

Editor's Introduction: Sustainability in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors

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In this new issue of *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, we offer a collection of *Research Articles* focused on the operational capacity, service delivery, and financial sustainability of the public and nonprofit sectors. Our *Social Equity* article offers insight and practical advice for enhancing the inclusivity of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual plus (LGBTQIA+) communities in public and nonprofit research. In addition, we offer two *Book Reviews* of important recent work focusing on nonprofit management research and the transnational NGO initiative.

First, in a comparative analysis of the US and China, Meier et al. (2022) utilize a least similar systems design to analyze which sector—public, nonprofit, or for-profit—consumers prefer to deliver services in 12 different categories of service provision. Their exploratory analysis based upon two internet surveys reveals that sector preferences for services are more similar than expected across the two countries with the public sector as the most preferred and the for-profit sector as the least preferred service provider. However, the authors find important differences emphasized among individual service categories that reflect the historical, cultural, and political traditions of each country. By focusing on public preferences for service provision, this article makes an important contribution to the literature on cross-sector service delivery and the debate on privatization.

As we continue to live and work amid a global health pandemic, Mumford (2022) offers a unique perspective on organizational resilience to COVID-19 by focusing on nonprofit leadership and racial diversity. Based on a survey of nonprofits based in New Orleans, Louisiana, the author empirically examines the extent to which racial diversity in nonprofit leadership increases the likelihood of organizational resilience in both service delivery and financial health. Findings reveal a positive association between nonprofit board diversity and targeted programming and advocacy to support racially diverse communities as well as expanded service delivery. On the other hand, more representation of Black individuals on nonprofit boards is also associated with a lack of reserves, which may threaten financial sustainability, suggesting diverse nonprofits are 'doing more with less' in response to the pandemic.

Focusing on 49 Lebanese nongovernmental environmental organizations (NGOs), AbouAssi and Tschirhart (2022) offer the first empirical test of the Strategic Response Model (SRM) as a management tool for nonprofit decision making. By integrating organizational resource dependence and network centrality, the authors use the SRM to predict NGO responses of exit, voice, or adjustment to bilateral donors with changed funding demands. Regardless of the measure of resource dependency, the authors find adjustment to be the most common response; however, NGOs also respond to donors through exit or by inserting their

environmental priorities into proposed projects. As such, this research highlights the need for donors and nonprofits to consider short- and long-term strategic decisions, because such relationships that are created and fostered may be as important as the resources provided and consumed.

Feng et al. (2022) empirically analyzes a sample of 705 nonprofit organizations over five years to evaluate the relationship between board chairs and chief executive officers (CEOs) and the potential impact on nonprofit executive compensation. Although the authors find no association between board chair characteristics (such as tenure and gender) and top executive compensation, the relationship between the board chair and CEO is found to have a positive impact on executive compensation for organizations with larger revenues, bigger boards, and fewer changes in program expenses. As one of the first to consider the role of board chairs in establishing CEO compensation in the nonprofit sector, this research helps to further our understanding of nonprofit CEO compensation packages with the intention of ensuring fair and reasonable practices.

Also focused on the nonprofit sector, Weber and Brunt (2022) use survey results and selected case studies to analyze the role of academic centers among American universities in institutionalizing nonprofit and philanthropic studies (NPS) as a distinctive academic field. Among 55 US-based nonprofit academic centers, the authors find variation in size and activities, revenue streams, and institutional locations of centers offering a broad range of services spanning both academia and practice that help to support local and regional nonprofit communities. In addition, the authors find that the sustainability of such academic centers relies upon interdisciplinarity, internal and external funding, and institutional support. As such, this research offers useful recommendations intended to strengthen academic centers' roles in institutionalizing NPS as a distinctive academic field.

In our last *Research Article*, Lee (2022) provides an historical account of federal budgeting at the end of World War II by focusing on President Truman's first director of the Bureau of the Budget (BOB) and co-founder of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), Harold D. Smith. As a major transitional stage in public administration, including needs related to demobilization, abolishing wartime agencies, and cutting military spending, the author reveals the modern-day practice of cutback management that occurred during this time, which is long before the term came into its current use. This research sheds light on an important figure in public administration with a record of acting both apolitically and politically in the face of difficulty separating budgeting and policy from politics.

In this issue's *Social Equity* section, Meyer and Millesen (2022) educate us on the terminology and distinctions that are most appropriate for and inclusive of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual plus (LGBTQIA+) communities, which are underrepresented in public and nonprofit affairs research. Through their 'call to arms' for public and nonprofit researchers to use more supportive and affirming language to describe the experiences of LGBTQIA+ individuals and communities, the authors suggest that we can improve the ways in which public and nonprofit organizations support these individuals and communities, which are an important part of the work in the public and nonprofit sectors. In doing so, the authors appropriately encourage us to loudly and proudly say "gay."

In his *Book Review* of Anheier and Toepler's (2020) edited volume entitled, "The Routledge Companion to Nonprofit Management," Schmitz (2022) evaluates this comprehensive guide to current research, which emphasizes the core challenges faced by the nonprofit sector, as a learning tool for undergraduate and graduate students. The author describes the six major sections of the edited volume offering a historical background, current status of the field, and future needs for the field in terms of research. In doing so, the author lays out a potential research agenda aimed at strengthening the nonprofit sector by overcoming challenges likely to be faced going forward.

Finally, Tran (2022) offers an account of the book, "Between Power and Irrelevance: The Future of Transnational NGOs," by Mitchell et al. (2020). The author explains that the book represents a collection of nearly 20 years of insights from the founding members of the Transnational NGOs (TNGOs) Initiative, which is based upon the premise that traditional TNGOs must overcome the sector's constricting institutional and normative context within which such organizations are typically embedded in order to remain relevant in the future. In doing so, the author reminds us of the importance of maintaining focus on sustainability.

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