

Editorial: Reflections

Welcome to the final edition of the International Journal of Health Promotion and Education for 2024. In this issue, the Editorial team have looked back at the papers submitted across the Volume. In doing so, we found that we have had more papers published that employed quantitative methods than qualitative – and this surprised us!

In terms of quantitative methods, most of the papers appeared to employ a mix of traditional inferential statistical tests (e.g. independent t-test or chi-square test) and logistic regressions. Importantly, good practice examples have emerged in relation to substantiating the choice of specific analytical aspects. This is the case of the article by Sui et al. in their analysis of Canadian university students' trait anxiety and nomophobia during COVID-19. In absence of theoretical grounds to guide the selection of the variables, the authors used backward stepwise selection to determine which independent variables would be eligible to enter the final model specification. Another way to guide model specification is adopted by Hall et al. by using hierarchical multiple regressions. This method underlines the authors' attention towards understanding the power of the independent variables of interest (i.e. specific drinking motives) in predicting drinking habits when socio-demographic variables are also controlled for. Besides establishing the model specification, considering how to best extract value from analysing the data on hand is equally important. In this sense, Gainer et al. enriched their analysis of depression and anxiety symptoms among U.S. physicians during the first phase of the COVID-19 pandemic by utilising multiple imputation to handle missing data. With this technique, the authors characterised the uncertainty around missing data points by estimating multiple plausible values derived from the distribution of the observed data. Overall, the variables' selection process guiding the model specification and the use of multiple imputation reflect the importance of examining and maximising the analytical value of the data.

Regarding qualitative methods, the majority of qualitative papers published in this volume employed an exploratory research design to gain insights into the experiences and perceptions of populations whose views are often absent from health research. Many good practice examples have emerged in this Volume, aiming to promote the health and wellbeing of more marginalised populations who experience greater health inequalities, such as pregnant women and mothers in prisons (Thomson), individuals living in areas of high socio-economic deprivation (Woodall et al.; Gillies, Elkhuisen, and Wagemakers), primary school children in Sri Lanka (Rumaisa et al.), and Māori primary school children (Loch et al.). For example, Thomson used individual semi-structured interviews to explore the care provided by 'Birth-Companions': a UK-based charity supporting pregnant women and mothers living in Mother and Baby units, released on temporary licence during the Pandemic. This is a vulnerable population group who experience a complex intersection of social factors and health issues, including poverty, poor mental health, exposure to violence and sexual abuse, lack of family support and poorer post-natal outcomes. Therefore, the use of individual semi-structured interviews was vital in gaining a rich, in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions and needs of women released on temporary licence. Furthermore, interviews with Birth Companions and health and social care professionals allowed for a more comprehensive view of the barriers and facilitators to service provision, and highlighted areas for service improvement and development. While there are substantially fewer papers employing qualitative methods in this Volume, the use of qualitative research to more deeply understand the experiences and views of marginalised populations is crucial for the development of more acceptable, targeted initiatives that improve the health and wellbeing of populations with the highest health burdens.

We hope that you have enjoyed the range of research published in this Volume as much as we, the Editorial team, have. Please do continue to submit original, innovative contributions to the

International Journal of Health Promotion and Education – we look forward to working with our global health promotion research community and supportive reviewers throughout 2025.

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