

Editorial: A connected transnational world: implications for educational psychology practice in the United Kingdom

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Interconnected opportunities

The world is becoming increasingly interconnected with unprecedented levels of movement (International Organization for Migration, 2024) providing new opportunities to learn from and with the global psychology community. As the United Kingdom (U.K.) continues to evolve in its cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity, so must the ways in which Educational Psychologists (EPs) view our professional relationships and responsibilities to the communities in which we work.

A long-established profession

The profession of educational and school psychology is long-established (Jimerson et al., 2008; United Nations Educational and Cultural Organisation, 1948) with psychologists working within education in many countries across the world. Despite its existence internationally, the profession is not identical across nations, with differing local models of service delivery in operation (Brown & Jimerson, 2015; Cook et al., 2010; Farrell et al., 2007; Honess et al., 2024; Jimerson et al., 2008). Exploration of this variation suggests that factors impacting the influence and presence of educational psychology are related to a country's socioeconomic development, cultural modernity and history of social welfarism (Cook et al., 2010). Whilst it is important to acknowledge and celebrate the global presence of the profession, it is also worth noting that over a quarter of a billion children and young people remain out of school (UNESCO, 2024) without any access to education or educational psychology at all.

Within psychology more broadly, critical attention has been paid to the populations that are represented within the psychological research base, both authors and participants. Whilst there is ever changing diversity in local practice contexts, rapidly developing global interconnectedness, and a growing understanding of the impact of structural bias and inequality, the literature base remains overwhelmingly representative of the Global North and Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic (WEIRD) populations (Rad et al., 2018). The original conceptualisation of WEIRD, developed by Henrich et al. (2010), was an attempt to encourage the discipline of

psychology to widen its research base to challenge the assumption that findings from studies with WEIRD populations are generalisable to the global majority. More recently, there have been calls to carefully conceptualise cultural variation without conflating country and culture – a perspective criticised as a ‘relic of European nationalism’ (Schimmelpfennig et al., 2024, p. 13).

Educational psychologists have become increasingly aware of such conversations related to inequalities of representation in the research and practice landscape, with calls for the development of approaches to practice that take account of these issues. In this special edition therefore, we consider how the EP profession ensures that representative voices from the global majority impact upon the educational psychology we practise in our local contexts.

The current edition

The original idea for this edition emerged from the Initial Training in Educational Psychology National Tutor Conference hosted by the University of East Anglia in May 2023. The theme for the conference was ‘*Global Approaches to Educational Psychology: Interconnected Opportunities*’ with some of the presenters from that conference (Anita Soni, Ryan Cullen and Quentin Abraham) authors of papers in this edition. Related to the conference, this edition's call for papers invited submissions that address how EPs might sensitively respond to the U.K.'s evolving cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Papers were sought that explored how the EP profession might:

- contribute to the United Nation's 4th Sustainable Development Goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all;
- learn from the global psychology community, including ways to meaningfully integrate research findings from diverse populations; and
- reflect upon how to better support trainees in developing culturally responsive and attuned practices.

In this issue, we consider the application of educational

psychology in Australia, Kenya, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Whilst we acknowledge that many of our contributors may identify themselves as belonging to WEIRD populations, the awareness of the limitations that this particular epistemological lens brings is acknowledged across the papers.

When considering how to organise the articles within this edition and the desire for action, we turned to Currie's (2002) core functions related to the role of the EP. We start with the overarching ideas from the research base regarding global psychology and frameworks for practice, before turning towards, consultation, assessment, intervention and finally training.

Sharnee Escott and colleagues' reflective article which examines the problem of conceptualising global psychology as a single entity, begins the edition. They call for solidarity amongst psychologists who work in countries where colonial forces have shaped and dominated psychological practice, and finally consider what curious and courageous conversations might be required to inspire different actions. Next, we turn to colleagues at the University of East London who, whilst acknowledging the oppressive roots of historical EP practice, have looked towards the Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF) to support their work in a more globally responsive way. Lucy Browne et al. consider how the use of the PTMF in EP practice can lead to the disruption of oppressive power and provide recommendations for future practice.

Ellie Sakata and colleagues present us with a tool to support the EP profession when navigating professional practice in consultation with culturally diverse populations. They call upon the profession to move away from locating difference in the 'other' and instead consider the intersection of one's own culture and ontology reflecting upon how these interact to support responsive intercultural attunement.

Joanne Lindelauf and Tim Corcoran encourage us to consider best practice assessment protocols when completing assessment with culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people. They consider how the principles of ecologies support the advancement of excellence and equity when completing culturally competent psychoeducational assessment.

In their systematic review, Eve Mbire-Chigumba and colleagues highlight the ethnic disproportionalities found in the United Kingdom statistics relating to the identification of pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs and school exclusion data. They draw out key themes for culturally responsive intervention to support young people's sense of school belonging, including access to

reflective spaces that facilitate acknowledging, valuing and respecting cultural diversity. The importance of pupils seeing their identities represented positively within the school community, as well as consulting with, and listening to, culturally diverse pupils when designing or reviewing practices that impact upon them, is underlined.

Experiences working in Kenya to develop workshops for parents of children with disabilities are explored by Anita Soni, as part of her wider body of work related to intercultural, transnational and transdisciplinary practice. Anita's paper describes how professional learning in a Kenyan context was transferred to an urban English context, the learning in this case was to trust the process of discussion and leave space for reflection. Anita reflects that adopting a stance of cultural humility enabled learning from others (in this instance parents), fostering an approach that ensures that experiences, values and beliefs are respected and honoured.

We end with a timely paper considering how to meaningfully promote racial inclusion when developing and leading training. Hannah Lichwa and colleagues call upon the profession to enact proactive change rather than the 'episodic spikes of interest in anti-racism' such as those seen in 2020. Their 'Promoting Racial Inclusion in Training' (PRIT) framework supports reflection and provides guidance to EPs when they are planning training and designing materials.

Concluding thoughts

If one of the fundamental aims of the profession of educational psychology is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all (United Nations, 2015), a greater awareness of the over representation of WEIRD psychology in our history, contemporary professional practice and overarching conceptualisations of both problems and potential solutions is paramount. The continued diversification of the profession is vital, bringing an expanded repertoire of ideas to the workforce itself, as well as critical reflection around whose ideas are championed and whose are silenced within our evidence base. Whilst the very concept of global psychology is imperfect, and adoption of such ideas could be criticised as providing a screen for a continuation of *practice as usual*, we hope that the orientation towards practicable action within these papers will promote working in ways that reduce existing inequalities and challenge the status quo.

We are very grateful to our contributors for their insightful reflections and the Educational Psychology Research and Practice periodical for providing a platform for continued focus upon issues of social justice. We end

with the hope that educational psychologists will continue to orientate towards learning from, and collaborating with, the global psychology community, enabling us all to engage in more considered, heterogeneous and evolving practices.



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