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Editorial Foreword

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Similar to the last edition of IJASS, this edition is also a general edition, carrying a range of papers, reflecting current and emerging issues in the applied social sciences. We would like to extend a warm thanks to all our external paper reviewers for their contribution to this edition. Your input was very helpful.

In the opening paper, Patrick F. Phillips and Helen Chen explore “*Emotional Intelligence and the Role of Motivation Within the Context of Career Guidance Counselling for Those Experiencing Unemployment.*” Through their research with people who are presently experiencing unemployment, they identify that certain aspects of emotional intelligence play a role in effective motivation (to secure employment/engage in education or training). They highlight that continued research into this area is necessary in order to further develop effective supports for people experiencing unemployment.

Simon Dunne, Liam MacGabhann, Michaela Amering and Paddy McGowan in “*Making People Aware and Taking the Stigma Away*”: *Alleviating Stigma and Discrimination through Trialogue*” draw attention to mental health stigma and discrimination as a major societal issue. They explore *Trialogue Meetings* (meetings of three or more sets of stakeholders in mental health systems), as a way to alleviate mental health stigma and discrimination. Their findings indicate that Trialogue Meetings may go some way towards tackling stigma and discrimination through positive social contact, dialogue and education for relevant stakeholders in mental health systems.

The experience of working as a Child Welfare and Protection Professional is investigated by Sandra Gorman in “*Child Welfare and Protection Professionals: How Do They Experience Their Work? An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*”. Using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis approach, she identifies the importance of client relationships, organisation support and variance, child welfare system inadequacies and job satisfaction as key work issues for Child Welfare and Protection Professionals. Improvements that can be made at the organisational and policy level are discussed.

In the final paper, Perry Share and John Pender in “*Preparing for a Robot Future? Social Professions, Social Robotics and the Challenges Ahead*”, consider the social and ethical impact of automation and robotics, as well as related issues in the field of social robotics, social care and the social professions. The authors highlight the need to respond to this new issue in terms of educational/CPD supports and regulatory standards. They suggest pedagogical approaches to these issues that may be of assistance to educators, CPD practitioners and students within the social professions.

This edition of IJASS also includes a review of “*Dark Secrets of Childhood*” by Fred Powell and Margaret Scanlon (published by Policy Press in 2015).

Again, in this edition, we have attempted to provide a selection of some of the innovative and insightful writing emerging from the applied social sciences. We hope that you find it an informative and interesting collection.