Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Associate Professor Ingrid Harrington

The IJHE provides an important platform for the development of theory, the addressing of policy questions, and the dissemination of innovative practice in the field of tertiary education, specifically widening participation and lifelong learning. A strength of the IJHE journal is its global reach featuring articles in this issue from researchers from South Sudan, the USA, China, Malaysia, Spain, Taiwan, Iraq, Mongolia and Uganda. The articles cover a range of themes including distance learning tools and strategies adopted in response to the uprise of AI in tertiary education, features of internationalisation management structures, and effective teaching and learning processes.

The first article by Kiri and associates explores the institutional practices for research internationalization at the University of Juba in South Sudan. They recommend that the university focus on developing comprehensive policies and guidelines that define a clear strategy, goals, and objectives for internationalizing research, due to the existing lack of resources, clear guidelines, and policies in the area. The next article by William Schonberg explores the prevalence of dual-career facility hiring policies at a variety of American universities, and outlined the benefits to both university and applicants. He recommended that universities consider developing dual-career hiring programs.

The third article by Yao Tsai examines the level of culture-shock international students who speak English as a foreign language coming from Southeast Asian countries, may experience when studying at a Taiwanese university where Chinese is the target language. The research reported that regardless of which language is adopted by international students, culture shock emerges as one of the learning outcomes of intercultural communication whilst studying abroad, and that culture shock may be transformed into worldviews or cultural awareness among international students. The fourth article by Quiang Wang explores how DeepSeek is reshaping the higher education model in all aspects by assisting differentiated teaching and personalized learning, and summarized the main scenarios in which DeepSeek R1 contributes to the sustainable development of higher education. The study has many recommendations including to continue to promote the healthy and innovative development of education models, actively deepen artificial intelligence to assist in the construction of teacher teams, bridge the global education digital divide, and help lifelong learning and sustainable social development, just to name a few.

The next article by Perez and Mattison's study proposes the foundations of a legal framework for addressing academic fraud in university faculty promotion and tenure, that is facilitated by the use of GenAI. A legal framework is outlined providing policymakers in government and university administration with interrelated concepts to guide the drafting of new policies, that would govern the use of GenAI in academic scholarship. The next article in this issue is from Othman and Shen whose study constructs an Occupational Competency Assessment System for vocational colleges, through a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis (Analytic Hierarchy Process, AHP) and qualitative techniques (literature analysis, expert interviews, and Delphi method). Their findings recommend strengthening practice-oriented teaching models, enhancing industry-education collaboration for real-time data integration, and incorporating dynamic AI-driven adjustments to improve assessment accuracy. The final article in this issue is from Tsogtbaatar and Ojgoosh who examine the globally recognized Conceive-Design-Implement-Operate (CDIO) framework, as an advanced and effective approach in modern engineering education, specifically analysing its fundamental principles and the challenges faced by educators in developing a results-based curriculum tailored to Mongolia's unique needs and cultural context. Their findings report

that the CDIO supports the development of transferable skills such as design thinking, systems integration, and iterative prototyping. These capabilities are increasingly critical in responding to employer expectations for graduates who are not only technically proficient but also adaptable and innovation-oriented. This analysis provides valuable insights for future improvements in Mongolia's engineering education system.

I sincerely hope that the broad range of topics and information shared are of benefit to our readers. Importantly, I would like to thank all contributors and reviewers who continue to make the timely publication of the current issue possible.   I look forward to receiving more contributions from researchers and practitioners for our future issues. Wishing all readers all the very best with their research studies.

Warm regards and the season's greetings,

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