

CALL FOR PAPERS

Thematic issue on

Changing Values and Value of Universities and Research

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The proposed Special Section of Italian Journal of Sociology of Education calls for empirical studies and theoretical contributions on value and values of Higher Education (HE) and research. We are looking for contributions that can help understanding the ongoing changes in the HE and research landscape, addressing systemic and institutional settings as well as practices and lived experiences.

The profound changes that have affected the world of HE and research in the last decades are widely appreciated in literature. Notwithstanding persisting differences at global level amongst institutional forms and educational practices, changes in the science-society relationships generally call for wider accountability of universities and research performing organizations. Hence, the diffusion of measures aimed at assessing their impact. The debate on impact evaluation of HE and research has never been so animated and controversial, as, besides the technical and methodological aspects (albeit important they could be), it relates to the very role, function and meaning of universities and research in our societies. In a word, it concerns their value.

This is a crucial issue for policy and decision makers at all levels as well as for practitioners, as it is profoundly related with administrative and organisational arrangements at system and institutional level, as well as actual practices and lived experiences on the ground.

Furthermore, the propagation of New Public Management (NPM) principles and practices in public administrations has significantly affected the institutional arrangements and management cultures of universities worldwide. This is related to growing pressure in relation to marketization of knowledge, widespread competitive culture, and pervasive audit culture.

Increasing administrative pressure, the diffusion of semi-automated and algorithmized practices in the reward system and resource allocation related to standardized performance programmes and objectives have a relevant impact on the working conditions of university teachers and researchers as well as on the behaviours, attitudes, and very values of all actors in the HE and research field, including early stage researchers and students.

Further robust evidence is needed to understand whether and to which extent the pressure for competition amongst organizations and individuals and marketization of knowledge might be related to unethical and predatory research practices aimed at extracting value from knowledge rather than producing valuable knowledge, and generate further stratification of epistemologies, disciplines, and institutions, thus hindering epistemic justice and endangering knowledge democracy.

As the power of science and technology to impact our daily life in hardly predictable ways has become clearer, the need emerged to rethink the public value of science along with knowledge production regimes. The growing complexity of research and innovation processes led to rethinking linear models of governance and made a new social contract for science necessary, to be realised through virtuous policies aimed at promoting inclusion and co-responsibility. Changing attitudes towards research require enhanced democratic governance of research and development policies. These evolving relationships between science and society are reflected in HE and research policies directed at promoting open science and call for more inclusive and equitable teaching and inquiry practices. Decolonization of knowledge, aimed at legitimizing multiple knowledge systems by exploring potential dialogue amongst different epistemologies, ontologies, and methodologies, is high in the agenda of

such countries as Canada or South Africa. In Europe, recent EC's research framework programmes advocate for active involvement of citizens at all stages of the investigation process. And as the policy agenda evolves, societal impact of research comes more into focus of the evaluation and rewarding system. Consistently, institutional adjustments are sought by decision makers at all levels, while once-marginal practices gradually gain visibility and question mainstream epistemologies. Citizen science, living labs, Community Engaged Research and Learning practices (CERL) and inclusive education are encountering a growing success, within such a setting.

Hence the theme for this special issue of the Italian Journal of Sociology of Education. With the aim to feed a productive conversation and critical understanding of the structural conditions that shape and give meaning to our working and living environment as academics and researchers, we solicit both theoretical and empirical paper proposals that address the changing values of academic work and the value of the scientific endeavour. Papers discussing meaningful initiatives or processes in engaged education and research are welcome. Key issues and topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Working conditions in academia
- Making sense of scientific and academic work
- Organizational forms of academic and scientific work
- Epistemological and methodological challenges of participatory research and learning
- Open science and citizen participation in research and higher education
- Multiple epistemologies and knowledge democracy
- Competition, cooperation, and the managerial university
- Ranking, evaluation, accountability
- Values of academic work
- Social responsibility of HE and research
- New and emerging teaching and research infrastructures for open science
- Epistemological and methodological challenges of participatory research
- Teaching and learning in the changing technology landscape

Key dates:

- **October 1, 2023:** Abstract submission deadline
- **October 9, 2023:** Communication of acceptance of the abstract
- **November 6, 2023:** Paper submission deadline
- **January 6, 2024:** Reviewers' feedback sent to authors (accepted/revise and resubmit/rejected) - IJSE adopts a blind reviewing policy, where both the referees and author(s) remain anonymous throughout the process. Each article is reviewed by at least two referees.
- **January 31, 2024:** Submission of the revised paper (if needed)
- The special section will be published in the VOL. 16, N. 1/2024.

Author Guidelines

Abstracts:

We ask for **abstracts in English** (500 to 750 words, with five keywords), to be sent as e-mail attachments (Word Format) to schessa@uniss.it

Articles (after acceptance of the abstract):

- **Must be submitted in English**
- **Should be original, not under review by any other journal and not published elsewhere**
- **Should not exceed 7.000 words**

If English is not your native or first language, before submitting your manuscript to IJSE you may wish to have it professionally edited

All manuscripts must follow the IJSE Author guidelines:

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Manuscripts must be submitted electronically to: schessa@uniss.it