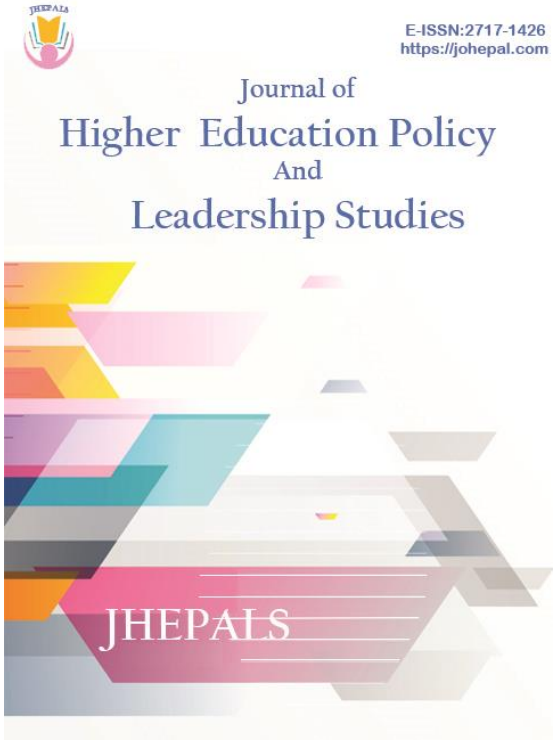
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Editorial Note

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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 December Issue 2025 (Volume 6/ Issue 4) 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 seven 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.

Jacqueline Baxter, Fran Myers, & Helen Selby-Fell in their work "*Pracademics in Remote Environments: Insights for Faculty Leadership*" highlight that creating a salient academic identity and generating a sense of meaningful work for pracademics can be a protracted and tricky process. Digitalisation in the academy, and reduced opportunities for engagement with traditional faculty due to post-pandemic hybrid and online working has exacerbated these challenges, as has finding meaning and value in roles with little direct contact with students (as is common in many digital universities). This paper examines the narratives of pracademics in a digital business school to examine these challenges, alongside considering how faculty leadership can better support them and their transition.

In the second research "*The AI Revolution in Higher Education: Transforming Teaching and Research*", Yves Flückiger explains that the rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into

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higher education is profoundly transforming both teaching and research. He explores how AI-driven technologies enable personalized and adaptive learning, empowering educators to shift from content delivery to mentorship and creativity. Beyond education, AI is revolutionizing research practices by accelerating data analysis, generating hypotheses and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration. He concludes by emphasizing the need for responsible AI governance, institutional investment, and international collaboration. When integrated thoughtfully, AI can enhance learning experiences, broaden access, and accelerate innovation for the benefit of society.

Bella Butler in the next research "*Conveyance as the Missing Links in Onboarding Models: The Case of Higher Education*" critically examines the onboarding process of new academics in a large university in Australia. He reports what new academics expect after accepting their job offer and the onboarding process. The research discusses how the onboarding experience impacts the overall experience of new academics at the university and provides recommendations for policy makers and university management.

Thomas G. Henkel, Ann Marie Ade, Celeste Schmid, & Kathy M. Markwith in their work "*An Exploratory Study of Educational Pathways in Policy and Leadership Among Successful Chief Human Resources Officers*" believe that the leadership performance and effectiveness of the Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO) are indispensable sources for a higher education organization's success. Despite a wealth of information available regarding the historical roles and functions of CHRO administrators, a notable gap exists in understanding the contemporary challenges they confront within the rapidly evolving landscape of organizational work environments. The synthesis of their findings, derived from firsthand accounts of CHROs and their expertise, reveals a comprehensive understanding of the indispensable knowledge, skills, and policy-making abilities required for success. Furthermore, this research sheds light on the most prevalent challenges that CHROs encounter as they navigate the complexities inherent in higher education.

In the fifth research "*Preparing Doctoral Students for College Teaching: A Mixed Methods Investigation*", Kelley Regan, Margaret King-Sears, & Kelly Durso discuss that for doctoral students who desire professorial positions of leadership in higher education, learning opportunities for development of their teaching during their doctoral program is crucial. In this mixed methods study, quantitative data include doctoral students' self-efficacy for college teaching at four different time points. Qualitative data include doctoral students' perceptions of a mentored teaching experience and faculty mentor's perspectives of the learning opportunity. Findings reveal that a semester-long mentored teaching experience served as a pivotal part of an approach to support doctoral student leaders as future teacher educators.

In the next research "*Identifying Dimensions of Innovative Student Leadership in Chinese Higher Education: An Exploratory Factor Analysis*"; Weiling Wang & Ziyun Song explore the key factors influencing students' innovative leadership within the unique institutional structure of Chinese higher education. Their findings emphasize the importance of both external organizational support and internal psychological traits in fostering innovative

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leadership. In particular, the study highlights the role of emotional and instrumental support in Party-led university structures, where genuine student participation and inclusive leadership development remain limited. By validating a culturally adapted measurement tool, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how innovation and leadership can be cultivated in Chinese universities, offering practical guidance for institutional reform and theoretical support for future studies.

Behrooz Shahmoradi & Ehsan Ehteshamnejad in their research "*Rethinking Funding Models for Higher Education: Global Insights and Future Directions*" highlight that funding for higher education critically shapes learning access, institutional capacity, and societal outcomes. As global demand rises and economic pressures intensify, traditional state-based funding is increasingly complemented—or replaced—by alternative mechanisms. This review analyzes diverse funding practices in public subsidies, private investment, philanthropic giving, religious endowments, community-based contributions, and hybrid models across varied national contexts.

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.

David I. Hernández-Saca, Wu-Ying Hsieh, Mason Kuhn, Soh Meacham, Colleen Mulholland, Shelley Price-Williams, Nicole Skaar, & Matt Townsley in their research "*Empirical versus Theoretical?: Education Faculty's Scholarly Publications without IRBs*" discuss that Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) play a vital role in education research by upholding ethical standards and protecting human subjects. However, critics argue that many IRBs lack the expertise to properly assess social science research and may favor quantitative methods. This article engages with the ongoing debate between empirical and theoretical literature in education.

In the next research "*Bridging the Gap: How K-12 Educational Policies Impact Students' Readiness for Higher Education*"; Zahra Zarrati highlights that the K-12 educational system in Iran faces challenges in preparing students for success in higher education and beyond, including their future professional careers. This study examines whether students are solely responsible for their struggles at the higher education level, or if the current K-12 policies contribute to an environment that limits students' potential.

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.

Yan Li & Ariunaa Enkhtur in their research "*AI in Higher Education Admissions: A Comparative Analysis of Practices in Japan and Abroad*" conduct a comparative analysis of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled higher education (HE) admissions practices in Japan and overseas through a structured review of 73 news articles published in English and Japanese over the past five years. They aim to identify emerging trends, commonalities, and contextual differences in the integration of AI in HE admissions in Japan and overseas.

In the INTERVIEW section of the journal "*Four Decades of Academic Services in Iranian Higher Education*", we have the honor and privilege to host Prof. Ali Meghdari as the Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Sharif University of Technology; and Founding Chancellor of IAU-Fereshtegaan International University- Tehran, Iran. Throughout his life, Ali Meghdari has devoted over 38 years to advancing higher education in Iran. A pioneer in mechanical engineering, social robotics, and interdisciplinary research, he has also played a key role in national higher education policy, serving on academic boards, research councils, and advisory committees.

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.

Ratan Sarkar in his review of the book "*Higher Education for Good: Teaching and Learning Futures*" edited by Laura Czerniewicz and Catherine Cronin concludes that *Higher Education for Good* stands as a landmark in post-pandemic higher education scholarship—a collective act of intellectual defiance and imaginative reconstruction. It bridges critique and creation, theory and practice, global and local, human and technological. While it does not (and perhaps cannot) offer a unified blueprint, its strength lies in plurality—the recognition that justice, care, and openness must be continually negotiated. This book equips educators, scholars, and policymakers for that fight—not with dogma, but with stories, solidarities, and speculative courage. Its vision of *Higher Education for Good* is both an ethical imperative and an imaginative invitation: to reclaim universities as spaces where light enters through the cracks, where learning becomes an act of love, and where the future of knowledge is inseparable from the future of humanity.

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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 confirm our commitment to the academic excellence through research we publish at the JHEPALS which happens with the collaboration of globally recognized researchers, leaders, and policy-makers within the realm of HE Policy and Leadership.

As we welcome the New Year (2026); 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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