

Preface to the Special Section on policy capacity framework analysis, and post-pandemic reflection, smart city, and primary education policy

Since its establishment in 1990, the Hong Kong Public Administration Association (HKPAA) has been committed to promoting and enhancing the quality of research and practice of public sector management in Hong Kong and the broader region. It provides a forum for the identification and discussion of important issues in public administration and management, collaborating with local universities and overseas counterpart organisations to spark interest in the pursuit of best practices in public services and emerging themes through regular dinner talks, seminars, and conferences featuring renowned leaders from both public and private sectors.

The PAP journal was first published in print in 1992. Since 2018, it has been published online in open access on the Emerald Insight Platform. Currently, the Journal publishes three issues annually, including at least one special issue and around twenty-five articles per year. In 2025, PAP attracted 300 paper submissions from authors in 51 countries and has consistently received over 17,000 downloads per month. The Journal has obtained a 5-year Journal Impact Factor (JIF) of 1.3 as released by Clarivate and is abstracted and indexed by Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). The Web of Science Citations were 251 and CiteScore 2025 was 2.6.

In summary, PAP is abstracted and indexed by: Scopus, Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), CrossRef, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), EBSCO Discovery Service, Google Scholar, Health Research Premium Collection (ProQuest), Healthcare Administration Database (ProQuest), ProQuest Central, ProQuest Central Basic (Korea), ProQuest Central Essentials, ProQuest Central Student, Publicly Available Content Database (ProQuest), Summons (ProQuest), WorldCat, and The British Library. Academics and practitioners in public administration, management, public policy, and related fields are encouraged to contribute papers to this journal.

This first issue of PAP in 2026 is comprised of two parts. The first part contains four articles of the Special Section on the Policy Capacity Framework in Implementation Analysis across different Contexts in the World, guest-edited by Fabiana C. Saddi, Stephen Peckham, and Nagina Khan. The articles in this section focus on the applications of the policy capacity framework in various locations, including the United States, Brazil, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Please refer to the Introduction to the Special Section for brief descriptions of each article. In addition, the second part includes four regular articles on post-pandemic reflection, smart city, and primary education policy. A summary of these four articles is provided below.

The first article, “What is the appropriate information delivery method? Post-pandemic survey in Japan, Germany, and the United States” by Eri Nakamura and Fumitoshi Mizutani, analyses public perception and response to COVID-19 information from different sources (e.g., government, media, healthcare, personal networks) in Japan, Germany, and the U.S., based on a survey of 1,572 individuals. Key findings show that while government information is seen as highly reliable, its perceived fairness is low; information from family/friends scores highest in fairness and is actively shared. Although official information influences daily life, news and personal networks also have significant impact. People primarily consult family/friends, news media, and government for information, spending less time on social media. The value of the study lies in linking the perceptions and behavioural differences to individual characteristics.



The second article, “COVID-19 reflection through Total Quality Management to prepare for future pandemics: lessons from Japan, United States, Taiwan, and India” by Kazuyuki Suzuki, proposes a Total Quality Management (TQM) framework for pandemic preparedness. The analysis applies TQM principles, such as process integration and preventive design, to infection, policy, and behavioural data. It finds that effective responses relied on science-aligned leadership and coordinated social processes, as seen in Taiwan’s early cross-sector cooperation, whereas fragmented leadership or structural barriers reduced effectiveness elsewhere. The study argues that institutional resources alone are insufficient. Rather, TQM-oriented practices, such as science-based leadership, process assurance, digital risk communication, and protecting vulnerable groups are essential for coherent crisis governance. Its originality lies in framing pandemic preparedness as a quality assurance challenge, offering a feedback-driven model that integrates TQM with digital governance to build more equitable and resilient health systems.

The third article, “An evaluation of factors affecting the acceptance of smart city ICT services in India” by M.J. Hakeem and M.M. Sulphrey, develops and tests an integrated theoretical framework to assess the drivers of citizen acceptance of smart city services in India, combining elements from the Technology Acceptance Model, Theory of Reasoned Action, and Social Cognitive Theory. Based on a survey of 407 respondents in Kerala, the study finds that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and self-efficacy positively shape attitudes towards these services, which in turn strongly determine the intention to use them. While trust in e-government has a direct effect on acceptance, its impact on attitude is weaker, suggesting that Indian citizens prioritise practical utility and confidence in using the technology over institutional trust. The article concludes that enhancing awareness and user training may be more effective than building trust for promoting adoption.

The fourth article, “Bridging the gender gap in education success: primary education policy in Bangladesh” by Pronita Dutta investigates the persistent challenges in implementing female primary education in Bangladesh and its alignment with gender-equity goals. Through a qualitative approach involving literature review, content analysis, and interviews with policymakers, academics, and private sector representatives, the study finds that girls face significant barriers, including higher dropout rates and limited academic progression, driven by curriculum gaps, urban-rural disparities, inadequate teacher training, and competing socio-economic demands. It also notes that inflated official statistics often mask these on-the-ground realities. The paper argues that an over-reliance on local resources, donor aid, and financial incentives offers only a limited solution, and calls for a deeper examination of implementation gaps, stakeholder engagement, and educational quality to foster meaningful social change and gender inclusion.

We hope this issue will make significant contributions to the understanding of the Policy Capacity Framework and other themes for policy makers, scholars, and practitioners in various countries around Asia and the world.

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About the Editor-in-Chief

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