

## Editorial

S. Alvin Leung (梁湘明)

The *Asian Journal of Counselling* has undergone some changes this year, including a new journal cover, a new group of consulting editors, and a new collaborative arrangement in publishing the *Journal*. Starting from this issue, the *Journal* will be jointly published by the Hong Kong Professional Counselling Association (HKPCA), and the Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research (HKIER) of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The HKIER has a tradition of excellence in research, programme development, and publishing. I believe that this collaboration will help the *Journal* to move toward a higher level of scholarship, and to make a stronger impact on the development of counselling in Hong Kong, the Chinese mainland, as well as other Chinese communities in Asia and around the world.

The *Asian Journal of Counselling* will continue to serve as a scholarly outlet for articles related to the practice of counselling in Asian communities. As the Editor of this journal, I would like to achieve a number of personal goals. First, I would like the editorial process to be positive and educational for authors. Too often, submitting an article to a journal is an unpleasant experience for authors because they are risking rejection and criticisms from reviewers. Whereas negative editorial decision is an inevitable part of the journal publishing process, we hope that the anonymous feedback and comments from our team of reviewers could help authors identify the strengths and shortcomings of their articles in a constructive manner. I hope that the editorial review process could, in the long run, help authors become better writers and researchers. Second, I would like to maintain an efficient editorial review process. I hope to keep the turnaround time to about eight to ten weeks, which means that under normal circumstances, authors should receive comments from the Editor and the reviewers within that time period. Third, I would like to resume publishing two issues of the *Journal* each year. With a few exceptions, due to shortage of resources, only one issue of the *Journal* was published annually. The collaborative partnership between the HKPCA and the HKIER should allow the *Journal* to be published twice each year. Fourth, I would like to make this *Journal* relevant to counselling scholars and practitioners. I hope that issues of this *Journal* could become necessary and standard references for researchers, teachers, counsellors, and other helping professionals. Ultimately, I hope that the *Asian Journal*

*of Counselling* could become a quality scholarly publication that authors and editors are proud of being associated with.

Counselling is still a developing professional discipline in Hong Kong and other Asian communities. At a macro level, I hope that the *Asian Journal of Counselling* could play two important functions. First, I hope that the *Journal* could publish articles that seek to integrate counselling theories and practice with Chinese or other Asian cultures. In the past two decades, cross-cultural and multicultural scholars have put forward the argument that theories of counselling and psychotherapy are limited in their applications to non-Western cultural groups (e.g., Pedersen, 1999; Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki, & Alexander, 1995; Sue, & Sue, 1990). Counselling professionals have to move beyond adopting Western oriented models and theories without questioning their relevance to the local cultural context. There has to be scholarly efforts, both conceptual and empirical, to explore and identify indigenous approaches, and theoretical models and strategies that are most consistent with the cultural context and realities within different Chinese communities. Second, at this point, the empirical research base of counselling in Hong Kong and other Chinese communities is still weak and far from being systematic. I hope that in time, this *Journal* could make a major contribution toward developing this research base through accumulating a body of conceptual and empirical literature that are diverse yet systematic, that scholars and practitioners would consult in their research and practice endeavors.

In future issues of the *Asian Journal of Counselling*, articles will still be arranged into different forums or sections. The titles of these sections, however, are slightly different from previous issues of the *Journal*. Starting from this issue, the different sections are: Special Topic, Research Forum, Theoretical and Issues Forum, and Experience Sharing Forum. In the following sections, I would like to describe my goals and expectations for these sections.

### **Special Topic**

Most of the past issues of the *Asian Journal of Counselling* consisted of an agglomeration of articles addressing different concepts and issues. As a result, knowledge generated by articles is often independent of one another. In future issues of the *Journal*, articles addressing the same topic or area from different perspectives could be published as a package in the Special Topic section. There are no set limits on the number of articles that could form a special topic, but in most cases, there should be more than one article.

There are at least two advantages of having multiple articles to address the same topic. First, multiple articles from different authors could explore a target area or topic from different angles or perspectives. These articles together are likely to make an impact to the literature in ways that a single article could not. Second, we could ask experts in the field to react to these articles. The exchange of ideas should generate dialogues and reflections that could advance our knowledge and theories. These dialogues and exchanges would not occur if the related articles are not published as a package. At this point, potential authors could initiate a special topic, and authors are encouraged to identify scholars who have similar interest and expertise to submit related articles as a package to the Special Topic section. A special topic on “The Development of Counselling in Different Chinese Communities in Asia” is scheduled to be published in the next issue of the *Journal*.

### **Research Forum**

Research articles have always been a major section in previous issues of the *Asian Journal of Counselling*. In future issues of the *Journal*, research articles will continue to play an important role. I would like to emphasize two goals related to the Research Forum. First, I would like to encourage authors to submit research articles using diverse research methods. Quantitative methods have always been the most popular research methods employed in counselling and counselling psychology research. However, there have been calls from counselling researchers to diversify our research strategies and methods such that information and knowledge could be obtained through diverse means (e.g., Borgen, 1992; Heppner, Kivlighan & Wampold, 1992). I hope that articles in the Research Forum of the *Journal* will represent an array of research methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, experimental, and non-experimental research methods. Second, I hope that research articles published in the *Journal* could reflect programmatic efforts to examine and investigate research questions that are theoretically based. Research studies that have a clear theoretical anchor are likely to generate enthusiasms for follow-up or related research studies that would add substance to our body of literature.

## **Theoretical and Issues Forum**

Two categories of articles will be published in the Theoretical and Issues Forum of the *Asian Journal of Counselling*. The first are those related to theories of counselling interventions. I am referring to counselling theories in a broad sense. In addition to traditional theories of counselling intervention, the *Journal* would be interested in articles addressing a broader range of counselling theories, including but not limited to areas such as cross-cultural counselling, career development and counselling, family counselling and therapy, brief therapy, group counselling, school counselling and consultation, play therapy and other interventions for children, and crisis intervention. I expect these theoretical articles to provide new and innovative perspectives on how theories could be integrated and applied to diverse settings, as well as the interface between contextual and cultural factors and types of counselling interventions.

The second category of articles are those that address current issues of counselling practices, such as ethical and legal issues, training, policies, and the organization and administration of counselling services. I am particularly interested in articles that address a broad perspective about the development of counselling in different contexts (e.g., regional, cultural, and institutional). I hope that in the long run, these articles could generate visions and missions for the development of counselling in Hong Kong, the Chinese mainland, and other Asian regions.

## **Experience Sharing Forum**

Counselling interventions are carried out in many settings, such as primary and secondary schools, universities, social services agencies, community counselling agencies, correctional facilities, and religious institutions. The Experience Sharing Forum welcomes descriptive articles about innovative counselling interventions and practices (e.g., remedial, educational, and preventive) for diverse populations in different service settings, including counselling case studies. Ideally, these articles should not only describe the interventions, but also address the theoretical and conceptual basis of such interventions, theoretical modifications that were made in relations to local and cultural contexts, as well as how the effectiveness of these interventions were monitored. I hope that services and practices shared in this Forum could stimulate more innovative and creative practices, and could enlighten both practitioners and researchers in the profession of counselling.

## Challenges and Opportunities: Into the Millennium

The new cover of this issue of the *Asian Journal of Counselling* signals the arrival of a new era in the history of this *Journal*. I am grateful that the Hong Kong Professional Counselling Association and the Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research of The Chinese University of Hong Kong are both supportive of the publication of this *Journal*, and both have committed valuable resources toward its future publication. As we move into the next millennium, there are many challenges in front of us. We need to maintain and improve the scholarly quality of this *Journal*, and at the same time make it an informative, relevant, and useful resource for all those who are involved in the counselling profession. I realize that without a pool of potential authors and scholars, who contribute articles to the *Journal*, we would not be able to meet these challenges. I would like to personally invite counselling professionals to consider the *Journal* as a scholarly outlet.

I am excited about the future of the *Asian Journal of Counselling*. I believe this *Journal* has an important role to play in advancing the counselling profession through publishing articles on counselling theories, research, and innovative practices. I would like to thank our new managing editor, Annie Yeung Hiu-yee, our editorial board members, as well as the editorial consultants for their valuable contributions. Meanwhile, I would like to personally thank Prof. Lam Man Ping, who was the founding Editor of this *Journal*. Prof. Lam stepped down from her position as Editor at the end of 1997 after serving consecutively on this position for a number of years. The *Journal* would not have become what it is today without her leadership, energy, and commitment. I would like to extend our sincere appreciation, on behalf of the Hong Kong Professional Counselling Association, for all the contributions that she has made as the founding Editor of this *Journal*.

## References

Borgen, F. H. (1992). Expanding scientific paradigms in counseling psychology. In S. D. Brown and R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Handbook of counseling psychology* (pp. 111–139). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Heppner, P. P., Kivlighan, D. M., & Wampold, B. E. (1992). *Research design in counseling*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.

Pedersen, P. (Ed.). (1999). *Multiculturalism as a fourth force*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Ponterotto, J. G., Casas, J. M., Suzuki, L. A., & Alexander, C. M. (Eds.). (1995). *Handbook of multicultural counseling*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. S. (1990). *Counseling the culturally different: Theory and practice* (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.