the importance of both sides of the debate and particularly of the intersection between them.

Dube and Smith investigate the complexities of disclosing HIV status to a child in the context of a children's home. Data from social service professionals reveal that such disclosure is important and has a number of positive benefits, but has to be done with care and taking cognisance of the child's social environment.

Sithole closes out this issue with a study on the experiences of first-time social work researchers at an undergraduate level. His findings highlight the competency and resource challenges that students face, and call for educational guidelines for improved supervision.

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