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Empirical Research on Transpersonal Topics from Around the World During the Pandemic, 2020–2023

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Empirical Research on Transpersonal Topics from Around the World During the Pandemic, 2020–2023 (Introduction to the Special Topic Section)

Glenn Hartelius

Editor-in-Chief

International Journal of Transpersonal Studies

A majority of the published literature in the subfield of transpersonal psychology has been written by authors from North America. Given that this area was founded in the United States, it is unsurprising that in its first decade, 100% of authors in its primary journal were situated in North America. Since 1980 the percentage of non-North American authors in the two indexed transpersonal journals has hovered around 30%, with the majority of these authors hailing from European nations or Australia. The rest of the world has been more poorly represented, with just 4% of articles from 1969 to 2009 (Hartelius et al., 2013). This percentage increased slightly to 6% in the decade 2010 to 2019.

During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 to 2023 it was the good fortune of this journal, the *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, to see the number of empirical submissions from nonanglophone and non-European countries increase substantially. These works have been published in the Special Topic sections of issues in Volumes 40 and 41, concluding with the papers in the Special Topic of this issue. In these two issues the percentage of published papers from the combined regions of Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Oceania reached 13% of total papers. In addition, representation of women authors in these two volumes increased to 42% of total authorship, well above the rate of female authorship in prior decades (see Hartelius, 2021b).

While this increase in diversity of culture and gender is small and still falls well short of what is needed, it does represent noteworthy progress. These recent volumes reflect what IJTS can be—the potential for this journal to develop as a truly international reflection of research and scholarship in topics of interest to transpersonal psychology. It

is the keen hope of the editors that the publication of these papers will spur additional empirical submissions from many areas of the world, so that this trend toward greater regional and cultural representation in empirical research continues.

In This Issue

The first paper in this Special Topic Section, titled "Emotion and Judgment in Young Women of a Society in Transition," is by Maura A. E. Pilotti of Prince Mohammed Bin Fahd University in Saudi Arabia, and Khadija El Alaoui of The American University of Iraq Sulaimani in Iraq. Their study asked young women who were undergraduate students at a university in Saudi Arabia about their emotional reactions to moral transgressions based on their relationship to the transgressing party, to determine whether a closer relationship would result in harsher judgment, greater leniency, or whether the response would be unchanged. The goal of the study was to "test a cultural, religious, and individualistic account of such responses in young females of a traditional society in transition towards a sustainable integration into the global economy" (p. XXX).

A second paper, titled "The Role of Spiritual Intelligence and Differentiation in Predicting Marital Adjustment," by Sedighe Ahmadi of Kharazmi University in Iran, Faezeh Ghalebi and Hossein Ilanloo of Azad University in Iran, and Richard H. Morley and Christine D. Nguyen of Texas State University in the United States, examined whether higher scores on aspects of spiritual intelligence such as existential thinking and production of personal meaning had a discernible impact on successful marital adjustment among participants from a sample of married students attending Yazd University in central Iran.

The next paper, titled "Eliciting Awe in the Spectator: The Case of a Dhruvad-Based Dance Performance," has 15 authors from Canada, France, and India, and presents results from a study measuring awe experiences in spectators in an immersive setting during a performance based on an ancient Indian musical form. Their chief qualitative findings centered on the performance's impact on spectators' state of consciousness.

The final paper, "How Perception Meets Hermeneutics: An Empirical Investigation of Tasseography," by Elizabeth Avetisian of the California Institute of Integral Studies in the United States, closely examines the perceptual process of reading ambiguous patterns by a seer conducting a traditional Armenian reading of coffee grounds. This qualitative study includes photographs of coffee ground patterns produced by two seekers, each of which was subsequently presented to roughly half of a sample of 17 female seers practiced in providing divinatory readings of such patterns. The study documented aspects of the process, results, and seeker's evaluation of each reading, and provides insightful analysis of how such divinatory processes produce meaningful results.

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About the Author

Glenn Hartelius, PhD, is Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, co-editor of *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology* and *The Ketamine Papers*, and Secretary of the International Transpersonal

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About the Journal

The *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies* is a Scopus listed peer-reviewed academic journal, and the largest and most accessible scholarly periodical in the transpersonal field. IJTS has been in print since 1981, is published by Floragrades Foundation, sponsored in part by Attention Strategies, and serves as the official publication of the International Transpersonal Association. The journal is available online at www.transpersonalstudies.org, and in print through www.lulu.com (search for IJTS).