

## Editorial:

# Do We Have a Community of Inquiry?

Hassan Soubhi, MD, PhD

Scientific research requires a fair share of common sense and industry in collecting and explaining data. Above all, it requires a community of people who explore similar questions, share their knowledge, and develop common tools and language. I invite you to read the lists of authors in this issue of JRIPE as part of the larger community of research in interprofessional practice and education (IPE). What forges the connection between these authors is not time or space, but the common field of IPE inquiry: the need to understand change in collaborative practice, the context of change, and how effective IPE can be in changing student attitudes, learning, or behaviour.

**Just et al.** offer the first entry with a randomized controlled trial assessing behaviour change among medical and nursing students [1]. Their study—a controlled experiment in a simulated setting—goes beyond self-reported perceptions of change. Instead, they develop and examine specific hypotheses on expected behavioural performance with a clear link to the definition of IPE and its core competencies. The result is a rigorous study that shows that generating empirical evidence on the behavioural effects of IPE is not only possible, but that it can also be elegantly inspired.

With **Grymonpre et al.**, we move to a quasi-experimental research design [2]. Using Mezirow's transformative learning theory [3], the study underlines the value of mixed methods, the complementarity of qualitative and quantitative data, and the importance of adequate sample size.

Two pre-experimental studies complete this series of quantitative analyses. **Shrader et al.**, using a pre-post test design, report on a model of interprofessional student service-learning and how it may improve or sustain positive attitudes toward teamwork and professional roles [4]. Next, **Guitard et al.**, using a single-group post-test-only design, go beyond students' attitudes to assess students' interprofessional learning in a rehabilitation clinical placement. The authors illustrate a commendable effort to assess interprofessional learning and the promise of the Personal Reflective Tool that requires further elaboration and testing [5].

Qualitative analyses in this issue examine change and the context of change. **Sterrett** points to what may constitute effective ingredients for an interprofessional community of practice among fellowship students [6]. Next, **King et al.**, through a comparative exploration of two different communities of professionals, lead us in a search for clues on what an effective learning workplace can look like [7]. Finally, **Gotlib et al.**, using an ethnographic investigation of a primary-care setting [8], report that change moves from first-order to second-order change: from what pro-

professionals do (e.g., face-to-face communications, informal and social interactions) to what professionals think of who they are as a team and what their work is about. This insightful study highlights the need for generative conversations among team members that help coordinate meanings, sustain the momentum of change, and advance a new team identity.

This issue of JRIPE closes with the Methodology section. **Gotlib** returns with an expanded commentary on the place and importance of ethnographic approaches in longitudinal case studies of change [8, 9], whereas **MacDonald et al.** describe their experiences designing a toolkit of IPE assessment tools for online and face-to-face education programs—a welcome addition to the armamentarium of IPE [10].

I like to think of the articles in this issue as the collective work of a community of professionals who are driven, if not united, by a shared interest in improving the field of IPE inquiry, its methods, its tools, and the knowledge it generates. Starting JRIPE—a new journal and an open home to connect different pieces of scientific knowledge—offers an opportunity to reflect on the potential of such a community of inquiry (as Charles Sanders Peirce intended it [11]): Do we have one? If not, what would we gain from cultivating one? The truth of the matter is that we may need many overlapping communities of inquiry to scaffold IPE's development and intelligence. IPE is complex in both concept and concrete, day-to-day application, and we need to pull in all the diversity of human talent we can get. Much of this diversity is mirrored in the articles you are about to read. Enjoy your reading.

## References

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Hassan Soubhi