

EDITORIAL

Promoting High-quality, Contextually Relevant Research in Applied Social Sciences and Entrepreneurship Education in Ghana

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On September 4, 2025, the University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (USTED), Ghana—formerly Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED)—formally launched the *Journal of Applied Social Sciences and Entrepreneurship Education* (JASSEE). This launch marks a significant institutional commitment to promoting rigorous, context-sensitive scholarly inquiry at the intersection of social sciences and entrepreneurship education, and to providing a dedicated platform for disseminating research that speaks directly to Ghanaian, African, and global development challenges. The journal aspires to become a leading open-access platform for the publication and dissemination of rigorous, contextually grounded scholarship in the applied social sciences and entrepreneurship education. Consistent with the legal mandate and institutional values of USTED, the journal is committed to advancing socially-responsible, culture-conscious, methodologically robust, and trustworthy research that meaningfully contributes to narrowing the persistent gap between theory, research, and practice. As evidenced by the contributions to this inaugural issue (discussed in the penultimate section of this editorial), the studies in JASSEE reflect and engage with the diversity of topics, disciplines, methodological approaches, epistemologies, scholarly voices, and populations that characterize these fields worldwide. By foregrounding the importance of contextual relevance and inclusivity in knowledge production, the journal seeks to foster dialogue across geographical, cultural, and institutional boundaries and to support the development of research that is both analytically sophisticated and practically consequential.

For decades, researchers and scholars based in higher education institutions and research centers across Majority World (so-called Global South) contexts, including Africa, have oriented their publishing efforts toward paywalled outlets situated in Western epistemic centers. These publication systems have undeniably played a significant role in advancing academic knowledge and shaping scholarly debates. However, this reliance has often come at a considerable cost. For example, to gain visibility and legitimacy within these venues, scholars from global majority world contexts have frequently felt compelled to refine, reframe, or even dilute their original ideas, as well as to translate their studies in ways that align with the dominant epistemic assumptions, methodological preferences, and thematic priorities of Western publication infrastructures (Adjei et al., 2025). In effect, the pursuit of recognition within these systems can inadvertently marginalize contextually grounded perspectives, constrain intellectual creativity, and perpetuate asymmetrical power relations in global knowledge production.

In an effort to mitigate this structural disparity in global knowledge economy, JASSEE is intentionally conceived as an open-access knowledge forum that removes paywall barriers and broadens participation. The journal seeks to engage a diverse community of scholars, practitioners, and educators who are committed to mobilizing theoretical frameworks in order to understand and address pressing social, economic, cultural, and educational challenges. By providing a freely accessible platform for contextually grounded, analytically robust research, JASSEE aims not only to expand who can publish and who can read, but also to reshape the terms on which knowledge is produced, circulated, and applied.

In this editorial, I outline the aims, scope, and guiding philosophy of JASSEE, indicate our anticipated publication rates, and provide a concise synthesis of the articles included in this inaugural issue. This high-level overview provides critical context for positioning the journal's anticipated contribution to ongoing scholarly and policy debates in applied social sciences and entrepreneurship education.

Aim and Scope of JASSEE

The aim of JASSEE is to advance scholarly dialogue and research in the interconnected fields of Humanities, Business and Management, and Entrepreneurship. Thus, JASSEE broadly encourages submissions that interrogate the nexus between humanistic perspectives, organizational and managerial dynamics, and entrepreneurial thinking, particularly as these intersect in teaching, learning, policy, and practice. The journal's title intentionally signals its distinctive academic orientation and emphasis on applied inquiry that bridges theoretical reflection and real-world practice. The scope of JASSEE reflects its core interest in work that bridges theory and practice, and that mobilizes knowledge in the fields of Humanities, Arts, Languages, Media, Communication, Social Sciences, Education, Accounting, Business, Management, and Entrepreneurship Education, for societal transformation. By cultivating this interdisciplinary and practice-sensitive space, the journal seeks to contribute meaningfully to global conversations on how knowledge in the social sciences and entrepreneurship education can be mobilized to inform policy, transform institutions, and improve lives.

Knowledge for all: JASSEE's Orientation

JASSEE is guided by a "knowledge for all" philosophy that affirms scholarly research as a public good rather than a private commodity. To this end, the journal operates as a fully Open Access outlet, making all published content available online without subscription or paywall barriers. Also, in alignment with its mission to democratize knowledge production and dissemination, JASSEE does not levy Article Processing Charges (APCs) on authors. The *knowledge for all* orientation of the journal shapes both its commitment to open access and the absence of author fees, as well as its inclusive scope that welcomes contributions from diverse geographical, institutional, and epistemic locations. By removing financial and structural barriers to publishing and reading, JASSEE seeks to democratize participation in global knowledge production, amplify underrepresented voices, and ensure that rigorous, contextually relevant and socially responsible scholarship can inform practice, policy, and public debate across the globe.

Rate of Publication

To uphold its commitment to scholarly rigor and quality, JASSEE follows a biannual publication schedule, with two issues released each year in May and November. This publication timeline is designed to allow sufficient time for a robust, multi-stage peer-review and editorial process. JASSEE prioritizes depth of review over frequency of publication to ensure that each article meets the journal's standards of methodological soundness, conceptual clarity, and contextual relevance, and to maintain the integrity and credibility of the scholarship it disseminates.

Contributions in the Inaugural Issue of JASSEE

Six diverse and multidisciplinary papers are included in this inaugural issue of the journal. In paper one, Mensah and colleagues (2026) employ a mixed-methods approach to examine how peer learning shapes artistic skill development and student engagement among undergraduate art students in Ghana. Their findings underscore that the intentional integration of structured peer learning into art education curricula, particularly through guided critique systems, collaborative studio projects, and clearly defined peer roles, can significantly enhance artistic competence while sustaining high levels of student engagement in the Ghanaian context. The second paper, by Addo and colleagues (2026), problematizes traditional credit risk models in Ghana's micro-lending business. Employing a quantitative experimental research design to examine the impact of machine learning (ML) techniques on credit risk assessment, they show that integrating ML models substantially improves the accuracy, consistency, and reliability of credit risk

evaluations. Their findings indicate that ML-based approaches can reduce default rates and, in turn, support broader financial inclusion within Ghana's microfinance sector.

The third paper by Gbadago and colleagues (2026) applies a mixed-method approach to offer an important contribution to contemporary debates on taxation, governance, and development in emerging economies by analyzing how digital taxation (DT), strategic leadership practices (SLP), and social responsibility (SR) interact to shape fiscal performance (FP) and sustainable development outcomes (SDOs) in Ghana. Their findings show how SR operates as a critical mediating mechanism linking DT and SLP to both FP and SDOs, thereby demonstrating that the effectiveness of digital tax reforms hinges not only on technological and regulatory innovation, but also on the normative and relational dimensions of state–society engagement. In doing so, the study extends the scope of fiscal sociology into the digital era, providing a mixed-method empirical evidence that responsible, socially attuned tax governance can enhance fiscal outcomes while simultaneously advancing broader sustainable development objectives in emerging contexts. In the fourth paper, Aboagye and colleagues (2026) demonstrates that, in the Bongo District of Ghana, both school-related and home-related conditions exert a significant and mutually reinforcing influence on whether school-age children are able to enroll in, attend, and remain engaged in primary education.

The fifth paper by Boateng and colleagues (2026) examines the relationship between teacher professionalism and professional practice in Ghana using a large national quantitative survey. Their study reveals a strong positive association between professional practice (such as participation in continuing professional development, in-service training) and professionalism, indicating that higher levels of practice correspond to higher levels of professionalism. Further, they report that marital status and number of children are negatively associated with both professionalism and professional practice. In the six and final paper, Takyi (2026) demonstrates how symbiotic relationships exert a significant positive effect on export performance and substantially promote product innovation among Ghanaian entrepreneurs. The study highlights the critical role of fostering innovation within symbiotic partnerships to enhance the export competitiveness of entrepreneurs in Ghana. Though the six studies in this issue are methodologically diverse and discipline-specific in different ways, they are unified by their contextual relevance, applied focus, and pedagogical orientation.

Concluding Thoughts

On behalf of the section editors, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to the authors who have chosen JASSEE as an outlet for their scholarship and to the reviewers who generously contribute their time and expertise to ensuring the quality and rigor of the work we publish. The vitality of the journal depends on this collective intellectual labour. We actively welcome constructive suggestions on how we might further enhance the experience of authors and reviewers, as well as improve the quality, diversity, and global relevance of the articles we disseminate. As an editorial team, we are committed to reflective practice, open dialogue, and continuous improvement. We stand ready to acknowledge, correct, and learn from our mistakes in order to strengthen JASSEE as a robust and inclusive platform for scholarly exchange.