

Reflecting on our society?

Welcome to the winter 2018 issue of *AJHPE*. Both the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms are represented; therefore, there is something for everyone. What struck me was how reflective of society this issue is, as it contains articles on stress, gender-based violence and use of social media. It was also interesting to note that several topics seem to be in pairs – I am sure it was not intentional!

The topic of research in undergraduate curricula is addressed from two different perspectives, but both relate to students. In an undergraduate student study by Van Aswegen *et al.*,^[1] the association between personality factors and chosen area of specialty of medical practitioners was explored. The authors identified personality types in some specialties and differences between characteristics of local specialists; these were compared with findings from other studies. In contrast, the second study that involved students sought to determine optometry students' attitudes towards research. Coetzee and Kruger^[2] report that, while students recognised several benefits to undertaking research, the time-consuming nature of conducting research and the administrative processes associated with obtaining ethical approval were viewed negatively. These findings reflect the reality of conducting research. Langtree *et al.*^[3] report on factors contributing to stress in nursing students, whereas Moodley *et al.*^[4] address stress in the dental profession. While the causes of stress were different in these two study cohorts, both studies recommend the inclusion of stress management programmes in undergraduate curricula. The use of social media in learning is addressed in another pair of articles. Naidoo *et al.*^[5] found that most students in their occupational therapy sample used some form of social media and that participants were aware of the ethical dilemmas inherent in using these media. Osaigbovo and Iwegim^[6] report on the use of Instagram and Facebook to complement lectures in the teaching of medical microbiology in Nigeria. Their post-intervention survey showed that engagement with material and postings were higher in Instagram.

Using the Delphi technique, Fawole *et al.*^[7] sought to obtain consensus from teachers on a gender-based violence curriculum for medical schools in Nigeria. The study identified topics for inclusion, level of study at which the curriculum should be taught, methods of teaching and who should teach. Interestingly, the written examination ranked highest as the method of assessment. Using the mnemonic AIMED AT ITCHEDD, Makkink and Vincent-Lambert^[8] conducted a survey to determine teachers' and students' opinions on the use of the mnemonic in teaching and learning critical thinking and decision-making in patient management. The mnemonic was generally well perceived by teachers and students alike. The article by Burch *et al.*^[9] reminded me of Paulo Freire's^[10] work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire believed that learners do not enter tertiary institutions

as blank slates. Burch *et al.*^[9] studied the self-reported proficiency levels of medical students in six categories of generic learning skills and found a significant relationship with pre-university admission aptitude test scores, information technology proficiency on entry to university and early academic performance at university. Furthermore, academically weak students did not overestimate their skills proficiency.

Pillay *et al.*^[11] compared teaching methods used in an anatomy course with the critical cross-field outcomes specified by the South African Qualifications Authority. This form of reviewing the curriculum led to changes in teaching methods that enabled better alignment of achievement of the cross-field outcomes.

I hope this brief summary of some of the contents of this issue of *AJHPE* piques your interest and motivates you to read this edition from cover to cover.

Patricia McInerney

Centre for Health Science Education, Faculty of Health Sciences,
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
patricia.mcinerney@wits.ac.za



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