

Editorial for the Inaugural Issue of the Journal of Educational Impact

Mehmet Soyer¹

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Journal of Educational Impact, where we are committed to advancing the field of education through rigorous research and innovative practices. Our mission is to provide a platform for scholars, educators, and practitioners to share insights that drive meaningful change in educational settings worldwide. In this first issue, we are proud to present a diverse array of articles that explore critical themes in education, from methodological advancements to innovative leadership and the integration of technology in learning environments.

Our first article, "Humanizing Online Discussions by Remixing AI and #DigitalPowerups," by Dr. Travis N Thurston, addresses the pressing need to enhance online learning environments. By integrating AI tools with the #DigitalPowerups strategy, Thurston demonstrates how educators can foster meaningful student engagement and develop essential academic skills. This approach not only enriches the learning experience but also equips students with the technological competencies necessary for success in the digital age. The article underscores the importance of humanized learning and AI literacy in modern education.

In "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around: A Principal's Fight Against Traditional Educator Pathways to Staff an Underperforming School in the Rural South," Phelton Moss presents a compelling case study of innovative leadership. This article chronicles the journey of Marcus, a principal who challenges conventional staffing methods to address the unique needs of an underperforming school. By forging new partnerships and training prospective teachers on-site, Marcus exemplifies the transformative power of non-traditional solutions in educational leadership, particularly in under-resourced communities.

In "Examining Retention Methods in Factor Analysis: A Comparison of Polychoric and Pearson Correlations for Categorical and Continuous Data" by Dr. Ziyanak and Jason Yagci, delves into the intricacies of factor analysis. This study highlights the importance of selecting appropriate retention methods to ensure accurate representation of latent variables. By comparing polychoric and Pearson correlations, the authors provide valuable insights into the most effective techniques for analyzing categorical and continuous data, offering a significant contribution to the field of educational research methodology.

This volume also includes a book review by Dr. Mehmet Fatih Yigit of *Teaching and Generative AI: Pedagogical Possibilities and Productive Tensions*, edited by Beth Buyserie and Travis N. Thurston. Yigit describes the book as a crucial and timely contribution to the ongoing conversation about AI's impact on education, thoroughly exploring the opportunities and challenges that AI technologies introduce to both traditional and online classroom environments.

¹ Utah State University, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Anthropology, E-mail: mehmet.soyer@usu.edu

Educational research is the cornerstone of progress in our field. It is through rigorous inquiry and exploration that we can address the persistent challenges and disparities in education. There is a significant gap in research focused on equitable resource distribution and the effective integration of technology in classrooms. We believe that by addressing these gaps, we can foster a more inclusive and effective educational landscape.

As we launch this journal, we invite researchers and educators to contribute their work to future issues. We are particularly interested in studies that explore innovative practices, methodological advancements, and transformative leadership in education. By sharing your research with us, you can help shape the future of education and make a lasting impact on learners and educators worldwide.

We hope you find the articles in this issue both inspiring and thought-provoking. Thank you for joining us on this journey to advance educational impact. We look forward to your contributions and to fostering a vibrant community of educational researchers and practitioners.

Sincerely,

Mehmet Soyer, PhD

Editor of The Journal of Educational Impact