

Editorial

Jerome Carson and Julie Prescott

Indian women are the foci for two papers in this issue. Sumant Kumar and colleagues look at the issue of suicide. Around 36% of global female suicide deaths are associated with India, yet Indian women only make up 28% of the world's female population. These researchers used Ontological Textual Analysis to examine the discourse around women's suicides in Indian newspapers between January 2023 and June 2023. They were able to identify 77 cases of suicide in the newspapers they surveyed. They looked at the role of stress in suicide deaths. The main causes identified were family problems ($n=16$), love affairs ($n=14$), frustration ($n=13$), sexual harassment ($n=11$), poverty ($n=9$), scolding ($n=5$), blackmailing ($n=4$) and chronic diseases ($n=3$). Further details were not available for two individuals. To reduce the trend in women's suicide, the authors conclude it will not just be through "[...] reforming laws or policies, but by restoring empathy, strengthening family bonding and acknowledging the emotional lives of women as central, not as peripheral to its societal fabric".

The second paper on Indian women by Aswathi P.R. and colleagues, describes digital mental health interventions. "Kootkari" which means "female friend", is a digital tool that provides modules looking at cognitive self-awareness, emotional regulation, relational wellbeing and body-mind integration. This approach rests on three concepts. First, it has a feminist psychological foundation. Second, it looks at promoting social inclusion at an individual, relational and collective level. Third, it uses a digital model that embeds cultural and gender sensitivity. It integrates three layers. These are psycho-education, therapy and community, representing the balance between self, relationship and community. The authors comment "Ultimately social inclusion in mental health is not solely about ensuring access to care. It is about cultivating belonging, recognition and relational safety. Kootkari as a 'digital friend' embodies these ideals".

Issues facing Indian transgender youth are explored in a scoping review by S. Visalakshmi and colleagues. Their review looks at the challenges faced by this group. The authors argue that transgender youth face increased mental health problems and receive inadequate social support. In contrast with their cisgender counterparts, transgender youth experience higher rates of depression, suicide and suicidal attempts.

Two papers in this issue address issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. A study from South Korea from Sangyoon Lim used Text Mining Analysis to look at online mental health information seeking between May 2023 and December 2024. The most frequently searched terms were anxiety (7,674 mentions), followed by depression (6,193 hits). This connects with concerns that the pandemic affected people's mental health. In a complete contrast to this data mining approach, Madison Harding-White, Lydia Ruddick and the editor Jerome Carson looked at their respective experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The three autoethnographic accounts showed the effects of the pandemic on each author. Lydia lived at home with her parents. She concluded her account stating, "I have come to see that it was embracing the lonely, quiet darkness of COVID-19 that allowed me to find true light and strive to share it with others". Madison's experience seemed the most traumatic. She

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described it as 10 months of hell. Yet she concludes, “she did not consider it a trauma”. She felt that the experience had made her a better version of herself. Jerome’s experience was different again. He hated the social isolation, but he had food, comfort, was well and made the days count. The authors pose the question for all of us about the COVID-19 experience, “How was it for you?”

A scoping review of Recovery Colleges was the topic of the paper by Campbell Tickner and his colleagues from Australia. They note that Recovery Colleges can now be found in more than 20 countries. In this account they reviewed 26 papers. They identified three main themes. The first considered the barriers involved in accessing Recovery Colleges, such as distance, finance, lack of external social support and a perception that the service might not be inclusive. The second looked at the transition to online learning during the Covid pandemic. This only benefitted those with good access to digital infrastructure. The third issue looked at the special needs of diverse groups, such as offering specific cultural adaptations.

Nabil ES-Sabib and fellow researchers from Morocco looked at service utilisation in the first university counselling service in the country. Some 401 student records were examined. Of these some 300 clients attended for primarily pedagogical reasons, e.g. advice, time management, dealing with exam stress, with only 101 going along with mental health concerns. Of equal interests was the fact that some 359 students only made a single visit to the service. Women were more likely to attend multiple sessions, with more visits from math and computer science students, than from earth and life sciences students. The authors grouped their students into three large clusters of subjects, so it was not possible to disaggregate the numbers for individual subjects. Anecdotal evidence for our own student counselling service is that psychology students are heavy users of the service.

Muneeba Shakil and colleagues from Pakistan looked at the relationship between virtues and wellbeing in two specific cohorts, Generation Y and Generation Z. Both groups completed a Global Assessment of Character, the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale and the Diener Satisfaction with Life Scale. Generation Y scored higher on five of the six virtues and also had higher levels of mental and subjective wellbeing. The authors conclude there may be a need to cultivate more positive character strengths in Generation Z.

John Carden and Peter Huxley present the findings of working with an individual diagnosed with schizophrenia, based on their assessments using the DIALOG + Scale. This asks the individual to rate their satisfaction with eight life domains (mental health, physical health, job situation, accommodation, leisure activities, relationships with partner/family, friendships and personal safety). Participants also rate their satisfaction with their medication, practical help received and meetings with mental health professionals. All 11 domains are each rated on a single scale where 1 = totally dissatisfied and 7 = totally satisfied. What is unusual about this paper is that the individual was followed up 45 months after his first assessment. His mean overall satisfaction score rose from 2.60 to 5.63 / 7.00. The biggest improvements were in mental and physical health, job situation, relationship with partner and family and personal safety. There is a short statement from the client stating that he found his involvement with mental health services had been very beneficial.

Manimegalai R. and co-authors describe a program they have developed which integrates artificial intelligence and natural language processing in therapeutic practice. Their platform includes both patients and therapists. One of the key components is an interactive chatbot, which allows real-time interactions with the patient. A journaling module allows patients to write down their thoughts, feelings and everyday experiences. The therapist can evaluate the patient’s situation with the help of machine generated insights and their own professional judgements. If the virtual tools provided on the platform are not sufficient, the system allows escalation to a meeting with the therapist. This paper is a sign of what is to come in mental health services as they exploit the potential of artificial intelligence.

Zafer Güney ağı and fellow researchers consider if the role of identifying with all humanity (IWAH) mediates the link between social dominance orientation and intergroup anxiety. The researchers suggest that the concept of IWAH could be a key element in reducing tensions between different ethnic groups.

A study from South America by Pedro Severino-González and colleagues used a systematic literature review to explore university social responsibility (USR). They identified 11 papers that they grouped into five categories. The first was wellbeing and mental health among university students. The second looked at USR and community health. The third considered psychosocial and contractual models. The fourth was institutional resilience in crisis contexts. The last was historical initiatives in university mental health. Among the practical examples reported were student hubs and employability programs to arts-based strategies and hospital-community engagement. In the UK, all universities have to demonstrate knowledge-exchange activities.

Kyle Retzer and fellow researchers from California looked at the relationship between depression-related stigma and psychosocial functioning. Self-stigma had the greatest effect on all three aspects of functioning, self-care, social functioning and productivity.

The final paper in this issue is from Matt Broadway-Horner in New Zealand. He examined four interconnected equity frameworks. These were Critical Tiriti Analysis, Discursive Tiriti Analysis, Progress World View and Discursive Equity Analysis. The aim of these different yet complementary approaches is to change institutions which fail to meet the needs of marginalised communities.

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