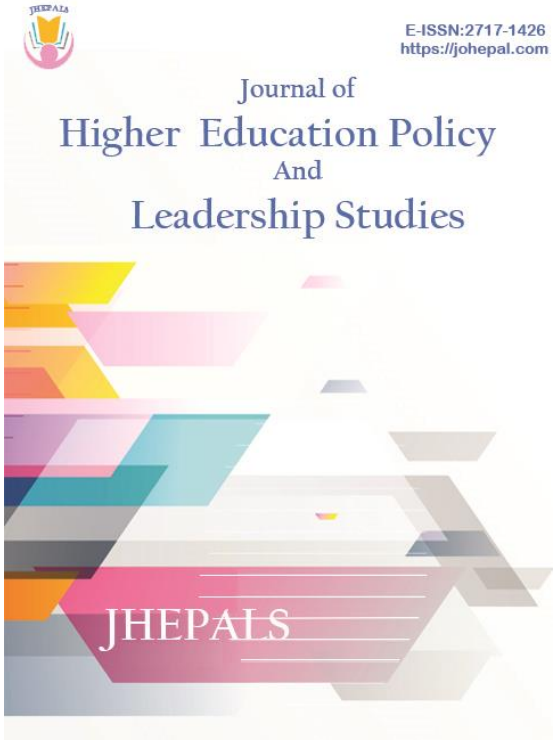
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Editorial Note

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Editorial Note

Journal of Higher Education Policy And Leadership Studies (JHEPALS)

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Journal of Higher Education Policy And Leadership Studies (JHEPALS) aims to foster novel ideas within the realm of Higher Education based on its eleven pivotal Aims and Scope.

We are also honored and delighted to receive numerous works from researchers worldwide; however, we have to be selective in alignment with the journal's policy in terms of the research which appear in our issues. These criteria are *the rigor of the research, the enriched nature of methodologies of the studies,* as well as *the novel and innovative research findings and recommendations* for researchers, leaders, and policy-makers within the realm of higher education policy and leadership.

In alignment with the journal's policy in terms of distribution of authors as well as novelty of ideas/ research practices; JHEPALS September Issue 2025 (Volume 6/ Issue 3) presents novel and innovative research from both higher education leaders and scholars with more than three decades of extensive research; and also novice researchers whose voices and works matter to the HE scholars, students, and policy-makers worldwide.

There are six research in the ARTICLES section of the journal which present timely research in a global scope and are finally selected after rigorous double-blind review procedure.

Jonathan Anuik and Heather Kanuka in their work "*"It's as Long as a Piece of String!" Definitions of Canadian U15 Faculty at Midcareer*" aim to gain a better understanding of how midcareer should be defined in academia. To determine when academics enter and exit midcareer. They highlight that the midcareer phase starts immediately or shortly following the tenure award (and, usually, promotion to associate professor), and one stays in the midcareer phase past the promotion to full professor. Our survey data also showed good agreement that one exits midcareer when one winds down research or achieves a notable recognition for careerlong work.

In the next research "*Experience and Authenticity: Shaping the Future of Minority Serving Institution Presidents*", Marybeth Gasman, Leslie Ekpe, Andrés Castro Samayoa, and Alice Ginsberg explored the role of mentoring in preparing aspiring leaders of color for the presidency of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). They contribute to ongoing conversations

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about diversifying higher education pipelines and ensuring that colleges and universities that serve large numbers of students of color are guided by leaders who are well prepared, supported, and equipped to steward their missions.

In the third research "*Meeting at the 'Wiggle Room': Conceptualizing a Fit between Higher Education and Policy Implementation*", Saber Khelifi deconstructs the uneasy relationship between higher education research and implementation analysis and suggests a possible conceptual fit between them. It invokes the concept of discretion from street-level bureaucracy and insights from the sociology of profession to stress the unique features of the highly professionalised character of academia to argue for a possible match.

Zohre Khajoueinejad, Gholamreza Shams, and Farhad Seraji in their research "*Empowering Leaders for Human-Centered Digital Transformation: A Strategic Framework for Establishing Digital Universities*" highlight that digital transformation in Higher Education (HE) enhances efficiency, academic experiences, and innovation but faces challenges like resistance to change, fragmented technology, and a lack of integrated frameworks in Iran's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This study examines academic leadership's role in overcoming these challenges through Human-Centered Design (HCD).

In the next research "*Why is the Underrepresentation of Diverse Tenured Track Engineering Faculty Stubbornly Persistent Despite Universities' Clarion Call for Diversity? The Perspectives of a National Sample about the Tenure Process*", Henry Tran, Brian Le, Maria Luz Espino, and C. Spencer Platt examine how engineering faculty experience and perceive the tenure process at research intensive "R1" institutions, a critical factor for their representation and retention. Their results highlight the importance of how faculty perceive their workplace climate, as well as how structural and cultural dynamics can affect progress toward a more representative engineering professoriate operate to sustain that perception.

Thomasin Nicholds, Sue Becker, and Robyn Jackaman in their research "*Work Identity and Gendered Liminal Spaces in Inclusive Leadership Development: A Higher Education Case Study*" take an organisation-wide approach to exploring the complexities of gender and leadership at work, with a focus on action. They highlight that the research is central to a wider project, designed to further the organisation's understanding of leadership and gender, to be better placed to promote inclusion, facilitate change, enable shared learning and support knowledge transfer.

The REFLECTION section of the journal is also a channel for the researchers to share their studies and adopt the novel ideas and innovative key points in other research as a stage to work on new research projects. In this regard, research submitted to this section also go through the same evaluation procedure by the editors-in-chief, members of the editorial team, and reviewers to ensure the works we publish meet all the journal's requirements.

Sandra R. Williamson-Ashe in her research "*Considerations for Andragogy in Leadership Education at HBCUs*" believes that educating adult learners for decision-making in reflection

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of differences, fairness, and comprehension concerns will be best served through the use of andragogy, the application of unlearning theory and through self-awareness. She reflects that differences, fairness, and comprehension of student leadership education using the principles of andragogy within an HBCU environment is a unique perspective that allows for leveraging as much opportunity for training as possible. The self maturing student in personal development and in the experiential learning from HBCU professors applying andragogy techniques will dissect and tackle implicit biases.

Natasha Winkler-Titus, Marie Therese Claes, and Anett Hermann in their work "*Remote Work in Higher Education: Operationalizing Self-Determination Theory*" reflect on the complex dynamics of remote working as a form of work flexibility within the higher education (HE) sector. Guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the reflection builds on research into the experiences of administrative and support staff in two HE institutions during and after periods of enforced remote work. Findings revealed that the three core psychological needs identified in SDT—autonomy, relatedness, and competence—were evident in remote work experiences. These were operationalized as self-regulation, connectivity, and flexibility as a way of working.

In the next research "*A Reflection on Organizational Adaptation & Higher Education in Iran: What Are the Building Blocks?*", Iman Tohidian, Abbas Abbaspour, and Ali Khorsandi Taskoh discuss that universities and colleges in centralized governing policy-making systems usually perform the policies from outside the campus with no choice to revolutionize their organizational structure. The result can be imperfect implementation of their strategic plans with no commitment to the national development plans. In this regard, organizational adaptation is introduced as a panacea to increase the congruence between the public's priorities and challenges out of the campus with the universities' strategic plans. Here, we reflection on the building blocks towards successful implementation of organizational adaptation in Iranian higher education system.

We also receive numerous works for the COLLOQUIUM section of the journal; however, we have to be selective to present the novel and innovative works which provide insightful ideas for the research community worldwide. In some cases, we even invite the authors of research articles to consider resubmission of their works to the colloquium section of the journal based on the reviewers' comments and editorial decision.

Christopher Paul, Andrea Honal, and Dorothee Beez in their research "*Beyond Role-Play: How Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence Transform Leadership Competency Development in Higher Education*" illuminate that immersive, interactive technologies bridge the gap between theory and practice, preparing learners more effectively for real-world leadership challenges. Findings provide evidence-based recommendations for integrating VR/AI into higher education curricula while noting ethical and access considerations.

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In the INTERVIEW section of the journal "*Pedagogy as Resistance in Dark Times*", we have the honor and privilege to host Prof. Henry A. Giroux as the Chair for Scholarship in the Public Interest & The Paulo Freire Distinguished Scholar in Critical Pedagogy at McMaster University, Canada. Throughout his life, Henry Giroux has sought to develop a critical theory of education, emphasizing crucial intersections between the role of education in schools and universities with that of culture and public life. His vision of critical pedagogy advocates for the need to make pedagogy central to politics itself, and to help create the conditions necessary for the development of a formative culture that provides the foundation for developing critical citizens and a meaningful and substantive democracy.

Hopefully, JHEPALS also receives numerous book reviews which are thoroughly reviewed by the editors-in-chief and the members of editorial team to select the most suitable book review which meets the academic rigorous criteria of the journal. The book review meets the journal's requirements in terms of its relevance to the HE community, being timely, including novel ideas with a focus to bridge the available gap in the knowledge about HE Policy and Leadership, as well as the reputation of the book authors and the publishers. The review procedure happens by the members of editorial board to select the most suitable work for this section.

Hilary Houlette in her review of the book "*Creating a Faculty Activism Commons for Social Justice: Finding Hope in the Messy Truth*" edited by Kim A. Case and Leah R. Warner concludes that through this work, we can examine in real time how the faculty activism commons are operationalized. Highlighted through the brave activism and commitment to social justice that faculty relayed through their thought-provoking stories, academic publishing is one outlet for the faculty activism commons to unfold. This publication serves as a guidebook for empowering more faculty to participate in cultivating these collective spaces. In light of the current political threats to DEI on U.S. college and university campuses, having these tools at our disposal is not only timely but necessary toward uplifting and advancing social justice efforts.

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Editorial Note

Editors' final note:

JHEPALS team works in a collaborative, academic, unified, and friendly environment who have one common GOAL: Success of the journal as an international publication which meet the maximum scientific merits in terms of the works we publish.

We at the JHEPALS have the honor to collaborate with a dedicated team of globally renowned higher educations scholars and leaders both as the members of the editorial team, the review board; and also the motivated members of our publishing team.

We would be pleased to receive your research for our future issues.

Prof. Abbas Abbaspour
Dr. Ali Khorsandi Taskoh

Editors-in-Chief
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