

International Studies in Widening Participation

Editorial

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The International Studies in Widening Participation journal was established in 2013. The journal is published by the English Language and Foundation Studies Centre and the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education at the University of Newcastle, Australia. The journal is aimed to engage academics, practitioners, and students on a wide range of topics related to widening participation. The issue 1, 2015 includes four papers. All papers are peer reviewed by national and international scholars with research strength in primary, secondary and postsecondary education, access and equity, widening participation, and other disciplinary areas.

The paper by *James et al*, is focused on an enabling program in an Australian University. Their study examined the extent to which the pre-entry testing program in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) is a predictor of student success in the enabling program. They found that the literacy element of the testing program is a strong indicator of student readiness and success in the STEPS program. The paper by *Singh and Tregale* assessed the effectiveness of a refugee mentoring program. The Learning, Education, Aspiration and Participation (LEAP) program is aimed to provide mentoring to refugee students. The study found that the use of student mentors from refugee background has proven to be success in transition and educational outcomes of refugee students from high school. They found that the LEAP program supported both mentors and mentees in making a smooth personal, social, and academic transition from high school to university.

Paper by *Khalid et al*, assessed the factors influencing Jewish and Arab students in Israel in choosing higher education institution. The study at four universities found that students from both Jewish and Arab backgrounds considered convenience as the key factor influencing their choice followed by reputation. They also found academic standard as one of the key perceptions regarding aspects of higher education institution.

The paper by *Raven* focused on how interviews with students could be used to evaluate the long term impact of widening participation. His study focused on qualitative method which includes interviews with students from underrepresented backgrounds. Raven found that interview method has generated rich insights into the learner journey and the method selected is effective if the interviewer is able to facilitate conversation.