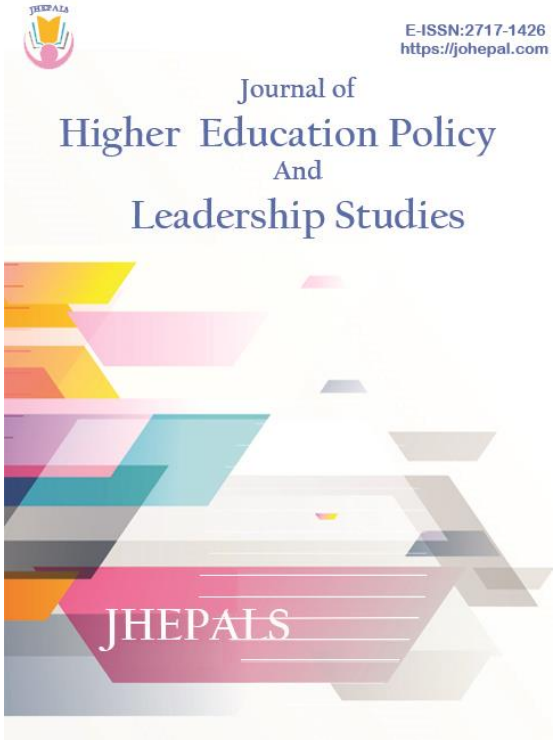
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Editorial Note

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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 March Issue 2025 (Volume 6/ Issue 1) also covers timely research findings within the realm of HE, Policy, and Leadership.

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.

Sherrie Myers Bartell in her research "*PhDead: The Erosion of Academic Freedom by Ignorance*" explores the gradual erosion of academic freedom in contemporary educational institutions, attributing this decline to the pervasive influence of ignorance. Through examination of both historical and contemporary examples, this piece highlights how ignorance—manifested through censorship, lack of critical thinking, and the suppression of diverse viewpoints—undermines the foundational principles of academic freedom. The paper argues that when academic freedom is compromised, there are detrimental effects on educators, students, and society at large. It is essential to foster an environment of open inquiry and intellectual rigor to preserve the integrity of academia.

Shalaleh Meraji Oskuie, Abbas Abbaspour, Ali Delavar, and Abbas Toloie Eshlaghy in their research "*Name It to Tame It: A Thematic Synthesis of Sexual Academic Transgressions Among Faculty Members*" aimed to bring attention to various types of sexual academic transgressions committed by faculty members to enable policymakers, legislators, and victims to properly address these transgressions and implement social control measures.

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They contribute to the literature by presenting a thematic model and tables that delineate legally actionable sexual harassment, the means through which such behaviors occur, and the muddled professional boundaries that create conditions for these misconducts.

Esra Tore in her research "*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Higher Education: The Case of Indiana University*" aims to analyze the theme of the Indiana University Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion's (OVPDEI) Annual Reports (2021-2022, 2022-2023). This study highlights Indiana University's progression in addressing DEIB through increasingly targeted and systemic initiatives. The shift from foundational approaches in 2021-2022 to more robust, data-driven strategies in 2022-2023 demonstrates the institution's responsiveness to evolving challenges and priorities.

Zuhra Abawi in her research "*North/South Hierarchies: The Coloniality of Refugee and Asylum Seeker Access to Education as an Epistemic Good*" explores the differential treatment of refugee and asylum-seeker access to higher education as an epistemic good within host-nation states along racialized hierarchies and geographies. She outlines extant policies pertaining to the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers in accessing education; the politics of othering people of the Global South; and explores the possibilities for anti-colonial resistance and racial equity in education in the European context and beyond, as refugee populations are projected to surge across the globe.

Maryam Mahsal Khan, Abid Ahmad, and Shiraz Khan in their research "*Role of Pakistan's Higher Education Institutes Towards SDGs – Insight into Times Higher Education Impact Ranking 2023*" address insight on how Pakistan HEIs has been mapped towards SDGs achieving impact ranking scores for the year 2023, using 2023 Times Higher Education Impact Ranking (THE-IR) data. They show which SDGs have been addressed most often by Pakistani HEIs in the conducted research—SDG5 (Gender Equality) and SDG4 (Quality Education).

Laila El Baradei, Ashraf Abdel Wahab, Passant E. Moustafa, and Nashwa Salem in their research "*AI Meets Public Policy: Tackling Higher Education Challenges in Egypt*" propose a blended approach of utilizing AI in policymaking. They rely on AI to identify main policy issues/challenges facing higher education in Egypt, and to generate policy alternatives for each of those challenges. Next, the authors devise a survey instrument targeting a purposive non-random sample of academics in Egyptian universities to assess the AI policy alternatives generated.

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.

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Thomas G. Henkel and Ann Marie Ade in their research "*Higher Education in Turbulence: A Need for Transformational Leadership*" investigate the crucial role of transformational leadership in enhancing the performance and effectiveness of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which are vital for organizational success. The findings of the study assert the importance of transformational styles of leadership in HEIs due to characteristics that are most suitable for the development of the HEIs and its multiple positive effects on the organizational structure of HEIs, the behavior of their employees, their job performance, the quality of academic research, and community service outcomes.

Ali Corey and Lemuel W. Watson in their research "*Navigating Change and Trauma: Essential Leadership Insights for Higher Education*" examine the evolving challenges in higher education leadership, including financial pressures, demographic shifts, post-pandemic recovery, and systemic inequities. Acknowledging the trauma and transformation experienced by stakeholders, it introduces an integrated leadership approach combining Transformational, Servant, Adaptive, and Trauma-Informed Leadership theories. By offering actionable strategies, the article provides a roadmap for creating inclusive and adaptive academic environments that align with workforce and student expectations.

Ashlie J. Andrew, Lori B. Doyle, and Kellie L. Playter in their research "*Supporting Remote Faculty: Theoretical and Practical Implications for Higher Education Leaders*" highlight that courses in higher education have been taught online for decades by remote faculty; however, research on how leaders can best support these faculty is minimal. Many administrators and leaders work primarily on-campus, but they often lead both traditional and remote faculty. The challenges for remote faculty are not always the same as those faced by on-campus colleagues. The authors of this paper suggest three overarching strategies or areas of focus: establishing effective communication, building a foundation of trust, and utilizing a HR specialist who understands the needs of remote employees.

Ceyhun Elgin in his research "*Academic Freedom Across Liberal Arts Colleges in Europe*" develop a novel index to assess academic freedom within liberal arts colleges (LACs) in Europe, addressing a critical gap in current higher education assessments. Findings reveal significant disparities in academic freedom among European LACs, influenced by governance structures, institutional policies, and external pressures such as political interference. The index not only highlights these differences but also offers a framework for policy development and institutional reform. By emphasizing academic freedom as a foundational pillar of higher education, this research calls for stronger institutional commitments and policy frameworks to safeguard it.

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

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research articles to consider resubmission of their works to the colloquium section of the journal based on the reviewers' comments and editorial decision.

Ali Khorsandi Taskoh and Fahimeh Rabbani Khah in their research "*The Future of Academic Governance: Key Scenarios for Iranian Higher Education*" highlight that universities need a new approach towards governance and foresight to adapt to rapid changes and environmental complexities, as well as to address emerging challenges. This approach enables them to identify emerging trends, anticipate future needs, and develop effective strategies to actively shape their future.

Gulnoza Sabirova in her research "*Doctoral Education in Uzbekistan: Challenges and Opportunities*" explains that Doctoral education in Uzbekistan, a two-tier system consisting of PhD and DSc (Doctor of Science) programs, relies on self-directed learning and a single supervisor program with limited support and guidance from higher education institutions in issues directly related to research and needs significant structural reforms. She reveals the necessity of structural doctoral education in Uzbekistan with mandatory and elective courses that will guide PhD students in their research work and equip with theoretical knowledge and practical implementation.

Layla Matar Alketbi and William C. Frick in their research "*Beyond Tuition: Decoding Financial Hurdles in Higher Education*" examine university students' experiences with the bursar's office when paying tuition fees, focusing on challenges and preferred payment methods. They highlight the importance of financial support and the roles of university departments in assisting students. They propose clearer fee policies, expanded financial literacy programs, and flexible financing solutions like grants and low-interest loans to ease financial burdens and promote equitable access to education.

In the INTERVIEW section of the journal, we also have the honor and privilege to host one of the globally recognized theorists within the realm of comparative and international education focusing on research on education policy, teacher's work, the internationalization of education, and global citizenship education; and a renowned HE researcher and leader whose research, books, and theories are extensively cited worldwide. JHEPALS has the honor and privilege to publish an exclusive interview with Ms. Melissa A. Torres (President & CEO at The Forum on Education Abroad - USA); a renowned higher education leader with extensive leadership experience; and passionate about advancing excellence and innovation in international higher education.

Ms. Melissa A. Torres in her interview "*The Role of International Education in a Polarized World*" gives insightful, illuminating and critical responses enriched with her academic/ leadership experience in higher education and global cooperation will be of interest to a

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broad audience of international researchers, students, policymakers, and leaders in Higher Education.

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.

Glen A. Jones in his review of "*Making Qatar University (1973-2018): An Informal History*" authored by Donald Noel Baker. He concludes that despite the reference to "informal" in the subtitle, *Making Qatar University* is very much an academic history of a university within the dynamic, rapidly changing context of the nation that founded it. Baker does a wonderful job of always locating the university within its social and political context, but also within the relevant literature on the region and the scholarship of higher education. Baker also had to deal with the reality that senior university administrators often destroyed administrative communication and records, a key source in institutional histories, when they left office, but he has identified a wide range of relevant sources and evidence and references are very carefully documented. This book is a model of a well-written, balanced, academic history of an important national university. It provides an important, foundational history of Qatar University, but it also contributes to our understanding of the challenges and possibilities of higher education within the complex, dynamic transformations within the Arab region.

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Editors' final note:

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.

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.

As a quarterly journal, now, we commence our sixth year of progress [Volume 6/ Issue 1] which is a seal of approval on the commitment of our team at the Journal of Higher Education Policy and Leadership Studies to our GOAL.

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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