

## Editorial for the Second Issue Volume 2 of the Journal of Educational Impact

In the labyrinth of modern education, where over 4,000 U.S. colleges impose decentralized deadlines, opaque platforms, and relentless demands on families, and where Western schooling sidelines the relational wisdom of Indigenous traditions, Volume 2, Issue 2 of the Journal of the Educational Impact reveals a profound tension—and a path to resolution. Erkan Acar’s “Lost in the Admissions Maze” lays bare the chaos that turns parental aspirations into survival struggles, while Darren Parry’s “The Path Forward” counters with holistic Indigenous models that prioritize storytelling, empathy, and ecological balance over fragmented metrics. Together, these pieces challenge us to dismantle barriers and reclaim education as a shared journey toward equity and enlightenment.

Volume 2, Issue 2 of the Journal of the Educational Impact brings together two timely contributions that illuminate how educational systems can either disorient or deeply sustain learners and their communities.

### *Navigating Systems, Honoring Stories*

In “Lost in the Admissions Maze: Why Parents Struggle to Navigate the U.S. College System,” Erkan Acar exposes how the sheer scale and decentralization of U.S. higher education—more than 4,000 institutions with divergent platforms, deadlines, and criteria—turn what should be an aspirational journey into a high-stakes puzzle for families. As applications, financial aid forms, essays, and testing decisions proliferate, time management becomes a decisive skill that many students and parents are forced to acquire on the fly rather than through accessible, equitable guidance.

“The Path Forward: Transforming Education with Indigenous Wisdom,” by Darren Parry, invites readers to reimagine education not as a standardized pipeline but as a lifelong, relational process grounded in Indigenous epistemologies. Drawing from traditions that center interconnectedness with land, community, and the spiritual world, the article contrasts linear, performance-driven models with approaches that foreground reciprocity, experiential learning, and holistic development.

### *Shared Themes Across Two Worlds*

At first glance, the college-admissions labyrinth described by Acar and the Indigenous learning frameworks articulated by Parry seem to inhabit different educational universes. Yet both pieces expose how systems either obscure or clarify pathways for young people: one through opaque procedures and overreliance on expert gatekeepers, the other through storytelling, elders’ guidance, and communal responsibility that render learning meaningful and navigable. Both authors, in different ways, argue that when information, power, and interpretation are concentrated in the hands of a few, learners and families are left vulnerable; when they are shared, education becomes a vehicle for agency, identity, and justice.

Taken together, these articles challenge educators, policymakers, and researchers to ask who benefits from complexity and who is silenced by it. Acar calls for clearer, more humane infrastructures and support systems so that parents can act as informed partners rather than anxious bystanders in their children’s futures, while Parry calls for a paradigm shift that legitimizes Indigenous knowledge as a source of curricular, ethical, and ecological renewal. For a journal committed to advancing scholarship that matters in practice, this issue underscores that educational “impact” must be measured not only in outcomes and metrics, but in whether systems help families find their way and honor the wisdom that has guided communities long before formal schooling existed.

Sincerely,  
Mehmet Soyer, Ph.D  
Editor-in-Chief  
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