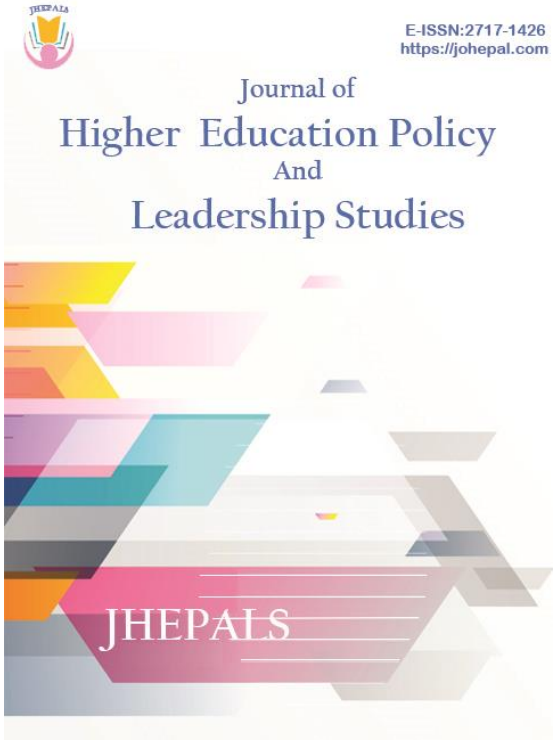
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Editorial Note

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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.

In alignment with the journal's policy in terms of distribution of authors as well as novelty of ideas/ research practices; JHEPALS March Issue 2024 (Volume 5/ Issue 1) also covers timely research findings within the realm of HE, Policy, and Leadership.

The ARTICLES section of the journal comprises six research articles which are finally selected after rigorous double-blind review procedure.

Goli Rezai-Rashti, Shamiga Arumuhathas, Chenzi Feng Zhao, and Vivian Leung in their research "*Racialized International Students and Their Experiences in a Canadian University During COVID-19 Pandemic*" investigate racialized students' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on their voices and concerns with racism and microaggression as well as other challenges they have experienced during these critical times.

In the next research "*Exploration of Coping Strategies among International Students Confronting Acculturation Challenges in Iranian Universities*", Mahza Pakzad, Abbas Abbaspour, Hamid Rahimian, and Ali Khorsandi Taskoh aim to fill a research gap by exploring the coping strategies of international students residing in Iran concerning their acculturation process. The research findings regarding the most significant coping strategies employed by these students in their acculturation process include self-direction, networking, personal development, cross-cultural interaction, and social support.

Elizabeth A. Rainey and Z. W. Taylor in their research "*"The struggle bus is full.": How College Faculty Interpreted and Navigated Institutional Policy Shifts Amid COVID-19*" explain that perhaps no other time in United States higher education's history did institutional policies change as quickly as they did during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, no studies have emerged from the pandemic era that address how faculty members navigated these

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changing policies, many of which were meant to increase safety and student success. This study examines weekly meetings of eight faculty teaching a course for students on academic or financial aid warning during spring 2021.

Pravin Chavan and Masuma Mehta in their research "*Uncovering Students' Higher Education Institutions Selection: An Investigation Using Factor Analysis and Cluster Analysis*" highlight that several factors influence student selection of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In recent years, students' decision-making criteria have evolved beyond traditional factors. This study explored the factors influencing students' choices of HEI. Exploratory factor analysis revealed eight significant factors that influenced HEI choices. The factors are 'Enrolment Value Optimization' (EVO), 'External Psychic Influence' (EPI), 'Internal Psychic Influence' (IPI), 'Academic Infrastructure Influence' (AII), 'Internal Financial Influence' (IFI), 'Pedagogical Aspects' (PEA), 'Objective Based Educational' (OBE) and 'Choice-Based Credit System'(CBCS).

In the next research "*A Qualitative Analysis of the Experiences of International Students in an Overseas Short-Term STEM Program*", Yunxi Qu explains that to recruit and enroll more talented international students, many colleges and universities in the U.S. have developed short-term study abroad programs to introduce students to life in graduate school and market their graduate programs. The author aims to explore the experiences of international students enrolled in the short-term programs to determine students' perceptions and broader implications of these programs.

Chrispen Chiome in his research "*Re-Imagining Internationalization of Higher Education: Tales, Tips and Lessons for an African Credit Accumulation and Transfer System*" interrogated tales, tips, and lessons regarding ways in which African universities can move towards an African credit accumulation and transfer system (CATS) that facilitates student and staff mobility within the continent. The tales, tips, and lessons of this study revealed that African universities need to have clear receiving and sending policies, put procedures in place to recognize qualifications, programs, and institutions, make information on accredited diplomas and degrees readily available, put in place health insurance facilities, devise mechanisms for linguistic tutoring, have access to mobility scholarships, enforce mandatory university partnerships, devise mechanisms for licensure and registration, improve foreign language proficiency and develop transversal skills among other issues.

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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Terron J. Phillips in his research "*Values and Value: Culturally Responsive Financial Literacy Programming in Higher Education*" highlight that U.S. Higher education institutions (HEIs) developed financial literacy programs (FLPs) in response to the 2008 recession which was characterized, in part, by the poor and uninformed financial decision-making of Americans. This qualitative study acknowledges the ways that cultural identity influences financial attitudes, behaviors, and decisions. The author further examined ways that some of the same FLPs tailor content and delivery modalities to be culturally responsive to the unique needs, perspectives, and experiences of the increasingly diverse students that they serve.

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.

Zahra Zarrati, Jamila Ermetova, Surayyo Atadjanova, and Shahodat Rakhimova Azadovna in their work within the higher education context of Uzbekistan "*Cliché ELT and the Requirements of "Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026": Expanding ELT Paradigms*" provide an overview of the requirements of changes in ELT practices worldwide with a special focus on Uzbekistan. It would be based on the "Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026" with practical suggestions for HE policy-makers and university management teams in Uzbekistan.

In the next colloquium "*Origin, Debates and Recommendations: A Critical Review of Biden's Student Debt Relief Plan*", Chan Lu illuminate that in response to escalating higher education costs and interest rates, addressing the mounting burden of student debt in the United States is imperative. While federal-level student loan forgiveness policies have emerged periodically, alleviating the weight of educational borrowing remains a pressing concern for the Biden administration. Biden's Student Debt Relief Plan employs a blend of incentive and authoritative policy tools. However, questions persist regarding its potential impact on racial justice, student welfare, and specific borrower categories.

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.

Marianne A. Larsen in her interview "*Internationalization of Higher Education -- Reflections from a Canadian Scholar*" enriched with extensive teaching and research experience within the realms of comparative and international education focusing on research on education

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policy, teacher's work, the internationalization of education, and global citizenship 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.

Rahmad Hidayat in his review of "*Capital in Higher Education: A Critique of the Political Economy of the Sector*" by Krystian Szadkowski highlights that this book has been an interesting and relevant work for summarizing the complexities of the political economy of work and production in higher education. By detailing current theories and research with a critical eye, the book has made a valuable contribution to our comprehension of how capitalism affects higher education while opening up space for thinking about different political-economic relations in the sector.

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Editors' final note:

A New Milestone: JHEPALS has been accepted for inclusion in the Web of Science (Emerging Sources Citation Index – ESCI) on March 26, 2024.

International reputation/ success of the journal is intertwined with the continuous support of a group of committed higher education scholars who serve as the members of editorial team, reviewers, and researchers.

We are 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.

One more important feature of the journal is the distribution of authors from all over the world which is a seal of approval on our commitment to disseminate knowledge and add to the available literature by providing a channel for researchers to share their findings.

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

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