

The past and present editors-in-chief of *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work & Development* discuss the journal

Irene Ng, *Executive Editor*

Vasoo, *Founding Editor and Former Editor-in-Chief*

Ngiam Tee Liang, *Former Editor-in-Chief*

Marcus Chiu, *Editor-in-Chief*

Irene Hi I'm Irene, I'm the executive editor of *The Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work & Development*. With me here are the past and present editors-in-chief of the journal and I'll let them introduce themselves starting with the gentleman on my left.

Vasoo I'm Vasoo, Associate Professor at the Department of Social Work, National University of Singapore. I was indeed privileged to have the opportunity to initiate this journal, which was known as *The Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work*, in 1991.

Why was the journal started?

Irene So what was the motive of starting the journal?

Vasoo Well the journal was started through collaboration with a number of schools of social work in the region. When we got together in the late 80s we were discussing together that we needed a forum through which we could express the issues facing social work, the challenges and how we can disseminate information for aspiring professionals in the region.

Irene Professor Ngiam.

Vasoo Ngiam was involved in this whole thing as our past chief editor.

Ngiam I was also involved in the beginning as an editorial board member and I remember vividly at that time we actually saw a lot of happenings in our Asia Pacific region. Social work was contributing towards the social economic divide and we needed to have a voice, articulated to publications and to our writings and research efforts. So that's why the journal saw the light of day then.

What challenges were faced in developing the journal?

Vasoo Was it an easy task to start such a thing?

Ngiam I would say it was probably harder for you when you started it, it was getting better, I think it's getting better with more contributions to the manuscript writing as well as the resources that we need. So I must say there were challenging moments but at the same time there were fulfilling opportunities for us.

Vasoo Yeah I think I remembered the early days with great challenges in trying to persuade people to submit articles and it was not easy because publication in the early 90s was a bit more difficult than what today you have. Because now with online and with all of the medias and other things it became more easier for people to communicate.

Marcus Hi, I'm Marcus Chiu, Associate Professor of the Department of Social Work National University of Singapore. So I'm currently the editor-in-chief.

What will the journal continue to strive for?

Marcus When we look back it's not easy at the time you started the journal. We certainly take on their legacy and we'll continue to showcase a platform for dissemination and exchange of knowledge in social work and social development. And also I think we are more fortunate now with the technology so we are looking into ways of how to promote the journal through various electronic means. That is one of our future ways to go but definitely I think we will continue as what we have done beautifully before. And with a focus on the Asia Pacific region and particularly this part of the world has not been affected by much compared to the rest of the world. I think it's important to share and disseminate knowledge and research in social work.

What makes the journal unique?

Irene To me since coming onboard as editor for the journal the focus on social and social development has been the very clear aims of not just in terms of social work and not just development but the two together. So I think it's just what you were talking about, challenges, some of the challenges from the past that you were talking about to today is the same which is encouraging contributions from this very diverse region, Asia Pacific. There are certain countries that we have more interest from, there are certain countries that we'd like to put out their work and know more about.

Marcus I realise in other journals sometimes they have a focus on just social work and some others are on social development and also I understand there's a kind of relationship sometimes that can be hard to put together, but we take this as a challenge. We think that the two should not be exclusive, in fact when we talk about social work; much of our attention will be paid to national and regional issues which concerns national development and the regional development. On the other hand we are not just handling development issues like economics or geography; we all try to link them to the social work paradigm. So in that way we hope that we can have shown you the best of two worlds. And I hope that we're going to do that and in fact we have done that.

Ngiam Again this is a reminder for us that this is a very dynamic region and the Asia Pacific perspective needs more and even though we're publishing in an English speaking environment, but still I think let's go for interest also, to want to know more. And I think the social work social development contributions of our academic colleagues, researchers, practitioners it's something that we really need to encourage more.

What advice would you give to authors looking to submit an article to the journal?

Irene So short advice to those who are interested to submit manuscripts to us; first browse our past issues, get a feel for the kinds of articles we have published, the format. And remember that this is a social work and social development journal so you must demonstrate strong application of your findings on social work and social development. And because of the language, diversity in Asia Pacific we get manuscripts where it's clear that the author is not a native English speaker so we

urge such authors to please get professional help with language and editing before you send us your manuscript.

Closing thoughts

Irene In two words how would you describe the journal?

Vasoo I'd say it's an interesting question which we are all thinking about; it's a journal with an Asia Pacific focus and an Asia Pacific solution to the issues.

Ngiam It is contributing towards the learning and practice of social work knowledge and skills that actually increasingly we have to demonstrate evidence based intervention.

Marcus To me we hope the journal is a quality journal with quality articles making an impact in Asia Pacific.

Thank you for watching

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