

Editorial

Care, Inclusion and Justice

by

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As *The Journal of Comparative Social Work* continues to foster dialogue across diverse contexts and topics, this issue brings together seven new studies. The articles in this issue focus on the contexts of Norway, Ethiopia and Hong Kong. Although not bound by a single theme, together they reflect a shared concern for the institutional and societal dimensions of care, inclusion and justice, which are the core principles of comparative social work. Collectively, these articles highlight structural conditions, cultural values and professional frameworks across different contexts, and how they shape policy ideals and lived realities.

In their study, '*Comparing the expectations of social work leadership and young, unaccompanied refugees on social workers in Norwegian trauma-informed care institutions*', Linda Borho, Sarah Hean, and Wenche Hovland explore the differing expectations held by institutional leaders and young refugees toward social workers. Their findings demonstrate the gaps between organizational perspectives and the lived experiences of service users, which is an important reminder of how power dynamics and communication patterns influence professional relationships in care institutions.

Complementing this, in '*Caregiver's experiences with kinship care and Child Welfare Services – A Qualitative Evidence Synthesis*', Anne Svalastog, Hulda Gunnarsdottir and Ingunn Ellingsen synthesize various qualitative research studies on kinship care and interactions with child welfare systems. Their work emphasizes caregivers' perspectives, and challenges the assumptions embedded in formal support structures. Together, this evidence synthesis underscores how frontline social work practices are shaped by competing expectations, professional discourses, and institutional demands.

Social work's concern for marginalized populations is further developed in, '*Beyond the Prison Wall: Experience of Motherhood after Incarceration in Ethiopia, A Descriptive Phenomenological Study*' by Eden Gobena, Sarah Hean, Vanessa Heaslip, and Ingunn Studsrød. Through a descriptive phenomenological approach, the authors provide rich insights into how formerly incarcerated mothers negotiate identity, stigma, and care responsibilities in a context marked by limited resources

and social reintegration challenges. This article contributes to a growing body of comparative literature on gender, justice, and social inclusion in the Global South.

Similarly, in *'An Ecological Approach to Understanding the Complexities of School-To-Work Transitions Among Youth with Intellectual Disabilities'*, Yuen Han Mo, Fu Fei Fong, Alice Yip, and Pui Man Chu apply an ecological perspective to help explore the intersection of education, employment, and social policy. Their findings demonstrate how systemic and interpersonal factors shape opportunities for inclusion and participation - issues that resonate across national contexts and policy frameworks.

Siv Oltedal contributes with the qualitative study, *'Continuities and differences in a Norwegian welfare service context: Comparing conversations about financial and employment problems in 1992 and 2015'*. Through an analysis of welfare service professionals' interactions over two decades, the authors explore how notions of morality and control are negotiated by professionals when addressing clients' financial and employment difficulties. Their comparative approach reveals significant shifts in the institutional discourse of the Norwegian welfare service (NAV).

The issue concludes with two papers that examine the relational and collaborative dimensions of social work practice. In *'Exploring Frontline Workers Perception of Interprofessional Collaboration Within Drug Courts in Norway - a Qualitative Study'*, Bjørn Kjetil Larsen and Atle Ødegård offer a qualitative exploration of how professionals navigate shared responsibilities and differing institutional logics within drug court systems. Their analysis sheds light on the conditions necessary for effective collaboration in the justice environments.

Prizma Ghimire, Sarah Hean and Wenche Hovland provide an integrative review in *'Exploring the Perspectives of Key Adults towards Sibling Relationships of Children in Contact with Child Protection Services (CPS): An Integrative Review'*. Their synthesis foregrounds the importance of sibling bonds and the role of supportive adults, offering a valuable contribution to child welfare scholarship that bridges research and practice.

Reflections

Collectively, the articles in this issue demonstrates the journal's commitment to advancing a comparative and critical understanding of social work in its many forms. They remind us that social work practice related to care, inclusion and justice, whether situated in Scandinavian welfare institutions, Ethiopian communities, or global frameworks of inclusion, is deeply contextual and inherently relational.

As editors, we are continually inspired by the diversity of perspectives that authors bring to the journal. We extend our gratitude to the researchers, reviewers and readers who make this regular number possible. We hope that this issue will stimulate further reflection and dialogue on how social work can respond to the complexities of care, inclusion and justice in an increasingly interconnected world.

— Editorial Team

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