



ATHENS INSTITUTE

# Abstract Book

**13<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on  
Social Sciences  
27-31 July 2026, Athens, Greece**

**Edited by  
Philip G. Cerny & Olga Gkounta**

2026



Abstracts  
13<sup>th</sup> Annual International  
Conference on Social Sciences  
27-31 July 2026, Athens, Greece

Edited by  
Philip G. Cerny & Olga Gkounta

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## Preface

This book includes the abstracts of all the papers presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> *Annual International Conference on Social Sciences* (27-31 July 2026), organized by the Athens Institute.

A full program can be found before the relevant abstracts. In accordance with Athens Institute's Publication Policy, the papers presented during this conference will be considered for inclusion in one of the Athens Institute's many publications only after a blind peer review process.

The purpose of this abstract book is to provide members of the Athens Institute and other academics around the world with a resource through which they can discover colleagues and additional research relevant to their own work. This purpose is in congruence with the overall mission of the association. Athens Institute was established in 1995 as an independent academic organization with the mission to become a forum where academics and researchers from all over the world can meet to exchange ideas on their work and consider the future developments of their fields of study.

To facilitate the communication, a references section includes all the abstract books published as part of this conference (Table 1). I invite the readers to access these abstract books –these are available for free– and compare how the themes of the conference have evolved over the years. According to the Athens Institute's mission, the presenters in these conferences are coming from many different countries, presenting various topics.

**Table 1.** *Publication of Books of Abstracts of Proceedings, 2014-2026*

| Year | Papers | Countries | References                                     |
|------|--------|-----------|------------------------------------------------|
| 2026 | 49     | 26        | Cerny and Gkounta (2026)                       |
| 2025 | 32     | 17        | <a href="#">Maddaloni and Papanikou (2025)</a> |
| 2024 | 36     | 15        | <a href="#">Maddaloni and Gkounta (2024)</a>   |
| 2023 | 43     | 19        | <a href="#">Tsagkaris and Gkounta (2023)</a>   |
| 2022 | 36     | 22        | <a href="#">Cerny and Gkounta (2022)</a>       |
| 2021 | 27     | 15        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2021)</a>               |
| 2020 | 16     | 12        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2020)</a>               |
| 2019 | 55     | 26        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2019)</a>               |
| 2018 | 31     | 18        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2018)</a>               |
| 2017 | 39     | 18        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2017)</a>               |
| 2016 | 29     | 15        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2016)</a>               |
| 2015 | 36     | 15        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2015)</a>               |
| 2014 | 42     | 23        | <a href="#">Papanikos (2014)</a>               |

It is our hope that through Athens Institute's conferences and publications, Athens will become a place where academics and researchers from all over the world can regularly meet to discuss the developments of their disciplines and present their work. Since 1995, Athens Institute has organized more than 400 international conferences and has published over 200 books. Academically, the institute is organized into 7 divisions and 37 units. Each unit organizes at least one annual conference and undertakes various small and large research projects.

For each of these events, the involvement of multiple parties is crucial. I would like to thank all the participants, the members of the organizing and academic committees, and most importantly the administration staff of the Athens Institute for putting this conference and its subsequent publications together.

**Gregory T. Papanikos**  
**President**

## **Editors' Note**

These abstracts provide a vital means to the dissemination of scholarly inquiry in the field of Social Sciences. The breadth and depth of research approaches and topics represented in this book underscores the diversity of the conference.

Athens Institute's mission is to bring together academics from all corners of the world in order to engage with each other, brainstorm, exchange ideas, be inspired by one another, and once they are back in their institutions and countries to implement what they have acquired. The *13<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Social Sciences*, accomplished this goal by bringing together academics and scholars from 26 different countries (Algeria, Brazil, Canada, China, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lithuania, Portugal, Qatar, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, Türkiye, UAE, UK, USA), which brought in the conference the perspectives of many different country approaches and realities in the field.

Publishing this book can help that spirit of engaged scholarship continue into the future. With our joint efforts, the next editions of this conference will be even better. We hope that this abstract book as a whole will be both of interest and of value to the reading audience.

**Philip G. Cerny & Olga Gkounta**  
**Editors**

**13<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Social Sciences,  
27-31 July 2026, Athens, Greece**

**Organizing & Scientific Committee**

All Athens Institute's conferences are organized by the Academic Council. This conference has been organized with the assistance of the following academic members of Athens Institute.

Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

Dr. Philip G. Cerny, Director, Social Sciences Division, Athens Institute & Professor Emeritus, University of Manchester (UK) and Rutgers University (USA).

Dr. Sonia Salari, Deputy Director, Social Sciences Division, Athens Institute & Professor, University of Utah, USA.

Dr. Chris Sakellariou, Vice President of Finance, Athens Institute & Associate Professor of Economics (Retired), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

Dr. Domenico Maddaloni, Head, Sociology Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, University of Salerno, Italy.

Dr. George S. Tsagaris, Associate Professor, Cleveland State University, USA.

Dr. Jim Clark, Head, Psychology Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, University of Winnipeg, Canada.

Dr. John Pavlik, Head, Mass Media and Communication Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, Rutgers University, USA.

Dr. Thanos Patelis, Lead Psychometrician, University of Kansas, USA.

Dr. Barbara Zagaglia, Head, Anthropology & Demography Unit, Athens Institute & Associate Professor, Polytechnic University of Marche, Italy.

Dr. Lampros Pyrgiotis, Research Fellow, Athens Institute.

## FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**13<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Social Sciences, 27-31 July 2026,  
Athens, Greece**

### PROGRAM

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <b>08:30-09:15</b><br><b>Registration</b><br><b>09:15-10:00 Opening Speech and Welcoming Remarks</b><br><b>Speakers: Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute &amp; Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>10:00-11:30 Session 1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Session 1a</b><br><b>Moderator: Utku Ozer,</b><br>Research Fellow, Athens Institute.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Session 1b</b><br><b>Moderator: Raid Suleiman,</b><br>Professor, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, Jordan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Session 1c</b><br><b>Moderator: Christos Anagnostopoulos,</b><br>Associate Professor and UNESCO Chairholder, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar..                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1. <b>Sabrina Joseph,</b><br>Provost and Professor, The American University of Rome, Italy.<br><i>Title: Water, Agriculture, and Power: Reframing the Nation-State in the Arabian Gulf through Political Ecology.</i><br>2. <b>Bob Uttl,</b> Professor, Mount Royal University, Canada.<br><i>Title: Widespread Use of Outdated, Obsolete, and Foreign Intelligence and Personality Tests and Norms Invalidate Numerous Clinical, Forensic, and Fitness for Duty Assessments.</i><br>3. <b>Mida Zantout,</b><br>Assistant Professor, American University of Dubai, UAE.<br><i>Title: Civil Wills, Legal Pluralism, and Gender-Stabilizing Mechanisms in the UAE.</i><br>4. <b>Benjamin Shlomit,</b><br>Lecturer, The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel.<br><i>Title: Between Community, Fatherhood, and Poverty: Divorce</i> | 1. <b>Stephan Goetz,</b><br>Professor and Director, Penn State University and The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, USA.<br><b>Luyi Han,</b> Assistant Professor, Penn State University, USA.<br><b>Zheng Tian,</b> Assistant Research Professor, Penn State University and The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, USA.<br><b>Xiaoyin Li,</b> Postdoctoral Scholar, Regional Research Institute, West Virginia University, USA.<br><b>Heather Stephens,</b> Director and Professor, Regional Research Institute, West Virginia University, USA.<br><i>Title: Determinants of Self-Employment and Income: Evidence from Confidential U.S. Administrative and Census Data.</i><br>2. <b>Laima Gerlitz,</b> Head of European Project Center, | 1. <b>Spiro Doukas,</b><br>Professor, American Public University, USA.<br><i>Title: Sport Tourism and Regional Development Through Marathons and Long-Distance Runs: A Case Study of the Ioannina Lake Run.</i><br>2. <b>Unsal Ozdogru,</b><br>Clinical Associate Professor, University of Illinois Chicago, USA.<br><b>Kyungsoo Chon,</b><br>University of Illinois Chicago, USA.<br><i>Title: Perceived Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Running.</i><br>3. <b>Ruta Dadeliene,</b><br>Associate Professor, Vilnius University, Lithuania.<br><b>Mantas Sapranasauskas,</b><br>MSc Student, Vilnius University, Lithuania.<br><i>Title: Physical Characteristics and Movement Quality of Athletes in Different Sports.</i><br>4. <b>Gregory T. Papanikos,</b><br>President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of |

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| among Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Men in Israel.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>University of Wismar, Germany.<br/><b>Title:</b> BIOCENTUM: A Quintuple-Helix Innovation Model for Mobilising Businesses, Citizens and Municipalities Around Urban Biodiversity – Lessons from the URBIO BAUHAUS Project.</p> <p>3. <b>Ewell Mnelisi Xaba</b>, Researcher &amp; Lecturer, Durban University of Technology, South Africa.<br/><b>Title:</b> Tapping into Loyalty, the Online Grocery Experience in South Africa.</p>                      | <p>Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.<br/><b>Title:</b> UEFA-versus-UEFA Matches at the 2026 World Cup.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p><b>11:30-13:00 Session 2</b><br/><b>Moderator:</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <p><b>Session 2a</b><br/><b>Moderator: Sabrina Joseph</b>, Provost and Professor, The American University of Rome, Italy.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p><b>Session 2b</b><br/><b>Moderator: Stephan Goetz</b>, Professor and Director, Penn State University and The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, USA.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p><b>Session 2c</b><br/><b>Moderator: Spiro Doukas</b>, Deputy Head, Sports Unit, Athens Institute &amp; Professor, American Public University, USA.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p>1. <b>Antonio Marziale</b>, Adjunct Professor, Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria, Italy.<br/><b>Title:</b> Adolescence from a Social Science Perspective.</p> <p>2. <b>Germinal Mtshegwa</b>, Lecturer, North-West University, South Africa.<br/><b>Title:</b> "It Feels Like You are Outside the Event": Exploring the Attitudes of Male Students towards Contraceptive Use at the North-West University.</p> <p>3. <b>Gisele Tchamba</b>, Faculty Member, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya.<br/><b>Title:</b> Washed Away: Assessing the Feasibility of Reusable Menstrual Hygiene Products in the Water-Scarce Oldonyonyokie Maasai Community, Kenya.</p> <p>4. <b>Apakorn Chamavit</b>, Lecturer, Srinakharinwirot University,</p> | <p>1. <b>Demos Vardiabasis</b>, Professor, Pepperdine University, USA.<br/><b>Burhan Yavas</b>, Professor, Pepperdine University, USA.<br/><b>Samuel Seman</b>, Professor, Pepperdine University, USA.<br/><b>Title:</b> Foreign Direct Investment and Financial Markets.</p> <p>2. <b>Kagiso Phake</b>, Lecturer, North-West University, South Africa.<br/><b>Title:</b> Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in</p> | <p>1. <b>Christos Anagnostopoulos</b>, Associate Professor and UNESCO Chairholder, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar.<br/><b>Khouloud Mtibaa</b>, Laboratory Manager, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar.<br/><b>Title:</b> The Governance Cascade: Stakeholder Expectations and Institutional Gaps in an Academic Exercise Science Laboratory.</p> <p>2. <b>Gergo Szilagyi</b>, PhD Student, Matej Bel University, Slovakia.<br/><b>Title:</b> Explosive</p> |

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| <p>Thailand.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>Pun Translation Method: Thai-English Translation Case Study of Popular Stand-Up Comedy Show Spanning a Decade.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Addressing Unemployment Challenges in Mahikeng Local Municipality.</p> <p>3. <b>Abilio Zacarias</b>, Researcher, ISEG Research, University of Lisbon, Portugal.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>Characteristics of Board Chairs for More Effective Recruitment During Financial Crises.</i></p> <p>4. <b>Rachel Nefertari Boveja</b>, Faculty Member, Indiana University – Political Advocacy and Civic Engagement Program, USA.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>Space Diplomacy: Collaborative Policies for the Future of Space Governance and Law.</i></p> | <p><i>Strength as a Key Predictor of Kata Performance in Youth Karate Athletes: A Pilot Study.</i></p> <p>3. <b>Emil Maj Christensen</b>, Urban Planner, Danish Cyclists' Federation, Denmark.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>Cycling-Friendly Urban Development Beyond Big Cities: Integrating Cycling in Low-Density Areas.</i></p> |
| <p><b>13:00-14:00 Session 3 – Symposium on “The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Teaching, Research, and Publishing: Personal Experiences from Users”</b><br/><b>Moderator:</b> Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute &amp; Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p>1. <b>Bob Uttl</b>, Professor, Mount Royal University, Canada.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>Undergraduate Students' Knowledge, Perceptions and Attitudes towards AI.</i></p> <p>2. <b>Raid Suleiman</b>, Professor, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, Jordan.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>AI in Jordanian Universities in Education.</i></p> <p>3. <b>Sabrina Joseph</b>, Provost and Professor, The American University of Rome, Italy.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>'From Principles to Practice: Developing Robust AI Policy for Universities.</i></p> <p>4. <b>Gisele Tchamba</b>, Faculty Member, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>From “Tool” to “Partner”: AI in Research, Evaluation, and Statistical Practice.</i></p> <p>5. <b>Laima Gerlitz</b>, Head of European Project Center, University of Wismar, Germany.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>Human Expertise in the Age of AI: Personal Experiences in Teaching, Research and Publishing.</i></p> <p>6. <b>Xinyu Xiao, Researcher</b>, Chinese Academy of Science and Technology for Development, China.<br/><b>Title:</b> <i>Becoming Better “Supervisors”: Teaching, Research and Publishing in the Age of Human-AI Collaboration.</i></p> <p><b>Interventions:</b></p> <p>1. <b>Wensupu Yang</b>, Associate, SAMI Consulting, UK.</p> <p>2. <b>Spiro Doukas</b>, Professor, American Public University, USA.</p> <p>3. <b>Daphne Vidanec</b>, Full Professor, Baltazar University of Applied Sciences, Croatia.</p> <p>4. <b>Afsin Sahin</b>, Professor, Ankara Haci Bayram Veli University, Türkiye.</p> <p>5. <b>Asanbe Comfort</b>, Professor and Chair, Psychology Department, City University of New York, USA.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p><b>14:00-15:00 Lunch</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**15:00-16:30 Session 4 – Microsymposium on Foresight**

**Moderator: Lampros Pyrgiotis**, Research Fellow, Athens Institute.

1. **An-Chun Teng**, Assistant Professor, Ming Chuan University, Taiwan.  
*Title: When Natural Disasters Become Governance Crises: Media Narratives of Crisis Management and Disaster Governance in Taiwan.*
2. **Samaneh Ebrahimabadi**, Researcher, Finland Futures Research Center, University of Turku, Finland.  
*Title: Temporal Dimensions in Corporate Foresight: Gaps, Approaches, and Future Directions.*
3. **Wensupu Yang**, Associate, SAMI Consulting, UK.  
*Title: Using LLM-as-a-Judge for Scenario Development: A Methodological Framework for Evaluating Scenario Logics and Narratives.*
4. **Like Yuan**, Director, Chinese Academy of Science and Technology for Development, China.  
**Xinyu Xiao**, Researcher, Chinese Academy of Science and Technology for Development, China.  
**Zheng Qin**, Researcher, Chinese Academy of Science and Technology for Development, China.  
**Rong Guo**, Vice President, Chinese Academy of Science and Technology for Development, China.  
**Kaiyuan Long**, Researcher, Chinese Academy of Science and Technology for Development, China.  
*Title: Technology Foresight in China: Methods and Practices.*

**16:30-17:15 Session 5**

**Moderator: Olga Gkounta**, Researcher, Athens Institute.

1. **Daniel Weissglass**, Assistant Professor, Duke Kunshan University, China.  
*Title: Confucian Constitutionalism: Expressive Harms of Doctrinal Public Discourse.*
2. **Naila Keleta-Mae**, Professor and Canada Research Chair, University of Waterloo, Canada.  
*Title: Black And Free: International Expressions.*

**18:00-20:00 Session 6 – Visit Aristotle’s Lyceum**

**This is not a guided tour**, and participation in this visit is **not included in any conference registration fee. It requires pre-booking.** It includes visits to Aristotle’s Lyceum, the Panathenaic Stadium (Kallimarmaro), the National Garden, the statues of Sophocles, Aeschylus, and Euripides, and Syntagma Square, where the tour concludes in front of the Hellenic Parliament. [Click here](#) for more details.

**20:30-22:30 Athenian Early Evening Symposium (Sequence of Events: Ongoing Academic Discussions, Dinner, Wine and Water, Music, Dance)**

**Tuesday 28 July 2026**

**09:30-11:00 Session 7 – Microsymposium on “Library and Information Science”**

**Moderator: Olga Gkounta**, Researcher, Athens Institute.

1. **Raid Suleiman**, Professor, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, Jordan.  
*Title: Challenges of Disappearance Printed Arabic Newspapers Archive in the Digital Environment (A Case Study: AL-Hussein bin Talal Newspapers Archive).*
2. **David Bodoff**, Senior Lecturer, University of Haifa, Israel.  
*Title: Attribution Theory for Understanding Information Search.*
3. **Mor Deshen**, Lecturer, Bar-Ilan University, Israel.  
**Noa Aharoni**, Lecturer, Bar-Ilan University, Israel.  
*Title: Artificial Intelligence Literacy among LIS Professionals: An Emerging Research Landscape.*



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| <p>4. <b>Sibongile Ngwenya</b>, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of South Africa, South Africa.<br/><b>Omwoyo Bosire Onyancha</b>, Professor, University of South Africa, South Africa.<br/><i>Title: An Informetric Study of the Co-existence of Open Science and Intellectual Property Rights.</i></p> <p>5. <b>Chekra Allani</b>, Assistant Professor, Arab Open University – Kuwait, Kuwait.<br/><b>Banan Daraiseh</b>, Assistant Professor, Arab Open University, Kuwait.<br/><b>Areej Al Siaghy</b>, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Attending Physician, University of Connecticut, USA.<br/><i>Title: Bibliotherapy for Mental Wellbeing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: The Role of Children's Literature in Educational Libraries.</i></p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>11:00-12:30 Session 8</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p><b>Session 8a</b><br/><b>Moderator: Sibongile Ngwenya</b>, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of South Africa, South Africa.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>Session 8b</b><br/><b>Moderator: Ewell Mnelisi Xaba</b>, Researcher &amp; Lecturer, Durban University of Technology, South Africa.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p><b>Session 8c</b><br/><b>Moderator: Gergo Szilagyi</b>, PhD Student, Matej Bel University, Slovakia.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>1. <b>Marie Manikis</b>, Professor, McGill University, Canada.<br/><i>Title: Comparing the Review of Prosecutorial Discretion.</i></p> <p>2. <b>Louis Kontos</b>, Associate Professor, John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY), USA.<br/><i>Title: Conspiracy Theorizing as Ideological Apologia and Polemic.</i></p> <p>3. <b>Gayil Talshir</b>, Senior Lecturer, Hebrew University, Israel.<br/><i>Title: Following the Authoritarian Protocol: Regime Change and Civic Resistance.</i></p> <p>4. <b>Lungisile Shange</b>, Senior Lecturer, North-West University, South Africa.<br/><i>Title: Drivers of Repeat Pregnancies among Young Mothers in Umlazi Township, KwaZulu-Natal: A Qualitative Study.</i></p>                                                 | <p>1. <b>Milan Radojicic</b>, Assistant Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia.<br/><i>Title: Re-Examining the CEAI Factor Structure in SMEs and Large Organizations in Serbia.</i></p> <p>2. <b>Tamila Kartsivadze</b>, Assistant Professor, Batumi Navigation University, Georgia.<br/><i>Title: Social Media Marketing Challenges and Opportunities in Georgia – Analysis of Modern Approaches.</i></p> <p>3. <b>Norizan Abdullah</b>, Researcher, University of Southampton, UK.<br/><b>Paul Smith</b>, Professor, University of Southampton, UK.<br/><b>Olga Maslovskaya</b>, Professor, University of Southampton, UK.<br/><i>Title: The Association between Sectoral and Business Characteristics and Entrepreneurial Outcomes in Brunei.</i></p> | <p>1. <b>Abdelghani Miliani</b>, Head, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, University of Health Sciences, Algeria.<br/><b>Mahmoud Dib</b>, Lecturer, University of Oran 1 – Ahmed Ben Bella, Algeria.<br/><i>Title: Static Foot Disorders in Young Athletes: Insights from a Podoscopic Study in Algeria.</i></p> <p>2. <b>Katarina Kravec Rerkova</b>, PhD Student, Institute of Pathophysiology, Comenius University, Slovakia.<br/><b>Zuzana Novakova</b>, Researcher, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia.<br/><b>Karin Marcek Malenovska</b>, Researcher, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia.<br/><b>Igor Straka</b>, Associate Professor, Comenius University, Slovakia.<br/><b>Lucia Slobodova</b>, Researcher, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia.<br/><b>Viera Litvakova</b>, Researcher, Comenius University, Slovakia.<br/><b>Peter Valkovic</b>, Professor, Comenius University, Slovakia.<br/><b>Jozef Ukropec</b>, Senior Scientist, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia.<br/><b>Barbara Ukropcova</b>, Professor, Slovak Academy of Sciences/Comenius University, Slovakia.<br/><i>Title: Exercise Modulates Circulating and Skeletal Muscle MyomiR Dynamics in Parkinson's Disease.</i></p> |
| <b>12:30-14:00 Session 9</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p><b>Session 9a</b><br/><b>Moderator: Louis Kontos</b>, Associate Professor, John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY), USA.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p><b>Session 9b</b><br/><b>Moderator: Unsal Ozdogru</b>, Clinical Associate Professor,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

13<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Social Sciences, 27-31 July 2026, Athens, Greece:  
Abstract Book

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | University of Illinois Chicago,<br>USA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Maria Santos</b>, Professor, ISEG Research, University of Lisbon, Portugal.<br/><i>Title: The Management of Ethics: A Case Study.</i></li> <li>2. <b>John Trougakos</b>, Professor, University of Toronto, Canada.<br/><b>Milad Moghaddas</b>, PhD Student, University of Toronto, Canada.<br/><b>Daniel Beal</b>, Associate Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA.<br/><i>Title: Anxiety at Work: Key Themes and Future Directions.</i></li> <li>3. <b>Crain Soudien</b>, Professor, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.<br/><i>Title: Assessing South African Higher Education's Management of its International Policy for Academic Staff.</i></li> <li>4. <b>Marcela Ribeiro De Albuquerque</b>, Professor, State University of Northern Paraná (UENP), Brazil.<br/><b>Luis Ricardo da Silva Miguel</b>, Student, State University of Northern Paraná (UENP), Brazil.<br/><b>Erica Patente Nascimento</b>, Professor, State University of Northern Paraná (UENP), Brazil.<br/><i>Title: Financialization and the Supplementary Health System in Brazil: A Bibliographic Study.</i></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Christos Mavrovitis</b>, Senior Lecturer, University of Surrey, UK.<br/><i>Title: Match Length, Player Rankings, and Bookmakers' Beliefs – Evidence from Professional Tennis.</i></li> <li>2. <b>Allison Kiefner Burmeister</b>, Associate Professor, University of Findlay, USA.<br/><b>Jacob Burmeister</b>, Associate Professor, University of Findlay, USA.<br/><i>Title: Body Image and Disordered Eating in Collegiate Athletes and Non-Athletes.</i></li> <li>3. <b>Robert C. Schneider</b>, Distinguished Service Professor, State University of New York at Brockport, USA.<br/><i>Title: Leveraging Competitive Sport to Develop Entrepreneurial Competencies.</i></li> </ol> |

14:00-15:00 Lunch

16:45-20:30 Session 10

Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk

The urban walk ticket is not included as part of your registration fee. It includes transportation costs and the cost to enter the Parthenon and the other monuments on the Acropolis Hill. The urban walk tour includes the broader area of Athens. Among other sites, it includes: Zappion, Syntagma Square, Temple of Olympian Zeus, Ancient Roman Agora and on Acropolis Hill: the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion, and the Parthenon. The program of the tour may be adjusted, if there is a need beyond our control. This is a private event organized by the Athens Institute exclusively for the conference participants.

21:00-23:00

Ancient Athenian Dinner

Wednesday 29 July 2026  
An Educational Visit to Selected Islands  
or Nafplio & Mycenae Visit

Thursday 30 July 2026  
Visiting the Oracle of Delphi

Friday 31 July 2026  
Visiting the Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

**Norizan Abdullah**

Researcher, University of Southampton, UK

**Paul Smith**

Professor, University of Southampton, UK

&

**Olga Maslovskaya**

Professor, University of Southampton, UK

## **The Association between Sectoral and Business Characteristics and Entrepreneurial Outcomes in Brunei**

Entrepreneurship is reflected in the creation of new businesses and their performance. However, firm emergence and performance vary across economic sectors and business characteristics. Empirical evidence on the role of sectors and business characteristics in entrepreneurship formation in Brunei is limited. This study examines the associations between sectoral and business characteristics and entrepreneurial outcomes, focusing on business entry and performance (measured by revenue and employment) in Brunei. This study uses the Annual Census of Enterprises (ACE) data from 2017 to 2022. New firm entry is analysed using negative binomial regression, and firm performance is analysed using a multilevel model. The key findings show that new firm entry rates vary across sectors, with higher rates in wholesale and retail trade and accommodation and food service activities. In contrast, firm performance, measured by revenue and employment, is determined more by internal firm characteristics, such as size, age, and ownership form, than by industry sector. This contributes to the entrepreneurship literature by examining how sector and firm characteristics shape firm entry and performance in Brunei using longitudinal ACE data. It also demonstrates how official data collections can be used to infer entrepreneurial activities. The findings provide insights into varying patterns of firm emergence and performance, offering evidence relevant for shaping Brunei's entrepreneurship policy.

**Chekra Allani**

Assistant Professor, Arab Open University – Kuwait, Kuwait

## **Bibliotherapy for Mental Wellbeing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: The Role of Children's Literature in Educational Libraries**

In an age of growing concern about students' emotional well-being, children's literature offers a valuable space for emotional identification, reflection, and resilience. When literary texts are carefully selected to help readers understand and process emotional experiences, they can serve a bibliotherapeutic function. This process resonates with the Aristotelian concept of catharsis, through which engagement with narrative may evoke, release, and transform emotions. The present study explores AI-enhanced bibliotherapy as a structured educational approach. It examines how the emotional power of literary narratives can be combined with the supportive capacities of artificial intelligence.

Using a survey methodology, data were collected from 123 teachers across selected Kuwaiti schools. The study examined their awareness, perceptions, and concerns regarding the use of literature to support students' emotional well-being. The findings reveal considerable interest in bibliotherapeutic practices, alongside recurring challenges. These include limited teacher training, time constraints, curriculum integration, lack of resources, AI awareness, and ethical concerns.

Drawing on these findings, the study proposes the AI-Enhanced Bibliotherapy Model (AEBM). This five-stage educational framework encompasses the identification of emotional needs, AI-assisted text selection, guided reading, creative response, and light monitoring. Within the model, AI serves as a carefully mediated pedagogical aid rather than a substitute for teachers, books, or human interaction. By bringing the Aristotelian concept of catharsis into dialogue with contemporary AI-assisted literary engagement, the study presents stories as forms of emotional scaffolding. The study does not claim to treat clinical conditions but proposes a preventive educational approach that can provide early emotional support, particularly for neurodivergent learners, and may help prevent associated emotional difficulties from escalating to a level requiring clinical intervention.

**Christos Anagnostopoulos**

Associate Professor and UNESCO Chairholder, Hamad Bin Khalifa  
University, Qatar  
&

**Khouloud Mtibaa**

Laboratory Manager, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar

## **The Governance Cascade: Stakeholder Expectations and Institutional Gaps in an Academic Exercise Science Laboratory**

Despite the centrality of academic laboratories to exercise science research and postgraduate training, the governance structures surrounding them remain largely unexamined. This study addresses that gap by applying stakeholder theory to the governance of an academic exercise science laboratory situated within a Gulf higher education context.

Drawing on an interpretivist, qualitative approach, the study employed a single-case study design comprising 19 semi-structured interviews with stakeholders across multiple roles: faculty, postdoctoral researchers, administrators, safety specialists, and postgraduate students. Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2021).

Findings reveal that stakeholder expectations cluster around three core needs: (i) operational, meaning access to resources and responsive institutional systems; (ii) relational, meaning meaningful participation in governance and communication; and (iii) developmental, meaning structured support for research and learning. These expectations are not balanced through any deliberate institutional strategy. Rather, the data expose a governance cascade: low institutional urgency toward dependent stakeholders generates a sequence of downstream operational and relational consequences, with postdoctoral researchers and postgraduate students bearing the greatest burden while receiving the least institutional attention. A cross-cutting finding complicates the picture: despite these structural gaps, stakeholders maintain strong affective investment in the laboratory's identity, expressed through a sense of belonging and pride. This organizational attachment is not cognitive dissonance; it is the informal scaffolding that currently holds the laboratory together and makes the governance deficits both invisible and consequential.

The study contributes at three levels. Empirically, it provides the first fine-grained stakeholder analysis of an academic exercise science

laboratory in the Gulf region. Theoretically, it extends stakeholder theory into a relational, academically governed setting and identifies three substantive limitations of Mitchell et al.'s (1997) salience model when applied to such contexts. Practically, it advances five evidence-based recommendations addressing governance formalization, role clarity, procurement responsiveness, knowledge transfer, and the dual institutional review board barrier that currently excludes master 's-level students from interdisciplinary research.

The central conclusion is that the laboratory's excellence persists largely in spite of, rather than because of, the institutional structures surrounding it. Excellence built on informal goodwill is structurally fragile. Sustaining high-quality exercise science research long-term requires governance mechanisms commensurate with the urgency and legitimacy of the stakeholders most dependent on them.

**Shlomit Benjamin**

Lecturer, The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel

### **Between Community, Fatherhood, and Poverty: Divorce among Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Men in Israel**

Divorce is most commonly examined through its legal, economic, and familial consequences, yet comparatively little attention has been paid to its meanings within tightly bounded religious communities in which marriage and family life constitute the foundations of social belonging and communal identity. This study examines the experiences of divorced ultra-Orthodox Jewish men in Israel, focusing on poverty, fatherhood, and communal exclusion in a social world where divorce carries a powerful social stigma.

The study forms part of a broader qualitative research project on divorced men who experienced downward socioeconomic mobility following marital dissolution. While the broader project examines the economic consequences of divorce among secular Israeli fathers, this presentation focuses specifically on ultra-Orthodox men, for whom divorce entails additional social and religious consequences. In ultra-Orthodox society, marriage is not merely a private relationship but a core institution through which adult status, religious respectability, family continuity, and community membership are organized and maintained. Divorce therefore destabilizes not only economic security and paternal involvement, but men's very location within their religious and communal world.

Drawing on interviews with economically disadvantaged divorced ultra-Orthodox fathers, the study examines how these men narrate the aftermath of divorce as a process of fragmented belonging. Most do not abandon religious life or relinquish their ultra-Orthodox identity; yet divorce places them in a profoundly ambiguous social position. They remain attached to religious practices, beliefs, and identities while experiencing distance, judgment, and exclusion from communal institutions and networks. Divorce thus produces a liminal condition in which men find themselves suspended between the ultra-Orthodox and secular worlds, without fully belonging to either.

The analysis develops along three interrelated dimensions. First, it examines how divorce restructures men's relations with their religious communities, including experiences of stigma, eroded communal support, and sharpened criticism toward religious and communal authorities. Second, it explores the implications of divorce and poverty for fatherhood, particularly the ways in which economic hardship,

housing instability, and constrained resources undermine men's capacity to sustain meaningful relationships with their children. Third, it considers how men renegotiate religious identity in the wake of divorce – not as a trajectory of secularization, but as a reworking of faith, belonging, and self-understanding under conditions of social marginalization.

The study contributes to sociological debates on divorce, poverty, fatherhood, masculinity, and religious community. It advances a more nuanced account of post-divorce vulnerability by demonstrating how, for ultra-Orthodox men living in poverty, material decline is deeply interwoven with diminished communal recognition and fragmented belonging. In doing so, it expands existing research on divorce and socioeconomic hardship by illuminating the specific ways in which religious community, gendered expectations, and class position intersect in shaping the lives of divorced fathers in Israel.



**David Bodoff**

Senior Lecturer, University of Haifa, Israel

## **Attribution Theory for Understanding Information Search**

The literature on information search has developed theories and models about how people seek information, including models of how searchers utilize the affordances that are found in libraries or the Internet, such as online card catalogs and search engines. A search session consists of numerous iterations; in each iteration, the searcher submits a query (or AI prompt), observes results, and plots his/her next steps. One key driver of how this process unfolds, is the attributions that the searcher makes regarding the reasons for any shortcomings in the results he/she has gotten so far, e.g. whether the query/prompt was not well formulated, the search engine or AI is imperfect, a website was misleading, and so on. The searcher's next actions depend upon the searcher's attributions regarding the cause of failure. Prior research in the field of information search has not adopted a theoretically-grounded approach to understanding these causal attributions. Attribution theory provides theory-based predictions and explanations regarding the searcher's attributions, which are a key driver of how a search session unfolds. On the flip side, the case of information search raises interesting new questions and challenges for established attribution theory. For these reasons, we view the inter-relating of AT and theories of information search as promising significant opportunities for theory development of both.

**Rachel Nefertari Boveja**

Faculty Member, Indiana University - Political Advocacy and Civic  
Engagement Program, USA

## **Space Diplomacy: Collaborative Policies for the Future of Space Governance and Law**

Space Diplomacy is no longer the topic of science fiction, it is a firm reality that nations are not only taking seriously, but have been implementing steps to oversee, for decades. Managing national borders seated on the earth's crusts is one way to exact sovereignty on a planet. Defending those borders has caused world leaders to enact many laws and regulations which protect their interests, citizens, and quality of life. Borders on earth have been drawn on maps, divided up by walls and given symbolic names so that everyone knows where they are at any given time and exactly who rules that space. Yet, what happens when world leaders must make the case for who has the right to govern *fluid* space, more specifically, the space above the divided earth we all live on? And to whom, does the responsibility go to protect the earth and what needs to happen for all to feel protected? The ongoing battle for space governance and space diplomacy seeks to answer this question for those living on earth as well as those who seek to explore the borders beyond this planet. For now, those rights fall to those nations of which that air space sits directly above. This paper outlines diplomacy research involving productive strategies for space governance and successful collaboration. It will demonstrate how currently working together across the globe can aid in the future of the space race, cohesively rather than competitively. Space Diplomacy, after all, gives humans another chance to create something together, for the benefit of all.

**Apakorn Chamavit**

Lecturer, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand

## **Pun Translation Method: Thai-English Translation Case Study of Popular Stand-Up Comedy Show Spanning a Decade**

This study investigates the strategies used for translating puns from Thai to English in audiovisual media, specifically focusing on the English subtitles of popular Thai stand-up comedy performances by Udom Taepanich. Puns pose a significant challenge in translation, a difficulty compounded by the technical constraints of subtitling. Analyzing 26 puns across four comedy shows (2013 - 2022), the research found that the dominant translation strategy used was Pun --> Non-Pun (Selective) (61.6%). This prevalence indicates that translators consistently prioritize Narrative Fidelity and Cognitive Efficiency--ensuring the plot-crucial meaning is retained and cognitive load is minimized--over stylistic equivalence. High-risk strategies, such as the direct Pun --> Pun (Equivalent Pun) transfer, were rare. This confirms that semantic neutralization is the preferred, low-risk functional norm driven by the constraints of the AVT environment and the low probability of finding structurally and semantically equivalent wordplay across the Thai - English linguistic gap. This outcome validates that the function (or skopos) of the commercial subtitle--optimal real-time comprehension--determine the strategy, often requiring the sacrifice of the original stylistic form.

**Emil Maj Christensen**

Urban Planner, Danish Cyclists' Federation, Denmark

## **Cycling-Friendly Urban Development Beyond Big Cities: Integrating Cycling in Low-Density Areas**

While cycling is often associated with dense urban areas, most new urban development in Denmark still takes place in low-density environments such as detached housing districts. The project *Cykelvenlig Byudvikling* (Cycling-Friendly Urban Development) by the Danish Cyclists' Federation explores how cycling can become a natural and attractive part of everyday mobility even in these suburban contexts.

Through multiple rounds of mapping and analysis of 34 development areas across Denmark, the project combines geodata, urban form assessment, and socioeconomic context to identify spatial and behavioural barriers to cycling. The work results in a set of planning recommendations tailored to different density levels – low, medium, and high – highlighting how design principles such as network connectivity, proximity to destinations, and integration of daily services can significantly improve cycling rates regardless of density.

The findings demonstrate that cycling-friendly planning is not only relevant for major cities but can be systematically embedded in suburban and small-town development. This broadens the scope of cycling policy and supports a more equitable, sustainable urban transformation.

The project shows that targeted planning principles increase cycling levels in both dense urban and low-density suburban areas. It delivers concrete design recommendations that help planners and policymakers create future housing areas where cycling is convenient, safe, and accessible for all residents.

Many European countries face similar development patterns with expanding low-density suburbs. The project's evidence-based recommendations and typology-based approach can easily be adapted to different geographical and cultural contexts to support everyday cycling beyond the major cities.

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&

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## **Physical Characteristics and Movement Quality of Athletes in Different Sports**

The aim of the research is to analyze the differences in physical characteristics and movement quality between different team sports.

**Materials and methods:** A total of 24 athletes participated in this study, aged 18 to 23 years, from two different team sports: basketball and football. Muscle strength and elasticity, torso muscle endurance, explosive force, static and dynamic balance, agility, and functional movement quality were evaluated.

**Results:** The results showed statistically significant differences in muscle strength, torso muscle endurance, explosive force, and dynamic balance between the two teams. Basketball players had greater upper limb muscle strength than football players, but football players had greater muscle strength in lower limbs. Football players demonstrated statistically significantly higher torso muscle endurance of the left side bridge and explosive power than basketball players. Football players performed better in the dynamic balance test in reaching the posteromedial direction with both legs, but basketball players demonstrated better results in balancing the posteromedial direction with both legs. The athletes' muscle elasticity, static balance, agility, and movement quality did not differ significantly.

**Conclusions:** Different team sports are characterised by distinct techniques for performing movements and require specific physical characteristics. To reduce emerging body asymmetries and muscle imbalances, minimise the risk of sports injuries, and enhance results during training and competitions, it is essential to assess and evaluate athletes' physical characteristics and movement quality.

**Mor Deshen**

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&

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## **Artificial Intelligence Literacy among LIS Professionals: An Emerging Research Landscape**

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly generative AI (GenAI), into information environments has positioned Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals at the forefront of supporting AI literacy. Despite the growing body of research on AI literacy, systematic evidence focusing specifically on LIS professionals remains fragmented.

This study aims to map and synthesize existing research on AI literacy among LIS professionals, examining how the concept is defined, measured, and operationalized, as well as identifying associated variables, methodological trends, and research gaps.

A scoping review methodology was employed following the PRISMA-ScR framework.

The findings reveal a rapidly expanding yet uneven research landscape, characterized by a predominance of quantitative, self-report survey designs and a strong geographical concentration in the United States and South Asia.

Among LIS professionals, AI literacy is commonly conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive understanding, practical application, critical evaluation, and ethical awareness. However, measurement practices remain highly fragmented, with most studies relying on self-developed instruments and only limited use of validated scales.

AI literacy is associated with demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal factors, including age, education, professional experience, motivation, and institutional support. At the same time, qualitative insights and context-sensitive analyses remain underrepresented.

This study provides a comprehensive synthesis of AI literacy research focused on LIS professionals. It highlights key conceptual and methodological gaps and underscores the need for validated measurement tools, mixed-method approaches, and longitudinal designs. The findings contribute to advancing a more coherent understanding of AI literacy in LIS and offer directions for future

research and professional development in an AI-driven information landscape.

**Spiro Doukas**

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## **Sport Tourism and Regional Development Through Marathons and Long-Distance Runs: A Case Study of the Ioannina Lake Run**

This presentation examines the role of the Ioannina Lake Run as a sport tourism event and its contribution to regional development in Ioannina, Greece. Drawing upon findings from event surveys and economic impact studies, the presentation explores how sport tourism generates economic, social, and destination-branding benefits for host communities. The presentation discusses tourism development, event impacts, destination branding, sponsorship, infrastructure challenges, and opportunities for future growth. Recommendations are provided for increasing international visibility, strengthening stakeholder collaboration, and enhancing the long-term contribution of the Ioannina Lake Run to tourism and regional development.



**Samaneh Ebrahimabadi**

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## **Temporal Dimensions in Corporate Foresight: Gaps, Approaches, and Future Directions**

For future management to function as a dynamic capability, firms must intentionally and repeatedly shape—or realize—the futures they envision. They cannot rely solely on chance or short-term problem solving to achieve desired outcomes. Understanding such sustained engagement with the future requires examining how time itself is conceptualized.

A review of the corporate foresight literature reveals frequent references to the critical role of time in foresight activities, yet its conceptualization and operationalization remain fragmented. While corporate foresight studies extensively discuss methods, organizational integration, and outcomes, comparatively little attention has been paid to how timing, temporal horizons, and the dynamics of change are incorporated into foresight practice.

This paper presents a systematic review of academic literature on corporate foresight focused on temporal dimensions (databases: Scopus and Web of Science; period: 2005–2025). The review examines how studies approach time—as a planning horizon, a trigger for initiating foresight activities, or a factor shaping the updating of strategic insights—and highlights the absence of a comprehensive framework integrating these perspectives. By synthesizing existing knowledge, the study clarifies how time is conceptualized in corporate foresight and outlines gaps that require further empirical investigation.

**Laima Gerlitz**

Head of European Project Center, University of Wismar, Germany

**BIOCENTUM: A Quintuple-Helix Innovation Model for  
Mobilising Businesses, Citizens and Municipalities  
Around Urban Biodiversity - Lessons from the URBIO  
BAUHAUS Project**

Urban biodiversity loss, compounded by intensifying climate pressures and development demands, poses a growing governance challenge for municipalities across Central Europe. This paper presents findings from the transnational participatory pilot testing of the BIOCENTUM (Biodiversity-Centered Urban Mindset) node model, implemented in four partner cities - Kranj (Slovenia), Pula (Croatia), Érd (Hungary), and Wrocław (Poland) - within the framework of the URBIOBauhaus project and the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB).

The BIOCENTUM model operates as a collaborative governance platform structured around the Quintuple Helix framework, integrating local authorities, academia, business actors, civil society, and aesthetic/creative stakeholders in co-creating nature-based urban biodiversity interventions. Drawing on Living Lab methodology, participatory design thinking, and iterative co-creation formats including World Café workshops, "Project in a Day" design sprints, open calls, and citizen science the nodes generated context-specific biodiversity action plans and pilot interventions tailored to each city's ecological and social conditions.

Despite marked differences in local challenges ranging from urban heat islands and habitat fragmentation in Kranj, coastal ecosystem vulnerability in Pula, community stewardship gaps in Érd, and light pollution impacts on nocturnal biodiversity in Wrocław the testing phase confirmed the model's flexibility and transferability across diverse urban contexts. Shared cross-cutting findings include the indispensability of multi-stakeholder governance, the importance of early, visible pilot actions as catalysts for community ownership, the role of data-informed engagement in grounding co-created solutions, and the value of embedding NEB principles of sustainability, inclusion, and aesthetics as operational design criteria rather than abstract guidelines.

The paper discusses key methodological lessons, the transnational added value of the BIOCENTUM approach, and strategic recommendations for institutionalising biodiversity as a structural element of urban planning. It also outlines a pathway toward a scalable

Urban Biodiverse Transition Roadmap applicable to other Central European municipalities seeking to integrate biodiversity governance into mainstream urban development processes.

**Stephan Goetz**

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**Determinants of Self-Employment and Income: Evidence  
from Confidential U.S. Administrative and Census Data**

Self-employment, as one form of entrepreneurship, can be a critical path to an individuals' economic opportunity and mobility, but access to resources and success vary dramatically across demographic groups and geographic regions. Research on entrepreneurial activity in nonmetropolitan areas remains relatively limited compared to urban settings, and for reasons of data availability, few if any studies have examined how individual characteristics interact with regional economic factors across different population segments in determining self-employment outcomes. This paper examines how individual characteristics such as age, gender or race) influence self-employment income across different geographic contexts, and the role of local economic factors (e.g., labor force participation, natural amenities, social capital, credit access, and industry composition) in determining entrepreneurial outcomes.

We find nonlinear age effects in that self-employment first rises and then falls with age for most groups; population density is negatively associated with income in nonmetro areas, and positively in metro areas; natural amenities positively affect white entrepreneurs in nonmetro areas but have negative or insignificant for minority groups. Access to loans or credit consistently benefits most groups, with strongest effects for nonmetro white males and Hispanic females, while social capital has effects negative effects for nonmetro females, and positive effects in metro areas for white males. The local manufacturing share is positively

associated with self-employment income in nonmetro areas, and negatively in metro areas. In addition to discussing policy implications of the findings, we present limitations of the work and ideas for future research in this area.

**Sabrina Joseph**

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## **Water, Agriculture, and Power: Reframing the Nation-State in the Arabian Gulf through Political Ecology**

Scholarship on the environmental history of the Arabian Gulf has grown considerably over the past two decades, addressing various issues related to agricultural development and water resources. A sizeable body of this work explores the technical dimensions of hydrology, agronomy, and environmental engineering, preoccupied with measuring, modelling, and mitigating water scarcity and agricultural stress. While this work sheds light on the physical aspects of water and agricultural crises, it does not critically examine these crises as historical, social, and political phenomenon. An emerging body of literature, however, over the past decade has focused on the political ecology and cultural geography of the region, assessing who benefits from particular resource arrangements, and how environmental change articulates with broader transformations in state power, social structure, and economic organization. This paper offers an analytical overview of the historiography on environmental change in the Gulf, with specific attention to agriculture and water as twin axes around which this change has revolved. It traces the field's evolution through an early period dominated by archaeological and technical approaches that treated environment largely as context; to more recent research in which political economy frameworks began to be applied to oil-driven agricultural and water transformations; and to research examining the relationship between national identity, environmental discourse, and actual resource governance. The paper highlights how emerging scholarship sheds new light on the role of nation states across the Arabian Gulf region by recognizing that environmental change is inseparable from power relations, economic systems, and social transformation. This approach offers an alternative to dominant frameworks of state power in the Gulf, such as rentier state theory, neo-patrimonialism, postcolonial perspectives, and international relations theories. The paper concludes with suggestions for future interdisciplinary research.

**Tamila Kartsivadze**

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## **Social Media Marketing Challenges and Opportunities in Georgia - Analysis of Modern Approaches**

The rapid development of digital technologies and the growing popularity of social media platforms have significantly changed the way businesses are conducted around the world. Georgia, as a country with an emerging economy, faces unique challenges in the process of digital transformation. Social media marketing represents both an opportunity and a challenge for Georgian businesses.

This study examines the challenges and opportunities of social media marketing worldwide. The study analyzes the barriers and opportunities for Georgian businesses in the process of digital transformation. Special attention is paid to the challenges of small and medium-sized enterprises in the effective use of social media for marketing purposes.

The conclusions and recommendations are developed based on the research we conducted, "Consumer Attitudes towards Managing Businesses with Social Media in Georgia" and "Business Representatives' Attitudes towards Managing Businesses with Social Media in Georgia".

**Naila Keleta-Mae**

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## **Black And Free: International Expressions**

This paper maps out the discipline of Black Studies from a Canadian perspective; examines connections between Blackness and freedom are interconnected through the examination of two sites of Black expressive culture: Art Bienale in Venice (2024) and the Accompong Town celebration of liberation in Jamaica (2024). Together, these sites provide historical and contemporary examples of the pursuit of freedom for Black people from the 18th to 21st century. These sites were selected for their cultural significance and prominence in the region and community while the findings reported in the paper are meant to determine the extent to which each site is a case study in freedom as a form of expressive culture.

Art Biennale began in 1895 as an exhibition of Italian Art but it has evolved into a large international event supported by national governments, art dealers, and private sponsorships. Art Biennale was of particular interest because it provides a unique opportunity to engage with the work of Black artists from countries in a range of geographical regions. Accompong Town is a village in Jamaica where descendants of the Maroons have lived autonomously since the 18th century. The Maroons were Africans who escaped enslavement by the Spanish and waged wars against the colonial authorities. I visited in 2024 for the town's annual celebration of the signing of a treaty in 1739 with the British. This reading of Art Bienale and Accompong Town will be theoretically and methodologically underpinned by feminist, critical race, performance studies, and autoethnography.

This paper is part of my larger research-creation project called Black And Free that I started in 2017 and have developed into sub-projects including commissions to Black visual artists; two art exhibitions; international research site visits; and multi-year partnerships with private, public, and community organizations. The pursuit of freedom has been a central preoccupation of Black people ever since the advent of the TransAtlantic slave trade in the 16th century, when Europeans led the taking of Africans from their lands to build European settlements in North America and the Caribbean (Bakare-Yusuf; Cooper; Fanon; McKittrick; Williams). For the past five centuries, Black people in these geographical regions have used visual art, performance, theatre, events, rituals, and other means of expression to imagine and advocate for freedom in public and private spheres that influence everyday life



(Brand; Collins; Crenshaw; hooks). My research-creation project, *Black And Free*, has brought together scholars, artists, students, and the public in the examination of how Black expressive culture constitutes distinct ways in which Black people express agency, explore power, and create conditions in which freedom can be imagined and lived.

This conference paper draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

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&

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## **Body Image and Disordered Eating in Collegiate Athletes and Non-Athletes**

Emerging adulthood can be a difficult time for psychological well-being (Collins et al., 2022). The need to care for oneself while maintaining university studies can stress both physical and psychological health. Taking time to engage in sport activities could increase emotional well-being along with physical health (Herbert, 2022). On the contrary, intense focus on one's body and athletic perfection may put young athletes in danger of developing disordered eating (Beals & Manore, 2002).

The current study investigated the differences between collegiate athletes and non-athlete students on numerous aspects of psychological well-being and eating habits. Participants were 18–23-year-olds, mean age = 19.89(1.14), enrolled in a private university (Ohio, USA). Of the 90 participants, 44 were university affiliated NCAA athletes and 56 were not. The sport teams enrolled were women's soccer and women's basketball. Participants were predominantly women (female  $n = 80$ , male  $n = 10$ ). The sample had a health body mass index (BMI mean = 24.04(5.36).

Results indicated that being in a sport related to higher overall well-being. Athletes reported significantly less trait anxiety  $t(81) = -2.19, p = .031$ , athlete (44)  $M = 21.84(6.58)$  and non (39)  $M = 25.18(7.31)$ . Athletes reported feeling better about their healthy eating habits  $t(81) = 1.86, p = .034$ , athlete (44)  $M = 13.14 (1.60)$ , non (39)  $M = 12.33 (2.3)$ , but did not report having greater knowledge of these habits or fewer problems with them ( $ps > .05$ ). Athletes reported less negative affect  $t(74) = -2.07, p = .042$ , athlete (39)  $M = 7.41 (6.12)$ , non (37)  $M = 11.35 (10.10)$ , but not more positive affect  $t(81) = .35, p = .730$ . Athletes reported less bulimia and food preoccupation  $t(87) = -2.04, p = .045$ , athlete (45)  $M = .60 (1.50)$ , non (44)  $M = 1.68 (3.24)$ , but not healthier views toward dieting  $t(87) = -1.79, p = .077$  or oral control  $t(87) = -1.19, p = .236$ . When it came to body image, athletes felt similar to non-athletes for the internalization of having a muscular or thin body and the pressures from family (all  $ps > .05$ ), but non athletes felt more pressure from peers  $t(81) = -2.35, p = .021$ , athlete (44)  $M = 1.63 (.70)$ , non (39)  $M = 2.10 (1.10)$  and the media  $t(81) = -2.22, p$

= .029, athlete (44)  $M = 3.10$  (1.18), non (39)  $M = 3.69$  (1.21) to have a better body.

In further analyzing the mechanisms at play within these relationships, it was found that anxiety fully mediated the relationship between self-objectification and disordered eating in the full sample ( $F(2, 83) = 8.30, p < .001$ ), but that the athlete sample had unique impacts from coaches. Regression analyses found that coach appearance pressures predicted higher athlete self-objectification ( $p < .001$ ) and disordered eating ( $p = .037$ ). Without the involvement of the coach pressure variable, self-objectification did not predict disordered eating in athletes ( $p = .209$ ).

This study found that athletes in non-lean focused sports tended toward better body image and food relationships overall than non-athletes, but that coaches should focus on caring for the growing adolescent mind. It is possible that athletes in lean focused sports (e.g., gymnastics, ballet) would show worse psychological health. Further investigation should be performed to investigate these nuances.

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## **Exercise Modulates Circulating and Skeletal Muscle MyomiR Dynamics in Parkinson's Disease**

Exercise training is increasingly recognised as a therapeutic strategy in Parkinson's disease (PD), capable of attenuating motor decline and supporting neuromuscular function. Muscle-enriched microRNAs (myomiRs) are predominantly expressed in skeletal muscle and released into circulation during physical activity, which makes them candidate markers of systemic adaptive response to exercise. The aim of this study is to investigate the modulating effects of PD and exercise training on myomiRs across multiple biological compartments, including blood, skeletal muscle, primary muscle cell cultures, and extracellular vesicles.

Eight patients with PD (Hoehn and Yahr stages 1-3; age 54-75 years) and eight age/gender-matched healthy controls completed a 4-month supervised aerobic-strength intervention (3×1h/week). Before and after the intervention, participants performed an acute exercise test (40-min cycling at ~70% HRmax) with blood sampled at baseline, 0 min, and 60 min post-exercise. Muscle tissue was obtained by needle biopsy of vastus lateralis muscle, and primary muscle cell cultures were established before and after training. MyomiRs miR-1-3p, miR-133a, miR-133b and miR-206 were quantified by RT-qPCR in plasma and muscle,

differentiated skeletal muscle cells (myotubes), and extracellular vesicles (EVs) from myotube-conditioned media (isolated by size exclusion chromatography). Data were analyzed using Linear Mixed Models with Bonferroni-corrected contrasts and Spearman correlations.

Basal plasma myomiR concentrations were similar between groups (all  $p > 0.20$ ) and did not change following the intervention (all  $p \geq 0.898$ ). During acute exercise, miR-1-3p and miR-133b decreased in both PD patients and healthy controls (time effect:  $p = 0.007$  and  $p = 0.034$ ). There was an opposing post-exercise dynamics in miR-133a in PD and healthy controls ( $p = 0.018$ ): healthy controls showed a declining trend in miR-133a from 0 to 60 min post-exercise before the intervention ( $p = 0.061$ ), whereas PD patients showed a rising trend after the intervention ( $p = 0.062$ ). Cross-compartment analyses revealed a robust negative correlation between intervention-induced changes in basal plasma and muscle miR-133a ( $\rho = -0.881$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ), and a positive correlation between intervention-induced changes in myotube and EV miR-133b in PD patients ( $\rho = 0.900$ ,  $p = 0.037$ ). Exploratory analyses further revealed opposing intervention-induced changes in skeletal muscle miR-206 between groups (increase in PD, decrease in healthy controls), and a positive trend between intervention-induced changes in miR-206 in myotubes and EVs isolated from myotube-conditioned medium ( $\rho = 0.617$ ,  $p = 0.077$ ).

A 4-month aerobic-strength exercise does not alter basal plasma myomiR concentrations but distinctly modulates acute myomiR dynamics in PD. Cross-compartment analyses suggest divergent rather than shared regulation of myomiRs in plasma and muscle by training, pointing to compartment-specific mechanisms. These findings support multi-compartment, dynamic myomiR profiling as a sensitive approach to capturing exercise-induced adaptations in Parkinson's disease.

This work was supported by APVV-23-0406, Horizon Europe ADDIT-CE No. 101087124, Austrian Science Fund KLI-1122, Recovery and Resilience Plan SR No. 09I01-03-V04-00077, VEGA 2/0076, and SAS-JRP 2018.

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### **Conspiracy Theorizing as Ideological Apologia and Polemic**

Conspiracy theorizing is becoming more popular in the U.S. (and elsewhere) because elected officials at the highest levels of government embrace it and because there is a confluence of forces – a perfect storm. There is a valid sense that structural changes are being decided behind closed doors by a small group, regardless of the outcome of political elections. There is also a valid sense that the populace is given false assurances about the meaning of progress, alternatively, about the maintenance of some aspects of American culture and society deemed valuable or the return of something lost. The merger of conspiracy theorizing with established political ideology gives the former legitimacy and the latter a renewed sense of purpose, whereby ideological adversity is recast in strictly moral terms. The following paper examines the confluence of forces within current authoritarian populism in the U.S.

**Marie Manikis**

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## **Comparing the Review of Prosecutorial Discretion**

Decisions about whether to prosecute an individual are among the most important in society – implicating both individual rights and collective governance. Despite stemming from the same common law tradition, England and Wales and Canada have developed different review practices of decisions of whether to prosecute. While England and Wales continues to enable broader review, Canada has a much narrower approach in terms of scope and purview.

This paper compares the historical development and evolution of judicial review of prosecutorial decisions in England and Wales and in Canada. In England and Wales, prosecutions were historically the responsibility of citizens and only exceptionally did the King have jurisdiction in this regard through the Attorney General. Indeed historically, the English common law viewed victims along with members of the public as holding duties to prosecute (those that kingdom). Accordingly, it was not only the privilege but the duty of the private citizen to preserve the King's Peace and bring offenders to justice. This framing can partly explain the broader prosecutorial review available for citizens in England and Wales.

With the rise of the nation state and liberal democratic values, prosecutions in England and Wales were increasingly undertaken by the state but also subject to judicial review, to preserve citizens judicial recourses in instances of excesses in powers. While judicial review was initially seen as a mechanism to challenge jurisdictional/procedural excesses by the state it increasingly was used for broader reviews. Courts increasingly stated that the standard of review should not be placed too high, particularly as judicial review is one of the rare means by which the citizen can seek redress against a decision not to prosecute. Judicial review in England and Wales has been available where prosecutors fail to carefully consider evidence, have misunderstood or misapplied the law or policy, and in situations where it can be demonstrated that state prosecutors have reached a decision as a result of fraud, corruption, or bad faith.

By contrast, Canada's approach to prosecutorial discretion reflects a distinct historical and constitutional trajectory. During the colonial period, the Attorney General exercised expansive control over prosecutions, largely due to their exclusive expertise in English law within the colonies. Private prosecutions were less common and more

widely subjected to the AG's powers. This history has contributed to a conception of the Attorney General as holding a near-monopoly over prosecutions, broader powers to intervene in or take over private prosecutions and constraining opportunities for judicial review. Canadian courts have reaffirmed that decisions relating to the initiation or continuance a prosecution are insulated from judicial review except in cases of abuse of process. As a result, the scope of judicial review in Canada remains significantly narrower than in England and Wales and is unavailable in cases where prosecutors have merely misunderstood or misapplied the law or internal policy. Moreover, unlike in England and Wales, prosecutorial guidelines in Canada are not subject to judicial review and lack the force of law and potential to alter the scope of a discretion that is founded in the common law or a statute.

Considering prosecutors fallibility based on empirical findings and individual cases, including instances of both under- and over-prosecution, particularly where marginalisation or power imbalances are present the paper concludes with a normative reflection on whether the Canadian model of prosecutorial discretion might accommodate a modest expansion of judicial review, particularly in relation to public interest determinations, without undermining prosecutorial independence.



**Antonio Marziale**

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### **Adolescence from a Social Science Perspective**

The text examines adolescence not as a universal biological transition, but as a social construction that varies according to historical and cultural context. Originating in the complex societies of the late 19th century, it represents a multidimensional transitional stage between childhood and adulthood.

In Western societies, this process is not a linear sequence, but rather the outcome of an interaction between the young person's identity transformation and the social context. Adolescence requires addressing biological, cognitive, psychological, and moral challenges, representing a process of profound metamorphosis.

Scientific literature offers several interpretative lenses: the physiological approach focuses on the developmental stages of puberty; the psycho-sociological perspective emphasizes the delicate separation from the family to the peer group; symbolic interactionism, starting from Cooley's concept of the self-reflexive "Self," sees identity as a mirror of social dynamics and socialization. Ultimately, adolescence requires a unified approach, capable of integrating the various dimensions of development to fully understand the complexity of this vital stage.

**Christos Mavrovitis**

Senior Lecturer, University of Surrey, UK

**Match Length, Player Rankings, and Bookmakers' Beliefs –  
Evidence from Professional Tennis**

NOT AVAILABLE

**Abdelghani Miliani**

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&

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**Static Foot Disorders in Young Athletes:  
Insights from a Podoscopic Study in Algeria**

**Background:** The human foot is a fundamental structure for athletic performance, providing support, propulsion, and shock absorption. Athletes, more than workers or military personnel, rely heavily on the integrity of their feet to sustain training and competition loads. Static foot disorders (SFDs), such as pes planus and pes cavus, alter plantar support, disrupt postural alignment, and increase the risk of musculoskeletal injuries. Although these disorders are well described in the general population, little is known about their prevalence in Algerian athletes, particularly in young sports practitioners.

**Objective:** This study aimed to establish the podoscopic profile of young Algerian athletes and to assess the prevalence of static foot disorders using objective digital evaluation methods. By identifying at-risk foot morphologies, we sought to contribute to preventive strategies that protect athletes' functional prognosis and optimize their performance.

**Methods:** We conducted a descriptive cross-sectional study involving 426 athletes (aged 18–21 years; mean  $19.5 \pm 0.9$  years) from Touggourt, Algeria. Anthropometric measurements included body mass index (mean  $21.06 \pm 3.18$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>), with 69.5% of athletes presenting a normal weight range. Physical activity level was predominantly regular (90.4%). Sports disciplines represented were mainly team sports (70.1%), followed by endurance sports (22.6%), combat sports (4.2%), and strength sports (3.1%). Plantar impressions were obtained using an electronic podoscope equipped with LED illumination and image recording capabilities. Digital analysis was performed using the Global Postural System (GPS 110) software, allowing linear and angular measurements. The Chippaux-Smirak Index (CSI) was calculated as the ratio between the minimal width of the midfoot and the maximal width of the forefoot to classify foot morphology into three categories: pes cavus, pes planus, or neutral foot.

**Results:** Analysis revealed a predominance of pes cavus in the study population (57.3%), followed by neutral foot (27.2%) and pes planus

(15.5%). The prevalence of pes planus was consistent with global data (15–20% in adults), but the proportion of pes cavus was remarkably high compared to international reports (10–50%). Both conditions are considered risk factors: pes planus has been associated with ankle sprains, soft-tissue injuries, plantar fasciitis, and stress fractures of the tibia and navicular bone, while pes cavus predisposes to metatarsalgia, metatarsal stress fractures, painful hyperpressure zones, chronic ankle instability, and degenerative changes. The findings emphasize that the majority of athletes in this cohort present foot morphologies likely to compromise performance and increase the risk of overuse injuries.

**Conclusion:** This study highlights a high prevalence of static foot disorders, particularly pes cavus, among young Algerian athletes. These results underline the necessity for sports physicians, physiotherapists, and coaches to integrate systematic podoscopic screening and individualized corrective interventions into athletic training programs. Early detection and management of abnormal plantar profiles may reduce injury risk, enhance comfort, and preserve long-term athletic potential. Future research should explore biomechanical correlations and evaluate the impact of targeted interventions on performance and injury prevention.

**Germinah Motshegwa**

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**“It Feels Like You are Outside the Event”:  
Exploring the Attitudes of Male Students towards  
Contraceptive Use at the North-West University**

**Background:** University campuses are often viewed as “sexual spaces” where peer pressure to be sexually active is commonly experienced among students, whose attitudes towards risky sexual behaviour can fuel the spread of HIV infections. Understanding the attitudes towards contraceptives in a university setting is essential for designing appropriate interventions that resonate with the unique needs and realities of male students. This study aims to explore the attitudes of male students towards contraceptive use at the North-West University to shed light on their sexual behaviour.

**Methods:** This study employed a qualitative exploratory research design. Data were collected through three focus group discussions with 22 participants selected from the three campuses of the North-West University, South Africa. Thematic analysis was used to code and analyse the data from the focus group discussions.

**Results:** The findings of this study revealed that attitudes of male students were shaped by concerns about contraceptives, uncertainties about the effectiveness of contraceptives, and a lack of trust in information providers. Beyond health concerns, socio-economic realities and education opportunities shaped contraceptive attitudes of male students. Cultural and religious expectations of masculinity and morality further influenced attitudes of male students at the North-West University.

**Conclusions:** Perspectives of young male students towards the use of contraceptives are an understudied topic, so this study sheds light on their sexual behaviour. The reluctance and negative attitudes of male students towards contraceptive use will exacerbate the high rates of unintended pregnancies and the spread of STIs. By positioning their views within the lived realities of South African youth, this study can inform family planning policies in designing targeted interventions that promote not only shared responsibility but also address males’ own contraceptive and reproductive needs.

**Sibongile Ngwenya**

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of South Africa, South Africa  
&

**Omwoyo Bosire Onyancha**

Professor, University of South Africa, South Africa

## **An Informetric Study of the Co-existence of Open Science and Intellectual Property Rights**

The concept of Open Science (OS) is spurring new visions, principles, and practices for how research and innovation are performed. However, there seems to be a lot of debate around the co-existence of OS and Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) in an environment where there have always been tensions between IPRs and access to knowledge. This article presents results of an informetrics analysis of scholarly literature on the intersections of OS and IPRs (1970-2024) using Scopus and VOS Viewer. 3 459 documents were retrieved, mostly being articles (2 404) in English (3 325). The keyword map showed varied cluster colours and numerous keywords. Trends in the growth of scholarly literature on OS and IPRs indicated by the colours progression, showed that very little research on the subject took place before the year 2000. The highest number of documents came from the United States (981) and the global north dominated funding for scholarly discourse on the intersections of OS and IPRs. The study concluded that the co-existence of OS and IPRs is a topic that has gained attention among scholars especially in the global north and has been growing over the years earning support from leading journals and institutions. To improve scholarly output on the intersection of OS and IPRs, the OS approach needs to be clearly defined and the IP framework reviewed. It is also essential to boost open collaborative research and strengthen the capacity of the Global South to participate in the OS and IPRs discourse.

**Unsal Ozdogru**

Clinical Associate Professor, University of Illinois Chicago, USA

&

**Kyungsoo Chon**

University of Illinois Chicago, USA

## **Perceived Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Running**

Running has been shown to provide numerous physical and mental health benefits. This study aimed to examine which benefits runners' experience and the extent to which they are affected by them. Data was collected through an online survey on various channels, participants included both competitive and recreational runners. Results indicated that feelings of accomplishment, improved endurance, and stress relief were among the most important motivations for running. Competitive runners reported greater enjoyment and stronger perceptions of improved health than recreational runners. They were also more likely to train in running despite not being fully healthy. Few gender differences were observed; however, men rated weight control as a more important benefit of running than women. Overall, the findings highlight the diverse physical and psychological benefits associated with running and suggest that these benefits may vary by level of competition.

**Gregory T. Papanikos**

President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of  
Tennessee, Knoxville, USA

### **UEFA-versus-UEFA Matches at the 2026 World Cup**

This paper examines the performance of national teams in UEFA-versus-UEFA matches at the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The analysis is motivated by previous research that estimated the probabilities of qualification of UEFA men's national teams for the expanded 2026 FIFA World Cup using demographic and economic characteristics (Papanikos, 2026). The paper compares the outcomes of all matches contested exclusively between UEFA teams with the pre-tournament expectations implied by the earlier probability estimates. Because the number of UEFA-versus-UEFA matches is limited, the analysis is descriptive and focuses on the extent to which the observed results were consistent with those expectations. The findings identify those teams whose tournament performance broadly confirmed pre-tournament expectations and those whose results departed from them. The team with the higher predicted probability won 10 of the 12 UEFA-versus-UEFA matches (83.3%), with both departures from prediction involving France. The paper concludes by discussing the implications of these findings for evaluating the predictive value of ex ante assessments of national team performance in major international football tournaments.



**Kagiso Phake**

Lecturer, North-West University, South Africa

## **Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in Addressing Unemployment Challenges in Mahikeng Local Municipality**

The EPWP programmes in South Africa were designed and implemented as intervention strategies that would assist in reducing unemployment especially in disadvantaged communities. The development of such programmes in South Africa came as a response to the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In South Africa such programmes were developed and implemented to address SDG 1: No poverty, SDG 2: Zero hunger and SDG 8 which is decent work and economic growth. This study's main objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Expanded Public Works Programme and to understand how it addresses the unemployment challenges in Mahikeng local Municipality. To achieve this, the study relies on the Keynesian economics theory of unemployment as the theoretical framework underpinning the study.

The study further explained that unemployment in South Africa remains one of the most pressing socio-economic problems in the country which in turn results in a high poverty rate, high inequalities, which then leads to problems of high crime rates and social unrests. A qualitative approach was used for this study and data was collected using semi-structured interview guide, interviews were conducted with both the EPWP officials and the EPWP participants in Mahikeng Local Municipality. Thus, the study relied on a case study analysis approach. The findings of the study revealed that the EPWP programme was developed for short-term employment opportunities and bared no long-term economic opportunities for its participants, this came because of the programme having limited skills development training, no job placements upon completion of the programme and limited to no resources during the undertaking of the programme. The study concluded that for the EPWP programme to be effective, the duration of the programme must be made longer, the Programme should re-design its structure and provide its participants with skills that are job market ready, through this the programme will be effective with regards to creating long-term employment.

This study therefore seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in addressing unemployment challenges in Mahikeng Local Municipality. The study

furthermore investigates how the programme is implemented in the respective local municipality.

**Milan Radojicic**

Assistant Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia

**Ognjen Andelic**

Teaching Associate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

&

**Zoran Rakićević**

Associate Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia

## **Re-Examining the CEAI Factor Structure in SMEs and Large Organizations in Serbia**

This study re-examines the dimensional stability of the Corporate Entrepreneurship Assessment Instrument (CEAI) in Serbia by assessing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large organizations separately. Using firm-size-specific subsamples, it evaluates the factorability of the 48-item instrument and compares factor retention, item-loading patterns, and cross-size consistency of the latent structure. Rather than assuming that the original CEAI configuration is invariant across organizational contexts, the analysis investigates whether firm-size-related structural heterogeneity emerges and whether context-sensitive measurement refinement is warranted in a transitional economy. By framing organizational size as a potential source of measurement instability, the study contributes to comparative construct validation and provides evidence on the robustness and interpretive limits of CEAI outside its original institutional setting.

**Marcela Ribeiro de Albuquerque**

Professor, State University of Northern Paraná (UENP), Brazil

**Luis Ricardo da Silva Miguel**

Student, State University of Northern Paraná (UENP), Brazil

&

**Erica Patente Nascimento**

Professor, State University of Northern Paraná (UENP), Brazil

## **Financialization and the Supplementary Health System in Brazil: A Bibliographic Study**

The supplementary health sector in Brazil (the private healthcare system) has become increasingly susceptible to the impacts of financialization, a process wherein financial logic dictates the operation of markets and social services. Understanding this phenomenon is critical, as the capital accumulation processes of healthcare providers in Brazil may influence public access to rights guaranteed by the 1988 Federal Constitution. This qualitative and bibliographic research aims to survey and analyze academic studies addressing the presence of financialization within the Brazilian supplementary health system. The study draws upon scientific articles, dissertations, and theses sourced from national and international academic databases. The methodology entails the construction of a theoretical-analytical framework grounded in political economy, emphasizing key concepts and perspectives on the subject. The research is justified by the necessity of understanding how financialization shapes the supplementary health sector and its potential to exacerbate inequalities in healthcare access. The findings include a bibliographic synthesis that contributes to the critical development of social actors and enriches the academic discourse on the relationship between healthcare provision, markets, and financialization in the Brazilian economy.

**Maria Santos**

Professor, ISEG Research, University of Lisbon, Portugal

## **The Management of Ethics: A Case Study**

Corruption knows no boundaries, occurs worldwide, and is susceptible to jeopardising business competitiveness and market confidence while also undermining economic and democratic development. This article analyses the procedures that companies and institutions adopt to ensure conformity and compliance with the legal and regulatory framework in effect for the sector and designed to prevent infringements and to detect irregularities, as well as to minimise risks. We furthermore consider how compliance programs influence senior management decisions and contribute towards establishing ethically responsible business practices. The empirical research was based upon a case study of a multinational company running a worldwide compliance program. We focus our analysis on the compliance policies in effect within the context of the organisation within the scope of three secondary objectives: i) studying how compliance programs are integrated into the respective sustainability strategy and its underlying justifying logics, ii) analysing whether or not leaders drive such ethical cultures and how this is actually achieved in the workplace, and iii) identifying just which initiatives and development action plans have been put into effect and how these influence strategic decision making and employee behaviors. The case study showed that sustainability is seen as a key factor in strengthening competitiveness. This occurs by channelling innovation in products and services toward sustainable practices and by directing company management to focus on the long term. Regarding the compliance program, although it is described as a way to strengthen ethical culture, attention is often given to other tools. These include business behaviour guidelines and training programs. The study highlights the importance of formal mechanisms that implement ethical standards. Examples include guidelines, tools, and compliance programs, supported by training initiatives and communication channels. These mechanisms actively put programs into practice and raise awareness about ethics within the organisational culture. The study concludes that anti-corruption corporate policies can be effectively implemented. It also shows the influence and effectiveness of compliance programs on strategic leadership at both top and middle management levels. In summary, the research demonstrates how ethics are incorporated into employee targets and objectives.

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**Robert Schneider**

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## **Leveraging Competitive Sport to Develop Entrepreneurial Competencies**

A form of experiential learning, competitive sport supports an entrepreneurial mind-set while establishing skills similar to those skills necessary to succeed as an entrepreneur. Successful entrepreneurship characteristics including learning, adjusting, and building resistance were found to take place from experiential learning (Geleske, 2019). Personality traits of athletes align with entrepreneurial success (Steinbrink et al., 2020) and those who engaged in the experience of sport were found to acquire entrepreneurial thinking (Matsankos et al., 2020). Expanding entrepreneurship through the use of competitive sport calls for an implementation process grounded in points identified by McCole et al. (2022) who focused on helping sport participants understand the connection between skills gained from sport and how to apply those same skills to a future profession centered on entrepreneurship.

**Lungisile Shange**

Senior Lecturer, North-West University, South Africa

## **Drivers of Repeat Pregnancies among Young Mothers in Umlazi Township, KwaZulu-Natal: A Qualitative Study**

**Background:** Repeat pregnancies among young women is a serious concern in many countries. This research examines the experiences of young mothers aged 18 to 24, a demographic especially at risk for repeat pregnancies and often overlooked in qualitative studies.

**Methods:** This study was conducted in Umlazi, a township in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, with a large young population. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with twenty young mothers who had at least one child. Thematic analysis was used to explore the complex factors contributing to repeat pregnancies.

**Results:** Key findings include early sexual debut, partner disapproval of contraception, contraceptive discontinuation and inconsistent use, cohabitation, and age at first birth. Several participants reported having their first child in early adolescence, supporting evidence linking early childbearing with repeat pregnancies. Male partners often discouraged contraceptive use due to misinformation, leading some women to hide their contraceptive use. Cohabitation was associated with frequent sexual activity and low contraceptive use, increasing repeat pregnancy risk. Fear of side effects was a common reason for discontinuing contraception.

**Conclusion:** This study contributes qualitative insights into the lived experiences of young mothers in Umlazi, highlighting local contextual factors influencing repeat pregnancies. It concludes that comprehensive, age-specific sexual education and improved postpartum contraceptive counselling are urgently needed. Additionally, involving men in reproductive health education is critical for addressing this issue.



**Crain Soudien**

Professor, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

### **Assessing South African Higher Education's Management of its International Policy for Academic Staff**

In 2019 the South African Department of Higher Education and Technology (DHET), the department responsible for the oversight of universities, developed “The Policy Framework for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa”. In this paper I look at the ways in which the universities have worked with this policy. Two important elements about the policy were, i) the embedding of Africanisation *in* the idea of Internationalisation, and ii) an explicit commitment to the government’s employment equity policy which stipulates that each institution should develop a plan for the medium to long term employment of historically under-represented demographic groups, particularly that of black South African nationals. The purpose of the paper, working with a critical understanding of the DHET policy and its commitment to giving priority to the employment of academics designated as African South Africans, and the broad internationalisation literature which suggests that the presence of foreign academics in higher education institutions is good for the educational experience of students and is good for raising standards of excellence, is to begin an evaluation of the approach emerging in South Africa. I ask what the dangers are, what opportunities and risks are developing and what a reasonable forward looking path might look like. I do so through a description and analysis of internationalisation trends in the country’s 26 universities, and an analysis of the contribution international staff are making to teaching and research in key disciplines and fields.

**Raid Suleiman**

Professor, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, Jordan

**Challenges of Disappearance Printed Arabic Newspapers  
Archive in the Digital Environment  
(A Case Study: AL-Hussein bin Talal Newspapers Archive)**

This study reviews the most important global and Arab experiences in digitizing printed newspapers and the importance of this in preserving global documentary heritage. Therefore, this study aims to diagnose the current state of printed newspaper archives and the digital transformation in the world and the Arab region. It also examines the challenges facing the archiving and digitization of printed newspapers, presenting global and regional experiences, including the experience of Al-Hussein Bin Talal University in Jordan in archiving and digitizing articles published about the late King Hussein Bin Talal in Egyptian newspapers.

One of the most important findings of the study is the necessity of digitizing printed newspapers to preserve documentary heritage and transmit it to future generations, and to avoid destroying the original printed newspapers after digital archiving, as scanned documents do not perfectly reflect their analog counterparts. The results also indicate that digitizing previous issues of printed newspapers has enabled researchers to access them. Otherwise, obtaining information from printed newspapers is difficult, and newspaper digitization processes face significant financial challenges. Furthermore, the study reveals that the archiving of internet content and multimedia elements is fragmented or nonexistent. In the Arab world, efforts are underway to digitize traditional newspapers, but these efforts represent only a small part of the process. If the digitization of printed Arabic newspapers is not accelerated, the Arab world will lose an important documentary legacy of printed newspapers. This can only be achieved through collaborative projects.

**Gergo Szilagyi**

PhD Student, Matej Bel University, Slovakia

## **Explosive Strength as a Key Predictor of Kata Performance in Youth Karate Athletes: A Pilot Study**

Karate Kata performance is traditionally considered a highly technical skill; however, the role of underlying physical capacities remains unclear. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between selected physical performance variables and kata performance in youth karate athletes.

Eight youth karate athletes (3 boys and 5 girls; age:  $10.38 \pm 1.51$  years) participated in the study. Kata performance was evaluated live by three certified judges according to World Karate Federation rules using a 1–10 scoring system with decimal precision. The sum of the three judges' scores was used as the final performance score. Physical performance was assessed using countermovement jump (CMJ), seated medicine ball throw, and isometric mid-thigh pull (IMTP), with IMTP values normalized to body mass.

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong relationship between CMJ height and kata performance ( $r = 0.92$ ). Seated medicine ball throw distance showed a moderate-to-strong correlation ( $r = 0.71$ ), while relative IMTP force demonstrated a moderate association ( $r = 0.62$ ). Age ( $r = 0.22$ ) and training experience ( $r = 0.40$ ) showed weaker relationships. High agreement was observed between the judges ( $r = 0.74$ – $0.98$ ).

These findings suggest that lower-body explosive power may play a key role in kata performance, potentially influencing the ability to execute rapid accelerations, stable decelerations, and dynamic transitions. The results highlight the importance of integrating general physical preparation into youth karate training and may have direct implications for coaching practice. Due to the small sample size, findings should be interpreted as preliminary.

**Gayil Talshir**

Senior Lecturer, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

### **Following the Authoritarian Protocol: Regime Change and Civic Resistance**

To the question “How do democracies die?” Levizki and Ziblatt (2019) answer – slowly. Gradual changes, slight alternation of relations between the executive and the legislative and judicial powers, accumulation of constitutional changes, hype of conspiracy theories, and more. The study of the struggle for democracy over the last two decades manifested itself through the prism of democratic backsliding (Bermeo, 2016, Diamond 2021). Appelbaum (2021) also warned that the 21st century is rolling back the achievements of democracy in the face of collectivist and totalitarian regimes. In Ginzburg and Huk’s (2018) study of nearly failed democracies – there are only three cases – Finland (1930s), Colombia (2010) and Sri Lanka (2015). A very poor harvest considering that the indicators of democratic retreat show that many countries are undergoing democratic retreat from democratic renewal.

On the theoretical level, I claim that analyzing the rise of authoritarian populism through a framework of democratic backsliding in fact misses the main road of regime change: deliberately using an authoritarian protocol. This protocol pertains to structural changes justified by an ideology which includes government aggrandizement, concentration of powers in the hands of the executive, dismantling the checks and balances, turning liberalism into the enemy of the people, politicization of the civil service and the delegitimization of the rule of law, the media, academia, and civil society. In other words, not just a random, serendipitous, incremental processes of democratic decline, but a premeditated protocol of regime change.

The phenomenon at the center of my analysis is the rise of authoritarian populism from within the rightwing ruling party (moderate in its past) in party systems of liberal or semi-liberal democracies. That is, countries in which populism in power arises from the ruling party that wins the elections and leads processes that can be defined as structural changes. The overall goal is to concentrate powers in the hands of the leader and his government and to systematically weaken – institutionally, ideologically and discursively – the opposition and the democratic gatekeepers. The mechanisms used constitute what I call the authoritarian protocol, in contrast to the analysis of the decline of democracy, which sees the retreat of institutions as a gradual erosion of

ups and downs (See also Scheppele, 2018; Gidron and Roznai, 2025:52; Lerner et al. 2025).

The authoritarian protocol includes: Curtailing the independence of the judiciary; Changing election laws and delegitimizing the opposition; Restructuring the military, police and intelligence organizations; Taking control of the news media; Politicization of the civil service and delegitimization of the gatekeepers and professional echelons; Violation of human rights, civil rights, and the rights of minorities and cultural/gender/sexual groups; Use of mechanisms of religious coercion and religious institutions to reduce the space Liberal and Harassment of civil society organizations – civil rights organizations, independent review bodies, etc.

An early diagnose of the authoritarian protocol may lead to sufficient public protest and civil resistance which may expose the government's project of rising authoritarian populism. In my talk I explore the social and political tools to defend liberal democracies from a planned regime change.

**Gisele Tchamba**

Faculty Member, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya

### **Washed Away: Assessing the Feasibility of Reusable Menstrual Hygiene Products in the Water-Scarce Oldonyonyokie Maasai Community, Kenya**

This study presents a critical needs assessment investigating whether reusable sanitary pads are a viable and safe solution for Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in the Maasai community of Oldonyonyokie, Kajiado County, Kenya. It challenges a common assumption in global health interventions – that reusable products are inherently sustainable – by testing it against the stark environmental and cultural realities of a pastoralist, semi-arid region. The core argument is that without addressing the fundamental nexus of water scarcity and deep-seated cultural norms, well-intentioned MHM interventions may not only fail but could inadvertently become a vector for infection, compromising the health of the women they aim to empower.

The research identifies a profound and practical conflict. Reusable pads require adequate clean water for thorough washing and direct sunlight for proper drying, which serves as a crucial, natural disinfectant. However, in Oldonyonyokie, both are critically scarce resources. The semi-arid climate, exacerbated by climate change, makes water a precious commodity typically allocated for drinking and livestock first, leaving little for hygiene. Even more complex are the deep-seated cultural taboos surrounding menstruation in Maasai culture. Menstruation is often considered taboo, requiring women to hide all evidence from male elders and the community. This creates a privacy-hygiene paradox: the medical necessity to sun-dry pads openly clashes directly with the cultural imperative to conceal them, forcing women to dry pads in dark, damp, and unhygienic indoor spaces.

To fully capture this complex issue, the study will employ a mixed-methods approach rooted in a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) framework. This will ensure the findings are co-created with the community rather than merely extracted from it. Quantitatively, a cross-sectional survey of 100 households will gather crucial data on daily per-capita water allocation and the prevalence of urogenital infections, establishing a baseline correlation. Qualitatively, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with adolescent girls and women will provide nuanced insights into lived experiences, exploring the daily navigation of the privacy-hygiene paradox. These perspectives are triangulated with Key Informant Interviews with local health officers, who can link

reported practices with clinical morbidity data, adding a layer of medical validation.

Inadequate washing with limited water and drying pads in unclean, concealed environments can foster bacterial and fungal growth. This significantly increases the risk of reproductive and urinary tract infections, turning a product meant for health into a health hazard. The study's significance therefore extends beyond Oldonyonyokie. As climate change intensifies drought cycles, it serves as a crucial case study for evaluating "sustainable" solutions in any resource-poor setting. It argues that MHM cannot be addressed in a silo; it is intrinsically linked to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and cultural competency.

Ultimately, the assessment seeks to go beyond identifying issues and aims to inform a comprehensive pilot program. A viable intervention could involve distributing reusable pads alongside investing in water supply solutions like rainwater harvesting and providing culturally sensitive education for safer drying practices. To effectively address health needs in Oldonyonyokie, the initiative must address both water scarcity and cultural menstrual taboos simultaneously.

**An-Chun Teng**

Assistant Professor, Ming Chuan University, Taiwan

### **When Natural Disasters Become Governance Crises: Media Narratives of Crisis Management and Disaster Governance in Taiwan**

This study examines how a natural disaster is transformed into governance and political accountability issue through media narratives. Using the 2025 Hualien Mataian River overflow disaster in Taiwan as a case study, the research explores how Taiwanese mainstream news media framed crisis causation, responsibility attribution, and political accountability during and after the disaster.

Drawing upon Crisis Communication and Media Framing Theory, the study employs quantitative content analysis to examine 175 news articles published in three major Taiwanese newspapers: *China Times*, *United Daily News*, and *Liberty Times* between September 23 and October 23, 2025. The analysis focuses on three main dimensions: crisis causation, responsibility attribution, and politicization.

The findings reveal that although media coverage predominantly framed the disaster as a natural issue caused by extreme weather conditions, a substantial proportion of news reports simultaneously attributed responsibility to government institutions and specific political actors. The results further demonstrate significant differences among newspapers in their attribution of responsibility. While some newspapers emphasized central government accountability, others focused on local governments and individual political leaders. In addition, over two-thirds of the news items involved political accusations or accountability-oriented discourse, indicating a strong tendency toward the politicization of disaster coverage.

The study suggests that contemporary disaster reporting is no longer limited to the dissemination of environmental risks and physical losses. On the contrary, disasters are increasingly turning into governance crises, and media coverage influences the public evaluations of government performance, accountability, and crisis management capabilities. The findings contribute to understanding of the relationship between media framing, crisis communication, and disaster governance, while also highlighting the importance of media literacy in interpreting politically contentious disaster issues.



**John Trougakos**

Professor, University of Toronto, Canada

**Milad Moghaddas**

PhD Student, University of Toronto, Canada

&

**Daniel Beal**

Associate Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University,  
USA

## **Anxiety at Work: Key Themes and Future Directions**

According to the World Health Organization, employee experiences of anxiety in the workplace contribute to more than 12 billion lost workdays annually, resulting in productivity losses exceeding one trillion USD each year (World Health Organization, 2024). In recognition of the substantial costs associated with maladaptive workplace anxiety, organizational scholars have increasingly sought to better understand this phenomenon. Since the beginning of the 21st century, research examining the role of anxiety in the workplace and its implications for employees has grown considerably. However, the prevailing assumption that anxiety yields predominantly negative consequences for employees is not as straightforward as it may initially appear. Broader conceptual theorizing and a growing body of empirical work suggest a more nuanced and complex picture. Indeed, the study of work-related anxiety presents several complexities: anxiety can manifest in multiple forms, it can be experienced both between and within individuals, and its antecedents and consequences are wide-ranging and varied.

The purpose of this presentation is to examine the key themes in the study of anxiety in the workplace over the past 25 years. This period reflects work that is most relevant to contemporary and emerging work contexts and encompasses the majority of research conducted on the topic. Our focus is on anxiety experienced at and within the workplace in its broadest sense, rather than solely on specific forms of workplace anxiety often defined in relation to employee performance. Additionally, we concentrate primarily on articles published in leading organizational psychology and management journals, enabling us to highlight key findings regarding both the detrimental and potentially beneficial consequences of employee anxiety that are most influential in shaping the current state of the organizational literature. We emphasize that the aim of this presentation is not to provide an exhaustive review of every study examining anxiety within organizational contexts. Rather, our

objective is to synthesize key insights and overarching themes, while identifying important gaps that warrant further scholarly attention. In doing so, we also aim to offer practical insights that may inform employees and organizational leaders.

In the discussion that follows, we pursue five primary objectives. First, we provide a broad conceptual discussion of anxiety in the workplace and distinguish it from related constructs. Second, we examine the importance of distinguishing between trait and state anxiety how research at each level contributes to understanding workplace experiences. Third, we outline the conditions under which anxiety may produce not only detrimental outcomes but also functional and potentially beneficial consequences for employees. Fourth, we highlight research trends across the diverse range of domain-specific anxieties experienced by employees, as well as across the organizational contexts in which these phenomena occur. Finally, we discuss promising directions for future research and identify key considerations for practitioners, with the goal of providing insights that can guide both scholarship and practice on workplace anxiety.

**Bob Uttl**

Professor, Mount Royal University, Canada

## **Widespread Use of Outdated, Obsolete, and Foreign Intelligence and Personality Tests and Norms Invalidate Numerous Clinical, Forensic, and Fitness for Duty Assessments**

Surveys of clinical, vocational, and forensic psychologists indicate that many practitioners continue to use outdated, obsolete, and foreign test norms, despite clear evidence that such norms are no longer valid for contemporary populations or across cultural contexts. This widespread practice persists even though the use of outdated or inappropriate norms is known to produce diagnostic errors and misclassifications. These errors have serious consequences, including the false identification of psychopathology, denial of employment opportunities, loss of careers in fitness-for-duty evaluations, and adverse outcomes in child custody decisions.

In this presentation, I will first review recent experimental evidence demonstrating that many widely used intelligence and personality tests rely on outdated norms, leading to substantial rates of diagnostic misclassification. For example, applying the 1990 U.S. norms of the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) in a contemporary Canadian context results in approximately 95% of examinees being classified as having elevated scores on one or more of the 22 PAI scales. In effect, when evaluated against these outdated norms, nearly everyone is “abnormal.”

Second, I will present findings from three new large-sample studies, involving hundreds of participants, examining the validity of U.S. norms for commonly used cognitive and achievement tests, including the Wonderlic Personnel Test, Shipley-2, and the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT-4 and WRAT-5) Math subtests. Results indicate that these tests’ norms are outdated and/or do not generalize to the current Canadian population.

Together, this review and new empirical evidence demonstrate that the validity of test norms cannot be assumed over time or across cultural contexts; rather, it must be periodically re-established through empirical research. The continued widespread use of outdated and non-generalizable norms suggests systemic shortcomings in professional regulation, including a failure to adequately protect examinees from invalid assessment practices. It also raises concerns about whether examinees are provided with sufficient information to give fully

informed consent.

This situation has several important policy implications. First, examinees should be encouraged to request detailed information about the assessments they undergo prior to testing. At a minimum, this includes the names of the tests, full references, and, for norm-referenced measures, key characteristics of the normative samples (e.g., year of data collection and population characteristics). Second, regulatory bodies, such as colleges of psychologists, should require disclosure of this information within standards of practice and codes of ethics, ensuring that consent is meaningfully informed rather than merely procedural. Third, legislative action may be necessary to mandate transparency and ensure that examinees are provided with all critical information as part of the informed consent process.

**Demos Vardiabasis**

Professor, Pepperdine University, USA

**Burhan Yavas**

Professor, Pepperdine University, USA

&

**Samuel Seman**

Professor, Pepperdine University, USA

## **Foreign Direct Investment and Financial Markets**

Foreign direct investment (FDI) occurs when a firm invests resources in business activities outside its home country. Evidence indicated that FDI had played a significant role in the global economy as cross-border investments increased in 1990s through early 2000s.

Capital markets are subject to swings in value and when capital moves across borders, these swings are amplified by the lack of knowledge of domestic institutions and exchange-rate risk. Foreign companies that undertake direct investments (buying of factories, building infrastructure) help alleviate a lack of domestic savings and investment to speed up GDP growth in the FDI receiving country.

The primary hypothesis in this paper is that stock market variables are among the key determinants of FDI inflows. We contribute to and expand upon the literature on the linkages between FDI and financial variables along the lines of Grave, Vardiabasis and Yavas (2019) and Yavas and Malladi (2020). This objective is carried out by studying the financial variables, (i.e., returns and volatilities of the stock markets) along with the traditional factors (GDP growth, exchange rates, and inflation rates) frequently found in FDI literature. The paper's contribution is to include the long-ignored financial variables.

The literature on the determinants of FDI is extensive. Two distinct approaches may be noted. Macro approaches draw on modern international trade theories to explain the location of multinational production. Micro or firm-level approaches explore the motivations behind FDI and try to explain why, and which firms are more likely to become foreign investors. Both approaches examine exogenous or endogenous variables that give firms ownership advantages for international expansion. These advantages include such things as management expertise, technological skills, firm size, etc. (Dunning, 1973). On the other hand, exogenous variables that affect a firm's FDI decisions, such as market size and labor costs and market imperfections which imply some location advantages for establishing in a host country have been suggested among the FDI determinants (Bergstrand & Egger,

2007; Buckley & Casson, 1976; Carr, Markusen, & Maskus, 2001; Markusen, 1984). The brief review of the FDI literature above indicates that the exclusion of the capital market or financial variables is a gap/omission to be addressed. This paper attempts to include financial variables among the determinants of FDI. In so doing, the paper will help improve the understanding of such phenomena as market entry and its timing. Therefore, we propose to include as financial variables both returns and volatilities of the equity market of the FDI receiving country among the determinants of incoming FDI flows.

The rationale is as follows: if stock market returns and volatilities in the target country result in an undervaluation of the firm's capital this may affect FDI decisions and their form. Companies might favor mergers and acquisitions (M&A) over establishing new operations through greenfield investments. Similarly, the timing of investments may be affected. In times of high volatility, delay to the start date of investment projects is prudent and this may foreshadow less investment. This paper asks whether and when equity market returns and volatilities may influence the pattern and timing of FDI decisions by MNEs.

One can argue that both the decision of "where" to invest (location) and "how" to invest (mode of entry) as well as the timing of investment are affected by the equity markets' performance. Using multinational companies as the focus, we find that the 2007-2008 financial crisis altered FDI (greenfield and M&A), trade, and other entry strategies. MNEs have responded to the financial crisis by focusing on growth opportunities outside their home country regions, expanding their geographic diversification and investments in secondary markets.

We collected data from selected MNE executives to gain insight and answers based on their experience, history, and investment expertise. To help design the survey, a literature review was conducted, and key challenges of cross-border investments (FDI) were discussed with managers from multinational enterprises across various industries. The names of the target company executives gathered through the students of the Executive MBA program of a University in California. The participants included in the sample were from large MNEs, with at least 5000 employees and at least \$5bn in annual revenue located in California, MN, NY, MA, GA, WA, and Texas. Various industries from multiple regions were deliberately included in these efforts.

All of the respondents indicated that their firms track the market following unstable market activity particularly if related to their financials. The main idea expressed is that market volatility increases and equity returns decline during crises. During normal times, however, MNEs focus on key countries where innovation is extremely fertile and

opportunity to impact their industry and core business is relevant. Key evaluation focus is related to the core capabilities of the business and potential to impact financial performance. Although macro variables like equity returns and volatility are tracked, evaluation primarily centers on micro conditions specific to the target M&A company and its capabilities. All of the firms responding to the survey indicated that they track financial market trends as part of their M&A diligence process.

All the interviewed executives agreed that stock market volatility affects corporate strategy as does the amount of cash holdings of the company. These two factors represent a firm's rating and the ability to sustain the company under threatening market conditions. This is in line with the findings of Meier et al. (2013) in that high pre-crisis levels of debt had a negative impact on firm value during the latest financial crisis, supporting the hypothesis that financial flexibility has value.

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## **Confucian Constitutionalism and the Oppressive Marginalization of Non/Anti-Confucians**

In the book *Confucian Constitutionalism: Dignity, Rights, and Democracy* (Kim 2023), and elsewhere throughout their work, Kim argues that public discourse governed by Confucian values can provide a viable alternative to Liberal conceptions of public reason which demand we not depend on particular conceptions of the good life in contributing to public discourse - without bringing about the oppressive harms of ideological that motivates the Liberal model. In Kim's own words: "Even if [some citizens] may find all or some of these values (as traditionally understood and practiced) offensive, how would this fundamentally invalidate the political legitimacy of Confucian democracy if, first, these values are accommodated to and modified by democratic institutions, values, and practices and, second, all citizens enjoy political equality, and their basic rights and liberties, including the right to form a voluntary association based on their own comprehensive doctrines, are fully protected by the constitution? The state in question might not be a liberal state, but what makes this Confucian "democratic" state oppressive?" (Kim, 2023, p. 86).

In response, I answer this question by highlighting two significant harms for non-Confucians which arise from Kim's model of Confucian public reason for non- or anti-Confucian citizens:

1. Hermeneutic injustice in light of the forced adoption of a hermeneutic framework for public discourse which may impair their ability to make public meaning from their values and experience.
2. 'Expressive marginalization in which they and their values are explicitly identified as relatively less important than others.

I argue that these are significant oppressive harms which fall on paradigmatic citizens (i.e., roughly those we would expect to be citizens prior to any deep theorizing), and are therefore objectionable. I then examine three possible responses that Kim might make: that such harm occurs with equal severity in Liberal systems (they don't), whether Kim's arguments successfully show that such harms will be rare (they don't), and whether non-/anti-Confucian's may simply deserve such treatment (they don't). I then flag some potential paths for further efforts to respond



to these threats while retaining Kim's general approach to Confucian public reason.

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### **Tapping into Loyalty, the Online Grocery Experience in South Africa**

Online grocery retailing is gaining traction globally, and South Africa is no exception. This study aimed to investigate the factors influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty towards online grocery platforms within the South African context. Despite the increasing adoption of online grocery shopping initially driven by the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic recent trends suggest a reversion to traditional brick-and-mortar shopping. This shift shows the urgency for online retailers to better understand their customer base to mitigate potential cannibalisation. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a descriptive survey design to collect primary data from 637 online grocery shoppers through a structured online questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were analysed using SPSS version 29.0 to establish the demographic profile of respondents. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) via the latest SmartPLS software was employed to test the hypothesised relationships. The Partial Least Squares SEM approach was chosen due to its suitability for complex model estimation, predictive accuracy, and efficacy under resource constraints. The findings indicate that perceived convenience, trust, website usability, product variety, and delivery efficiency significantly influence customer satisfaction. In turn, satisfaction strongly correlates with customer loyalty. These results highlight the importance of enhancing digital service quality and trust mechanisms to sustain consumer retention. This study contributes to academic discourse by contextualising online consumer behaviour within an emerging market. It further offers practical recommendations to South African online grocery retailers, providing strategies for retaining existing customers in an increasingly competitive omnichannel retail environment.

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## **Using LLM-as-a-Judge for Scenario Development: A Methodological Framework for Evaluating Scenario Logics and Narratives**

Generative AI is increasingly being used in strategic foresight to support scenario development. However, as AI systems make it easier to generate large numbers of candidate scenarios, the bottleneck shifts from production to evaluation: which alternatives deserve further development, which narratives are useful, and which outputs are fit for a particular user and strategic purpose?

This paper proposes a three-stage methodological framework that adapts "LLM-as-a-judge" – the use of large language models as evaluative agents, originally developed in machine-learning evaluation – for AI-assisted scenario development.

First, judges support scenario logic evaluation: because the human mind can compare only a handful of alternatives, foresight has traditionally collapsed a large combinatorial space of drivers and uncertainties into a 2×2 matrix or four-to-five scenarios. Pairing LLM generation with evaluation may relax this constraint by making it easier to explore a wider range of candidate configurations. Second, judges evaluate scenario narratives against selected foresight-specific criteria, such as plausibility, novelty, distinctiveness. Third, judges assess whether scenarios are sufficiently *tailored* to the intended user and strategic decision context.

We propose a recursive workflow – generate, judge, critique, filter, revise, re-evaluate – through transparent human-machine feedback loops. We demonstrate it on an illustrative set of AI-generated candidate scenarios, running them through multiple loops, and report initial findings on both its promise and its limitations. Two challenges stand out: how far judge evaluations can be aligned with the end-user's purpose, and how to scale automation without displacing the human sense-making that gives foresight much of its value.

The paper contributes a practical bridge between AI evaluation methods and scenario-development practice and outlines an open evaluation harness for future practice-based validation.

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## **Technology Foresight in China: Methods and Practices**

China's research and practice in technology foresight began in the post-reform era. In the 1980s, foresight studies in China mainly focused on economic and social development. In the 1990s, China began to place greater emphasis on foresight studies related to science and technology. In 1992, the State Science and Technology Commission, the predecessor of the Ministry of Science and Technology, organized a study on the selection of key national technologies. In May 1995, it released a list of key technologies in four major fields: information technology, biotechnology, manufacturing technology, and materials technology. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the Ministry of Science and Technology has organized the fourth, fifth, and sixth rounds of national technology foresight programs. These activities have provided important analytical support for the formulation of China's national science, technology, and innovation strategies and plans, and have gradually become a regular component of science and technology governance.

In addition to technology foresight exercises organized by national science and technology authorities, China's national academies, professional associations, and science policy research institutions have also conducted foresight studies. From 2003 to 2005, the Chinese Academy of Sciences organized the project "Technology Foresight for China over the Next 20 Years." In 2015, the Institute of Science and Development of the Chinese Academy of Sciences launched a major

consulting project entitled “Technology Foresight and Development Strategy in Key Areas Supporting Innovation-Driven Transformation,” thereby initiating a new round of research on technology foresight for China over the next 20 years. In 2015 and 2021, the Chinese Academy of Engineering and the National Natural Science Foundation of China jointly organized studies on China’s Engineering Science and Technology Development Strategy toward 2035 and 2040, both of which incorporated technology foresight research. From 2019 to 2020, the National Academy of Innovation Strategy of the China Association for Science and Technology also carried out technology foresight research toward 2035 in six fields: integrated circuits, intelligent transportation, cybersecurity, advanced materials, life sciences and health, and new energy. In addition, several Chinese provinces have conducted technology foresight studies for local industries, providing support for regional science, technology, and industrial development.

In these technology foresight processes, Chinese researchers have applied a range of methods, including vision and needs analysis, literature review, Delphi surveys, expert panels, key technology selection, and technology roadmapping. Over time, they have developed an approach that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis, as well as expert judgment and data-based assessment. More recently, China has also begun to incorporate artificial intelligence and big-data analytics into technology foresight. Against this background, this report reviews the development of technology foresight in China and introduces its major methods and practices.

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## **Characteristics of Board Chairs for More Effective Recruitment During Financial Crises**

**Purpose** - Analysing the board of directors of companies is a relevant and timely topic despite having already been the focus of many studies over recent decades. As a representative of the shareholders, the board is the most senior management body of a company. Boards appoint a board chair who, ultimately, represents the company. Thus, understanding the most suitable type of candidates for recruitment for board leadership positions holds great interest. Therefore, knowing what kind of candidates should be nominated, what characteristics they should have for board leadership in times of financial crisis, those able to contribute towards better company performance, certainly holds great interest.

**Methodology** - This research provides a quantitative description of the trend in Portuguese companies through the study of a sample. This study was transversal, deployed questionnaires for the data collection process with the intention of returning generalisable results. The study applied information collected by surveying the person in charge of the day-to-day management of 1,000 largest non-financial companies and the 100 largest financial companies in Portugal. We processed the data through StataNow 18.5, applying multivariate analysis (MANOVA) to the variables.

**Findings** - The study affirms that many boards in the sample run dual leadership structures. Agency theory and stewardship theory postulate different characteristics for the board chair, but our results provide proof for either perspective. These results are in line with the conclusions of a group of researchers that maintain there is a lack of substantive and systematic evidence of any causal relationship between board leadership and the performance of companies. On the other hand, they did validate the behavioural theory of firms (BToF) in concluding that experience interlinks with levels of organisational performance.

**Originality** - Analysing companies not listed on financial markets is also relevant not only because of their representativeness in the economy but also because they receive very little research attention with this study thus unprecedented. This article also reaches beyond the scope of Anglo-Saxon countries.

Practical implications – The characteristics that board chairs should hold to ensure more effective organisations.

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## **Civil Wills, Legal Pluralism, and Gender-Stabilizing Mechanisms in the UAE**

This article examines civil wills in the United Arab Emirates as elective legal instruments that enable expatriates to structure inheritance and guardianship arrangements outside default succession rules. Situated within a plural legal system in which Islamic inheritance law remains the baseline framework for Muslims, the article analyses how these instruments operate alongside – rather than replace – doctrinal norms.

It develops the concept of “gender-stabilising mechanisms” to describe elective legal tools that redistribute the practical consequences of gendered legal rules without altering their underlying doctrinal structure. In the case of ADJD civil wills, such mechanisms can enhance women’s practical legal position by enabling control over asset distribution and the nomination of child guardians, particularly in contexts where expatriate women lack access to state welfare protections or automatic legal safeguards.

However, these instruments do not transform inheritance law itself. Instead, they operate through procedural opt-in arrangements that allow individuals to modify outcomes while preserving the authority of the existing legal order. The result is a dual dynamic of individual-level empowerment alongside systemic continuity.

By integrating feminist legal theory, Islamic feminist scholarship, and legal pluralism, the article contributes to socio-legal debates on how elective legal tools redistribute vulnerability within constrained normative systems while simultaneously stabilising those systems.



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