

Editorial

Theo Gavrielides

Welcome to the second issue of 2021! Since the publishing of Volume 14 Issue 1, 20.4% of the UK's population have been vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus (13.6m fully vaccinated) and 3.3% worldwide (254m fully vaccinated). The shared global thread made us all think differently and along with the deaths and suffering, it also brought out the best in us. I have personally been involved in a COVID-19 emergency relief project named "You are not Alone" (<https://www.fredcampaign.org/covid19/>). The number of volunteers, donors and supporters who offered their help has been simply inspiring. Never before have I seen so much and so coordinated community and voluntary action.

Against this encouraging news, we know that just in the UK there have been 4,404,882 COVID-19 cases and 147,211,802 worldwide. Undoubtedly, the vaccine gives a much-needed hope for overcoming our lifetime's biggest health and socio-economic challenge. If previous generations were faced with the aftermath of two World Wars, we are called to understand and deal with the complex health, social, economic and human rights implications of a pandemic that spread fast and unexpectedly.

It is also important to acknowledge that the pandemic does discriminate as we now have enough data that shows that Black and minority ethnic groups as well as those from low socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to get infected or die due to COVID-19. We also know that the financial impact of the pandemic and the lock down government measures had and will continue to have detrimental effects on the poorest and especially those with little, or no savings.

Continuing to learn about COVID-19 and its multiple impacts is a key objective of our Journal. We aim to support the international community by publishing high-quality, evidence-based papers on what works. We also want to expose bad practices while giving a voice to under-represented groups. That is why I am thrilled to be hosting a special issue this year titled "Human rights in healthcare during COVID-19 and other pandemics". It is an honour to work alongside the Guest Editors Jan Michael Alexandre C Bernadas (De La Salle University Manila) and Lee Edson P Yarcia (Alliance for Improving Health Outcomes) to prepare this timely special issue.

Turning to this issue, our first paper is "Harmful cultural practices and HIV stigma as psychosocial issues in North Central Nigeria". People living with HIV are still stigmatised in Western countries where governments claim to have put strong laws and educational system in place to increase awareness and address discrimination. It is not surprising that this study which was conducted in North Central Nigeria points out a number of persistent failings. The paper is based on a qualitative phenomenological research design that was conducted between April 2019 and July 2019 through face-to-face, in-depth interviews. Purposive sampling was used to recruit, from three selected hospitals, 20 participants aged 18–56 years. The study findings indicate that sociocultural factors and HIV stigma in Nigeria are significant psychosocial problems that have adverse implications for health and psychological well-being. These problems contribute to the harmful traditional practices, thereby making people vulnerable to contracting HIV infection. The nontherapeutic practices of female genital mutilation, sexual intercourse during menstruation and tribal marks or scarification cause medical complications. The study also highlights the need for better education in relation to gender equality and human rights including young people and girls.

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“Revisiting equity in healthcare spending through capability-approach” aims to draw theoretical insight from Sen’s capability-approach, while examining the effectiveness of health insurance schemes in reducing out-of-pocket-expenditure and catastrophic-health-expenditure in India. The paper concludes that a notable segment of the Indian population is still not covered under any health-insurance-schemes. Reimbursement was higher among elderly, literates, middle-class, central-regions, using private-facilities/insurance and for infections. The paper argues that extending insurance coverage alone cannot address the widespread inequalities in health care. Extending the health-insurance-coverage to the entire population requires a better understanding of the underlying-dynamics and health-care needs and must make health care affordable by enhancing the overall capability.

The third paper “Health system responsiveness in Iran: A cross-sectional study in hospitals of Mazandaran province” uses a cross-sectional study design that was carried out with 1,083 patients. They were all referred to public and private hospitals and hospitals affiliated to social security organization in Mazandaran province in 2017. Communication and confidentiality were identified as priority dimensions based on the least score for breeding actions to improve the responsiveness of the health-care system. At the end, some useful recommendations such as re-engineering the processes, training to engage the employees with patients and encouraging them to fill the gap were suggested.

Subsequently, “Enhancing Nurses Well-being Through Managerial Coaching: A Mediating Model” investigates the role of managerial coaching on nurses’ well-being through psychological ownership and organizational identity. The paper is based on survey that was conducted with 284 nurses working in both public and private hospitals between December 2019 and February 2020. The findings suggest the management to consider the importance of managerial coaching in shaping positive workplace behaviours of employees. The paper extends past studies to examine the mediating roles of psychological ownership and organizational identification between managerial coaching and workplace well-being among nurses.

All the remaining papers of this issue address matters relating to COVID-19. Starting with “The Management (or Lack Thereof) of COVID-19 in Brazil: Implications for Human Rights & Public Health”, it explores how the COVID-19 pandemic has been managed at the federal administrative level, with the focus being on the implications for human rights and public health in the country. The paper is based on original data through a case study analysis. The paper argues that Brazil’s President bulldozed anti-COVID-19 efforts, which can be better explained through the concepts of necropolitics and neoliberal authoritarianism.

Moving on to “Populism, pestilence and plague in the time of Coronavirus”, the authors explore right wing populist government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper is loosely structured around fascistic themes set out in Albert Camus’ allegorical novel, *The Plague*. The paper argues that although individual responses to the coronavirus pandemic among right-wing populists differ, they appear to coalesce around four central themes: initial denial and then mismanagement of the pandemic; the disease being framed as primarily an economic rather than a public health crisis; a contempt for scientific and professional expertise; and the “othering” of marginal groups for political ends. The paper then moves on to argue that populist responses to the pandemic have given rise to increased levels of xenophobia, the violation of human rights and the denigration of scientific expertise.

Finally, the “Impact of COVID–19 on the Mental Health among Children in China with Specific Reference to Emotional and Behavioural Disorders” posits recommendations to nurture resilience among children, while involving them in various positive activities. Relatives’ health, poor appetite, fear of asking questions about epidemics, agitation, clinginess, physical discomfort, nightmares and poor sleep, inattention and separation issues were among the major psychological conditions analysed. The paper concludes that personal attributes such as resilience should be nurtured so that children are empowered to manage difficult situations such as traumas and disappointments. Several measures are recommended to

reduce feeling of loneliness, increase communication and promote and encourage physical activities.

I hope that you find this issue useful in your practice and research. Your feedback is always welcome; you can submit your views via our website as well as your work for peer review and publication at <https://www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/journal/ijhrh?id=IJHRH#author-guidelines>. We review papers on an ongoing basis and have a target of returning them to the author within five–eight weeks of receipt. Warm wishes from everyone at the *IJHRH* and stay safe!

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