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## Bashaer Alrukaibani, Analytics, Technology & Operations

### The process of aligning technology frames in digital archival projects

**Keywords:** Technology frame, effective technology use, stakeholder alignment process, case study, qualitative research.

**Description:** This paper explores the alignment process of diverse stakeholders who implement and use two digital archival projects to achieve effective technology use, employing interviews and document analysis.

#### Research problem

Research suggests stakeholder groups have their own technology assumptions and expectations that shape their views on its use, referred to as 'technology frames'. Aligning these frames is key to avoiding conflict. While calls for a process-based approach to alignment exist, much research (e.g., Gallivan, 2001; Mishra & Agarwal, 2010) treats frames as static, overlooking the dynamics of frameshifts (Orlikowski & Gash, 1994).

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

This paper investigates the process of aligning diverse stakeholders' perspectives by describing and analysing alignment approaches based on Thomas's (1992) conflict resolution model. The primary research question of this paper is: How do organisations manage the process of aligning technology frames to achieve effective use of technology?

#### Methodological approach

This paper employs an interpretative, in-depth case study. It focuses on two digital archive projects, Alpha and Beta, to preserve the cultural heritage of a Gulf country known for its rich history and previous data losses. The projects were selected for their engagement with unique cultural heritage materials that hold significant long-term social value. Data collection involved two stages: (1) gathering published data on the project milestones and (2) conducting 30 semi-structured interviews with internal stakeholders (management, IT, IT governance) and external suppliers. This was complemented by document analysis of over 100 files, including reports, training materials, and press releases.

#### Summary of key findings

The findings reveal that stakeholder groups experienced multiple misalignments rooted in differences in identity, perceived benefits and concerns about technology. Alignment can be achieved through cycles of adjustment involving avoidance, compromise, competition, accommodation, and collaboration.

During the initial implementation in Beta, most IT group members held an initial benefit frame, expecting improved digital content access and quality. Despite having no input in

project decisions, they 'compromised' by working on the project. However, as concerns about quality, work overload, and ineffective training increased, they shifted to a negative frame. Eventually, they 'avoided' further engagement, as the project manager, with a 'dominant frame' of being overambitious, dismissed their concerns, leading to the project being outsourced. Over time, the manager's enthusiasm declined, leading to retirement. Afterwards, the IT group's understanding of the project evolved, and they 'collaborated' with other groups to address ongoing challenges. In contrast, Alpha showed no evidence of dominant frames and achieved effective technology use.

### Key contributions

This paper contributes to the technology frames perspective by developing a dynamic process model for aligning stakeholder groups over time. This process starts with an initial understanding that differs among stakeholders. It emerges through a sequence of interpretive views, which may create a shared frame. It proposes alignment approaches across groups, shaping outcomes. It also shows that concerns related to technology use are often deeply rooted, with dominant frames influencing others.

## Norah Alsalhi, Management & Organisations

### Exploring the Relationships Between Ethical Leadership, Illegitimate Tasks, and Employee Well-being: The Moderating Roles of Justice Sensitivity and Psychological Entitlement

**Keywords:** Ethical Leadership, Illegitimate Tasks, Employee Well-being, Justice Sensitivity, Psychological Entitlement

**Description:** This study investigates the relationships between ethical leadership, employee perceptions of illegitimate tasks (unnecessary and unreasonable tasks), and various dimensions of employee well-being within an academic work environment. It further examines the moderating roles of justice sensitivity and psychological entitlement in these relationships.

#### Research problem

While ethical leadership is known to foster positive employee outcomes, limited research has explored its role in reducing perceptions of illegitimate tasks. This study addresses this gap by examining how ethical leadership relates to task legitimacy perceptions and employee well-being, and how individual differences in justice sensitivity and psychological entitlement influence these relationships.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Guided by Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, the study conceptualizes ethical leadership as a protective resource that buffers employees against the resourc draining effects of illegitimate tasks. Justice sensitivity and psychological entitlement are incorporated as moderators, shaping employees' emotional responses to perceived injustices and resource threats.

#### Methodological approach

A cross-sectional quantitative design was employed, utilizing survey data collected from faculty members at three universities in Saudi Arabia. Standardized and validated scales were used to measure ethical leadership, perceptions of illegitimate tasks, justice sensitivity, psychological entitlement, and employee well-being.

#### Summary of key findings

The findings revealed that ethical leadership was significantly negatively associated with perceptions of illegitimate tasks and positively associated with overall employee well-being. Moreover, justice sensitivity intensified the negative effect of unreasonable tasks on psychological well-being, whereas psychological entitlement consistently strengthened the detrimental impact of both unnecessary and unreasonable tasks across all well-being

domains. Mediation analyses revealed that perceptions of illegitimate tasks partially mediated the relationship between ethical leadership and employee well-being.

### Key contributions

This study enhances scholarly understanding of how ethical leadership correlates with perceptions of illegitimate tasks and employee well-being, significantly contributing to the theoretical framework on how leadership styles are associated with employee perceptions of work demands. Furthermore, integrating justice sensitivity and psychological entitlement as a moderator in these relationships offers a perspective on how individual differences influence the connection between perceived workplace injustices and well-being.



## Argyro Angeli, Accounting & Finance

### The digital trail of the main street and stock price synchronicity

**Keywords:** clickstream data, attention allocation, return synchronicity, retail investors, uncertainty

**Description:** This paper uses novel high-frequency click-level data to investigate how retail investors allocate their attention between market-wide and firm-specific information, and explores its implications for stock price synchronicity.

#### Research problem

Existing research presents competing explanations for stock price synchronicity, attributing it either to investors focusing broadly on market-level signals or to the efficient incorporation of detailed firm-specific information into stock prices. Our study empirically disentangles these conflicting attention mechanisms and assesses their distinct impacts on stock return synchronicity and overall market efficiency.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Due to cognitive constraints, investors exhibit rational inattention and must strategically allocate limited attention between firm-specific and market-wide information. Coordination theory argues that investors prioritise common market signals to predict peer behaviour, potentially causing asset prices to move together (synchronicity). Although the crowding-out of attention is more prominent for retail investors, retail attention synchronicity has no exploratory power over returns synchronicity. On the contrary, competing evidence emphasises the role of rapid firm-specific information incorporation in explaining synchronicity. Our research directly addresses these theoretical debates by empirically isolating and analysing these distinct attention dynamics and their precise effects on price synchronicity.

#### Methodological approach

We construct a unique high-frequency dataset capturing retail investor attention through click-by-click activity from over 200 financial websites. From this, we create separate measures for market-wide (MSID) and firm-specific (FSID) information demand and analyse their relationship to market uncertainty. We construct quarterly attention synchronicity measures to examine how attention metrics affect stock return synchronicity. Further, we develop an interaction-effect model distinguishing positive and negative correlations between FSID and MSID. Additionally, we introduce "information demand jumps," capturing sudden shifts in investor attention. We establish the determinants of FSID and MSID correlation through logistic regressions.

## Summary of key findings

We find that increased market uncertainty drives investor attention toward market-specific information, simultaneously reducing firm-specific focus. When MSID and FSID diverge (negative correlation), higher attention synchronicity leads to greater stock price synchronicity, supporting the crowding-out hypothesis proposed in prior literature. In contrast, when market-wide and firm-specific attention correlate positively, higher attention synchronicity is associated with reduced stock price synchronicity, indicating a spillover effect. These findings remain robust across multiple websites, significant attention correlations, and after controlling for extensive covariates.

## Key contributions

This paper contributes to the ongoing debate on whether stock price synchronicity is driven by the incorporation of more market-specific or firm-specific information. We address this key gap by empirically clarifying the relationship between retail investor information demand synchronicity and stock return synchronicity, an area previously characterised by mixed findings. We disentangle the distinct effects of positive and negative correlations between FSID and MSID, highlighting the nuanced dynamics of investor information processing. Finally, our study extends the research on retail investors by examining their attention allocation and decision-making processes, thereby enhancing understanding of their broader role in financial markets.

## Gogo Anyanwu, People, Work & Employment

### The effectiveness of Trade Unions as a mechanism of Voice for Employees in the Nigerian banking sector

**Keywords:** Employee voice, trade unions, union effectiveness, organising, union revitalization

**Description:** This paper discusses the critical role of trade unions in ensuring employee voice and rights in a changing world of work, particularly in emerging economies like Nigeria.

#### Research problem

In Nigeria, the abuse of employees' voice and rights exist in all sectors but is prevalent in banks due to inadequate representation by trade unions (Erap, 2011), resulting in the decline of union membership, active participation and workplace influence (Okoye et al., 2020). This research is important because members of the Bankers Union of Nigeria (BUN) are losing confidence in its ability to organise, achieve desired union objectives and quality collective bargaining outcomes. These have become consistent with seeming evidence that the interests of union leaders differ from those they represent (Hyman, 1975; Anyim et al., 2013). Thus, facilitating the abuse of employees' right and voice, decline in union membership, participation and influence in the banking sector (Fajana, 2006; Okoye et al., 2020). These are significant issues that require further research.

This paper argues that for trade unions to serve as a mechanism of voice for employees, they must demonstrate effectiveness, as the level of enthusiasm among union members is closely linked to unions' ability to protect employees' rights and achieve positive collective bargaining outcomes (Sarmah, 2017). Consequently, this study investigates the extent and form of how employee voice operates in the Nigerian financial sector, with focus on the role of trade unions in facilitating and guaranteeing effective voice.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Union revitalization theory (Frege and Kelly, 2003; Levesque and Murray, 2006; Trif et al., 2023) provides valuable insight into the adjustments and change initiatives undertaken by unions to restore strength and influence over the years. In analysing BUN's activities further, this research also draws on Burchielli's (2004) 'typology of union effectiveness' (representative, administrative and ideological effectiveness) in answering the research questions.

#### Methodological approach

This research applied qualitative approach because it is effective for examining complex phenomena in specific contexts (Cypriss, 2017). Data collection was done via semi-structured interviews with 51 participants (experience union members and executives,

managers and union employees) drawn from 5 unionized Nigerian commercial banks and a labour centre.

### Summary of key findings

Data analyses of BUN's practices reveal a union grappling with structural and contextual issues, including weak communication, limited technological integration, and inconsistent engagement of members. A critical concern among participants is the lack of union communication which undermines trust and weakens activities. Leadership quality emerges a central factor in recruitment, member participation, and collective bargaining outcomes. Additionally, the lack of members interest in active participation and internal democracy hinders the emergence of competent leadership. BUN practices a combination of union models.

### Key contributions

This study contributes to union revitalization theory by highlighting BUN's practices which this research refers to as 'Hybrid Model' – combination of aspects of closed shop, service model and organising model of unionism (Zappala, 1992; Schenk, 2003; Holgate, 2021). This model plays a role in union revitalization and contributes to literature. Also, this research contributes to union revitalization theory (Frege and Kelly, 2003) and further advances the understanding of the renewal of union power in a particular context (Lévesque and Murray, 2010) that is unexplored.

## BIPASHA BARUA, Accounting & Finance

### Financial technology adoption by banks and its impact on bank stability

**Keywords:** Bank, Financial technology, Bank stability, US Banking sector

**Description:** The research assesses the impact of financial technology adoption on bank financial stability, using US banks as a sample.

### Research problem

Does fintech adoption influence banks' financial stability? This research examines whether banks' fintech adoption through internal investments and external collaboration influence their financial stability.

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

## Methodological approach

In measuring banks' fintech adoption, this research develops a Fintech Adoption Score (FAS) by text mining technique on the annual financial reports of the banks. The research uses Z score, a commonly utilized technique for measuring financial stability. The following model is estimated to explore the impact of FAS on Z-score:

$$\ln Z_{it} = \alpha + \beta_2 FAS_{it} + \beta_3 BSIZE_{it} + \beta_4 CAP_{it} + \beta_5 LEN_{it} + \beta_6 DIV_{it} + \beta_7 CONR_{it} \\ + \beta_8 INF_{it} + \beta_9 BRATE_{it} + \beta_{10} INGDP_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Here,  $i$  and  $t$  represent entities (e.g., bank) and time (e.g., year), respectively, and  $\alpha$  denote constant,  $\beta$ s are coefficients to be estimated e.g., the impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable and  $\varepsilon_{it}$  denotes error term. The banklevel fixed effect dummy captures the unobserved heterogeneity or differences between banks, while the time fixed-effects dummy controls for the changes in the bank stability happening due to changes in time (i.e., over the years). While FAS measure fintech adoption and Z-score measure financial stability, BSIZE, CAP, LEN, DIV, CONR are banklevel control variables e.g., (bank size, capitalization, lending ratio, diversification, concentration ratio); INF, BRATE, and INGDP are macroeconomic control variables for inflation, bank rates, and gross domestic product, respectively).

This study primarily uses the Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS) estimator, an instrumental variable (IV) based estimation technique used to address the endogeneity problems in regression models where there is the possibility that one or more explanatory variables are correlated with the error term. This research uses the Instrumental Variable- Generalized Method for Moments (IV-GMM) estimator as another dynamic panel estimation technique.

## Summary of key findings

The regression coefficient on fintech adoption score  $-.2005$  and  $-.1605$  from 2SLS and IV-GMM, respectively. It indicates that a one unit increase in fintech adoption is associated with a decrease of  $-.2005$  and  $-.1605$  units in the Z-score of banks. On the other hand, considering the two-lag period in both dependent and independent variables, the fintech adoption score shows a statistically significant and negative impact on bank stability. As since this is small (38 banks), it is likely to improve with a larger sample size. Hansen's J for IV-GMM, Sargan, and Basman tests for 2SLS results are statistically insignificant, confirming that the instrument used is valid and the IV regression model specified is correct. **Key**

### contributions

1. While existing literature explores the effects of fintech adoption within banks and fintech development outside banks on their operations and performance, little research has examined whether or how internal fintech adoption impacts banks' financial stability.

2. Additionally, this study introduces a novel machine-learning-based FAS score derived from text mining to measure fintech adoption in banks. This score offers a potential standard for future research without a widely accepted metric.

## Oliver Bell, Accounting & Finance

### What Fees do Investors Really Pay for Private Capital Funds?

**Based on paper initial draft that is under embargo: comments and suggestions welcome.**

**Please do not quote or disseminate without permission.**

**Keywords:** Private Equity, Institutional Investors, Investment Costs and Fees, Carried Interest

**Description:** Using novel data, we reveal the actual fees incurred by limited partners invested in private equity funds

#### Research problem

Private equity research is a growing field. However, the costs of private equity funds are rarely mentioned, in both industry and academia. The only significant paper to discuss these costs makes use of net-performance data and does not observe the costs directly (Begenau and Siriwardane, 2024). What costs investors actually incur in these funds, and to what degree, is unknown. Pricing economies-of-scale are also unknown.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The FCA's 2017 Asset Management Market Study (FCA, 2017) provided the regulatory framework for allowing client-specific disclosure, created by the Institutional Disclosure Working Group. This framework, the cost transparency initiative, has led to industry adoption, and hence the provision for investigating costs at the client-specific level in private equity funds.

#### Methodological approach

We use CTI private market mandates collected by data collection and processing firm ClearGlass Analytics to investigate the firms incurred by UK limited partners, specifically institutional pension schemes, in private equity funds. The data accounts for 70% of total UK private equity LP holdings. The granularity of this collection framework means there are over a dozen cost groups we investigate. The main area of investigation focuses on management fees, carried interest, and interest expense for fund financing.

#### Summary of key findings

We find that management fees, both gross and net of rebates, are far from the 2% of committed capital believed by market sentiment and commonly referenced in academic papers. Total ongoing charges approach 2% of committed capital in the investment stage,

however. This indicates that there has been a nomenclature issue, and once costs are partitioned, unusual costs e.g. interest expense are discovered, but management fees are lower than expected. Economies-of-scale, though statistically significant in explaining the level of management fee, are economically insignificant. This contrasts with mutual funds where the literature has found larger investment scale to reduce costs. Rebates and zero-fee are found to be relatively common at the start and end of funds.

#### Key contributions

This is the first paper to directly discuss client-specific private equity fund costs, at a granular level. No previous paper has explored the carry accrual and distribution cycle. We are also the first to look at total ongoing costs, including management fees and third-party expenses. The level of cost burden due to interest expense is unexpectedly high, and of significant interest to both industry and academia. We build on previous literature that has implied through use of net-performance data, that clients in the same fund receive different fee schedules.

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## Andrea Charalambous, Accounting & Finance

### WHERE PEOPLE BANK, CREDIT EXPANDS: MIGRATION-DRIVEN DEPOSITS AND CREDIT SUPPLY

**Keywords:** Internal Migration, Deposit Markets, Credit Markets, Bank Lending Behavior

**Description:** This paper explores how migration-induced changes in bank deposit markets drive local credit supply in the U.S. banking sector.

#### Research problem

When banks experience deposit shocks from internal migration, whether from immigration or emigration, it remains unclear how they respond. Do banks actively transform migration-driven changes in deposits into expanded credit supply, or do they passively adjust their balance sheets without significantly altering lending?

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

This paper builds on the idea that funding shocks create liquidity synergies between banks' funding and lending activities (De Jonghe et al., 2019; Yang, 2021). Yang (2021) shows that exogenous deposit shocks from Chinese student inflows lead banks to expand credit supply, particularly in information-sensitive markets. Similarly, I examine how internal migration-driven deposit flows affect U.S. banks' credit supply, using domestic migration as a natural experiment. Furthermore, De Jonghe et al. (2019) demonstrate that banks respond to funding shocks by strategically reallocating credit, favoring sectors where they have greater market share, specialization, or lower borrower risk, rather than applying uniform credit cuts. I test whether migration-driven deposit shocks lead banks to actively expand their mortgage lending. Given that migrants are more likely to require mortgage loans, I hypothesize that positive funding shocks from migration flows trigger strategic adjustments in lending behavior, specifically an increased focus on mortgage lending. **Methodological approach**

#### 1. Bank Exposure to Migration

$$\text{Bank Exposure}_{bt} = \ln \left( 1 + \sum (\text{Weighted deposits}_{ict} * \text{Migration}_{ict} * \text{Migration Dummy}_{it} / \text{Branch Network}_{bt}) \right) \quad (3)$$

**Where:**

- $\text{Weighted deposits}_{ict}$ : share of total deposits held by branch  $i$  in county  $c$  during year  $t$ .
- $\text{Migration}_{ict}$ : net-migration, immigration or emigration at the branch-level of branch  $i$  in county  $c$  during year  $t$ .



- Migration Dummy<sub>it</sub>: Indicator variable equal to 1 if a branch's migration exposure falls in the top quartile (4th quartile) for immigration and high net migration. For emigration and low net migration, which have negative signs, the indicator equals 1 if the branch's exposure falls in the bottom quartile (1st quartile).
- Branch Network<sub>bt</sub>: the number of branches that bank  $b$  has in time  $t$ .

## 2. Regression Model

$$\text{Loan Growth}_{bt} = \alpha_i + \beta_1 \text{Bank Exposure}_{bt} + \gamma_{ct} + \delta_b + \eta_c + \theta_t + \varepsilon_{ct} \quad (4)$$

### Where:

- Loan Growth<sub>bct</sub>: Loan growth in bank  $b$  at time  $t$ .
- Bank Exposure<sub>bt</sub> : Bank's exposure to migration at time  $t$ .
- $\gamma_{ct}$  : County-time fixed effects.
- $\delta_b$ : Bank fixed effects.
- $\eta_c$  : County fixed effects.
- $\theta_t$  : Time fixed effects

## Summary of key findings

The key findings show that bank exposure to low net migration reduces credit supply growth, while exposure to high net migration increases credit supply growth. Additionally, migration exposure primarily affects banks' deposit liabilities and funding composition, without impacting other funding sources like equity or wholesale funding. Hence, any effect of migration-driven deposits on credit supply is solely due to the migration-driven deposits themselves, and not the result of additional funding that the bank may be obtaining through other sources.

## Key contributions

**Bank Response to Migration Shocks:** This paper demonstrates how banks strategically adjust their credit supply in response to previously unexplored funding shocks driven by migration. It contributes to our understanding of how banks may align changes in funding composition with corresponding shifts in lending allocation, as evidenced by migration-driven deposits being directed towards mortgage lending to potentially support migrants' relocation and settlement in new areas.

Regional Economy: By isolating the effect of migration-driven deposits on credit supply, this study underscores the pivotal role of migration in regional economic development. It illustrates how migration-induced funding shocks can alter local banking activity, with profound implications for regional economic growth and stability.

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## Can Cheng, Management & Organisations

### UNDERSTANDING REFRIGERATOR MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOURS: A COM-B MODEL INFORMED QUALITATIVE STUDY

**Keywords:** Food safety; Refrigerator management behaviour; COM-B model; Household; User-friendly fridge

**Description:** This study examines the behavioural and contextual factors that shape how UK households use their refrigerators—focusing on temperature control, food organisation, and door opening habits—to uncover design opportunities for safer and more user-friendly fridge systems, using the COM-B model as a guiding framework.

#### Research problem

Despite decades of access to modern refrigeration technology, many UK households still engage in suboptimal refrigerator practices—such as poor food placement, irregular temperature checking, and leaving the fridge door open for an extended time — that may compromise food quality and safety. While these behaviours are welldocumented, there is limited understanding of how everyday behaviours and environmental contexts shape how people interact with their refrigerators. This gap hinders the ability of manufacturers and designers to develop fridges that truly support safe and efficient food storage in real homes. To address this, the study explores Capability, Opportunity, Motivation barriers to effective fridge use as a foundation for user-informed design.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

This study is guided by the COM-B model (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation– Behaviour), which conceptualises behaviour change as dependent on an individual’s physical and psychological capability, social and environmental opportunity, and both reflective and automatic motivation. The interview protocol is further structured using the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF), allowing a fine-grained understanding of behavioural determinants across capability, opportunity, and motivation constructs.

#### Methodological approach

The study adopts a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews with 20 UK households with diverse demographics. The interviews will explore participants’ fridgerelated behaviours—such as temperature checking, food organisation, and door usage. Interview data will be transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis structured by COM-B and Theoretical Domains Framework domains to capture the complexity of daily fridge management.

### Summary of key findings

Data collection is ongoing, and the results of temperature checking, food organisation, and door usage behaviours will be presented and discussed during the conference in light of the literature.

### Key contributions

This study contributes to the design and innovation of domestic refrigeration by identifying key behavioural and contextual drivers that affect how consumers interact with fridge storage. Using the COM-B model as a theoretical lens, the research generates insights into how fridge features, and user behaviour intersect to influence food safety outcomes. The findings offer actionable implications for refrigerator manufacturers seeking to design user-centred products that promote safer and more efficient food storage. These insights also lay the groundwork for future large-scale behavioural studies that can inform product development and market strategy.

## Ming Cheng, Marketing

### Economic Inequality and Pricing for Premiums in Retail Markets

Economic inequality is not only a topic in economics, but also has far-reaching implications for other social sciences, including marketing. Research has shown that geographic economic inequality has a noticeable impact on price in retail markets, especially in vertically differentiated markets with large differences in product quality and price.

Particularly in the organic food market, which is considered a typical example of a vertically differentiated product, it is crucial to understand how economic inequality affects its price premium.

This study seeks to explore whether retail prices are affected by levels of income inequality, or alternatively, whether and how retail prices adjust to local levels of income inequality. Theoretically, economic inequality leads to market stratification, and retailers and brands take advantage of the price insensitivity of high-income groups by catering for them by enhancing the quality and price of their organic products. This means that retailers' and brands' pricing strategies targeting higher income groups may result in higher prices for organic products in these regions. Therefore, we assume that the premium pricing of organic products might not only reflect production costs but also the broader socio-economic context, including income inequality and market segmentation. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following questions: (1) To what extent does economic inequality drive premium pricing strategies in the context of organic foods? (2) How do these strategies differ between national and private label brands?

In addressing these questions, we make three contributions. First, it enriches the literature on the impact of economic factors, particularly economic inequality, on the retail product pricing, especially in contexts characterized by premium products (e.g. organic food). Second, while some studies have found that the larger gap between high-income and low-income groups leads to higher retail prices, our research could reveal whether these trends hold true in the organic market or whether the premium nature of organic products introduces different pricing patterns based on income inequality. Moreover, the study attempts to investigate the premium pricing of organic products might not only reflect production costs but also the broader socio-economic context, including income inequality and market segmentation.

We make these contributions by testing the four hypotheses.

The study attempts to examine if retail pricing of organic products varies regionally according to the level of regional economic inequality. The results of the study have important implications for both policymakers and retailers. For policymakers, the results suggest that economic inequality may exacerbate price differentials in the organic food market, potentially limiting low-income consumers' access to healthier foods. This emphasizes the need to improve access to organic produce in economically disadvantaged areas through

interventions such as subsidies or price controls. For retailers, the findings provide guidance on how to tailor pricing strategies to different groups of consumers, particularly in areas with high economic inequality. Retailers can capitalize on the price insensitivity of affluent consumers to optimize pricing strategies and maximize profits, while taking into account the wider socio-economic context in market positioning.

## Qian Cheng, International Business

### Unpacking the impact of the innovation ecosystem on EMNEs' innovation performance in international business

This study conducts a systematic literature review to explore the impact of the innovation ecosystem on the innovation performance of emerging market multinational enterprises (EMNEs). Based on a bibliometric and content analysis of 61 relevant studies, we identify four key research themes: triple helix agents, collaborative networks, value co-creation, and knowledge transfer. These themes reveal the multifaceted mechanisms through which the innovation ecosystem can enhance firms' innovation performance. However, existing research predominantly focuses on domestic innovation ecosystems embedded by local firms, with little attention paid to firms' international status and the innovation ecosystem they embed in developed countries. In particular, EMNEs remain significantly underexplored. To address this gap, this study integrates the concept of ecosystem-specific advantages from ecosystem literature with resource dependence theory from international business literature, to explain how EMNEs transfer and embed ecosystem-specific advantages from their home-country innovation ecosystems into those of developed countries. In view of this insights, we propose a comprehensive conceptual framework that provides a theoretical foundation and future research directions for understanding the relationship between the innovation ecosystem and EMNEs' innovation performance.

## Abioye Dada, Management & Organisations

### Servant leadership, PSM and Organisational Citizen Behaviours in the Nigerian Public Sector: Exploring Religion as a Moderator

**Keywords:** Servant leadership, Religion, Public Service Motivation, Organisation Citizenship Behaviour

**Description:** This study examines the relationship between Servant Leadership, Organisational Citizenship Behaviours (OCB), Public Service Motivation (PSM), and Religion.

#### Research problem

Several studies have established a positive relationship between servant leadership and organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs). Additionally, prior research has identified various mediators within this relationship. However, a gap remains regarding the mediators involved. Identifying these mediators is crucial for enhancing our understanding of how servant leadership influences employee OCBs. This study aims to explore the relationship

between servant leadership and employees' organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) within the Nigerian public sector. Specifically, the research examines a moderated mediation model in which servant leadership is indirectly linked to employees' organisational citizenship behaviours towards individuals (OCBI) and clients (OCBC) through public service motivation (PSM). Furthermore, this mediated relationship is moderated by religion. The proposed model was tested using time-lagged data collected from 369 public servants across seven Federal Ministries in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria.

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

This study is grounded in the process theory of public service motivation (Perry, 1996), a theoretical framework that views public service motivation as a dynamic phenomenon influenced by a combination of individual characteristics, sociohistorical context, and organisational environment. The research focuses on the organisational context of this theory, particularly the role of servant leadership.

### Methodological approach

The research employed a positivist paradigm and a quantitative approach. Data was collected from employees at two different time points to minimise common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2012). The study assessed the independent variable (Servant Leadership) and the moderating variable (Religion) at Time 1. Additionally, demographic information was gathered at the same time point. One month later, the mediating variable (PSM) and the employees' OCBI and OCBC (dependent variables) were assessed at Time 2. Two control variables, Social Learning and Social Exchange, were also evaluated at Time 2. Each questionnaire included a cover letter stating that participation was voluntary and anonymous, in accordance with the University of Leeds guidelines.

### Summary of key findings

The study's findings established a positive relationship between servant leadership and PSM. Moreover, PSM mediates the relationship between servant leadership and OCBI and OCBC. Additionally, religion moderates the relationship between servant leadership and PSM, as well as the indirect relationship between servant leadership and OCBs through PSM. This influence was more pronounced at higher levels of religious commitment compared to lower levels of commitment.

### Key contributions

This study addresses the need for more empirical investigations into PSM theory by examining the 'socialisation influences' component of the theory, with a particular focus on the role of religion. It examines how religion moderates the relationship between servant leadership, PSM, and OCBs.

This research adopts a unique theoretical approach, utilising the process theory of public service motivation (PSM) rather than traditional social learning and social exchange theories to investigate the relationship between servant leadership and employee behaviours (Chen



et al., 2015; Panaccio et al., 2015; Bavik et al., 2017). The mediating effects of social exchange and social learning were controlled for, offering a fresh perspective on the relationship between servant leadership, OCBI and OCBC.

## Maren Doemer, Marketing

### Seeing Mind in Machines: How Similarity Perceptions Drives AI Receptivity Among Collectivists

**Keywords:** AI receptivity, Collectivism, Perceived similarity, Mind perception, Crosscultural differences

**Description:** This paper examines the psychological mechanisms through which collectivism enhances receptivity toward artificial intelligence (AI), proposing that individuals high in collectivist orientation are more likely to attribute humanlike qualities to AI agents, thereby perceiving greater similarity with them and ultimately exhibiting heightened AI receptivity.

#### Research problem

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly integrated into consumer-facing technologies, understanding factors driving user receptivity is critical. While prior research has explored technological features, application contexts, and task-related predictors, consumer-side cultural influences remain comparatively underexplored. By focusing on collectivism, a key dimension of cultural sociality (Kitayama and Salvador, 2024), this work provides a cultural perspective on how individuals socially engage with emerging technologies, addressing this gap.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Drawing from sociality motivation theory (Waytz, Epley, & Cacioppo, 2010) and similarity-attraction theory (Montoya & Horton, 2004), the authors propose that individuals in collectivist cultures, who define the self through social relationships (Ellemers et al., 2002), are more likely to anthropomorphize AI agents. This increased attribution of mind to AI (Epley et al., 2007) heightens perceived similarity between users and AI, ultimately leading to greater AI receptivity. Collectivism thus fosters a relational lens through which consumers evaluate AI technologies, promoting social connection even with nonhuman agents.

#### Methodological approach

The research employed a multi-study, multi-method approach. Study 1 analyzed a multi-wave (2022–2024) panel dataset, applying a Bayesian multilevel model to country-level secondary data from 34 countries to examine the relationship between national collectivism scores and longitudinal changes in AI receptivity, while controlling for economic and technological covariates. Study 2 recruited 600 participants (Chinaborn and UK-born) to

assess whether collectivism predicts perceived similarity with AI and AI receptivity at the individual level. Study 3a and 3b (pretests) tested the role of mind perception in mediating the collectivism–similarity relationship while ruling out alternative mechanisms. Finally, Study 4 (pretest) experimentally manipulated both perceived similarity and collectivism among U.S. participants to demonstrate causality.

### Summary of key findings

Across all studies, collectivism positively predicted AI receptivity. Country-level collectivism significantly forecasted AI receptivity even when controlling for economic and technological variables. At the individual level, collectivists reported higher AI receptivity, mediated by perceived similarity with AI agents. Experimental evidence further confirmed that collectivists respond more favorably to AI agents perceived as similar. Mind perception was identified as a key mechanism driving these effects.

### Key contributions

This research advances understanding of cultural influences on technology acceptance by identifying collectivism as a central predictor of AI receptivity. It introduces perceived similarity with AI, rooted in mind perception, as a critical psychological pathway linking cultural values to AI attitudes. The findings extend mind perception literature by demonstrating that cultural orientation systematically moderates anthropomorphism of nonhuman agents. Practically, the work offers insights for the culturally sensitive design and deployment of AI, suggesting the importance of aligning AI with users' cultural sociality motivations.

## Hritic Gautam, Economics

### Too Poor to Afford Time: Bivariate Measurement of Time and Consumption Poverty in India

**Keywords:** Time Poverty, Consumption Poverty, Poverty Measurement, Household Production, Indian Time Use Survey

**Description:** This paper develops a new method of measuring time and consumption poverty and applies it to evaluate time poverty in India using the Indian Time Use Surveys of 2019 and 2024.

### Research problem

The concept of time poverty is still evolving, and many of the existing methods in the literature to measure it remain rudimentary, often relying on ‘free time’—defined as the time remaining after both paid and unpaid work responsibilities—as the key evaluative variable. However, ‘free time’ is merely a particular way of calculating time and offers limited

insight into individuals' temporal well-being. Rather than focusing on whether individuals have enough free time, the concern of time poverty should focus on whether individuals can have free time. It is possible for someone to have no free time and yet exercise full autonomy over their time. For instance, a billionaire who chooses to work 100 hours a week may have virtually no free time, but would we really consider them time poor?

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Free time is typically calculated as the residual after subtracting time spent on activities deemed obligatory. However, this can be misleading, as not all time spent on such activities is strictly necessary. For example, individuals may spend hours preparing elaborate meals, but that would be an exercise of their temporal autonomy rather than a constraint. Similarly, people often work longer hours in paid employment than needed for subsistence, but this should not make them time poor if the additional work hours are not required to avoid poverty.

### Methodological approach

I build on the LIMTIP framework with three key modifications: disaggregating household production into housework and care work, treating educational time as necessary for students, and accounting for economic well-being while calculating time poverty. Time deficits are estimated using shares of socially necessary unpaid work from non-linear regressions, with monthly per capita expenditure capturing access to time-saving assets. Time poverty is defined through both individual deficits and household-level economic constraints, ensuring only unavoidable burdens tied to subsistence needs are considered to determine time poverty.

I apply this method using the Indian Time Use Surveys (ITUS) of 2019 and 2024. Since ITUS captures time use only for the day preceding the survey, I apply a regression model to estimate individuals' long-term time use patterns and use the predicted values to evaluate both time and consumption poverty.

### Summary of key findings

The findings show an increase in time poverty from 16.1% in 2019 to 18.7% in 2024, driven largely by a sharp rise in urban areas—from 14.9% to 21.9%. Women are more time-poor than men in rural areas, while the reverse is observed in urban regions. The results also highlight that estimates of time poverty are highly sensitive to how thresholds for necessary time in personal care, household work, and labour are defined, pointing to the need for more robust methods to determine these benchmarks. **Key contributions**

This paper makes two key contributions to the literature. Methodologically, it develops a framework to identify individuals who lack the necessary time to reproduce themselves, physically and socially, without risking income poverty. Empirically, it applies this approach to assess time poverty in India.

## Mawaddah Ghazali, Analytics, Technology & Operations

### Interdependency and Organisational Learning in Flood-Prone Healthcare Systems: Preliminary Insights From Malaysia

**Keywords:** healthcare resilience, organisational learning, interdependency, flooding, qualitative research

**Description:** This paper explores how interdependent relationships influence organisational learning in flood-prone healthcare systems, drawing on preliminary findings from fieldwork in rural Malaysia.

#### Research problem

Climate-related disasters, particularly floods, increasingly disrupt healthcare systems. While healthcare resilience has gained attention, limited research has explored how healthcare organisations learn from past disruptions and how interdependency practices with energy, transport, water, communication, and other sectors shape this learning. In Malaysia, where floods are the most frequent and damaging natural disaster, understanding how healthcare services adapt and collaborate is crucial to strengthening system resilience.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The study is based on organisational learning theory, especially Nonaka and Takeuchi's knowledge creation model, and incorporates concepts from resilience engineering and the interdependence of critical infrastructures. These frameworks help explore how experience-based learning emerges through inter-organisational collaboration. The research also incorporates interdependency thinking to understand the systemic links influencing healthcare response and adaptation. It recognises that learning and preparation for emergencies occur not in isolation but through collaboration between healthcare systems and the external infrastructure sectors.

#### Methodological approach

A qualitative case study approach was employed, with the first fieldwork conducted in Bau District, Sarawak (April 2025). Data collection included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis. Field observations and informal interactions provided critical contextual insights into local practices. Interviews are currently being transcribed, and initial familiarisation with the data is in progress.

#### Summary of key findings

Preliminary reflections show that flood-related knowledge is often stored informally and shared across clinics through casual encounters such as training sessions. Staff in rural clinics demonstrated strong improvisation skills during flood events, adapting flexibly to limited

resources and unpredictable conditions. Coordination with external agencies typically occurs via hierarchical pathways (e.g., through the District Health Office), limiting direct collaboration at the clinic level.

Egocentric maps revealed that local communities, nearby clinics, hospitals, BOMBA (Fire and Rescue Department), and APM (Civil Defence Force) are the most frequently cited collaborators during flood responses. However, participants also highlighted persistent challenges with critical infrastructure, particularly communication (e.g., unstable phone lines and internet access) and water supply, which routinely affect operations even outside of flood periods and complicate emergency responses further.

WhatsApp emerged as a crucial platform supporting real-time information sharing and coordination across all organisational levels, from state and divisional health departments to district health offices and rural clinics, highlighting the importance of accessible, flexible communication technologies in disaster-prone and resourceconstrained environments. Communication fragility and informal knowledge-sharing are central themes.

### Key contributions

Preliminary findings suggest that while adaptive actions and cross-sector coordination exist, resilience learning remains informal and experience-based, particularly in rural clinics. The study underscores the need for structured systems to capture and use flood-related learning in future planning. It also shows how interdependencies—like communication and referral networks—shape learning and coordination. These insights offer practical guidance for improving disaster preparedness and knowledge sharing in resource-limited settings.

## Fangqi Guo, Accounting & Finance

### Public Scrutiny and Supply Chain Decarbonization

**Keywords:** Public Scrutiny; Index Addition; Carbon Emissions; Supply Chain

**Description:** Using a stacked difference-in-differences design based on the staggered inclusion in the S&P 500 index, we find that heightened public scrutiny prompts newly indexed firms to decarbonize their supply chains.

### Research problem

For most sectors, carbon emissions from supply chains—particularly from upstream activities—account for the majority of total corporate emissions. However, prior research has primarily focused on the drivers of decarbonizing firms' direct operations, with little attention given to the motivations behind supply chain decarbonization. In recent years, growing environmental awareness and increasing regulatory demands have led stakeholders

to place greater scrutiny on corporate supply-chain carbon performance. Motivated by this development, we aim to explore the following research questions:

How do firms manage their supply chain carbon performance in response to greater public scrutiny?

What strategies do focal firms adopt to reduce supply-chain carbon emissions under heightened scrutiny?

What firm-specific factors influence the motivation and ability of focal firms to reduce supply-chain carbon emissions?

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Our study builds on stakeholder theory and institutional theory to explain corporate supply chain decarbonization. Stakeholder theory suggests that firms respond to external pressures from various stakeholders to align with environmental expectations. Institutional theory posits that firms seek legitimacy by conforming to societal norms. As public scrutiny of corporate supply-chain carbon performance increases, firms are increasingly compelled to decarbonize their supply chains to maintain legitimacy and stakeholder trust.

### Methodological approach

An empirical challenge in examining our research questions is identifying the causal effect of public scrutiny. In this paper, we exploit the staggered timing of S&P 500 index additions and adopt a stacked DID design. Specifically, we compare the supply chain carbon performance of newly indexed firms around the time of index additions to that of a control group composed of firms that meet the S&P 500's annual reconstitution criteria but are not ultimately selected. This control group offers a credible counterfactual and helps mitigate concerns about the exogeneity of index additions and potential selection biases.

### Summary of key findings

We find that newly indexed firms decarbonize their supply chains in response to heightened scrutiny. This decarbonization is primarily achieved by initiating relationships with green suppliers, rather than terminating those with brown suppliers. Instead, firms actively manage supply-chain emissions by encouraging existing suppliers to reduce their carbon footprint. The decarbonization effect is more pronounced when focal firms have stronger motivations and greater capabilities to manage their supply chains.

### Key contributions

First, our study is among the first in accounting and finance to investigate the motivations underlying corporate supply chain decarbonization.

Second, our findings contribute to the literature on the effects of index additions by examining their impact on corporate environmental performance.

Third, we add to the literature on climate-conscious stakeholders by shifting the focus from individual stakeholder groups to the broader impact of scrutiny from all stakeholders on corporate supply chain carbon performance.

## Wenqi Guo, Accounting & Finance

### Director Career Concern and Employee Mistreatment: Evidence from Wage Theft

**Keywords:** Board of Directors, Majority Voting, Shareholder Empowerment, Corporate Misconduct, Wage Theft

**Description:** This paper studies whether the staggered enactment of Majority Voting legislation, which empowers shareholder voting rights in directors' elections, promotes a firm's wage theft violations.

#### Research problem

Will firms commit more wage theft violations after the enactment of MV legislation?

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Building on agency theory, we examine how directors respond to re-election pressures in ways that may conflict with broader stakeholder interests, particularly employee welfare. Shareholder empowerment after the MV legislation aligns managerial decisions more closely with shareholder interests, and the pressure of losing their place on the board incentivizes managerial short-termism behaviour to boost firm performance, which promotes cost cutting activities such as engaging in wage theft violations.

#### Methodological approach

This study adopts a stacked difference-in-differences (DiD) approach based on the staggered enactment of MV legislation in US states. Based on the year when the US states enact MV rules, we designate different cohorts using a [-5, +5] event year window surrounding the adoption year. In each cohort, we manually matched the treatment firms with control firms using observable firm characters in the year prior to the adoption of MV legislation, and we stacked all matched cohorts to form our final sample. We then estimate the treatment effect using OLS model.

#### Summary of key findings

We find that wage theft violation is more prevalent after MV legislation, and firms pursue higher violation penalty amounts after the enactment. This effect is strengthened by the presence of financial constraints, and it is mitigated by labour mobility and labour

unionization. Also, the effect is attenuated in a collaborative corporate culture where employee involvement is high.

### Key contributions

This paper contributes to the studies of both the consequence of shareholder empowerment, and the incentives of corporate misconduct. The push for greater shareholder empowerment, particularly through enhanced voting rights in directors' reelections, is seen as a way to better align directors' actions with shareholder interests. Yet this governance mechanism may have unintended consequences. When directors face intensified pressure to secure their place on the board, they may prioritize shortterm performance over ethical conduct. While prior studies link governance structures to financial reporting choices or corporate policies, the potential for directors to respond to governance pressure by externalizing costs onto vulnerable stakeholders remains underexplored. This paper explores and provides evidence that directors respond to increased career concern by cutting labour cost through wage theft violations.



## Ying Jin, Marketing

### OPTIMIZING PROMOTIONAL COMPETITIONS: THE IMPACT OF SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE CONTEST ENTRY TYPES

**Keywords:** Promotional Competitions, Contest Entry Types, Consumer Engagement, Procedural Fairness

**Description:** This paper examines how subjective versus objective contest entry types influence consumer engagement and perceptions of fairness in promotional competitions.

#### Research problem

Promotional competitions are crucial marketing tools widely used to enhance consumer engagement and stimulate sales. Examples include McDonald's Monopoly, Coca-Cola's eYeka competitions, and Amazon's giveaways. Despite their popularity, there remains limited understanding regarding how different contest entry types— subjective (opinion-based) versus objective (fact-based)—impact consumer engagement and perceived fairness. This gap limits marketers' ability to optimize promotional activities effectively.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Previous studies have focused on consumer behavior in competitive settings (Lazear and Rosen, 1981; Gill and Prowse, 2012; Hock et al., 2020) and promotional effectiveness (Pauwels et al., 2002; Grewal et al., 2011; Hanna et al., 2017). However, these studies have not deeply explored consumer reactions to varying contest entry formats or their implications for fairness perceptions and engagement.

#### Methodological approach

An experimental method was employed, involving two promotional competition scenarios: one subjective and one objective. Participants (N=390, 42.1% female, Mean Age = 39.6, SD = 1.07) were randomly assigned to imagine entering one of these competitions by answering either subjective or objective questions. Subsequently, participants indicated their participation likelihood and perceptions regarding procedural and distributive fairness of the competition.

#### Summary of key findings

Analysis showed procedural fairness significantly mediated the relationship between contest entry type and participation likelihood (Mean\_subjective = 3.06, SD = .94 vs. Mean\_objective = 3.65, SD = .91; mediation effect  $b = .12$ , SE = .37, 95% CI = [.05, .20]). However, distributive fairness did not significantly mediate this relationship (Mean\_subjective = 3.91, SD = .82 vs. Mean\_objective = 3.99, SD = .80;  $b = .04$ , SE = .38, 95% CI = [-.03, .011]).

### Key contributions

This research highlights the critical role of procedural fairness as a driver of consumer engagement in promotional competitions. By distinguishing the effects of subjective and objective contest entry types, this study provides practical insights for marketers aiming to optimize promotional strategies to enhance consumer participation and satisfaction.

## Alireza Kamali, International Business

### **Institutional Actorhood and Trust Boundaries: How do Senior Executives Locate Their Trust When Forming International Strategic Alliances?**

**Keywords:** multilevel trust, institutional theory, international strategic alliances, emerging markets

**Description:** This paper explores to theorise the multilevel inter-organisational trust discourse concerning the institutional theory in international business.

#### Research problem

Inter-organisational trust research maintains that trust operates at both individual and organisational levels as distinct but interrelated constructs. However, the literature lacks consensus on their relative importance and the conditions influencing their interplay (Schilke and Lumineau, 2023), as observed in the International Business (IB) literature (Fregidou-Malama and Hyder, 2021; Zahoor et al., 2023). A micro-institutional view sheds light on individual vis-à-vis organisational controversy. A higher level of institutionalisation within the organisation increases the organisational actorhood and, hence, the locus of trust (Schilke and Lumineau, 2023). Two aspects demand scrutiny from an IB perspective, particularly in the ex-ante context. First, understanding how boundary spanners intentionally investigate the organisational actorhood of the trustee to evaluate their trustworthiness as an agency for institutional arrangements. Second, examining the institutional boundaries that entail the institutional arrangements. Therefore, this study's question is: how do senior executives of strategic alliances between foreign and emerging market firms examine the organisational actorhood and boundaries of alliance institutional arrangements?

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The phenomenon is explored using the institutional actorhood perspective (Bitektine et al., 2020). The study also draws on the interaction-based branch of culture research (Shenkar et al., 2022),

#### Methodological approach

The study adopts a moderate constructionism epistemology with a single case study strategy. It abductively analyses qualitative data from semi-structured interviews. Exploring organisational actorhood from senior executives' perspectives is reasonable because the focus is on purposive actions in a multi-dimensional institutional context. India is theoretically chosen as a representative of EMs, widely recognised for low institutional-based trust.

#### Summary of key findings

Based on the pilot emerging themes, leadership influence, boundary spanners' organisational position, organisation size and establishment, and interpersonal coworking

requirements are heuristics that inform prioritising trust in individuals versus organisations, i.e., evaluating organisational actorhood. The perceived actorhood agent's trustworthiness is attributed to the resource constraints, tight cultural elements, and enforced regulatory environment. The primary focus should shift from the institutional distance assumptions to the evolving international institutions and global pressures to adopt efficient practices that do not violate local constraints, that is, the actorhood within the institutions' overlapping legitimate realm. Besides 'what is done' (institutionalised norms), executives also evaluate the efforts towards 'what can be done' (institutionalising arrangements).

#### Key contributions

I make three main theoretical contributions. First, IB's multilevel trust research has raised concerns due to the heterogeneous cultural and institutional environments of trusting parties. There are mixed findings regarding their influence on uncertainty and trust (Zou et al., 2023). I apply and advance the recent discourse in broader interorganisational trust and the IB culture literature that has been vastly ignored in IB trust. I shift the focus from cultural distance and a static view of uncertainty to cultural interaction and relaxing rigid boundaries (Schilke and Lumineau, 2023; Shenkar, 2024). Second, I illuminate the reflexivity of individuals on trust-building endeavours in complex institutional arrangements. I identify heuristics that boundary spanners incorporate to examine their counterparts' trustworthiness at the appropriate level based on their institutional actorhood. The intentionality of individuals has been encouraged to be studied (Parkhe, 1998; Child and Möllering, 2003). This has received insufficient attention in multilevel research, especially with less emphasis on the individual's contingent priorities of locating their trust, considering the institutional contexts. Third, I address the controversy on prioritising institutional-based versus individual-level trust by shifting the priority to institutional actorhood as an investigated antecedent by trustors.

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## Anas Khitou, Analytics, Technology & Operations

### Understanding Interoperability Practices in the Humanitarian Sector

**Keywords:** interoperability, humanitarian sector, organizational dynamics, information sharing, qualitative research

**Description:** This paper explores how interoperability is conceptualized and practiced within the humanitarian sector, examining the organizational, systemic, and relational factors that shape its adoption.

#### Research problem

While interoperability —the ability of systems, organizations, and actors to collaborate effectively— is widely recognized as crucial for effective humanitarian action, it remains inconsistently applied across organizations in practice. Although technical and semantic aspects have been emphasized, there is limited understanding of how organizational, systemic, and relational dynamics influence interoperability within humanitarian settings. This research investigates how humanitarian organizations negotiate what and how to share, integrate, and align, aiming to uncover the broader systemic structures, tensions, and assumptions that shape the practical realization of interoperability.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The study draws on socio-technical systems theory (Trist and Bamforth, 1951) to understand interoperability as an evolving practice shaped by both organizational structures and

broader systemic forces. Rather than treating interoperability as a predefined outcome, the research examines it as a phenomenon constructed through negotiations between actors operating under diverse operational logics. It also adopts Charles Tilly's (1984) encompassing case strategy, framing organizational practices within wider systemic and power structures rather than viewing them as isolated instances.

### Methodological approach

The research adopts a two-part paper-based approach. The first part involves a systematic review of existing interoperability frameworks across humanitarian and related sectors, with particular attention to how underlying assumptions, governance structures, and contextual factors influence their design. Phase two adopts a qualitative multi-case study design, exploring how interoperability is practiced in humanitarian operations by understanding the organizational and inter-organizational dynamics through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and organizational document reviews across four humanitarian collaboration models (e.g., UN clusters, NGO consortia). Data collection for the second part has not yet commenced. The research design prioritizes reflexivity, particularly in how the concept of interoperability is introduced to participants, to avoid leading responses. Analytical methods will be grounded in reflexive thematic analysis to capture both individual experiences and broader systemic patterns.

### Summary of key findings

Data collection has not yet started; therefore, no empirical findings are available at this stage. However, preliminary insights from the document review suggest that although technical interoperability dimensions are often emphasized, organizational governance and relational dimensions remain underexplored and present significant challenges for the implementation of interoperability in humanitarian contexts. Future findings are expected to provide a deeper understanding of how actors perceive, operationalize, and negotiate interoperability in practice.

### Key contributions

This study aims to contribute to academic understanding by distinguishing between interoperability as a conceptual ideal and its manifestations in organizational practice. It further highlights the crucial role of governance structures and relational dynamics—such as trust, negotiation, and collaboration—in shaping interoperability outcomes. By reframing interoperability as a socio-technical phenomenon embedded within broader systemic and organizational realities, the research seeks to provide theoretical insights and practical strategies for improving coordination and information-sharing in humanitarian sector.

## Chuyao Kuang, Management & Organisations

### Advancing Sustainable Management of Household Food Waste in the UK: An application of the Behaviour Change Wheel

**Keywords:** Food management behaviours; Household food waste; Behaviour change wheel; Behaviour science

**Description:** This project aims to investigate household food waste and leftover reuse behaviours and household food waste in the UK, and to design interventions using the Behaviour Change Wheel to address and improve these practices.

#### Research problem

In 2021, the UK generated approximately 10.7 million tonnes of food waste, of which 60% came from households (WRAP, 2023). Reducing household food waste is therefore imperative to mitigate economic losses and to address environmental concerns. Previous research has identified reusing leftover as a key food management practice significantly associated with household food waste in the UK (e.g., Bretter et al., 2022). However, existing research on leftover reuse behaviours remains limited, providing insufficient insight into underlying behavioural patterns and the drivers and barriers influencing such practices. Furthermore, the absence of interventions specifically designed to promote leftover reuse highlights a research gap.

This project aims to apply the Behaviour Change Wheel to investigate household leftover reuse behaviours in the UK, focusing on how these behaviours are associated with and households' capabilities, opportunities and motivations. Based on the findings, interventions will be developed and tested to promote leftover reuse practices.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

This project is theoretically grounded in the Behaviour Change Wheel (BCW) theory, which was proposed by Michie et al. (2011) to systematically analyse behaviours and inform the design of interventions. The core of this theory is the COM-B framework, indicating that a behaviour is driven by capability, motivation, and opportunity. The second layer of the theory comprises nine intervention functions, which links the COM components with intervention strategies. This provides a basis for identifying targeted intervention strategies tailored to specific behavioural components.

#### Methodological approach

An online survey was conducted to examine households' behaviours in managing leftovers, their capabilities (e.g., knowledge and skills), motivations (e.g., habits and emotions), and opportunities (e.g., resources and social support) related to leftover reuse, and the extent of their food waste. Multiple regression analyses will be employed to determine the extent to

which the COM components influence engagement in leftover reuse behaviours, and to identify which components have relatively stronger effects.

## Summary of key findings

### Expected Findings

This project is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the UK household leftover reuse behaviours, including the types of leftovers, the reasons for reusing or discarding them, the methods employed for reuse, and the frequency of these behaviours. Additionally, this project will identify households' capabilities, motivations, and opportunities related to leftover reuse and examine their associations with behaviours.

### Key contributions

This project will provide a deeper insight into leftover reuse behaviours among UK households. By applying the BCW, the study offers a theory-driven understanding of how capabilities, opportunities, and motivations shape leftover reuse, thereby contributing to the behavioural science on food sustainability. Furthermore, the findings are expected to support the development of evidence-based interventions to promote leftover reuse, with practical implications for environmental organisations or public initiatives targeting food waste reduction.

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## Aditya Lal, People, Work & Employment

### Working Lives of Indian Non-Film Musicians in the Age of

#### Platformisation

 Keywords: cultural work, India, musicians

**Description:** This paper presents the impact of digital platforms on the working conditions of non-film musicians in the Indian recorded music industry.

#### Research problem

To understand how music streaming platforms (MSPs) have affected the working lives of non-film musicians in the Indian recorded music industry.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The proliferation of digital platforms across industries has intensified debates on worker precariousness. This 'platformisation' has significantly impacted recording musicians, with MSPs having arguably altered the business dynamics of the recorded music industry. Their impact has been particularly pronounced in India where film soundtracks, especially Bollywood music, have traditionally dominated the Indian music industries, but the growth of MSPs has given new impetus to non-film musicians who are now achieving unprecedented success and challenging the cultural hegemony of film music. This paper critically analyses the optimism associated with this change and foregrounds issues of power, inequality, and culture that continue to shape cultural work in the platform economy.

#### Methodological approach

A holistic case study approach was adopted to underscore the distinctive Indian context. Grounded analysis was used to enable theory construction, ensure openness to surprising evidence, and maintain sensitivity to the research context in alignment with the holistic case study strategy. Semi-structured interviews were the primary data collection method. Interview data were triangulated with ethnographic fieldnotes from trade conferences and data collected from secondary sources.

#### Summary of key findings

First, the paper identifies the changes and continuities in the structure and practices of the Indian recorded music industry. The importance of traditional Indian systems and socio-cultural norms is highlighted for their persistent influence over contemporary practices. Subsequently, the strategies adopted by non-film musicians to navigate the various novel services offered by platforms, distributors, and record companies are recounted. Second, the paper unpacks the impact of platformisation on the personal well-being and livelihood of non-film musicians. Here, the problems and opportunities faced by non-film musicians in the management and sustenance of their career are discussed. Third, the paper analyses the evolving relationship of non-film musicians with mainstream Bollywood in the wake of

platformisation. An important shift in the musicians' mindset from a career in Bollywood being the only viable option to it becoming one of many possible concurrent career paths is presented.

### Key contributions

Scholars have explored the working conditions of musicians before digitalisation and in the contemporary age of platformisation. However, a striking gap exists with respect to the Indian music industries which are vital economic and cultural assets to one of the world's largest countries but have been conspicuously ignored by scholarship on cultural work. This paper contributes towards addressing this gap. In doing so, it also highlights the distinctiveness of the Indian context which resists a straightforward application of Western scholarship to cultural work under platformisation. This helps to further the debate on the need for modified scholarly approaches towards analysing local contexts and indigenous cultural industries in the Global South.

## Ellie Lucas, Management & Organisations

### Intra-Individual Goal Conflict: A Self-Regulatory Model

**Keywords:** Goal conflict; self-regulation; multiple goals; resources

**Description:** This research develops and tests a self-regulatory model of intraindividual goal conflict, showing how workplace goal conflict emerges from resourcegoal demand discrepancies, shaped by individual appraisals and characteristics.

#### Research problem

In the workplace, employees inherently pursue multiple, often conflicting goals. Despite the prevalence of goal conflict and its negative effects, the literature lacks a clear, integrated model explaining how and why it emerges. Without this, the theoretical precision needed to understand goal conflict and inform effective interventions cannot be achieved.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

This study uses an abductive approach to develop a self-regulatory model of intraindividual goal conflict and aims to empirically test and establish the causal relationships underpinning its emergence.

#### Methodological approach

Across two studies using independent samples of individuals in work, goal conflict was induced by manipulating environmental cues to compare single-goal (control) and multiple-goal conditions. Study 1 (N = 224) developed and tested a stress-based model of goal conflict, finding that goal conflict follows a stress process shaped by individual appraisals. However, the goal conflict literature demonstrates additional nuances, indicating that goal conflict cannot be fully explained as a stress response. To address these complexities, Study 2 (N = 261) integrated stress and self-regulatory theories to develop a self-regulatory model of intra-individual goal conflict.

#### Summary of key findings

The findings demonstrate that resource-goal demand discrepancies are central to the emergence of goal conflict, with individual appraisals and characteristics shaping how conflict is experienced.

#### Key contributions

This study is the first to clearly delineate the components of intra-individual goal conflict and establish its causal relationships. Therefore, this work provides the precision needed to enable scholars and practitioners to develop and tailor interventions that minimise goal conflict in the workplace.

## Zora (Zhuoran) Ma, Management & Operations

### Tensions in Corporate Sustainability

**Keywords:** corporate sustainability, tension management, decision-making

Tensions are an unavoidable experience for companies dealing with economic, social and environmental issues simultaneously. Drawing on 262 scholarly articles and 17 grey literature sources, the research adopted the Smith & Lewis dynamic equilibrium model and employed a qualitative approach, using a systematic review and thematic analysis to synthesize and interpret the results: (1) Sustainability tensions arise from both external pressures (e.g., institutional isomorphism) and internal cognitive factors (e.g. cognitive frames). (2) Misalignments between managerial cognition and organizational logics pose significant challenges in managing tensions. Corporate logics evolve from individual ("I think") to collective ("we think") perspectives, with collective cognition both enabling and constraining the logic it supports. (3) Existing research on sustainability strategies reveals a range of approaches, with proactive strategies—more extensively studied—offering both short- and long-term benefits, while recent studies also highlight the potential for success in defensive strategies. (4) Management strategies are characterised as multi-level, multi-stage, and multi-directional that dealing with multiple tensions, evolving over time and requiring comprehensive approaches.

This study reveals important knowledge gaps related to (1) the need for defensive strategies and new proactive approaches in varied contexts and its contingency effects; (2) the need to understand underlying process mechanisms linking tensions with outcomes, and research on dynamics within and across levels (i.e., collective level); (3) the need for methodological approaches that will help address these substantive knowledge gaps; (4) and a unified standard for sustainability outcomes is needed. Accordingly, I present a comprehensive research agenda for the future, grounded in a multilevel perspective that seeks to integrate diverse strategies while also deepening our understanding of the underlying mechanisms and microfoundations of sustainability tensions. The practical implications highlight that organizations can more effectively manage sustainability tensions by recognizing and addressing them at various stages, ultimately improving decision-making processes

## Alvy Riasat Malik, People, Work & Employment

### Structural Intersectionality and Patriarchal Power: Unpacking Women's Labour Market Segregation in Bangladesh

**Keywords:** Gender segregation, social structures, patriarchal systems, Bangladesh.

**Description:** This study aims to explore how various overlapping and multi-layered socio-structural systems, shaped by patriarchal hierarchies and male power dynamics, constrain Bengali women's progression in the labour market.

### Research problem

Despite notable advancements in workforce participation, women, on average, continue to be segregated into less prestigious industries, jobs, and positions. Bangladesh, a third-world nation, is not exempt from this issue, as women in the country are predominantly confined to income-volatile sectors and relegated to lowerpaid occupations and positions.

Geographically located in South Asia, the country possesses distinct historical, political, cultural, and religious attributes that diverge from those of Western nations. This context has the potential to marginalise women in Bangladesh at the intersection of multiple social systems and interconnected social structures. This paper, therefore, aims to examine the complex, multi-layered sociostructural challenges surrounding Bengali women's personal, social, and work lives that limit their labour market progression.

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Deviating from the traditional single-axis anti-discrimination frameworks that consider gender as the sole analytical dimension, this study intends to adopt a structure-based intersectional approach to analyse the relational dynamics of gender. Further, considering Bangladesh's long-standing conservative and male-dominated social systems, this study will utilise the framework of patriarchy to understand the sociostructural intersectionality in the Bangladesh context. By positioning patriarchy as an overarching ideology in which numerous patriarchal structures and practices cumulatively marginalise women's experiences, this study argues that when analysing the complex interplay of socio-structural dimensions and women's subjugation in the labour market, it is important to consider how the country's patriarchal social institutions construct and maintain male dominance and restrict women's freedom and life chances compared to men. Hence, this study sheds light on both intersectionality and patriarchal notions and aims to extend the debate of gender segregation through understanding the prevalence of patriarchy within Bangladesh's broader structural power systems, i.e., culture, religion, state-level policies, and workplaces.

### Methodological approach

Data will be gathered from qualitative semi-structured interviews with three groups of participants—including female and male professionals at various levels across Bangladesh's public and private sectors, along with key officials and policymakers. The collected data will be analysed using the thematic analysis method.

### Summary of key findings

### Key contributions

While existing literature often emphasises women's individual choices or identity-based discrimination, it tends to overlook the broader socio-structural power systems that drive gender-based employment segregation. By adopting a structure-based intersectional approach, this study aims to contribute to examining not only gender but also its intersections with other social systems, as well as contemplating how male power dynamics and hierarchies embedded in these systems impact women's experiences and career progression. Overall, this study is critical for advancing the discussion of gender segregation, as it enhances the understanding of the cultural and institutional foundations of women's marginalisation within specific national contexts.

## Roland Maposa, International Business

### Intra- African trade and the Regional Economic Integration as International Business Policy

The research project is problematised by the issue of the low intra-African regional trade (Ngepah & Udeagha, 2018; Olney, 2021). Problematisation allows for 'a dialectical interrogation of the researcher's position, received theory, and literature to identify, articulate, and challenge assumptions that underlie existing literature to formulate research questions that may develop theories' (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011, p. 26). Through an exploratory case study of the African Economic Community (AEC), the research seeks to understand how this macro policy, as a mechanism of International Business Policy, may inform the solution to the problem motivating this research.

The recent operationalisation of the AfCFTA, a pan-African macro policy mechanism for trade, which itself is a mechanism of a broader and larger Policy, the African Economic Community (AEC), may be seen as a signal of intent by the African nations to increase trade among themselves. The first iteration of the AEC was adopted in 1991 (OAU, 1991). The AEC is intrinsic to the Constitutive Act of the African Union, 2000 (AU, 2000).

As all African countries are signatories to the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) (AUC, 2021), this allows for an institutional theory perspective and, therefore, a formal Intergovernmental Organisation (IGO) institution that can implement a formal policy that affects all African countries as members of the AU.

This observation means a formal perspective rooted in the formal institution of the AU and institutional theory (North, 1991) allows for the exploration of this case through the AU (conversely, Africa, as all African countries, are members of the AU). To do this, the research uses a Public choice theory to regional economic integration. Pelkmans (1980) posits that where policymakers are focused on a single macro policy, only then can the gap between the market and policy for integration be bridged in the context of Africa. Through a political economy lens, this research explores whether African Regional Economic Integration (AfREI) may provide a solution to the problem motivating this research, which is the perennially low intra-African trade. The public choice theory approach to the AfREI as a mechanism of IBP argues for both a political and economic approach. This research explores how this macro policy may serve as a solution to the problem motivating this research.

The interdependence framework informs the multilevel explanation by understanding this policy dynamic between the continental, regional, national, and firm levels of analysis, as

this research posits that the problem of low intra-African trade may require a macro policy mechanism that creates an enabling doing business environment for Africa.

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## Tim Marsh, People, Work & Employment

### DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IN THE BENGALURU GARMENT CLUSTER

**Keywords:** Garment Industry; Digital Technology in the workplace; Management strategy; Global Production Network; Labour

**Description:** This paper presents research on the introduction of new technology and its impact on workers in garment production networks, focusing on management strategies of large tier-one apparel suppliers in the Bengaluru garment cluster who export to the global market.

### Research problem

The use of digital technology in management strategies amongst tier-1 suppliers in global production networks is an underexplored research area. Research on Global Value Chains/Global Production networks assumes that lead firms are the drivers of technological upgrading in these networks (Pipkin and Fuentes, 2017). Critical research from the Labour Process Theory tradition points to the substitution of labour, work intensification and/or increasing control over the production process as key drivers for the introduction of new



technology in the workplace (Briken et al., 2017; Joyce et al., 2023). This paper will argue that while overcoming the indeterminacy of labour is an important factor in the production process, managements' aim is to increase surplus value. This can include but does not necessitate the aforementioned drivers.

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Drawing from Labour Process Theory (LPT) and the Global Production Network (GPN) framework, this paper will provide a perspective on how the development of new technologies in the workplace are shaped by political economy dynamics (Henderson et al., 2002; Taylor et al., 2015; Briken et al., 2017). This research takes inspiration from a materialist approach to LPT analysis (Briken, 2023).

### Methodological approach

This research followed an embedded, single-case design (Yin, 2014). Fieldwork was carried out in the Bengaluru garment cluster where large full-package suppliers have headquarters, design studios and manufacturing facilities. Large suppliers were selected who had key relationships with international lead firms. These firms had stable commercial relationships with retailers, multiple production sites and have generally been successful in industrial upgrading. 33 semi-structured interviews (76 participants) were conducted with managers, workers and other key stakeholders including trade unions. Two factories were visited in the cluster.

### Summary of key findings

Managers in the cluster were generally reluctant to introduce new technology in the workplace. The drivers for the introduction were less related to pressures internal to the firm but market dynamics such as vertical and horizontal competition. While lead firms played a more direct role over the introduction of new technology in pre-production processes, suppliers retained control over the production process. At this level, the introduction of new technology was driven more by horizontal competitive pressures.

With cheap labour abundant in this garment cluster, the introduction of new technology is not about replacing labour. Working conditions remain poor in the cluster with low wages and long and intense working days for most production workers. Limits have been reached regarding intensification and workers are also responding to pressure through attrition and absenteeism. Instead, the introduction of new digital tools is focused on the increase of quality in the production process, the reduction of waste and rework and removing bottlenecks.

### Key contributions

This paper points to a relationship between managerial decisions on the shopfloor and broader political economy dynamics in the garment cluster. Upgrading in the garment cluster is not driven entirely by lead firms in the production network with the dynamics of horizontal competition playing a significant role.

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## Kayaga Matovu, People, Work & Employment

### Job Quality in Small and Medium Enterprises

This study explores job quality (JQ) in the socio-economic contexts of developing economies, focusing on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The study is positioned within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8, which advocates for inclusive economic growth and decent work for all. It also aligns with the African Union's "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," which envisions sustainable economic transformation.

Research on JQ has primarily examined developed economies, creating a critical gap in understanding how JQ and the concept high-quality jobs is constructed and experienced in low-income economies, specifically in SSA. Given the central role of SMEs as key employers in SSA, this research is crucial in informing policy and practice for fostering increased supply and access decent work and economic growth in the region.

The research adopts a quantitative methodological approach, collecting survey data from employees of SMEs in Uganda to assess importance attached to the existing job quality dimensions and collecting new data on self-reported items linked to a highquality job. A Job Quality Index (JQI) tailored to SMEs in SSA will be developed based on existing frameworks from developed economies. Data collection is currently underway, focusing on key dimensions of JQ: skills utilisation and development, pay, job security, working hours, desirable work conditions, employment opportunities, equal opportunity, and voice & social dialogue. Statistical analysis will be applied to identify trends and correlations within these dimensions. Analysis has not yet commenced.

This research will make a significant contribution to the field by proposing a framework of high-quality jobs adaptable to similar socio-economic contexts and provides empirical evidence on how SMEs in SSA can improve job quality. The findings will support strategies for achieving inclusive economic growth and increased access to decent work as well as sustainable development.

## Mustafa Kamel Mohammadi, Analytics, Technology & Operations

### **CONTRADICTIONS ACROSS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: A STUDY OF POWER, CULTURE, AND MECHANISMS.**

**Keywords:** Information management, Power, Culture, mechanisms, Critical realism

**Description:** This research looks into the contradiction that exists across information management activities and tries to explain these contradictions using the power of culture through mechanisms.

### Research problem

The research studies Information management (IM) activities, which include a series of activities involving information collection, evaluation, processing, storage, and sharing (Nespeca et al., 2020) or more, which are embedded in the wider chain of humanitarian response operation, that involve both local aid agencies and international aid agencies.

Herein, the literature shows that there are certain issues and problems emerge across the IM activities, examples of which in Yemen and Afghanistan (Rietjens et al., 2007; Wu, 2012; Zürcher, 2012; Sandstrom, 2014; ACAPS, 2023; Paulus et al., 2023) are noted as interference by powerful individuals and groups such as military authorities on the choice of location for data collection, survey design, change of information on beneficiary lists, selecting beneficiaries based on certain characteristics, and manipulating the final reports on humanitarian activities. There are also indications that the perception of cultural taboos related to gender-based and domestic violence, sexual harassment, and child recruitment in the armed forces also leads to the elimination of survey variables or interview questions. The literature highlights the existence of local power brokers and community leaders influencing humanitarian operations, and local NGOs accused of being affiliated with local power structures, leading to the collection of biased information.

With the evidence of power and cultural norms and values behind the issues, ending up in issues and problems leading to aid diversion, corruption, marginalization from aid, and importantly collection of biased information, this study aims “To identify the contradictions and explain their causes concerning power along with cultural norms, values, and practice across IM activities within the localized humanitarian response operation in Afghanistan”.

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The term “contradictions” is used here, to capture historically accumulating structural tensions that emerge in the everyday practice of activities (Engeström, 2001) or represent a misfit between elements of activity systems. This research employs activity theory as the theoretical lens to identify the elements of context, which is further accompanied by a Morphogenetic approach rooted in critical realism to explain the reproduction and change of culture.

### Methodological approach

A qualitative interview approach is used in this research, with in-depth interviews. The interview data pass through an eclectic coding approach to facilitate analysis. Contradictions are first identified and later the explanatory model of social science (Danermark et al., 2019) acts as the data analysis framework to explain the change and reproduction of culture across the IM activities, giving rise to contradictions.

### Summary of key findings

The research came up with the identification of IM activities across the humanitarian response operations. Then, contradictions across the IM activities that manifest themselves as certain issues and problems were identified which involve various cultural norms, values, and practices named as aid entitlement culture and adaptive opportunistic response. The findings are then extended beyond the identification of these cultural practices and explain their emergence by demonstrating the mechanisms that led to the emergence of these cultural practices, norms, or values.

### Key contributions

The findings of this research provide insight into understanding the power of culture, culture related to communities and social groups, and then understanding the reproduction and change of culture across IM literature.

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## Xiaoyin Na, International Business

### Multinational Enterprises' Environmental Outcomes after Green Foreign Direct Investment (GFDI)

**Keywords:** Green Foreign Direct Investment (GFDI), Environmental Performance (EP), Environmental Innovation (EI), Knowledge Spillover, Multinational Enterprises (MNEs)

**Description:** Through the fixed effects model, this study reveals the positive and significant impact of GFDI on environmental performance and environmental innovation, as well as the period for GFDI to be implemented on EP and EI.

#### Research problem

Green Foreign Direct Investment (GFDI) as a form of investment by multinational enterprises is expected to obtain advanced knowledge and technology through the investment and achieve reverse spillover effects, thereby achieving environmental benefits. However, existing literature focuses on the factors affecting the GFDI path but rarely explores the actual environmental performance and innovation of GFDI such as pollution emissions and technological innovation. In addition, since the purposes of GFDI vary among companies, it remains to be verified whether it can ultimately be effectively implemented in actual performance. This research aims to study whether GFDI by multinational enterprises can ultimately have a tangible positive impact on the environmental performance and environmental innovation of parent companies. We tested our hypotheses on an unbalanced fixed effect panel data of 80 MNEs, mostly from the Global Fortune 500, their foreign direct investment in the renewable energy sector between 2014 and 2023. Besides, we also explored the time it takes for GFDI to be implemented in environmental performance (EP) and environmental innovation (EI) based on years. After research, we propose to find the relationship between GFDI and EP or EI and the time for GFDI to take effect. We aim to make contributions by giving a clear conceptual framework of GFDI and examining the purpose of corporate environmental investment.

This research aims to study whether GFDI by multinational enterprises can ultimately have a tangible positive impact on the environmental performance and environmental innovation of parent companies. (Research problem)

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Green Foreign Direct Investment (GFDI) as a form of investment by multinational enterprises is expected to obtain advanced knowledge and technology through the investment and achieve reverse spillover effects, thereby achieving environmental benefits. So, the knowledge spillover theory is the key theory of our research.

(Theoretical reference point)

### Methodological approach

We test our hypotheses on an unbalanced fixed effect panel data of 80 MNEs, mostly from the Global Fortune 500, their foreign direct investment in the renewable energy sector between 2014 and 2023. (Methodological approach)

### Summary of key findings

After research, we propose to find the relationship between GFDI and EP or EI and the time for GFDI to take effect. (Key findings)

### Key contributions

We aim to make contributions by giving a clear conceptual framework of GFDI and examining the purpose of corporate environmental investment.

## Ali Obaidan, Marketing

### Assessing the Effect of Strategic AI Emphasis on Firm Performance

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, strategic emphasis, firm performance, firm capabilities

**Description:** This paper investigates whether firms should focus on using AI for revenue growth or cost efficiency to enhance their performance.

#### Research problem

Commercial applications and investments in artificial intelligence (AI) have surged exponentially in recent years. In 2024, private AI investment in the United States reached a record \$109 billion, up from \$67 billion in 2023. Amid this significant expenditure, managers are under growing pressure to demonstrate the performance impact of this technology. Investors now expect firms to follow a clear strategy focused on using AI to either drive revenue growth or cost efficiency. Although prior studies have explored the general relationship between AI adoption and firm performance, whether managers should focus on revenue expansion or cost efficiency with AI remains an open question.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

In this research, we propose that AI's effect varies based on firms' strategic emphasis. Firms may pursue a revenue AI emphasis, leveraging the technology to enhance customer acquisition and retention, thereby achieving higher performance through increased revenues. Alternatively, firms may adopt a cost AI emphasis, using AI to boost operational efficiency and productivity, thereby achieving higher performance through cost reduction. Furthermore, we argue that the effectiveness of each strategic emphasis is contingent on a firm's marketing and operations capabilities, which determine its ability to maximize revenues and minimize costs.

#### Methodological approach

Our sample consists of publicly listed firms in the United States between 2016 and 2024. We measure revenue and cost AI emphasis by conducting text analysis of the contexts in which firms discuss AI in their 10-K annual reports. Specifically, we identified 2,065,118 contextual windows where managers reference AI and applied a special purpose dictionary to assess their revenue and cost AI emphasis. We then merged each firm's AI emphasis scores with financial data from COMPUSTAT to evaluate the performance outcomes of each strategy. To examine moderating effects, we follow the extant literature and measure firms' marketing and operations capabilities using stochastic frontier estimation. The final sample includes 12,009 firm-year observations of 2,650 different companies.

#### Summary of key findings

Building on the view that achieving revenue growth with AI requires costly investments in complementary assets, we demonstrate that revenue AI emphasis negatively impacts firm



performance. In contrast, we show that cost AI emphasis has a positive effect on firm performance. Additionally, we demonstrate that firm capabilities play a critical role in moderating these effects. Specifically, we show that complementing revenue AI emphasis with strong marketing and operations capabilities enhances its contribution, while these same capabilities diminish the effect of cost AI emphasis.

### Key contributions

Our findings contribute to the literature by demonstrating that AI's effect is not uniform but rather varies based on the strategic objective for its adoption. Further, we show that this distinction is crucial in determining whether AI complements or substitutes traditional firm capabilities. For managers aiming to enhance efficiency, our findings indicate that cost AI emphasis can increase performance but is sub-optimal when the firm retains high marketing and operations capabilities. For those aiming to increase revenues with AI, our analysis highlights that strong marketing and operations capabilities are essential complements for achieving success with this strategy.

## Yi Pang, Economics

### Multiple Structural Breaks in Heterogeneous Spatial Panels with Latent Common Factors

**Keywords:** Structural Breaks, Spatial, Heterogeneous Panel Data, Interactive Effects

**Description:** This paper provides a new econometric method for detecting multiple structural breaks in heterogeneous panel data model with spatial effects and latent interactive effects.

#### Research problem

In panel data models, four types of issues are of particular concern as they could lead to inconsistent estimators and invalid inference: First, due to unrecognisable shocks from policies or events, an unknown number of structural breaks may occur in the estimated slopes/marginal effects. Second, different individuals in the panel data may be affected by varying effects from explanatory variables, indicating the potential existence of heterogeneous slopes/marginal effects. Third, there may be unknown common correlated factors among different individuals (or cross-sections) in the panel data, resulting in uncontrolled interactive effects and thus biased estimation. Fourth, there may be spatial effects in the panel data based on their geographic distances or social mobility relations, and failing to control for spatial dependence could lead to biased estimation. In empirical research, some studies have pointed out that these four issues are likely to appear simultaneously in panel data analysis, such as investigating the impact of macroeconomic variables on the UK regional house price growth rates. However, to date, documented econometric methods could at most address three of these four issues simultaneously, and most of these methods require strict preconditions. The main research problem is thereby to find an efficient econometric method that can simultaneously address all four issues while having more relaxed preconditions.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Although a brand-new econometric method has been developed, this study is inspired by BP03's structural breaks method and the CCEX-2SLS method.

#### Methodological approach

The study builds upon BP03's structural breaks method, using dynamic programming and statistical tests to locate break points. This study also draws on the CCEX-2SLS method to address spatial effects and latent interactive effects, which could provide consistent and asymptotically valid estimations. The validity of the new econometric method has been tested by both numerical simulation and empirical application.

### Summary of key findings

The new econometric method can efficiently identify unknown breaks for spatial heterogenous panels. Additionally, it can largely reduce Sum of Squared Residuals (SSR) compared to previous structural breaks methods, such as BP03.

### Key contributions

This study has the following 3 contributions: First, this study develops a new dynamic programming way, enabling the new econometric method to effectively locate unknown structural breaks in each individual time series while relaxing the common break assumption. Second, the new method can provide mean group structural breaks, allowing group structural breaks to be efficiently identified for heterogeneous panels. Third, the new method also controls the spatial effects to provide more consistent estimation, which has not been considered on previous structural breaks method.

## Yuanyuan Quan, International Business

### Centrality in Syndication Networks: the Importance of Local and International Firms for Venture Capital Performance

**Keywords:** Venture capital, Syndication networks, Network centrality, Cross-border knowledge spillovers, Emerging markets

**Description:** This study examines how venture capital (VC) firms' network centrality affects investment performance across developed and emerging markets.

#### Research problem

First, to what extent does a VC firm's centrality position within a syndication network explains its investment performance?

Second, how does the explanatory effect vary across different institutional environments, specifically between developed and emerging markets?

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The resource-based view (RBV) characterizes the firm as a collection of tangible and intangible resources, with competitive advantage stemming from the accumulation of rare and inimitable resources. In strategic alliances, interconnected firms gain competitive advantage by accessing the unique resources of other firms within the alliance networks. The RBV of interconnected firms provides a theoretical basis for examining the relationship between firms' network positions and their performance.

#### Methodological approach

This study applies Social Network Analysis to construct variables of firms' centrality within their syndication investment networks and employs the High-Dimensional Fixed Effects (HDFFE) regression model to empirically test the hypotheses.

#### Summary of key findings

The results confirm the positive effect of centrality on performance in developed countries, but the effect is limited in emerging economies. An Effective Centrality measure is introduced to amplify connections with developed-market firms. By incorporating cross-border knowledge spillovers from developed to emerging markets, the Effective Centrality measure demonstrates an equally substantial positive influence on performance in emerging markets.

#### Key contributions

The primary contribution is to extend prior VC research by emphasizing the role of network positions, particularly network centrality, in shaping VC firm performance across different economies. This is achieved by empirically testing the hypotheses using a longitudinal panel

dataset comprising 14,449 firm-year observations from 75 countries over the period 2000 - 2023. In addition, this study helps clarify the mixed empirical findings in emerging economies by establishing boundary conditions for the applicability of the centrality-performance relationship. Specifically, we examine how the effects of centrality on VC performance differ between developed and emerging markets. In doing so, we highlight the dual role of VC firms within a network - namely, their network centrality and their capability to benefit from cross-border knowledge spillovers from developed markets to emerging markets. This approach offers new insights into how connections with VC firms from developed markets can enhance the effect of centrality on performance for VC firms operating in emerging markets, thereby advancing our understanding of the interplay between network positioning and crossborder knowledge spillovers in the global VC landscape.

## Mohammed Quotb, Accounting & Finance

### SASB Standards Adoption, ESG Disagreement, and Stock Returns

**Keywords:** SASB, ESG Reporting, Voluntary Disclosures, ESG Ratings, Investors' Disagreement, Stock Returns

**Description:** I investigate the impact of Sustainability Accounting Standards (SASB) adoption by firms on disagreement among ESG ratings agencies about firms' ESG performance. Given that SASB standards focus on financially material ESG issues, I also examine its impact on disagreement among investors about firms' future prospects. Finally, as SASB standards resolve disagreement among investors, I test its asset pricing implications.

#### Research problem

Disclosures of financially material information is mandated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in regulation S-K. This extends to both financial and nonfinancial information<sup>1</sup>. This aligns with SASB standards which focus on financial materiality of non-financial information, amplifying its relevance, and calling for better understanding of its impact on investors' decisions and their implications on financial market outcomes. Our study contributes by investigating the impact of SASB standards adoption by firms on disagreement about ESG performance among ESG ratings agencies, and on disagreement among investors about firms' future prospects; in addition to its implications on stock returns.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Spandel et al. (2020) document that the standard setting process by SASB allows for "second-order observation". This provides investors with insights about which ESG issues are considered financially material as observed by other market participants. Adopting SASB standards enforces this argument as it specifies which accounting metrics to be used in measuring ESG performance in addition to which ESG issues are deemed financially material for each industry.

According to Xiong (2013), there are three channels through which disclosures affect disagreement. First, standardized disclosures lead to less differential interpretations (Kandel and Pearson, 1995). According to Chang et al. (2023), improved disclosures lead to more precision about public signals. This means fewer differential interpretations and more differential prior belief revisions following the release of public information. Second, enhanced disclosure reduces investors' overconfidence, and thus, results in less disagreement (Scheinkman and Xiong, 2003). Third, although strategic behavior by analysts results in more disagreement (Xiong, 2013), analysts act less strategically in the presence of better disclosures (Chang et al., 2023) which leads to less disagreement.

## Methodological approach

Time series of SASB standards adopters in the United States between 2014 and 2023 is collected manually from CorporateRegister.com, ResponsibilityReports.com, and company websites. This time series of SASB adopters is merged with MSCI, LSEG, and Sustainalytics for ESG ratings' disagreement data. It is also combined with data from CRSP, Compustat, IBES, and Thomson Reuters 13F for market, accounting, analysts, and institutional ownership data.

The following baseline model is used, which is based on lead-lag design with panel fixed effects (Christensen, 2016; Kim et al., 2011):

$$DEP_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Adopter_{i,t-1} + \sum \beta_j Controls + FirmFE + YearFE + e_{i,t}$$

## Summary of key findings

SASB standards adoption resolves disagreement among ESG ratings' agencies and investors. Reduction in investors' disagreement induced by the adoption of SASB standards leads to a faster correction in overpriced stocks post earnings' announcements.

## Key contributions

This study provides timely empirical evidence for the impact of standardized ESG reporting on investors' disagreement about firms' future prospects and its implications on stock returns. In addition to filling an important gap in the academic literature, its findings are highly relevant for investors, regulators, and ESG ratings agencies.

# Salilporn Soubsawwong, Management & Organisations

## Thailand Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Institution Effects on Process and Strategy of Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurs

**Keywords:** Thailand 4.0, Innovation-driven Enterprise, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Institutional Policy

**Description:** Although the Thailand 4.0 policy is top-down, the economic impact is generated mainly by qualified entrepreneurs using institutional tools in their business strategy, process, and value capture, changing them into business performance.

## Research problem

Thailand's economic growth is trapped as a middle-income country with a foreign technology import spending 2.4 times higher than exports. The reformation of policy is called the Thailand 4.0 scheme. Policies have been implemented to promote technology businesses, such as an innovation strategy, an entrepreneurial society, and ecosystem facilitation. The national setting encourages managerial innovation and impacts individual

entrepreneurs and employees. Previous studies on Thailand's ecosystem have focused on the national innovation system, industrial or sectoral innovation, or regional enterprises. There has been no investigation on the impact of policy management within an entrepreneurial company or the mechanisms between the innovation process and economic performance reviews in Asia.

## Theoretical/conceptual framework

The Thai government has created an entrepreneurial ecosystem through resources and activities, established or reformed institutions, and designated target industries based on institutional and industry perspectives. Possessing activities and knowledge as a resource-based view results in strategy heterogeneity due to unique competencies. This approach is implemented at two levels of the organisation: the founder/top management level and the firm level. Entrepreneurs develop an innovation strategy and implement innovation across the business process to achieve long-term success. An entrepreneurial ecosystem is a collection of talent creators, networks, and institutions driven by entrepreneurs that accumulate knowledge (Spigel and Harrison, 2017). Figure 1 offers a framework for interconnections between the entrepreneurial ecosystem, institutional theory, and innovation model.

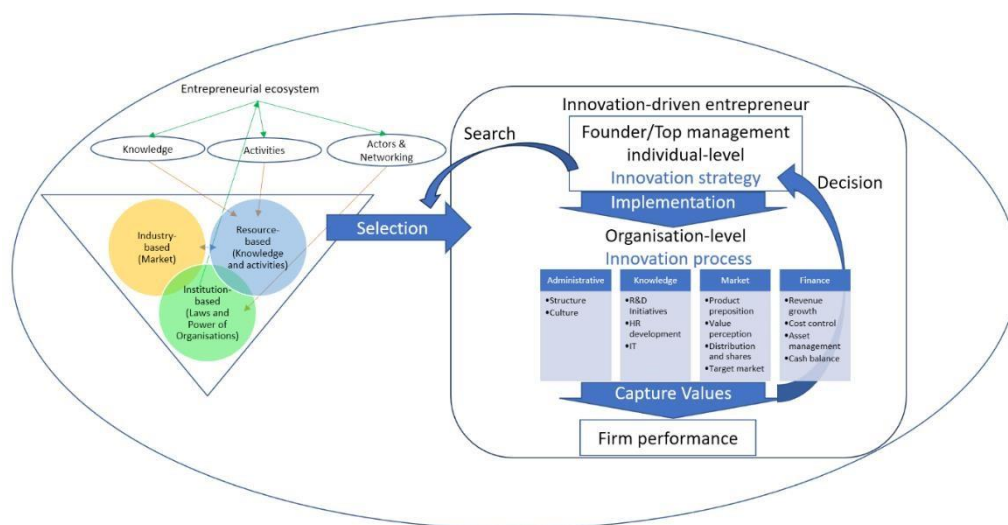


Figure 1: The framework of research

## Methodological approach

The secondary data is used to develop the conceptual model. The exploratory semistructured in-depth interviews are then done with key persons from selected actors, with purposive sampling as the preliminary research. The responses will be used to create a survey to evaluate the hypothesis. Entrepreneurs who engage in or benefit from at least one service or activity inside the chosen ecosystem serve as quantitative study subjects. The sample will be tested and compared to the mechanisms and relationships underlying activities, innovation processes, and company performance.



## Summary of key findings

The formal institution includes skills, strategies, and coordination, which are deliberated policies. The informal ones are conventions, codes, customs, and traditions. The regulatory change is based on how it removes barriers to entrepreneurship and facilitates entrepreneurial activities (Armanios and Eesley, 2021). Entrepreneurial ecosystems develop for emerging or developing countries to overcome problems, helping business efficiency. The innovation process includes collecting innovative ideas, prioritising them, figuring out, and targeting investment into innovation products and services (Frederick, Lam and Martin, 2014). The innovation strategy's scope is taking decisive and progressive practices about the product, process, and operation (Sjodin and Kristensson, 2012). The guideline hypotheses are shown in Table

1.

Table 1 The guideline hypotheses

Hypothesis	Null hypothesis
<b>H1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurs believe that participating in ecosystem activities will positive gain by innovation process/strategy and performance</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurs who comply with policy will gain more values for business</li> </ul>
<b>H2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A regulation change will positively impact entrepreneur establishment and direction</li> <li>• A regulation change will positively impact access of entrepreneur activities as cognitive support</li> </ul>
<b>H3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurial ecosystems as an institution will positively impact the innovation process and business performance</li> </ul>
<b>H4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy will positively impact innovation process of entrepreneur</li> </ul>
<b>H5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy will positively impact innovation strategy generations and adoption</li> </ul>
<b>H6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy will positively impact innovation process on business performance</li> <li>• Policy will positively impact of top management as a mediator on the relationship of innovation process and business performance</li> <li>• Policy will positively impact of organisational factors as moderators on the relationship of innovation process and business performance</li> </ul>

## Key contributions

Theoretical contributions build the constructs of policy adoption from three theories/models, including institutional theory, entrepreneurial ecosystem, and innovation model. The practical contribution is an empirical study on policy adoption from other

countries to Thailand. Using new datasets from Thailand stakeholders and entrepreneurs is the methodological contribution.

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## Belyse Umwali, Economics

### The Role of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Female Employment

Expanding women's access to formal employment remains a global development priority, with far-reaching implications for enhancing economic growth, boosting productivity, improving competitiveness, and promoting long-term economic sustainability. As countries seek effective strategies to achieve this goal, FDI has emerged as a potentially powerful tool. While recent OECD summaries based on World Bank Enterprise Survey data suggest that foreign-invested firms tend to employ more female workers than local firms, these descriptive figures do not account for critical firm-level characteristics such as size, age, or sector. The academic literature remains fragmented and largely focused on single-country studies with mixed findings, constraining the external validity of existing research and limiting our understanding of whether, and under what conditions, FDI supports gender-equitable labour market outcomes. Addressing this important research gap, this study investigates the impact of FDI on female employment across 81 host countries between 2006 and 2023. We examine whether foreign-invested firms employ more women than local firms of similar characteristics, and whether wholly owned subsidiaries are more gender-inclusive than joint ventures. We further consider how the relationship between FDI and female employment varies across host country institutional contexts, focusing on the moderating roles of gender inequality and anti-discrimination laws. Drawing on complementary logics from discrimination theories and institutional theory, we provide a more holistic view of the firm-level and societal pressures shaping female employment outcomes in foreign-invested and local firms.

## SHUANG WANG, Economics

### ENVIRONMENTAL SPILLOVERS FROM EMERGING-MARKET MNCs INTO THEIR HOME COUNTRY

**Keywords:** Multinational corporations, Environmental spillovers, Home country

**Description:** Whether MNCs from emerging economies can generate environmental spillovers to home country firms, that is, transmit their accumulated green technology and green management experience overseas to their home country, and then support the green transformation of home country firms, is the focus of this research.

#### Research problem

Whether MNCs from emerging economies can generate environmental spillovers to home country firms, that is, transmit their accumulated green technology and green management experience overseas to their home country, and then support the green transformation of home country firm.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Our conceptual model is built on the pollution halo hypothesis and the literature on spillover mechanisms of MNCs.

#### Methodological approach

This study constructs a new and original comprehensive firm-level dataset (2005–2013) by integrating four major data sources. The estimation of the model uses a multidimensional fixed effects model to explore the environmental spillovers of Chinese MNCs on domestic firms in the home country.

#### Summary of key findings

The results show that Chinese MNCs generate positive environmental spillovers to domestic firms, primarily through linkages with customers and suppliers and labor mobility. To ensure these spillovers are not confounded by spillovers from advanced economy MNCs, we further control for their effects, the environmental spillovers of Chinese MNCs are still significant, proving that the environmental spillovers of MNCs on domestic firms in the home country are not driven by MNCs from advanced economies. Finally, this research takes a comparative analysis of the results at the provincial and city levels, finding that the closer the distance, the stronger the environmental spillovers.

#### Key contributions

There are three main contributions of this study: firstly, Firstly, it extends the pollution halo hypothesis from the perspective of the home country. The study reveals how the positive environmental externalities of globalization are realized through environmental spillovers from the perspective of the home country. By emphasizing the potential role of MNCs from

emerging economies in promoting sustainable development in the home country, it highlights the two-way value of MNCs from emerging economies in addressing global environmental challenges: they are both learners of green technology and transmitters of green technology. Secondly, the existing literature on environmental spillovers mainly focuses on the environmental spillovers of MNCs from advanced economies on host country firms. There is no literature that explores the environmental spillovers of MNCs from emerging economies on domestic firms in the home country. To fill this gap, this study examines how MNCs from emerging economies generate environmental spillovers on domestic firms in the home country through different channels such as horizontal spillovers (within the industry) and vertical spillovers (between industries) from the perspective of the home country. Third, the study constructs an original database combining data from four sources, covering both listed and non-listed firms. This comprehensive dataset enables a broad and detailed analysis of spillovers, capturing effects across firm types and drawing more targeted conclusions.

## Zhuo Wang, International Business

### Firm- Level international experience and subsidiary exit: A systematic review and research agenda

**Keywords:** International Experience, Subsidiary Exit, Survival, Divestment, Multinational Enterprises

Firm-level international experience (FIE) of multinational enterprises (MNEs) has long been considered a robust predictor of foreign subsidiary exit, yet the empirical findings are mixed. In this review, we identify and organize empirical research on the FIE-foreign subsidiary exit relationship, using 47 empirical studies published in leading academic journals between 1995 and 2024. Overall, the findings from our review demonstrate that, besides contextual and methodological limitations, two underappreciated conceptual issues, namely, the heterogeneous nature of firm-level international experience and the complexity of the learning mechanism contributes to the lack of theorizing on FIE-foreign subsidiary exit relationship. We subsequently develop a conceptual framework which integrates complementary streams of theoretical lenses and empirical work relating to firms' FIE and subsidiary exit as the focal unit of analysis. Drawing insights from our review, we explore future research agendas, linking the contemporary research themes with two primary directions. First, FIE operates at key interfaces of shifts in institutional and organizational learning environments and hence coalescing these shifts into an analytical and integrated framework of foreign subsidiary exit will enable breakthroughs in scholarly advancements in the international business (IB) domain. Second, IB research will benefit from micro-foundational research on the international experience cycle and its linkages with divestment and survival of foreign subsidiaries. Future research into these pertinent dynamics of FIE-subsidiary exit relationship would therefore enhance our understanding of internationally operating firms in a fractured global economy.

## Minghao Xu, Marketing

### Seeing through different eyes: Moral emotions and donation intention under joint vs. separate appeals

**Keywords:** donation framing; periodic; joint versus separate evaluation; moral emotions; self–other asymmetry

**Description:** Presenting donation appeals jointly (vs. separately) can amplify moral emotions and thus increase donation intentions, and this effect may be significantly moderated by participants' standpoint.

## Research problem

Are potential donors more willing to donate when asked, “Would you prefer to donate \$5 per week or \$250 once”, compared to “Would you prefer to donate \$5 per week (or not at all)”? And how will their feelings differ as a result? Might there be an asymmetry between positive and negative feelings that mirrors the one observed in moral judgment? Finally, will charity managers, who rely on their predictions of donor responses to make decisions but approach the donation decision with a different perspective, misjudge how donors actually feel and behave?

## Theoretical/conceptual framework

This study was inspired by inconsistent discussions about more favorable perceptions of small continuous donations than those framed as larger overall sums (Basu 2021; Lee and Chu 2023; Schaumberg and Lin 2023, 2024).

Based on the mental accounting effect (Skwara 2023; Sussman, Sharma, and Alter 2015; Thaler 1999, 2008), the attractiveness of periodic framing should differ under different types of evaluation (joint vs. separate) and from different perspectives (charity managers vs. potential donors).

Furthermore, informed by the asymmetric effects of moral evaluation (Tan, Anderson, and Basu 2025) and perceived cost and benefit (Rubaltelli et al. 2020), we predict that emotional responses will also exhibit asymmetric effects.

## Methodological approach

The collected data enrolled 400 participants were divided into three paired groups: two joint and one separate evaluation group. Each group included 100 responses for both the periodic (\$5 per week for one year) and lump-sum donation appeals (\$250 once).

In the two joint evaluation conditions, participants were asked to evaluate both donation appeals simultaneously, either by imagining themselves as charity managers or as potential donors, and to predict potential donors' responses. In contrast, participants in the separate evaluation group were randomly assigned to read only one of the two appeals. Then, we sequentially examine the main, mediation, and moderation effects based on those groups.

## Summary of key findings

The survey reveals several suggestive findings. First, periodic framing (vs. lump-sum) attracts higher donation intention across all three paired groups. More surprisingly, presenting a lump-sum appeal increases donors' intention toward both the periodic and the lump-sum appeal.

Second, charity managers predict an asymmetric mediation effect between positive and negative emotions. Specifically, they consider guilt as a significant mediator from periodic (vs. lump-sum) framing to donation intention, but not warm glow.

Third, under joint evaluation, charity managers (compared to potential donors) underpredict warm glow for lump-sum appeals and overpredict guilt for both, leading to higher predicted donation intentions.

### Key contributions

This research makes three key contributions. First, periodic appeals elicit higher donation intentions, and presenting the equivalent lump-sum appeal alongside can boost both. Second, this research indicates a presenter–receiver discrepancy in predicting potential donors' emotional responses toward periodic vs. lump-sum appeals. Third, the results show that positive and negative emotions of potential donors, one of the key drivers of donation, exhibit asymmetric effects. Practically, charity managers are advised to present both appeals jointly and justify their predictions when designing and applying donation appeals.

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## Ning Yang, Economics

### CHINA'S POLICY UNCERTAINTY: SOME POLITICAL ECONOMY INSIGHTS

**Keywords:** Varieties of Capitalism; Policy Uncertainty; Chinese economy

It is widely accepted that high policy uncertainty leads to low economic growth in the established literature, which has focused first and foremost on western economies. However, in contrast to the established negative empirical associations, the case of China challenges the conventional opinion and tells a different story, where China has maintained robust growth over the past two decades despite the rising policy uncertainty. To address this puzzle, this paper seeks to discuss and explain the behaviours of different institutions under policy uncertainty. Drawing on a political economy approach and narrative analysis, this paper highlights the critical role of state intervention in mitigating the growth effects of policy uncertainty. The VoC framework is a conceptual framework to understand the institutional similarities and differences among economies, distinguishing Liberal Market Economies (LMEs) from Coordinated Market Economies (CMEs) according to how firms coordinate their activities and interact with economic institutions. China was found to differ from LMEs and CMEs fundamentally based on the firm' ownership dimension. By alleviating the fall in private investment and stimulating economic activity in the face of high uncertainty, China's central government has played an important role in mitigating negative growth effects.



## Yushan Yang, Analytics, Technology & Operations

### The Dynamic Flow of Algorithm Power in the Digital Labour Platforms

**Keywords:** E-hailing Industry, Sociomateriality Theory,

**Description:** The Impact of E-hailing Algorithms on Drivers and Employees within the E-hailing Industry

#### 1.0 Purpose

This study aims to explore the relationship between algorithmic management and the socialisation behaviours of gig workers in the e-hailing industry through sociomateriality theory. It also seeks to provide appropriate references and theoretical support for improving relevant management mechanisms and promoting social accountability in platform governance. This research intends to explore the use of algorithms on E-hailing platforms and explicate the “roles” that such algorithms play between related workers and drivers of E-hailing companies.

Based on this, the study will discuss the socialisation and resistance of the driver community to the advantages and disadvantages of the algorithms' functionality. Finally, the research will also analyse how e-hailing algorithmic accountability drivers and workers can be used in the future. Through these aims, this research question is:

How is the impact of e-hailing algorithms on drivers and employees within the e-hailing industry?

#### 2.0 Methodology

For data collection, participants for the interviews included: 3 government official, 6 employee of the e-hailing algorithm department, and 7 drivers. In addition to this research decided to do 40 semi-structures interviews and focus on the secondary data (e.g., forms, reports, and news) will also be collected. Qualitative data will be coded using the Gioia method through software such as NVIVO.

#### 3.0 Relevance and Contribution

Through the Sociomateriality theory, this study expands understanding of the relationship between technology and society by exploring the impacts of E-hailing algorithms on E-hailing employees and drivers. Specifically, this research presents two potential contributions. First, based on the Sociomaterial theory, this study will investigate the dynamic relationship between technology and actors in the social environment by summarising the roles and functions of E-hailing algorithms on the interactions between E-hailing employees and drivers. Besides, the study intends to expose the socialised behaviour of gig workers in the face of algorithmic management by further discussing the sociomateriality perspective. Thus, this research aims to extend previous drivers' passive behaviours towards algorithms by uncovering the mechanisms of how E-hailing drivers discover and understand algorithms

and how they adapt to and fight against algorithmic management. This research findings will discuss the interconnectedness of algorithms and social factors such as driver behaviour and organisational decision-making from a practical perspective, thus enriching the 'Mutual Construction' view of technology and society. Finally, the study will critically discuss the issue of responsibility of different stakeholders, such as drivers and employees, towards algorithms by introducing the concept of algorithmic accountability. By examining features such as algorithmic transparency, the study has rich potential to extend beyond the design issues of the technology itself. Instead, it can focus more on accountability issues when the technology is applied at a societal level.

## Qi Zhang, Marketing

### Artificial Intelligence adoption in Marketing and its Influence on Firm Performance

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence Adoption, Resource-based View, Capability-based View, Marketing Strategies

**Description:** This study operationalises three types of AI intelligences, purifies the scales and tests the reliability and validity, and examines the relationships between the adoption of AI in marketing and firms' performance.

#### Research problem

The fast advancement of Artificial Intelligence (hereafter, AI) technologies has been reshaping firms' marketing strategies and activities across different industries in the recent two decades (Huang et al., 2019; Huang and Rust, 2021). Scholars have provided comprehensive frameworks regarding the roles and applications of AI in marketing activities. However, it falls short in providing a standardised measurement scale for evaluating the effectiveness of each AI intelligence, which hinders the comprehensive understanding of AI's impact. Secondly, despite a recent surge in studies on AI adoption and firms' performance, the existing literature is dominated by conceptual frameworks and lacks empirical evidence (Mikalef and Gupta, 2021), which limits the understanding of the mechanism through which the adoption of AI can enhance firms' performance.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Following Churchill's (1979) guidance on new construct development, this study develops and purifies items for AI adoption in marketing based on Huang and Rust's (2021) categorisation of three types of AI (i.e., Mechanical AI, Thinking AI, and Feeling AI). To build the nomological validity, resource-based view (RBV) serves as the overarching theoretical background, and the newly developed scales are tested in a conceptual model that consists of marketing strategy and firm performance.

#### Methodological approach

The development of a robust measurement tool to operationalise these AI intelligences is crucial, and this study adopts both qualitative and quantitative research designs. The mixed methods of developing new scales are in line with the existing literature, such as those Mitrega et al. (2012). Figure 1 depicts the multi-stage research design of this study.

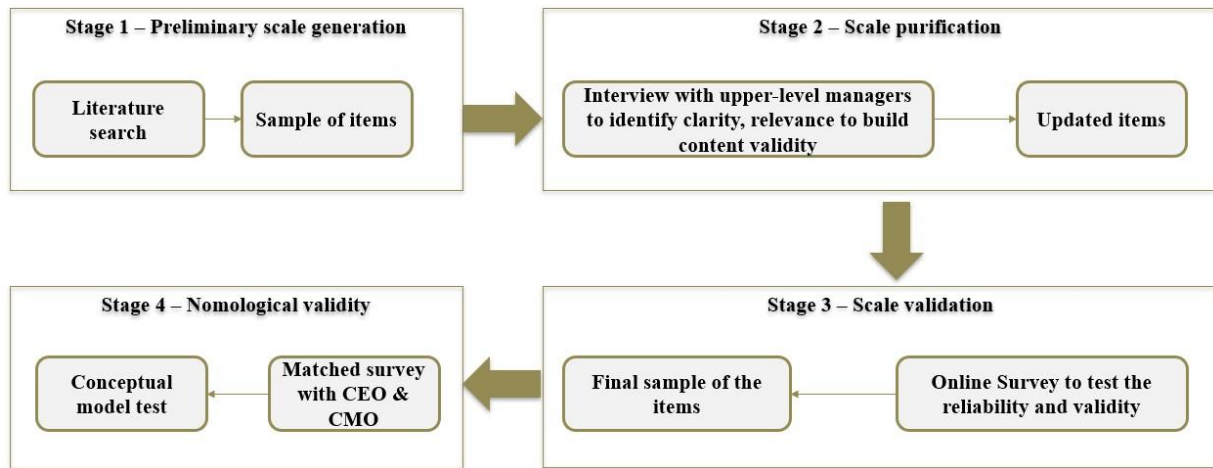


Figure 1. Multi-stage research design

Manufacturing firms are selected as the research industry for this research because AI has been used in this sector for longer time (compared to services sector), and it still sees the continue adoption in the future.

For the stages 2 and 3 in Figure 1, the United Kingdom is selected as the research context for the reasons of respondents' experienced experts and their knowledge and experience as native English speakers. For the stage 4, China is selected for the research context for the reasons of the nation's increasing financial investment in AI technologies, its national strategy of dominating the AI world by 2030, and the country's manufacturing-intensive nature and the large-scale manufacturing landscape as well as the significant world's production output.

### Summary of key findings

Currently conducting the data analysis.

### Key contributions

This study contributes to the theory and practice by developing the survey scales for three types of AI, which can be further empirically applied. Unlike other applicationbased scales (which mainly are formative measures), all the measurements are reflective and can be tested in different industries and cultures.

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## Zicen Zhao, Accounting & Finance

### Social Connection and Cross-border VC Investments

**Keywords:** Social connection, Venture Capital, Innovation, spatial economics, patent

**Description:** Implementing a novel proxy of Social Connectedness Index, extracted from Facebook friend connections, we investigate the role of social connections in cross-border venture capital investments selections and investments outcomes.

#### Research problem

How does social connection effect cross-border VC investments selections, financial performance, and innovation outcomes.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

Social connections mitigate information asymmetry problem raised by geographic distance. However, it induces groupthink and affect the first success exits at the same time. In addition, spillover effect improves innovation outcomes.

#### Methodological approach

First, we conduct a counterfactual analysis on 2,587,898 potential VC-PC pairs to assess the likelihood of cross-border VC investment, utilizing logit and probit regression models. Furthermore, we use logit and probit to examine the financial performance of cross-border venture capital investments. Then, we apply the Poisson pseudomaximum likelihood estimator to evaluate the impact of social connectedness on the number of patents and citations.

Moreover, we implement two methods to address potential concerns, which are instrumental variables, internet user coverage in VC country, to control for endogeneity and employing the Heckman two-stage regression to correct the selection bias.

#### Summary of key findings

Taken together, our results support the hypotheses that cross-border VC investors are more likely to invest in portfolio companies within socially connected countries. Nevertheless, these close social relations adversely affect portfolio company performance, decreasing the likelihood of successful exits. Conversely, portfolio companies leverage diverse resources and knowledge spillovers by cross-border VCs, improving their innovation performance after cross-border VC investments.

#### Key contributions

This study contributes to three major areas of literature. First, it adds to the broader literature in economic sociology, especially the economic impact of social connectedness. Existing research shows social connectedness plays a significant role in people's financial

decisions, corporate hiring decision, and international trading decisions. We extend the study in cross-border VC investments decision makings.

Second, our study further contributes to the literature on spatial economics, by examining the role of geographic distance on economic activities. Previous studies indicate exacerbating information asymmetry and liability of foreignness problems when investing abroad. However, with the increasing trend of VCs investing globally, few studies investigate how VCs select cross-border investment opportunities. Our research aims to fill this gap by examining the deal formations, while also extending the analysis to evaluate investment outcomes.

Third, our findings shed light on the factors driving corporate innovation. The existing literature identifies several determinants, such as female representation on boards, overconfident CEOs. However, most of innovation studies are in domestic level, due to the data limitation. We use the international patent database Orbis-IP and extend the literature by studying the role of cross-border VC investors on innovation, combining with social connectedness between countries.

## Chenyi Zhu, Management & Organisations

### Implicit attitudes towards imperfect fresh produce: reduce the intuition “Ugly = Bad” by using implied motion

**Keywords:** Implicit attitude, Imperfect fresh produce, Implied motion, Food Waste, Social cognition

**Description:** This paper investigates the automatic association between imperfect fresh produce and negative attributes and how implied motion influences consumers' negative implicit attitudes toward imperfect fresh produce using a mixed-design Implicit Association Test (IAT).

#### Research problem

Imperfect fresh produce, despite being edible, often faces consumer rejection due to aesthetic standards, contributing significantly to food waste. While explicit interventions have been explored, less is known about the unconscious or automatic evaluations consumers form towards imperfect produce. Understanding these implicit attitudes is crucial to designing more effective interventions. This research examines whether visual cues suggesting implied motion can positively influence consumers' implicit attitudes toward imperfect fruits and vegetables.

#### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The study draws on the theory of implicit social cognition, which suggests that individuals' automatic evaluations can significantly influence behaviour, sometimes independently of their explicit beliefs. To influence these automatic processes, the study incorporates implied motion cues into product imagery, aiming to enhance engagement and trigger more positive non-conscious evaluations of imperfect produce without requiring deliberate processing. Implied motion, such as the illusion of water pouring into a glass from a static image, has been shown to influence perceptions of freshness and quality. Previous research has focused on how such visual cues can make perfectly shaped and coloured fruits and vegetables appear fresher and more appealing. Our study extends these findings to include visually imperfect produce, to explore the role of implied motion on automatic association and furtherly reduce the negative implicit attitudes towards imperfect fresh produce.

#### Methodological approach

A mixed-design Implicit Association Test (IAT) was employed, with 145 participants randomly assigned to either an implied motion or static image condition. The study used a two-dimensional IAT structure, combining an image-word task (perfect vs imperfect produce paired with "good" and "bad" words) and an image-image task (perfect vs imperfect produce paired with "pleasant" and "unpleasant" images). Participants' reaction times were measured to assess implicit associations. After the IAT tasks, participants completed a



questionnaire measuring their existed taste rating towards the produce used in the experiment.

### Summary of key findings

This study investigated whether implied motion has the potential to alter consumers' automatically negative attitudes toward aesthetically imperfect fruits and vegetables. Using an md-IAT, we found that participants exhibited stronger negative implicit attitudes toward imperfect produce compared to perfect produce. Importantly, the presence of implied motion significantly reduced this bias, especially for imperfect items. These results suggest that visually implied motion cues in static images can weaken deeply rooted aesthetic-based biases in fresh produce purchase.

### Key contributions

The study contributes theoretically to the social cognition and sustainability literature by demonstrating that people exhibit implicit negative biases against imperfect produce, confirming the "Ugly = Bad" intuition. Meanwhile, it shows that implied motion cues can weaken these negative biases towards imperfect fresh produce unconsciously.

Methodologically, the research extends the use of the Implicit Association Test to imperfect fresh produce, offering a novel approach to uncover hidden cognitive barriers to sustainable choices. The findings also provide practical implications for engaging the audience through non-verbal and sensory-level interventions to promote sustainable consumption of fresh produce. More broadly, the findings emphasise the importance of addressing both implicit and explicit processes when designing interventions aimed at reducing waste of imperfect fresh produce.

## Charles Zhuwau, Management & Organisations

### Forging complementary and escape paths: Entrepreneurial network agency to navigate corruption in Zimbabwe

**Keywords:** Corruption, network agency, entrepreneurship

**Description:** The research examines how entrepreneurs utilise networks to navigate corruption in contexts with severe institutional voids.

### Research problem

Corruption is a major obstacle to entrepreneurship and economic growth (Audretsch et al., 2022). While the past half century witnessed increased global efforts to combat corruption, the measures appear ineffective (Barrington et al., 2022). This is particularly the case in low-income developing countries where corruption is widespread (Wang, 2022) and can be interpreted as a manifestation of institutional voids (Webb et al., 2020). Extant research

provides insights into the causes of corruption and its impact on entrepreneurial outcomes, yet paying less attention to examine how corruption impacts entrepreneurial actions (Liu et al., 2023). Addressing this gap has potential to reveal factors that influence entrepreneurial responses to corruption. With entrepreneurial reliance on networks in such contexts (Ge et al., 2019), the research contributes to closing the key research gap by asking: How do entrepreneurs utilise networks to navigate corruption? In answering this question, the research attends to recent calls for research to provide insights into entrepreneurial responses to corruption (Komba et al., 2024).

### Theoretical/conceptual framework

The research integrates institutional theory and network theory to examine corruption through the strategic choices that entrepreneurs make in response to corruption. The research presents institutional voids as constraints that entrepreneurs can address through networks and by engaging in corruption. However, the literature has inconsistencies in suggesting that networks and corruption are substitutes (Krammer, 2019) on one hand, and complementary (Tonoyan et al., 2010) on the other. Hence, there is a need to understand when and how networks substitute and complement corruption.

### Methodological approach

This in-depth qualitative study adopts a narrative inquiry. 35 life-story interviews were conducted with Zimbabwean early-stage and established entrepreneurs selected using purposive and snowball sampling. The data was analysed using reflexive thematic analysis.

### Summary of key findings

The results show that early-stage entrepreneurs leverage existing personal networks of family, friends, coworkers and former employers to respond to corruption. However, personal networks provide limited (or no) entrepreneurship support due to lack of resources, unwillingness to support and absence in organizations that entrepreneurs transact with. Accordingly, entrepreneurs pay bribes, which are haphazard, and involving high corruption fees and failure risks. Later, entrepreneurs develop business networks that provide support specific to activities being pursued. Whereas some forge clientelism based low-level business networks with employees of target organisations to organise, reduce fees and increase certainty of corruption, others develop value based top-level business networks with peer entrepreneurs and executives to resist corruption and grow.

### Key contributions

The research makes double contributions to theory. First, the research contributes to dynamic perspective of entrepreneurial networking (Engel et al., 2017) by showing that entrepreneurs practice network agency through developing business networks to influence entrepreneurial growth. This addresses calls to advance the understanding of entrepreneurial networking behaviour in context with high uncertainties (Sydow et al., 2022).

Second, the research advances the understanding of corruption by demonstrating that some networks perpetuate corruption while others help to resist it. This addresses calls for research to distinguish networks and their usage (Ge et al., 2019), and examine mechanisms for entrepreneurs to participate and resist corruption (Cuervo-Cazurra, 2016).

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