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Editor's Introduction: Urban Planning, Performance Measurement, Evaluation and Policy Implementation Strategies

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Cover Page Footnote

The topics covered in this volume reflect the types of issues that are particularly welcomed by JPMSP. Nonetheless, this current issue of JPMSP contains five articles.

The *Journal of Public Management and Social Policy* concludes its twenty-second volume with a collection of articles that examine issues pertaining to urban planning, performance measurement, evaluation and policy implementation strategies. It begins with a discussion on the emerging concept of neighborhoods of opportunity in urban planning and concludes with a continuing dialogue on the regulatory fog of opioid treatment programs in multi-layered and complex enforcement environments. The topics covered in this volume reflect the types of issues that are particularly welcomed by *JPMSP*. Nonetheless, this current issue of *JPMSP* contains five articles.

The first article, “Neighborhoods of opportunity: Developing an Operational Definition for Planning and Policy Implementation,” by Kelly Patterson, Robert Silverman, and Laiyun Wu uses the extant literature to dissect the new concept of neighborhoods of opportunity and its linkages to place-based and people-based approaches to urban and community development as they influence emerging models for siting affordable housing in distressed inner-cities and their more opportunity surrounding rich suburbs. Patterson, Silverman and Wu conclude that a new tiered approach to place-based and people-based strategies for affordable housing siting in both core and regional environments seems more appropriate for scholars and practitioners alike to adhere to.

In the second article, “Capacity to Implement Performance Measurement in Small Nonprofits,” Claire Knox and XiaoHu Wang deploy a capacity building framework to examine performance measurement (PM) in small nonprofits and how such approach can work in other types of nonprofit organizations. The study results were used to develop research propositions on leadership, technical competency, feasibility, and institutionalization of PM in small nonprofit organizations to overcome implementation barriers.

The third article—“Learning in the Public Sector: Evaluation of the SSA Title IV-E Intervention Program of Virginia Department of Social Services” by Mohan Pokharel, Niraj Poudyal, and Nabin Baral—utilizes a summative evaluation tool and mixed methods of data collection to examine Social Security Act Title IV-E Intervention Program at the Virginia Department of Social Services. While the study’s quantitative analysis could not show any evidence of organizational learning that are usually expected in social service agencies at the local level, the qualitative analysis indicates “that complex organizational structure, distorted economic incentive system, and rapid staff turnover are some factors inhibiting leaning and retention of knowledge in” these types of agencies.

In the fourth article, “United States vs. China in Africa: The Policy Battle for Hearts and Minds and the Difference it Makes,” Nicholas Alozie and Kathy Thomas deploy Pew’s 2013 Global Attitudes Survey data to probe China and United States’ battle over political economic influence on the continent. The study finding reveal that while most Africans tend to contend that China may take the global hegemonic leadership position from the United States, they still find American economic system and culture more attractive to emulate than Chinese brand of state capitalism. Alozie and Thomas commend Africans for being able to distinguish ideological matters from rent-seeking concerns, and caution African countries and their citizens to engage in some types of cost benefit calculations in all their bilateral political economic relationships with both China and the United States of America in order to achieve a win-win foreign policy benefits for all the actors.

In the final article, Mary Wickersham and Stephanie Basey deploy the extant literature in examining the effectiveness of state regulation in “The ‘Regulatory Fog’ of Opioid Treatment” programs in the United States. Due to the proliferation of opioid addition and the regulatory fog of multilayered oversight mechanism that it creates, Wickersham and Basey recommend that we take a fresh look at other alternative approaches coming up with the best practices rather than focusing “on the rule and process as the end, not the means.”

In sum, I would like to thank the editorial team and *JPMSP*’s staff for their continued service. I also appreciate our contributors for considering our journal as the outlet for their scholarly work.