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Andrew Ewoh
Texas Southern University

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Editor's Introduction

Municipal Consolidation, Innovations and the Dynamics of Public Policies

Andrew I.E. Ewoh
Texas Southern University

The *Journal of Public Management and Social Policy* ends the twenty-fifth volume with scholarly contributions that explore various issues pertaining to municipal organizational realities, innovations, media influence in the public policy process, choice, perceptions, and participation. This volume starts with a discussion on municipal consolidation and closes with a qualitative analysis of political rhetoric in framing public policy and its implication on Latino political participation in Arizona. The five articles in this volume show the variety of topics published in *JPMSP*.

The first article, "Municipal Consolidation and Organizational Realities: A Case from New York City," by Bakry Elmedni, Sade McIntosh, and Beverly Lyons evaluates the merger of two New York City agencies. Using a survey instrument and follow-up interviews, the analysis reveals that the merger process was deficient and resulted in differing perceptions of employees' self-image six years after implementation. It further notes that a well-planned and negotiated process could have produced a better working relationships among the employees while accomplishing the goals set for the new emerging agency. The article concludes that employees were unaware of the new agency's mission and policies due to the deficiency in the merger process and its efforts.

In the second article, "The Good, Bad and Ugly of Innovations in Human Services Administration: Evidence from New York Counties," Lauren Bock Mullins and Jyldyz Kasymova deploy a theoretical method in selecting the six counties included in their study that reported using innovation techniques in the administration of social services in their jurisdictions. The major innovations in departments of social services pertains to a transition from a case-based administration of welfare application to a tasked-based method, including a web-based application process, to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in program implementation. Comprehensively, the study concludes that counties demonstrated their proclivity to innovate even during periods of budgetary constraints.

The third article—"In the Midst of an Epidemic: How Print Media Shapes Policy Feedback to the Opioid Crisis," by Peter Stanley Federman—uses a content analysis of local newspaper articles to show that political and administrative officials perceive the

use of medication to decrease the risk of opioid abuse in noticeably different ways. On the contrary, elected officials portray an “indirect mindset” and usually focus on cost, legal implications, and eclectic effect, ignoring the street-level concerns shared by public administrators and other policy advocates. The analysis concludes with directions for future research not only to enhance citizens’ understanding of the dynamisms influencing Narcan policy, but how the elected officials, public administrators and other stockholders can bargain, dialogue, and form alliances throughout the policy making process.

Jeanne M. Powers, Amelia Marcetti Topper, and Amanda U. Potterton in the fourth article titled “Interdistrict Mobility and Charter Schools in Arizona: Understanding the Dynamics of Public School Choice” investigate the mobility patterns of elementary school students enrolled in traditional public school districts and charter schools in Arizona. Using a regression analysis, the study finds that the relationships between different types of student mobility and school characteristics differ across the two sectors including regional variation in mobility patterns. Moreover, the study concludes that educational markets differ significantly across and within local jurisdictions.

In the fifth article, “Does Political Rhetoric Framing of Public Policies Thwart Political Participation? Latinos Say Yes, and No: Implications of Latino Civic Engagement in a Trump World,” Karina Moreno deploys a purpose sampling technique in selecting participants that provided qualitative data in the form of in-depth interviews pertaining to their understanding of public policy issues that affect their welfare, which in turn affect their civic engagement. The study findings show that a degenerative policy such as Arizona’s Senate Bill 1070 has a negative impact on political integration of Latinos and Latino immigrants, because it alienates them from the conventional form of political participation. The analysis concludes that since current policy dynamics convey political unpalatable messages to Latino communities and other similarly situated minorities, public administrators should play a crucial role in transforming these dynamics into positive changes that strengthens the nation’s democracy and upholds social justice and equity in its involvement with the community that they serve.

In sum, thank you to all the *JPMSP*’s authors and reviewers for their contributions in producing the third issue of Volume 25. On behalf of the Editorial Board, I extend my profound gratitude to Charles E. Menifield for agreeing to serve as the Managing Editor, and to John C. Ronquillo for accepting the role of Case Study Editor. Furthermore, the ideas and thought provoking questions raised in the articles that appeared in this *Journal* will help our readers to deepen their understanding of issues regarding municipal consolidation, innovations and the dynamics of public policies in the United States.