



10th PAN-IIM

WORLD MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE (WMC) 2025

THEME : DRIVING SOCIAL IMPACT THROUGH MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

BOOK *of* ABSTRACTS

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PREFACE

We are delighted to present the Book of Abstracts for the 10th Pan-IIM World Management Conference (WMC), hosted by the Indian Institute of Management Ranchi. The theme for this year's conference, "Driving Social Impact Through Management Research," reflects a collective commitment to advancing scholarship that contributes meaningfully to society. At a time when economic uncertainty, technological disruption, climate change, digital inequalities, and shifting organizational realities are transforming the global landscape, management research plays a vital role in shaping informed policy, responsible governance, and inclusive development.

The Pan-IIM WMC, the flagship global academic forum jointly organised by the Indian Institutes of Management, brings together policymakers, industry leaders, academics, and researchers to engage with emerging ideas across management and allied disciplines. The 10th edition continues this tradition of intellectual vibrancy by offering a rigorous environment for knowledge exchange through plenaries, workshops, roundtables, and technical sessions. IIM Ranchi is proud to host this milestone edition and contribute to a legacy of strengthening management scholarship in India and beyond.

As host institution, IIM Ranchi brings to this conference its commitment to academic excellence, research rigor, and social impact. Established in 2009 under the Ministry of Education, Government of India, the Institute has quickly emerged as a leading management school in the country.



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Its national and international recognition—including its 18th position in the NIRF 2025 Management Rankings, the distinction of 4 Palmes of Excellence in the Eduniversal 2025 rankings, and a top-tier position in the Outlook ICARE 2026 rankings—reflects its academic strength and global visibility. Research remains central to the Institute's mission, supported by robust research infrastructure, active faculty-led centres, and strategic initiatives such as IIMRanchi@2030, which places “social impact” at the core of institutional development.

This year's conference is further strengthened by Innovision, the National Exhibition on Artificial Intelligence, Innovation & Sustainability, organised alongside the 10th Pan-IIM WMC. Conceived as an interface between academic inquiry and technological application, Innovision showcases cutting-edge solutions in artificial intelligence, automation, sustainable systems, and digital innovation. With participation expected from over 800 delegates—including leaders from industry, academia, and policymaking—the exhibition provides a dynamic platform for collaboration, visibility, and the translation of research insights into real-world impact. Innovision embodies the conference theme by demonstrating how responsible innovation can drive societal progress.

Against this rich backdrop, the conference presents research contributions across nine tracks, each offering a distinctive lens on how management scholarship can enhance social impact:



PREFACE

1. Economics provides analytical and empirical foundations for inclusive growth, welfare improvement, public policy design, institutional strengthening, and addressing inequality.

2. Finance & Accounting

explores financial inclusion, sustainable finance, transparent reporting, and ethical governance, examining how responsible financial systems can support societal resilience and equitable development.

3. Marketing focuses on consumer behaviour, social marketing, inclusive product design, and digital engagement, thus highlighting how marketing scholarship can enhance consumer well-being and create value for diverse communities.

5. Information Systems & Business Analytics addresses the role of data, AI, and digital infrastructure, highlighting responsible technology adoption that enhances decision-making, public service delivery, and digital inclusion.

4. Organizational Behaviour & Human Resource Management

examines leadership, diversity, mental health, employee experience, and the future of work, emphasizing how humane and equitable workplace practices contribute to wider societal progress.

8. Responsible Business focuses on ethics, sustainability, ESG, and stakeholder governance, examines how organizations can embed social and environmental responsibility into core strategy.

6. Quantitative Methods & Operations Management investigates operational strategies, resource optimization, and supply chain resilience, emphasizing analytical approaches that strengthen efficiency and promote social welfare.



PREFACE

7. Strategy & Entrepreneurship covers strategic choice, innovation, and entrepreneurial ecosystems, and explores how purpose-driven enterprises can drive economic development, job creation, and community empowerment.

9. Interdisciplinary Studies recognizing that societal challenges cross disciplinary boundaries, encourages integrative research linking domains such as technology and psychology, economics and sustainability, and policy and analytics.

These contributions collectively reflect the diversity, depth, and societal orientation of contemporary management scholarship. We extend our sincere appreciation to the authors, reviewers, track chairs, session chairs, and members of the organizing committee for their dedication to making this conference a success.

We hope this compilation serves as a valuable resource for scholars and practitioners, inspiring new perspectives, collaborations, and pathways for management research that meaningfully advances social impact.



WELCOME MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR, IIM RANCHI



Dear Guests,

It is my great pleasure to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to all participants of the 10th Pan-IIM World Management Conference, hosted by the Indian Institute of Management Ranchi. We are honoured to convene the flagship event of the IIM community, which brings together distinguished scholars, academics, and practitioners, from around the world.

The Pan-IIM Conference has long stood as a premier platform for intellectual exchange - one that fosters rigorous debate, encourages interdisciplinary inquiry, and advances the frontiers of management research. The theme for this year's conference is "Driving Social Impact Through Management Research," which blends with the host institution's mission and vision. The discussions and deliberations planned over the three days offer a valuable opportunity to explore innovative solutions, challenge dominant paradigms, and engage with diverse perspectives to broaden our collective understanding of contemporary challenges.

Hosting the landmark 10th edition of the Pan-IIM Conference reflects IIM Ranchi's deep commitment to fostering impactful research. We hope that the conversations initiated during this event at IIM Ranchi will inspire impactful research agendas, meaningful partnerships, and lasting contributions to management theory and practice.

I extend my best wishes to all participants and sincerely hope that your experience at IIM Ranchi is intellectually rewarding, professionally enriching, and personally memorable.

Thank you for being a part of this significant edition of the Pan-IIM World Management Conference.

**Sincerely,
Prof. Deepak Kumar Srivastava
Director, IIM Ranchi**

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM

PAN IIM 2025

CONFERENCE CHAIRS



Welcome to the 10th Pan-IIM World Management Conference, hosted by the Indian Institute of Management Ranchi from November 27 to 29, 2025.

Centred around the theme “*Driving Social Impact Through Management Research*,” this prestigious forum brings together academics, industry leaders, policymakers, researchers, and innovators to explore how management scholarship can shape a more inclusive, sustainable, and socially responsive future. The conference serves as a landmark platform to discuss the transformative role of research in addressing contemporary challenges and advancing societal well-being.

Over the three days, participants can look forward to insightful keynote addresses, engaging panel discussions, interactive workshops, invited talks, roundtable dialogues, scientific sessions, and paper presentations across diverse management domains. The conference also provides opportunities for networking, collaboration, and knowledge exchange, aiming to enrich both academic inquiry and practical impact.

We look forward to your active participation and meaningful engagement, which will contribute to the success, dynamism, and intellectual vibrancy of this significant Pan-IIM gathering

Prof. Subhro Sarkar, IIM Ranchi

Prof. Manish Bansal, IIM Ranchi

Prof. Krishna Kumar Dadsena, IIM Ranchi

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TRACKS AND TOPICS MAPPING

Track	Illustrative Themes
Economics	• Inclusive growth models for emerging and developing economies • Innovations in welfare economics for modern policy challenges • Behavioural economics for poverty alleviation • Institutional reforms for reducing inequality • Economic resilience to shocks • Labour market dynamics in the modern times • Fiscal policy, taxation, and redistribution • Economics of climate change and green growth • Digital economy and productivity inequality • Public-private partnerships for welfare delivery
Finance & Accounting	• Financial inclusion and access to credit • Sustainable finance and ESG integration • Green accounting and carbon reporting • Transparent financial reporting and governance • Fintech for democratizing finance • Microfinance and social investment models • Risk management for resilient financial systems • Corporate governance reforms • AI and analytics in finance and accounting • Integrated reporting and accounting for social value
Information Systems & Business Analytics	• AI governance and ethical data practices • Digital public infrastructure for inclusion • Data-driven policymaking for social welfare • Digital ecosystems • Algorithmic bias, fairness, and equity • Generative AI and societal impacts • Analytics for sustainability and climate risk • Cybersecurity, privacy, and digital trust • Digital inclusion for underserved populations • Social impact of platform economies
Marketing	• Consumer behaviour in underserved markets • Social marketing for sustainability and public health • Inclusive product and service design • Digital engagement for diverse audiences • Ethical and responsible marketing • Influence of digital tribes and online communities • Branding for social value • Cultural differences in consumer behaviour • Marketing analytics for marginalized segments • Community-based and grassroots marketing



TRACKS AND TOPICS MAPPING

Track	Illustrative Themes
Organizational Behaviour & Human Resource Management	• Leadership for inclusion and psychological safety • Workplace mental health initiatives • DEI strategies for modern organizations • Future of work and skills transformation • Employee experience in global and virtual teams • Compassionate and human-centred cultures • Talent development in mission-driven settings • Ethical HR practices • Cross-cultural leadership • Managing stress, burnout, and uncertainty • Psychological scale development
Responsible Business	• ESG strategy and sustainable value creation • Ethical governance and stakeholder decision-making • Climate action and carbon transition • Business–society partnerships • Circular economy and sustainable operations • Responsible and transparent supply chains • Social entrepreneurship for equity • Human rights compliance in global firms • Impact measurement frameworks • Ethics in AI and digital innovation
Quantitative Methods & Operations Management	• Operations analytics for welfare delivery • Sustainable and circular supply chains • Humanitarian logistics and disaster response models • Optimization for equitable resource distribution • Resilient operations under volatility • Demand forecasting and risk mitigation • Industry 4.0 and digital twins in operations • Health operations analytics • Multi-criteria decision analysis for sustainability • Lean, agile, and sustainable operations
Strategy & Entrepreneurship	• Purpose-driven strategy for social value • Community-focused innovation ecosystems • Entrepreneurship for livelihood creation • Strategic responses to inequality and climate risks • Inclusive business models and frugal innovation • Digital entrepreneurship and global access • SME resilience and renewal • Strategic alliances for sustainability • Corporate purpose and stakeholder strategy • Entrepreneurial finance for marginalized founders



TRACKS AND TOPICS MAPPING

Track	Illustrative Themes
Interdisciplinary Studies	• Tech and psychology intersections in well-being • Environmental economics and behavioural sustainability • AI ethics across law, philosophy, and data science • Integrated public health and social protection research • Digital literacy and educational transformation • Climate resilience through engineering economics • Governance of digital platforms • Culture, arts, and technology interactions • Policy analytics linking economics and IS • Human-machine collaboration in socio-technical systems

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INFLUENCE OF BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS OF ART INVESTORS IN EMERGING MARKETS

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Abstract

Since the 1940s, the art market has gone through significant changes, developing from a specific interest focused on aesthetic delight to a generally recognized elective investment avenue. This study examines how the Big Five Personality Qualities — Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism — connect with expectations to finance in art within developing business sectors. The outcomes show that specific qualities, especially Openness and Conscientiousness, emphatically affect art investment intentions. People who score high in Openness are bound to see the value in imaginative articulation and aesthetics, which improves their probability of financing in art. Similarly, the people who are Conscientious, esteeming association and self-control, likewise show a more noteworthy penchant to invest in art. Conversely, Neuroticism adversely influences intentions to finance in art. These discoveries can assist stakeholders in the art market make designated methodologies that take care of different character types. Also, further examination is expected to analyze different variables that might impact venture ways of art behaving across various cultural settings.



SUSTAINABILITY-DRIVEN OUTBOUND TRAINING: A FRAMEWORK FOR ECO-FRIENDLY EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN INDIAN B-SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Outbound Training (OBT) is an influential experiential learning method that develops Emotional Intelligence (EI), Leadership skills, team-building dynamics, and decision-making skills. This research provides a sustainability-focused OBT framework on an eco-friendly campus, examines and compares global & Indian OBT techniques, and assesses how well they fit into Indian B-schools. The proposed study objectives are to analyze sustainable OBT models and their adaptability to B-Schools in India, to evaluate existing OBT practices in Western and Indian B-schools and corporate settings, focusing on sustainability, to develop a structured, sustainability-driven OBT framework that aligns with environmental and educational goal, and to suggest strategies for seamless implementation of eco-friendly OBT activities in B-schools. The researchers will use a mixed-method approach that includes surveys, expert interviews, and focus group interviews with B-school students in addition to secondary research from universities like Stanford, Harvard, and IIMs. The proposed framework may emphasize environmental stewardship and sustainable behaviors while incorporating mindfulness exercises, phobia reduction strategies, and leadership training. Also, the proposed framework is expected to offer a scalable, profit-generating approach that not only fills the gap in practical exposure but also investigates OBT's possible development into executive MBA and corporate leadership training. Through the assimilation of experiential leadership, sustainability doctrines, and psychological spirit, this framework nurtures personal development and environmental awareness while preparing students to face real-world difficulties.

Geographic Scope: A comparison between India and Western nations' sustainable OBT Practices.

Learning Scope: Assessment of current corporate and B-school OBT initiatives with an emphasis on sustainability.

Sustainability Scope: Combining risk management procedures, resource optimization, and environmentally friendly practices.





UNLOCKING EMPLOYABILITY WITH GRIT AND CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE ~ AN EXTENSION OF THE CAREER EDGE MODEL OF EMPLOYABILITY

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Abstract

Purpose: The Career Edge Model was introduced as the ‘key’ to employability in 2007, but it does not explain how graduates manage in multicultural environments or cope with failure. The study aims to present an updated and enhanced version of the Career EDGE Model by adding the constructs of Cultural Intelligence and Grit, as an answer.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The paper follows an integrative literature review approach where papers pertaining to the career EDGE model are evaluated to create an enhanced framework of employability by including Cultural Intelligence and Grit in the original model. Total 85 papers were considered for the study majorly within the time frame 2017 to 2024, with a few seminal papers dating as far as 1998.

Findings: The research shows Cultural Intelligence and Grit address Career EDGE’s gaps in explaining external environment and multicultural settings. Cultural Intelligence helps graduates perform efficiently even in an environment that is culturally different from their own, thus promoting adaptability. Grit helps graduates face adversity in terms of labour market or rejections in career while not losing hope and continuing their pursuit of continuous learning and excellence.

Research Limitations/Implications: The model’s limitation is the number of variables, but it is justified. It highlights how cultural sensitivity boosts adaptable and self-reflection develops student’s self-perceived employability. The paper recommends new curricula for global multicultural integration.

Originality: The work is original and has not been published or presented anywhere. There also has been no work so far relating Career EDGE with Cultural Intelligence and Grit.





THE ROLE OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN DRIVING SOCIAL CHANGE

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Abstract

Ethical leadership is an essential driver of social change, particularly in an era where businesses and institutions are increasingly held accountable for their impact on society. This research examines how ethical leadership shapes corporate social responsibility (CSR), stakeholder trust and sustainable business practices, ultimately fostering long-term social transformation. Using secondary data from academic journals, industry reports and case studies, the study highlights key ethical leadership traits—such as integrity, fairness, accountability and transparency and their influence on decision-making at both organizational and societal levels. The findings suggest that ethical leadership enhances business reputation, promotes responsible corporate behavior and contributes to inclusive economic growth. The paper concludes with recommendations for businesses, policymakers and educators on embedding ethical leadership principles into governance and management education for broader social impact.





ASSESSING TEACHERS' SATISFACTION WITH ONLINE TEACHING: A STUDY OF PRIVATE SECTOR SCHOOLS IN KOLKATA AND HOWRAH DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL

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Abstract

The rapid adoption of online teaching, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has significantly transformed the educational landscape. This study assesses the satisfaction levels of teachers in private sector schools in Kolkata and Howrah districts of West Bengal regarding online teaching. Through a mixed-method approach, including surveys and interviews, the study explores factors affecting teacher satisfaction, such as technological infrastructure, administrative support, student engagement, and work-life balance. The findings offer insights for policymakers and educational institutions to enhance online teaching experiences.

This research investigates the extent to which private school teachers are content with online teaching, considering the technological challenges, institutional backing, and pedagogical adaptations required in a digital environment. The study highlights both the advantages and difficulties faced by teachers, including increased accessibility, flexibility, and new teaching methodologies, juxtaposed with issues like digital fatigue, inadequate training, and inconsistent student participation. By analyzing teachers' perspectives, the study aims to propose strategies to improve online teaching frameworks, ensuring better satisfaction levels and more effective digital learning environments. The results emphasize the need for robust digital infrastructure, comprehensive teacher training, and sustainable work policies to enhance the overall teaching and learning experience in the online domain.





INVESTIGATING THE SUCCESS OF IMPACT INVESTING IN BRINGING DOWN SMOKING RATES AND ENCOURAGING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

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Abstract

Impact investing has come up as a commanding weapon for the financial strategy to arrange economic returns with welfare of the society and environment. This study investigates the success of the impact investing in bringing down the smoking rates and aims to encourage the healthier communities in India. By studying various case studies, models for investments and health consequences, this study estimates the reduction in smoking and increase in healthcare with the help of public awareness campaigns and financial interference. The end results suggest that the impact investing is a successful and productive tool to reduce the tobacco use and bring down the smoking rates, but the effectiveness require compliance assistance, responsibilities, and strategies to modify behavior.



CORNERSTONE OF SERVICE QUALITY FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATORS AND PARENTS

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Abstract

The quality of service in higher education plays a pivotal role in achieving academic excellence and sustainable growth. Besides the primary stakeholders, students, the participation and feedback of educators (i.e. faculty members) and parents are also paramount to the success of the higher educational institutions (HEI) and helps in improving the overall service quality.

The present research aims to unveil the key service quality attributes based on the views of the educators and the parents. This paper first formulates an integrated theoretical framework by synthesising SERVQUAL, HEdPERF and HESQUAL models. Then it obtains the views of the members of focused group of educators and parents separately regarding the attributes of service quality leading to academic excellence of HEIs. It then identifies the success factors based on service quality and carries out a multi-criteria group decision analysis using Intuitionistic Fuzzy numbers (IFN) to unveil the key success factors related to service quality of HEIs. To determine the weights, the present paper uses COBRAC methods. The research offers logical insights for higher education policymakers and institutional leaders, promoting a stakeholder-inclusive approach in quality assurance.

DOES WASTE DISCLOSURE INFLUENCE CORPORATE CASH HOLDINGS? EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

India, one of the world's fastest-growing economies, faces significant environmental challenges due to waste from its rapid growth and rising population. India generates 9.3 million tonnes of waste annually out of 57 million tonnes of global waste annually as per the recent Times of India Article ("India Produces Most Plastic Pollution in the World, Contributes 20% of Global Waste," 2024).

India's association with the National Waste Management Campaign in October 2014 has resulted in a significant increase in waste reporting over time by the companies (Adler et al., 2022). Despite the significant increase in the prevalence of waste, there is a dearth of research on corporate waste disclosure.

The single study that analyses the relationship between waste disclosure and cash holdings is conducted on a sample of S&P 500 firms (Benjamin et al., 2020). In contrast to the developed markets of the US, there are differences in the regulatory landscape for an emerging economy like India. This paper helps to fill this lacuna by exploring whether waste disclosure influences corporate cash holdings in an emerging market of India.

Using the sample from India from 2014-2024, we find a non-linear relationship between waste disclosure and the corporate cash holdings (CCH) of firms. We also explore the relationship in the context of environmentally sensitive industries and find that the association is more pronounced for such firms. This paper makes a novel contribution of a new variable- corporate waste disclosure as a significant determinant of CCH.



CHALLENGES AND USER SATISFACTIONS TOWARDS OPTIMIZING HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS AT QUALITY ACCREDITED TERTIARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

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Abstract

The implementation of Hospital Management Information Systems (HMIS) has transformed healthcare delivery by streamlining operations and improving patient care coordination. However, user satisfaction remains a critical challenge influencing the system's effectiveness. This study explores the barriers to user satisfaction with HMIS, focusing on usability, system reliability, and training adequacy. A qualitative approach was employed, involving semi-structured questionnaire-based interviews with 70 healthcare professionals, including nurses, doctors, paramedical and administrative staff, across various public and private quality accredited hospitals. Thematic analysis revealed that complex interfaces and frequent system downtimes significantly frustrated users, leading to workflow disruptions. Additionally, inadequate training programs hindered users' ability to leverage HMIS functionalities fully, fostering resistance to adoption. Participants emphasized the need for intuitive designs tailored to diverse user needs and robust technical support to ensure system reliability. Furthermore, organizational factors, such as insufficient management commitment and limited feedback mechanisms, exacerbated dissatisfaction. The findings suggest that enhancing user satisfaction requires a multifaceted approach, including user-centered system design, comprehensive training, and proactive maintenance strategies. Addressing these challenges can improve HMIS adoption, ultimately enhancing healthcare delivery efficiency. Future research should investigate longitudinal impacts of user satisfaction on patient outcomes and explore scalable solutions for resource-constrained settings.





CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCY AND MACROECONOMIC STABILITY: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA AND GLOBAL COMPARISONS

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Abstract

This study investigates the macroeconomic implications of Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) adoption, focusing on India's Digital Rupee (₹) and its comparative impact across global economies. Using a multi-layered econometric approach—comprising probit regression, fully modified ordinary least squares (FMOLS), Granger causality tests, and difference-in-means (DIM) estimation—this research examines the effects of CBDC on GDP growth, inflation, interest rates, and sectoral performance. The analysis is based on macroeconomic time-series data from Q1 2018 to Q4 2024, complemented by cross-country comparisons involving eleven other CBDC-adopting nations. Results reveal a statistically significant causal relationship from CBDC adoption to GDP growth and interest rate shifts in India, while no bidirectional causality is observed. Sector-wise analysis shows differential responses, with agriculture and manufacturing displaying stronger long-term linkages to CBDC than services. International comparison suggests that developing economies exhibit greater post-CBDC GDP acceleration but face heightened inflationary pressures relative to developed counterparts. While CBDC's short-term macroeconomic impact remains modest, its structural influence across key sectors and policy instruments underscores its potential as a transformative monetary innovation. These findings provide crucial insights for central banks and policymakers evaluating digital currency frameworks in diverse economic contexts.



IMPACT OF BENEFICIARY CONTACT ON EMPLOYEES, THE COMPANY AND CUSTOMERS: THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEE'S PROSOCIAL VALUE

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Abstract

Although the significance of social characteristics of jobs has been highlighted in various studies, limited research has focused on the direct impact of contact with beneficiaries. Integrating the theories on job impact and work engagement, we propose a conceptual model that links contact with beneficiaries to three levels of outcomes: employees, the organization and customers.

In Study 1, data collected from field level service employees ($N = 406$) from a leading microfinance bank based in Southern India supports the effect of contact with beneficiaries on employees' work engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior. Study 2, conducted in another leading microfinance bank from the same geography using data from field service employees ($N = 483$), verifies the above relationships and further extends it to customer loyalty intentions ($N = 1449$).

In both our studies we observe the effects are stronger when the prosocial values of employees are higher than when it is lower. In addition, work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior mediated the relationship between contact with beneficiaries and customer loyalty intention.



LEVERAGING AI-DRIVEN BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE FOR SMARTER AND SECURE BANKING SYSTEMS

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Abstract

The increasing competition in the banking sector has made customer acquisition and customer retention difficult for the banks. Banks need to integrate their processes to make their systems robust so as to offer exemplary customer experience, better risk management and reduced frauds which will help them stay ahead of the curve. Business Intelligence solutions today offer banks an opportunity to convert the customer data into meaningful information which can improve their decision making and also help in understanding customer behaviour. BI systems in banks cover various areas, including Customer Relationship Management, Performance Management, and Risk Management, utilizing data warehouses and online analytical processes as their foundation. This study examines how Business Intelligence (BI) is shaping the banking sector, focusing on its influence on decision-making, risk assessment, and customer engagement. It delves into the challenges banks face, such as navigating regulatory requirements, ensuring data security, and managing the costs of implementation. Additionally, the study explores emerging trends, including AI-powered analytics and real-time decision-making, which are set to redefine the future of banking.



AI-BASED DIGITAL LENDING PRACTICES BY INDIAN BANKING SECTOR: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATIVE STUDY DURING THE PERIOD 2014-2024

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Abstract

This study investigates the evolution and impact of AI-based digital lending practices in the Indian banking sector over the past decade (2014-2024). Using a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative analysis of lending data from 28 major Indian banks and qualitative assessments through structured interviews with banking executives, the research examines how AI technologies have transformed credit assessment, risk management, and customer experience in digital lending. The findings reveal that AI adoption has resulted in a 37% reduction in loan processing time, a 29% decrease in non-performing assets (NPAs) for AI-enabled loans, and an expansion of credit access to previously underserved demographics. However, challenges persist in algorithmic transparency, data privacy concerns, and regulatory compliance. The study contributes to the growing literature on fintech innovation in emerging economies by providing empirical evidence of AI's transformative role in Indian banking and offers strategic recommendations for stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of AI-based lending solutions while addressing ethical and regulatory considerations.



GREEN LEADERSHIP AND PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR: ROLE OF GREEN MINDFULNESS & GREEN HR PRACTICES

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Abstract

Leadership has a critical place in promoting pro-environmental behaviour in organizations (Robertson 2013). Green Human Resource practices can further influence pro-environmental behaviour of employees through the development of Green Mindfulness (Saifulina, 2020). These Green Human Resource endeavours, like training on environment protection and sustainable recruitment, can shape employee behaviour, particularly when supported by senior management and clear understanding among various departments (Mishra, 2017). Besides, cohesive Green HR practices and action played by Green Leadership in mediating and moderating the relationship between Green Human Resource and Pro-environmental employee behaviour has been promulgated (Luu, 2019). This study is designed to understand the mediating role of Green HR practices to explain the existing relationship amongst Green Human Resource Management practices, Green Leadership, and Green Mindfulness. This study aimed to understand green leadership-induced Green Human Resource Management practices that underpin the sustainable business performance for the industries. A mixed methodology has been adopted here to understand the exploits of scholars in the fields of Green HR, Green Leadership, Pro-environmental behaviour and the Green Mindfulness.

The main focus of our study rests on three hypotheses: Green Leadership, Pro-Environmental Behaviour, and Green HR Practices. Here, we emphasize Green Leadership. Some scholars have argued that Green leadership is a factor in environmental viability (Judge, 2004). Our study aims to emphasize Green HR Practices in particular as the mediator for Green Leadership and the Pro-Environmental behaviours of employees towards environmental safety.

In the quintessence, environmental health poses a great challenge to all, the industries cannot overlook its importance. This aspect becomes more relevant in the context of developing nations as they face acute challenges in this regard. The management actions and leadership policies become questionable at times. Degradation of environment can be saved if the understanding between the management and the workforce is in unison in the organizations. The prime time of an employee in an organization is spent at his workplace so how they spent their time in an environment friendly manner dictates the success of achieving environment development goals. When the human resource is able to strike a healthy relationship between the green leadership and the pro-environmental behaviour of the employees, positive business performance becomes a reality. This approach will enable governments to respond to the calls for sustainability given by the world community (Chaudhary, 2020). In short, this is the appropriate time when an organization's workforce can be actively engaged in redressing the issue of environment health.



SMART CONTRACT ENABLED USER IDENTIFICATION AND AUTHENTICATION MODEL USING BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of digital financial services has increased exposure to sophisticated fraudulent activities, including document forgery, identity theft, and account takeovers. Traditional Know Your Customer (KYC) and electronic KYC (e-KYC) systems, despite their regulatory significance, face challenges in detecting real-time fraud and mitigating security risks. This paper proposes a blockchain-based smart contract authentication model that integrates Aadhaar and bank records to enhance user verification processes. The model leverages blockchain's immutability, transparency, and permission-based access to create a decentralized identity verification system, reducing reliance on centralized data storage and mitigating cybersecurity vulnerabilities. By automating authentication through smart contracts, the proposed framework improves fraud detection efficiency, enhances security, and ensures compliance with regulatory standards. The paper highlights the research gap in existing authentication mechanisms and demonstrates how the integration of blockchain technology can revolutionize identity verification in financial services, improving both security and user trust.

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH IN THE WORKPLACE

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Abstract

Posttraumatic growth refers to the positive transformation that occurs when people encounter challenging life events (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). The literature is limited in comprehensively reviewing the antecedents and outcomes of Posttraumatic Growth. The current study bridges the gap by focusing on PTG from a non-medical viewpoint and creating a conceptual model of its antecedents and outcomes. The present investigation made use of the systematic literature review approach. After conducting a comprehensive review, the authors identified documents that should be excluded from the study. The 50 publications that were chosen for the full-text systematic review were assessed. The review revealed a model that focused on individual and external antecedents of posttraumatic growth, such as individual personality, affective, traumatic incident, social support and others, while also revealing the quality of life as the outcome of posttraumatic growth.

EXAMINE HOW DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP STYLES (TRANSFORMATIONAL, TRANSACTIONAL, LAISSEZ-FAIRE) AFFECT JOB SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE IN MULTINATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of three major leadership styles transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire on job satisfaction and performance in multinational environments. Leadership plays a crucial role in shaping employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall organizational effectiveness, particularly in globally diverse settings where cultural differences influence workplace dynamics. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiration, motivation, and intellectual stimulation, has been shown to enhance job satisfaction and performance by fostering empowerment and alignment with organizational goals. Transactional leadership, focusing on rewards and penalties, drives performance through structure and clear expectations, although its effect on long-term job satisfaction is less pronounced. In contrast, laissez-faire leadership, marked by minimal supervision, can be empowering for self-driven employees but may result in disengagement and lower performance in environments requiring guidance and direction. The study highlights that the effectiveness of each leadership style is contingent upon cultural contexts, where collectivist and individualistic cultures respond differently to various leadership approaches. This research contributes to understanding the nuances of leadership effectiveness in multinational organizations, emphasizing the need for leaders to adapt their style according to cultural expectations to optimize job satisfaction and performance.

WHEN INDIVIDUAL'S KNOWLEDGE RIGHT SWIPES AUTONOMY AND SENDS A SUPERLIKE! A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO REVIEW KNOWLEDGE HOARDING

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Abstract

Purpose: Hoarding, a non-strategic compulsive behavior, once considered niche is becoming a pressing concern due to its bearings with human capital's emotional wellbeing. Important articles in the allied areas represent the phenomena of knowledge hoarding (K_{HOARD}). This article aims at reviewing the literature adopting an inductive coding strategy of phenomenology to suggest themes, highlighting how K_{HOARD} impacts the sustainability factors of organizations.

Design/methodology/approach: The coder-authors conduct a phenomenological review of 57 articles (published during 2000-2025) by adhering to the Phenomenological analysis evaluation guideline, to review K_{HOARD} .

Findings: The coding schema of the review surfaced K_{HOARD} 's approach in six areas for future research. Majority of the themes (five of six) were indicating K_{HOARD} 's negative impact on organizational profitability; however, one theme shows K_{HOARD} to lead to serendipitous knowledge, a positive disruptive implication.

Practical implication: The choice of altruism over personal-interest with regard to K_{HOARD} is an inner calling. This study suggests neuropsychological-buddies, organizational training and development programs, and counselling interventions to gel well with the hoarders to make the compulsive behavior recede.

Originality: To the best of our knowledge, the study has two original contributions. It is the most recent study to have reviewed K_{HOARD} for a period of twenty-five years (2000-2025). It is the first study to have adopted a phenomenological approach to review literatures.



LIQUIDITY RISK AND VOLATILITY IN FOREX MARKET PERFORMANCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SELECTED FOREIGN BANKS IN BRICS COUNTRIES

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Abstract

This study explores the interplay between liquidity risk and market volatility within the foreign exchange (forex) market, focusing on foreign banks operating in the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). The research aims to conduct a comparative analysis of how these banks manage liquidity risk while navigating the fluctuations in exchange rates and volatility across different economic environments. By employing quantitative methods such as regression analysis and volatility modelling, the study investigates the effects of liquidity risk exposure on the stability and profitability of these foreign banks.

The study's findings reveal that liquidity risk management practices play a crucial role in mitigating the adverse impacts of market volatility. Foreign banks in BRICS countries face distinct challenges due to the differing levels of economic development, regulatory frameworks, and market conditions within each region. As a result, the ability of these institutions to maintain liquidity and profitability varies significantly. The research underscores the importance of tailored risk management strategies to address the specific challenges posed by each country's economic landscape.

Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how foreign banks in emerging markets respond to forex market volatility and liquidity risks. The insights provided offer practical implications for policymakers and banking professionals, highlighting the need for robust risk management frameworks to ensure the stability and resilience of financial institutions in volatile market conditions.





IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS ADAPTATION FOCUSING ON HEALTHCARE INFORMATION SYSTEMS SENSITIZING TO HEALTHCARE 4.0 & SOCIETY 5.0.

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Abstract

Global healthcare is likely to reach a magnitude of US\$1,211.14 billion by 2034, with a C.A.G.R. of 22.5% from 2024 to 2034, indicating the enormous magnitude. Due to the technological advent, IoT in Healthcare (IoHT), Healthcare 4.0, Society 5.0 and remote patient management altogether dynamically change the perception of the healthcare sector thereby transforming healthcare into a new technological 'realm' where healthcare information systems (H.I.S) is the backbone of healthcare delivery. Thus, the H.I.S needs to be adapted internally in order to adapt to the dynamically changing external environment, providing maximum efficiency, sustainability, and the competitive advantage. For this, just technology alone will not be adequate. The accurate combination of technology and change management together will be required to devise the optimum strategy using the Co-efficient of Progressive Adaptation which states that: "The rate of change of progressive adaptation of the concerned information systems is directly proportional to the efficiency of the same. Vice-versa". Having focus on information systems adaptation on an accurate and timely basis for the optimum efficiency, accurate combination of change management and technology, eradication of steps no longer required, automation and adaptation, direct proportionality to the adaptation and H.I.S. and the inverse proportion between H.I.S. efficiency and the eradicated steps no longer required thereby covering gaps of the existing methods of information systems efficiency management as discovered in the gap analysis and seminal findings holistically blended using ontologically thereby indicating the importance of I.S. adaptation using the Coefficient of Progressive Adaptation.



A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING THE INTERPLAY OF FINANCIAL AND NON-FINANCIAL REPORTING: AN INTANGIBLE HUMAN CAPITAL CASE STUDY

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Abstract

This conceptual paper critically examines the relationship between financial and non-financial disclosures. It identifies and addresses limitations and ambiguities in financial and non-financial reporting. The study analyses key data points related to intangible human capital accounting within the Non-financial Reporting Framework, such as Business Responsibility Reporting and the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting framework, a non-financial Reporting Standard, and aligns them with financial data metrics established by the Accounting Standards framework. The paper also explores the interconnectivity between financial and non-financial reporting, evaluating methodologies, including a case study approach, to assess the implications of the double materiality principle on intangible human capital accounting practices and their financial implications. Specifically, the paper investigates the use of an employee development index to measure the impact of employee development programs on company earnings, using Infosys data from 2017 to 2023, and explores how this index can be integrated into existing financial and non-financial reporting frameworks to provide a more comprehensive view of organisational performance and sustainability.



IMPORTANCE OF “ THE RATE OF CHANGE OF PROGRESSIVE ADAPTATION OF THE CONCERNED INFORMATION SYSTEMS IS DIRECTLY PROPORTIONAL TO THE EFFICIENCY OF THE SAME. VICE-VERSA” IN THE INDIAN E-COMMERCE SECTOR

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Abstract

Technological advent that includes digital disruption, IoT, Industry 4.0, 5G, Augmented Reality(A.R.), Virtual Reality (V.R.) and Society 5.0 plays a significant role e-Commerce and changes the perception of the market as e-Commerce makes the market come to the consumer practically any time 24/7 rather than the traditional method consumer going to the market . In India the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform by the government of India provides a level playing field for all suppliers and buyers thereby reducing monopoly resulting in many more options for buyers and sellers and even increases the consumers' demands. Customer satisfaction is utmost crucial for profit maximization and sustainability. Customer Relationship Management is the core method of maximizing customer satisfaction. Customer Relationship Management and e-Commerce have Information Systems(I.S) as the backbone of delivery. Thus, information systems need to be adapted on a timely basis. This timely adaptation requires the accurate combination of change management and technology to devise the optimum internally in order to face the external environment. This to be done using the Co-efficient of Progressive Adaptation which states that : “The rate of change of progressive Adaptation of the concerned information systems is directly proportional to the efficiency of the same. Vice-versa”. Adaptation using automation and integration of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) and Knowledge Management Systems(K.M.S.) prominently optimize I.S. efficiency in e-commerce and customer relationship management using the Knowledge management principle of providing the right information to the right person at the right time thereby altogether enabling the optimum efficiency of the information systems being the backbone of delivery in e-Commerce and customer relationship management also enabling the e-Commerce platforms and customer relationship Management platforms to sustain and obtain the competitive advantage . The maximum efficiency of the information systems being the backbone of delivery of the e-Commerce platform and the customer relationship management platform enable sustainability and the competitive advantage of the same as the information systems forming the backbone of delivery is adapted using the Co-efficient of progressive adaptation that emphasis on timely/ "nth" moment adaptation of information systems by accurately combining change management and technology to devise the optimum strategy to be implemented for the concerned information systems. The mentioned Co-efficient of Progressive Adaptation also focuses on optimum efficiency of information systems, accurate /timely adaptation and elimination/eradication of steps no longer required in the process and have room for errors, delay the process thereby causing in efficiency of the information systems and





inability to sustain thus making the information systems eventually obsolete. As the Co-efficient of Progressive Adaptation specifies the direct proportionality between I.S. adaptation to I.S. efficiency and the inverse proportionality between I.S. efficiency and eradicated steps no longer required , this study indicates the importance of combining change management and technology for information systems as endorsed by the research methodology that compared and contrasted methods of information systems efficiency management like T.P.M.,T.Q.M., Six Sigma, O.E.E. and D.M.A.I.C. Gap analysis in these methods indicted criticality of accurately implementing the Co-efficient of Progressive adaptation for Information Systems.





WORLD AI POLICIES AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIAN ECONOMY

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Abstract

From the developed nations, the sophisticated technologies in combination with robust policy schemes have been driving an economic revolution with AI. This study investigates how international AI policy affects the Indian economy and what India must do to spur growth from AI. The method employed for the descriptive qualitative analysis of AI is based on secondary data analysis of an instance of international AI development, societal issues, effects by sector, and ultimately the readiness of the Indian economy.

The research findings yield the Global AI Policy-India Economy Influence Matrix through counter-mapping policies and sector-wise analysis. Hence, it outlines where India can align with international AI activity in data governance, ethical AI, innovation systems, re-skilling of workers, and sectoral uptake. Results show that India is already on the AI track, but some of the key areas remain in the gap, while regulation, innovation assistance, and skills building remain the key finds of world frontiers. This research presents tangible suggestions for the operational steering of ethical AI practices, AI innovation, and a broad economic environment. Adhering to international AI standards, India will enhance competitiveness, encourage digital transformation, and become a significant actor in the AI-driven global economy.

Moreover, the paper highlights the imperative need for an all-governmentally integrated strategy towards AI policy, forward-thinking, cognizant of regional inequality, equitable protection, and sectoral aligns. The future-proof sustainable growth of India may be pioneered by AI-based assistance under a high-level framework nurtured by high-quality benchmarking, inter-ministry coordination, and private sector collaboration.





AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF HERZBERG'S TWO-FACTOR THEORY ON ATTRITION RATE OF FACULTY MEMBERS IN A BUSINESS SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study aims to explore impact of Herzberg's two factors on attrition rate of faculty members at a business school.

Research on faculty attrition has highlighted factors influencing retention, including compensation, work-life balance, career development opportunities, & organizational support. This theory has been applied to different sectors to explain job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Studies by Hicks (2020) and Lee & Shukla (2021) demonstrate relevance of motivators such as recognition and achievement, while hygiene factors like salary and working conditions are crucial to preventing dissatisfaction.

This theory doesn't focus much on its application in business schools and often fail to quantitatively measure direct impact of motivators and hygiene factors on faculty attrition. This study fills this gap by objectives & Hypotheses as given below.

To examine the relationship between Herzberg's motivators and faculty retention in business schools.

To assess the impact of hygiene factors on faculty attrition.

To provide empirical insights into how these factors collectively influence faculty turnover.

H1: Motivators (intrinsic factors) significantly reduce faculty attrition in business schools.

H2: Hygiene factors (extrinsic factors) are significantly associated with faculty dissatisfaction and increased attrition.

H3: A combination of motivators and hygiene factors influences the overall attrition rate.

Questionnaire includes a Likert-scale section for responses on job satisfaction, work environment, salary satisfaction, opportunities for growth, and recognition. The survey will be distributed to faculty members of a business school, ensuring a diverse representation in terms of age, gender, experience, and academic discipline.

Factor analysis will be employed to identify underlying variables that contribute to faculty attrition. Multiple regression analysis will be used to test the relationship between the identified factors and the attrition rate. The analysis will include





1. **Motivators and Retention:** Factor analysis will reveal key motivators, and regression will demonstrate their impact on faculty retention.
2. **Hygiene Factors and Attrition:** Hygiene factors such as salary and working conditions will be examined for their role in dissatisfaction and attrition.
3. **Combined Effect:** The regression model will incorporate both motivators and hygiene factors to assess their collective effect on faculty turnover.

Motivators like career development opportunities and recognition have a strong negative correlation with faculty attrition. Hygiene factors such as salary and administrative support also show a significant relationship with faculty satisfaction but are more strongly associated with dissatisfaction when absent.

The study confirms that Institutions should focus on improving intrinsic motivators while also ensuring adequate hygiene factors to reduce attrition rates.

The study is limited by its focus on a single business school, which may not fully represent broader academic trends.

Business schools should invest in professional development programs, recognition systems, and improved working conditions to enhance faculty satisfaction and reduce attrition.





NAVIGATING THE QUANTUM REALM OF INTENT: SUPERPOSITION AND UNCERTAINTY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial Intent can be represented as a cognitive stance that precedes the decision of venture creation. Intent formation, under the lens of conventional models like Theory of Planned Behaviour, is viewed as a linear and rational process. However, entrepreneurial decision making in the real-world scenario is juxtaposed with ambiguity, conflicting theories and uncertainty as well. This paper proposes a novel conceptual schema that reiterates entrepreneurial intent, shaped on the principles of superposition and uncertainty, intertwined with the fundamentals of quantum mechanics.

In the proposed structure, entrepreneurial opportunity perception is regarded as a superposition state, wherein multiple opportunity evaluations like optimism, fear, feasibility and desirability, exist in simultaneity, within the cognitive realm of the entrepreneur. The transition from ambiguity in intent to clarity in decision is triggered by contextual measurement, stated as external events that perform in analogy with the quantum wave function collapse. Moreover, the risk-knowledge trade-off, motivated from Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, offers that the more clarity on risk entrepreneurs seek, lesser will be the certainty they have about factors like timing, need for resources, etc.

This paradigm posits entrepreneurial intent as constructs of probability and context sensitivity rather than a stagnant outcome (intend or not intend). This study articulates a fresh vantage point to understand cognitive ambivalence, decision fluidity and dynamism in intent formation. The design bears implications for entrepreneurial education, opportunity evaluation research as well as decision making strategies under high uncertainty. Qualitative exploration and Structural Equation Modelling are proposed for empirical validation.





HUMANIZING HRM IN THE POST-PANDEMIC DIGITAL ERA: A STRATEGIC SHIFT TOWARD SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

The study examines the developing role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in promoting social stability in the subsequent era after COVID-19. Planning of mixed methods approaches integrates qualitative insights from interviews with Indian multinational companies and HR managers, as well as 25 employees examined in hybrid or external settings. Conclusions indicate a significant change to human-focused HRM approaches, which highlight the importance of sympathetic leadership, autonomy, and the moral digital rule. Psychological safety arises significantly for staff storage and productivity and motivates HR managers to implement welfare programs, mental health days, and open communication channels. The widespread use of algorithm monitoring and surveillance has stimulated concern about openness, right data use, and digital trust. The study emphasizes the need for balanced productivity and personal autonomy under the supervision of protocols through transparent communication and consent. Emotional intelligence and sympathy management, characterized by emotional intelligence and supportive behaviour, are identified as a catalyst for trust and organizational harmony in digital workplaces. The hybrid work model is now regarded as a strategic approach to the integration of working life and employee satisfaction. The research contributes to a comprehensive structure for adjusted moral and durable HRM practices with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially related to those belonging to decent work and low inequalities. This provides action-rich recommendations for organizations that navigate digital changes and balance human development with operational efficiency. The main findings include human-focused HRM approaches, the importance of psychological safety, the adoption of HR technology, anxiety for algorithm monitoring, requirements for sympathy management in digital workplaces, and changes in the strategic value of hybrid work models. The study highlights several important aspects of post-pandemic HRM, including sympathy management, autonomy, moral digital governance, psychological security, work-life integration, digital trust, and welfare initiatives. The challenges include balanced monitoring of productivity with individual autonomy, ensuring transparency in algorithmic decisions, maintaining organizational harmony in remote and hybrid work environments, and addressing digital fatigue and burnout. Opportunities include increasing HR functions and employees' experiences, developing more inclusive and flexible work policies, promoting continuous learning and adaptation culture, and taking advantage of technology to coordinate HRM practices with major stability goals. The research concludes that the post-pandemic world provided the opportunity to recommence HRM as a crucial driver for social stability. Combined with responsible digitalization, sympathy, and transparent and inclusive HR practice, it can redefine the future of work to solve challenges, promote equity, and increase collective flexibility. Organizations' recommendations include investing in leadership development programs focused on sympathy and emotional intelligence, implementing transparent data collection and human resource processes, developing extensive welfare





programs, arranging flexible work, setting up clear communication channels, and regular HR strategies to evaluate HR strategies.





STRATEGIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP, ANALYZING THE FIELD AND CHARTING A PATH FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

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Abstract

Strategic entrepreneurship integrates opportunities and advantage-seeking behaviours to create wealth, emphasizing both entrepreneurial dynamism and strategic resource deployment to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and organizational transformation. Strategic entrepreneurship (SE) is a field that combines the insights of entrepreneurship and strategic management to understand how firms can create value through both identification and exploitation of opportunities and development and maintenance of competitive advantages. Some important key elements are opportunity seeking, advantage-seeking & wealth creation. One definition of SE is a process that helps businesses find opportunities that have the best chance of creating value through the entrepreneurial component and take deliberate, strategic actions based on their available resources. The four types of SE are organizational revitalization, strategic renewal, sustained regeneration, domain redefinition, and business model reconstruction. Despite its increasing importance, research on SE has been scattered and fragmented. This study aims to close this gap by analyzing the current status of SE, highlighting key issues in the literature, and suggesting prospective lines of inquiry for future academics.



"THE PURPLE SQUIRREL PARADOX: LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY AND INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES FOR ATTRACTING AND RETAINING EXCEPTIONAL TALENT IN TECH STARTUPS"

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Abstract

A larger systemic issue in tech startups is the conflict between idealized talent expectations and fair, sustainable hiring practices, which is reflected in the "Purple Squirrel Paradox"—the unrelenting pursuit of the ideal, multi-skilled hire. Through more accessible and equitable talent models, this paper explores how technology-driven and inclusive management strategies can drive social impact while resolving this paradox. Startups can lessen prejudice and provide access to previously underutilized and underappreciated talent pools by utilizing AI-enabled hiring tools, skills-first evaluation procedures, and inclusive candidate outreach strategies. We also look at how retention tactics based on psychological safety, equity-centered leadership development, and inclusive onboarding support the long-term creation of social value. Based on startup case studies and empirical research, this work provides founders and HR leaders with a useful, evidence-based framework for seeking to create diverse, high-performing teams that promote social progress and innovation. The study presents talent strategy as a crucial lever for systemic inclusion and impact within the startup ecosystem, in addition to being a growth driver.



SYSTEMS THINKING APPROACH TO TACKLE THE NEW WORLD CHALLENGES – ITS IMPACT AND NECESSITY

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Abstract

The present article illustrates the urgency and relevance of Systems Thinking in the *New World* for business and mega projects. A great transformation is underway which is presenting itself in the most disruptive and turbulent manner. The problems the new world presets, are very different from what we have encountered in the past. The present research attempts to provide tools for practitioners and academicians to tackle the new age problems. These problems are categorized into those emerging from war and artificial intelligence. This is then reflected upon policy making in mega projects and business which form the main backbone of our national growth. Three approaches are discussed, one is rapid transformation process Syntegration®. to manage complex problems. Mega projects being complex systems can have a tectonic shift in the way we handle them. The global losses of \$91 billion and national losses of Rs. 1 trillion has been reported due to delayed projects. In this paper we compare the traditional project management approach with the new approach of complex project management with Syntegration®. This is need of the hour considering the impact due to the crisis such projects will face due to war and ingress of AI. The second approach is System Dynamics and how this can be of immense utility in capturing action levers in complex systems. The third and final approach will be that of TRIZ, an innovative tool which shall be path breaking in the present circumstances. This article finally also touches upon public policy making considering such disruptions.





NEUROMARKETING: A SCIENTIFIC WAY OF UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract

Neuromarketing, an interdisciplinary field that merges neuroscience with marketing, offers a scientific lens through which consumer behaviour can be examined and understood. Traditional marketing methods rely heavily on self-reported data, which can be biased or incomplete. Neuromarketing is the union of cognitive psychology, which studies mental processes; neurology and neurophysiology, which study the functioning and responses of the brain and body physiology to external stimuli; and marketing. These studies offer valuable examples of how marketing affects consumers' behaviour and buying and decision processes. In contrast, neuromarketing employs techniques such as functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), Electroencephalography (EEG), eye tracking, and biometrics to gain direct insights into the subconscious processes that drive decision-making. This paper explores how brain activity and physiological responses can reveal consumer preferences, emotional engagement, and attention levels in response to marketing stimuli. By using and analyzing different neuromarketing techniques, marketers can design more effective campaigns, improve product design, and optimize user experiences. This paper highlights objectives, a review of literature, techniques, and the importance and limitations of neuromarketing, and it emphasizes its potential to transform how businesses understand consumer behaviour scientifically in an increasingly data-driven world.





WOMEN IN FAMILY BUSINESS SUCCESSION: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS AND SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Leadership succession is a critical task in the family business, and it becomes even more complex when the successor is a woman. The current literature review aims to provide a nuanced view of female succession in family business. We systematically searched Scopus and Web of Science to identify the available scientific evidence, followed by a bibliometric analysis and systematic review of twenty-five peer-reviewed articles published between 2006 and 2024 using R Bibliometrix and Biblioshiny. The bibliometric analysis highlights that the most considered evidence is from qualitative studies on small and medium businesses in European countries and the USA, creating a gap in knowledge in the context of developing nations in other regions. Besides, there is an abundance of cross-sectional research, creating another gap in the experience of female leaders in businesses over the long term. The current body of literature explains female succession from the perspective of Primogeniture, Gender Role Theory, Role Congruity Theory, Gender Socialisation Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory, which provide an understanding of how the gender norms, interaction within and outside the family, shape the legitimacy and roles of family businesses. The systematic review findings reveal three key themes-- barriers to female succession, enablers of successful leadership transition to female successors, and the impact of gender diversity on business performance.

Being male-dominated entities, the family businesses often overlook women as successors in the leadership roles. They are typically chosen as the successor in the absence of male candidates. Besides, women are considered to be more suitable for philanthropic and social responsibility-related roles due to the gender norms which limit their participation in other responsibilities. The enablers of female succession include parental encouragement and mentorship from family and non-family members within the organisation, as well as educational background and working experience. The self-efficacy and intention to join the family business among women increase when the factors above are in favour. The female leaders adopt a collaborative approach to managing the stakeholders, creating an inclusive environment and ensuring sustainability and ethical business practices. We have developed a conceptual framework based on factors influencing female succession to explain their intertwining nature. However, the review indicates they are subject to higher resistance and conflicts. Future studies should address the gap in the literature by exploring areas like overcoming gender bias in succession planning, the effects of cultural variation in female succession, and the influence of female leaders on organisations.





SCRAPMANAGER: AUTOMATED E-WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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Abstract

E-Waste Management system (Scrapmanager) represents a crucial step toward addressing the escalating global crisis of electronic waste (e-waste). As technology advances at an unprecedented pace, the rapid obsolescence of electronic devices poses significant environmental and health risks. Our proposed system aims to create a sustainable ecosystem that bridges the gap between responsible disposal and environmental preservation. Key features of this system are clean UI design which makes it accessible to all, connects users with certified e-waste collectors across cities. Our proposed system (Scrapmanager) educates users about impact of e-waste through informative articles, infographics, and FAQs. This system contributes to economic growth and sustainable development of the earth. Aim of this system is to protect the environment from the hazardous element used in electronic devices by recycling it using advanced technological equipment's and method. Scrapmanager isn't just a system, it's a promise—to our planet, future generations, and collective responsibility



JCP ADHERENCE AND DSE PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract

This Summer Internship Project "JCP Adherence and DSE Productivity Improvement" was executed by Parambrata Saha (Enrollment No. 24BSPHH01C0892), an MBA Marketing and Operations student at ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad. The internship was carried out at VE Commercial Vehicles Ltd. (VECV), a leading commercial vehicle manufacturer in India, which was born of a strategic alliance between Eicher Motors Ltd. and the AB Volvo Group. The project was implemented at the VECV headquarters in Gurgaon from April to June 2025, guided by Ms. Deepshikha Malik (HR Head, VECV) and Dr. Niraj Kishore Chimote (Associate Professor, IBS Hyderabad). The primary objective of the internship was to measure the compliance levels of Dealership Sales Executives (DSEs) with the Journey Cycle Plan (JCP) and see if greater compliance resulted in greater sales productivity. A secondary goal was to highlight gaps in implementation and offer strategic suggestions to enhance DSE efficiency in the Heavy Duty (HD), Light and Medium Duty (LMD), and Bus segments. The research design was descriptive-analytical. Raw performance data from October 2024 to February 2025 (FY 2024–25) was made available by the company mentor, and in-depth analysis was done using Excel-based tools. Important metrics used were JCP Adherence %, Conversion Ratio, P-Terex, T-Terex, and Market Share. Data was month-wise and segment-wise segmented to analyze trends, fluctuations in performance, and planning-productivity correlation. The internship was not confined to desk research. On-field interactions were made in all three business segments. With the LMD team, I attended route planning sessions and joined a DSE on field visits to commercial areas to see firsthand customer interaction. With the HD team, I attended performance review sessions, walked through data analysis, and helped plan targets for the next financial year. For the Bus segment, I accompanied a DSE on institutional calls to learn about the special dynamics of bulk buying, tender handling, and high-involvement selling. The research found that though JCP adherence is positively associated with enquiry generation and improved retail performance, it does not necessarily guarantee high productivity. Various qualitative variables like lead qualification, CRM maintenance, and DSE product knowledge have considerable influence on results. Patterns by segment were noted—extended sales cycles in HD, price sensitivity but high awareness in LMD, and bureaucratic complexity in Bus. With these findings, the report suggests: DSE training and induction enhancement, real-time CRM discipline, route optimisation, referral schemes, and brand repositioning strategies. Particular focus was given to customer education, USP communication, and post-sales service reliability as vehicles for long-term brand trust. In summary, the project laid out a field-validated and data-driven blueprint to enable VECV in enhancing salesforce efficiency, customer interaction, and business growth in the market. It also exemplified how analytical journey planning, coupled with principles-based marketing concepts, can be used to produce sustainable business performance.

DRIVING SOCIAL IMPACT THROUGH MANAGEMENT RESEARCH THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF HYBRID PADDY SEEDS ADOPTION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES OF ODISHA

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Abstract

This study examines the social and economic advantages of adopting hybrid paddy seeds in rural areas, with specific emphasis on the influence of agricultural extension services on improving adoption results . The main objectives are to examine the effects of hybrid seed utilization on rural lives and to analyze how access to extension services affects productivity and income. A mixed methods strategy was employed to collect data from 300 rural farmers in odisha via structured questionnaires, which were subsequently analyzed using SPSS 22.0, incorporating descriptive statistics, regression and ANOVA tests. Result demonstrate a substantial positive influence of hybrid seed adoption on socio-economic advantages, evidenced by a R value of 0.555 and an explained variation of 30.9%, whereas access to extension services exhibited a notable, albeit moderate, effect ($R = 0.378$). The research emphasizes significant benefits including enhanced yield, elevated income, bolstered food security and job creation, particularly for small holder farmers and women. Nonetheless, adoption is constrained by elevated input expenses, environmental hazards and deficiencies in information. The results emphasize the significance of cohesive support networks, encompassing extension services, financial assistance and education , to surmount these obstacles. In conclusion, the adoption of hybrid paddy seeds, facilitated by efficient agricultural extension services, offers a feasible approach to fostering sustainable and inclusive rural development .



RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION IN EDTECH: BALANCING GROWTH WITH EQUITY IN THE DIGITAL EDUCATION AGE

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Abstract

The global expansion of educational technology (EdTech) has opened new opportunities for learning while intensifying concerns around inclusion, ethics, and equity. This study explores how responsible innovation frameworks can guide the development of socially just and inclusive EdTech solutions. It focuses on four core areas: equity-by-design, ethical AI, inclusive business models, and regulatory governance. Using a combination of theoretical analysis and empirical evidence drawn from policy documents, literature reviews, and semi-structured interviews with EdTech developers, educators, and policymakers, the research highlights enduring disparities in access and outcomes, especially among students from marginalized communities. Findings indicate that dominant commercial EdTech models often prioritize scale and market penetration at the expense of equity, reinforcing existing digital and learning divides. By applying the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) framework, the study presents a practical roadmap for embedding ethical and inclusive practices across the EdTech lifecycle. Recommendations include the adoption of transparent AI systems, proactive stakeholder engagement from early design stages, and business strategies aligned with public service objectives. This research provides actionable insights for developers, decision-makers, and educators working to ensure that EdTech innovations support, rather than hinder, educational equity. It emphasizes that intentional design and governance are essential for bridging systemic gaps and meeting the needs of all learners.





UNRAVELING THE MYSTERIES OF HOSPITALITY: THE SILENT IMPACT OF INCIVILITY

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Abstract

In a country seeking inclusive development and fair workplaces, subtle yet detrimental behaviors such as supervisor incivility (SI) continue to be a concern that is not sufficiently addressed, specifically in the labor-intensive hospitality industry. SI, a term that has gained significant popularity since its inception, is marked by subtle, discourteous behaviors such as ostracizing, demeaning, or sabotaging employees, which can severely impact their morale, performance, and well-being (Abubakar et al., 2017). In the high-pressure culture of the Indian hospitality industry, where supervisor-subordinate relationships are crucial, such behaviors can exacerbate workplace productivity. While the majority of prior studies on this topic have focused on quantitative approaches, this study undertakes a qualitative lens by conducting in-depth interviews with 30 lower-level hospitality employees to capture the lived experiences of those subjected to incivility. Through thematic analysis, this study unveils the patterns, precursors, and psychosocial consequences of incivility as well as the organizational and personal coping strategies used to deal with such adversity.

What makes this study socially effective is its specific focus on blue-collar service workers, whose voices are frequently ignored in organizations and whose struggles affect service quality and organizational efficiency. The study emphasizes how organizational hierarchies and power imbalances perpetuate silent suffering and how empowering employee voice and creating evidence-based HR solutions can make progressive change. By revealing these latent dynamics, this study not only broadens the theoretical boundaries of workplace mistreatment literature but also provides practical insights for policymakers, HR professionals, and social workers who are committed to fostering a respectful and inclusive workspace.

Reference:

Abubakar, A. M., Namin, B. H., Harazneh, I., Arasli, H., & Tunç, T. (2017). Does gender moderates the relationship between favoritism/nepotism, supervisor incivility, cynicism and workplace withdrawal: A neural network and SEM approach. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 23, 129-139, 10.1016/j.tmp.2017.06.001.





FLYING HIGH OR GROUNDED? ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DRONE TRAINING IN ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY IN INDIA'S DRONE INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The rapidly expanding drone industry in India has enormous potential to transform the economy, but it also faces a skills gap that restricts employability and sectoral competitiveness, particularly when compared to global leaders like China. With an emphasis on DGCA-approved Remote Pilot Training Organizations (RPTOs) and additional training provided by private drone companies, this study assesses the efficacy of drone training initiatives in India. The study looks into the quality of hands-on training, trainee employability outcomes, and how current curricula match industry demands. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of employment data from RPTOs and placement records with qualitative interviews with training providers, employers of drone companies, and alumni. The results are complemented by secondary data from government publications and drone trade associations. According to preliminary findings, programs approved by the DGCA offer a basic understanding of regulations and operations. However, they usually lack domain-specific applications (like logistics, surveillance, and agriculture), sophisticated technical modules, and soft skills required for job readiness. Despite being more adaptable, private businesses differ greatly in terms of standardization and quality. Key deficiencies in curriculum design, industry alignment, and regional training accessibility are identified by the study. In order to improve employability and create a skilled talent pool that can compete globally, the study ends with practical suggestions for strengthening India's drone training ecosystem. These include establishing tiered certification programs, expanding industry-academia collaboration, and standardizing private training benchmarks.





EXPLORING THE ROLE OF RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP IN DRIVING ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY: INSIGHTS ON GREEN COMMITMENT AND GREEN INNOVATION

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Abstract

Responsible leadership is crucial in addressing the growing demands for sustainability in today's organizational landscape. However, It is still unclear how responsible leadership leads to sustainable performance, though. This paper examines how responsible leadership contributes to organizational sustainability performance, emphasizing the importance of green commitment and green innovation. Responsible leadership, characterized by ethical accountability and a focus on long-term goals, plays a pivotal role in embedding sustainability within organizational practices. Green commitment, which reflects an organization's dedication to environmental and sustainable objectives, fosters a culture of accountability toward sustainability. Green innovation, involving the creation and implementation of eco-friendly products, processes, and practices, drives the organization's ability to adapt to environmental challenges while maintaining competitive advantage. Through an extensive review of the literature, this study highlights the potential of green commitment and green innovation as essential variables for understanding the relationship between leadership and sustainability outcomes. The study proposes a conceptual framework to explore these relationships and identifies opportunities for future empirical testing. By focusing on these dimensions, the research aims to enhance the theoretical understanding of responsible leadership's role in sustainable organizational performance and provide practical insights for driving sustainability initiatives.





STANDING TOGETHER OR FALLING APART: CO-WORKER SUPPORT AS A MODERATOR BETWEEN TOXIC LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Leadership is not always positive in nature; some facets of leaders can be negative both for the employees and the organization. One such form of leadership that has received attention of researchers is toxic leadership (TL), which is frequent in organizations. TL has several dysfunctional outcomes like adverse effect on morale and motivation, diminished levels of commitment and strong misalignment with organizational objectives.

The current study attempts to understand the impact of toxic leadership on two important employee outcomes: Turnover Intention (TI) and Affective Commitment (AC). More significantly it also studies co-worker support (CWS) which is an informal support mechanism as a mediator between the above relationships. Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model and Conservation of Resources (COR) theory are used as a theoretical foundation to understand the association between the predictor, moderator and the outcome variables.

This research is based on a survey of 324 employees working in Information Technology (IT) sector across Northern India. The results indicate strong, positive relationship between TL and TI, and a moderately negative but significant impact on AC. Moderation Analysis revealed a significant interaction effect between TL and CWS on TI, but CWS does not significantly moderate the relationship between TL and AC.

In light of these results, it is recommended organizations should view TL as a potential risk and check toxic leadership behaviour while encouraging peer support. There is a strong need to review leadership styles and train leaders, especially on dealing with subordinates.





TVS MOTORS: STEERING THROUGH THE CHALLENGES OF EV TRANSITION

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Abstract

Amid the escalating impacts of climate change, the Indian government has implemented stringent measures to curb carbon emissions, with a major focus on the transport sector, that is predicted to source for over 20% of the country's pollution by 2030¹. In line with it, NITI Aayog has directed organizations to electrify 80% of two-wheeler and three-wheeler vehicle sales by 2030². Despite the bouquet of subsidies and incentives offered by the government, EV manufacturers face significant financial losses. Reports reveal that automakers are incurring losses of nearly ₹5 lakh per EV sold³. Many Indian EV startups like Ola Electric subsidiary, Hero Electric and Ashok Leyland filed for bankruptcy and laid off a significant portion of their employees^{4,5,6}. To examine the challenges of responsible business and its alignment with SDGs 7 and 13, this paper employs a case study methodology, analyzing the issue through the business leader - Venu Srinivasan, Emeritus Chairman of TVS Motor Company. Srinivasan and his team had to make difficult decisions, such as - Should TVS continue its investment in EV manufacturing and charging infrastructures, despite the poor return on investment? Should the company strike a balance between EV and traditional (Internal Combustion Engine) market investments, given the uncertainty surrounding long-term risks and market demand of EV? The paper will delve into these decision dilemmas that can enable business leaders to take bold and decisive actions, that could lead to emergence of sectoral climate leadership in the region.





LEVERAGING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR CROWD AND SECURITY MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF MAHA KUMBH

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Abstract

The Maha Kumbh Mela, held once every twelve years in India, is considered one of the largest peaceful human congregations in the world, often attracting over 100 million pilgrims. Managing such a massive event presents unique and complex challenges related to crowd control, public safety, emergency response, and infrastructure management. Traditional methods of surveillance and control fall short in addressing the real-time dynamics and unpredictability of such mega-events. This research investigates the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing crowd and security management at the Maha Kumbh Mela, aiming to drive significant social impact through intelligent, data-driven decision-making.

The study synthesizes case-based insights, available technological deployments, and simulations that integrate AI-powered surveillance (e.g., facial recognition, anomaly detection, predictive analytics), real-time drone monitoring, IoT sensors, and crowd density heat maps. Using these tools, authorities can forecast crowd surges, prevent stampedes, optimize resource allocation, and respond swiftly to emergencies.

Furthermore, the research emphasizes stakeholder coordination, ethical concerns, and infrastructural readiness as critical factors in successful AI deployment. The findings suggest that AI not only augments traditional safety measures but also introduces a proactive, preventive paradigm of managing high-density events, making it a potent tool for future public management strategies.

This case study contributes to the discourse on smart governance and public policy innovation, aligning closely with the conference theme of “Driving Social Impact through Management Research.” The paper advocates for a scalable, replicable model of AI-driven security applicable to large-scale events globally.





NARRATIVE ADVERTISING IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL STORYTELLING ON BRAND RECALL IN THE INDIAN MARKET

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of emotional engagement in narrative-driven advertisements (storytelling ads) compared to traditional product-focused advertisements on consumer memory. As digital marketing increasingly leverages social media platforms, understanding how narrative ads influence brand recall is critical for marketers aiming to create memorable consumer impressions (Escalas, 2004; Green & Brock, 2000). Storytelling ads, often integrating emotional narratives, aim to foster deeper consumer connections by resonating with personal or cultural experiences (Cohen, 2001; Till & Baack, 2005), whereas product-focused ads emphasize product features and benefits, primarily appealing to rational processing (Keller, 2003).

We hypothesize that storytelling ads will result in greater emotional engagement and better brand recall than product-focused ads. To test this hypothesis, we conducted an experiment with two groups of Indian social media users ($n = 436$). One group was exposed to narrative-driven ads incorporating emotional storytelling elements, while the other group viewed product-centric ads focused on product attributes. Participants' emotional engagement and brand recall were measured immediately post-exposure and again after 24 hours using recall tests, Likert-scale surveys assessing emotional responses, and validated emotional engagement questionnaires (Mandler, 1984; Schmitt, 1999).

Results indicated that participants exposed to storytelling ads exhibited significantly higher brand recall and emotional engagement than those who viewed product-focused ads. Specifically, storytelling ads led to a 25% increase in brand recall ($p < 0.05$) and a 30% higher emotional engagement score ($p < 0.01$) after 24 hours. These findings suggest that emotional storytelling is a more effective strategy for marketers seeking to enhance long-term memory retention and create strong brand impressions (Escalas, 2004; Woodside et al., 2008). This effect was especially pronounced in culturally diverse markets such as India, where personal and cultural narratives resonate deeply with consumers (Sharma & Jain, 2018). Our findings contribute to the growing body of literature on the role of emotion in advertising, highlighting the potential of narrative-driven ads to improve consumer memory and brand loyalty (Bruner, 1991; Kim et al., 2012).





DOES CARBON RISK AFFECT THE COST OF EQUITY? EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of carbon risk on the cost of equity in publicly traded companies in India. It examines the influence of financial constraints, information asymmetry, ownership concentration, and corporate governance on investor reactions to environmental risk. The study utilises two-stage least squares (2SLS) and system generalised method of moments (GMM) estimations to mitigate potential endogeneity and dynamic effects. The research identifies a positive correlation between carbon risk and equity cost in Indian companies. Companies with significant carbon exposure encounter elevated equity costs due to investor apprehensions regarding environmental and regulatory risks. This effect is more pronounced in financially constrained firms and those exhibiting poor disclosure quality. The concentration of ownership, especially significant promoter holdings, exacerbates the situation by diminishing incentives for environmental investment. Inadequate governance frameworks, characterized by minimal institutional ownership, a small board size, and restricted board independence, exacerbate this relationship. This study provides novel insights into the impact of carbon risk on equity financing in emerging markets. It emphasizes the interplay between financial, informational, and governance factors and environmental risks. The results provide significant insights for managers, investors, and policymakers seeking to improve sustainability, transparency, and capital accessibility.





"IDENTIFYING CRITICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF “SELECT” MNCs IN INDIA: A MULTI CRITERIA APPROACH"

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to identify and analyze factors influencing financial performance of selected multinational corporations (MNCs) in India. Given the complex business environment, a multi-criteria approach is required to evaluate key determinants such as H R Structure, Capital Structure, Cost Management, Operational Efficiency, Organizational Behavior etc. The study applies the Best Worst Method (BWM) to prioritize these factors and provide insights for corporate decision-making.

Design/ Methodology/Approach – The research adopts a quantitative approach, utilizing the Best Worst Method (BWM) to assess the relative importance of various financial performance factors. Primary data is collected from academic experts (Professors) and industry experts of selected MNCs through structured surveys. The BWM framework enables efficient weighting of criteria by determining the best (most important) and worst (least important) factors based on expert judgment.

Research Limitations and Implications – The findings will have practical implications for global companies and corporate leaders aiming to enhance efficiency and market success of MNCs in India. By understanding the importance of financial performance factors, organizations can allocate resources effectively. The study also aids in improving policies that support foreign investments and business sustainability.

Originality/Value - This research contributes to knowledge by employing BWM for MNC financial performance analysis in India. Unlike conventional methods, BWM provides structured assessment that minimizes inconsistencies in weights. The study enhances decision-making for industries and policymakers, valuable for academic and corporate applications.





CHALLENGES OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN STEEL INDUSTRY: A DEMATEL APPROACH

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Abstract

The transition to a circular economy (CE) within the Indian steel industry presents numerous challenges, particularly due to its resource-intensive nature and high environmental impact. This study employs the Decision-Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory (DEMATEL) methodology to identify and analyze cause-effect relationships among key challenges that affect CE implementation in the sector. Eight critical challenges were identified through expert consultation. After applying DEMATEL to challenges categorized in cause and effect analysis, it finds rankings for them. The analysis revealed that 'carbon footprint' and 'complex supply chains' are dominant driving (cause) factors, exerting significant influence on other challenges. Conversely, 'Lack of technology and innovation' and 'High Energy Consumption' were identified as dependent (effect) challenges, primarily influenced by the cause group.

These findings highlight the critical need for targeted interventions addressing the root causes to effectively adopt CE. Prioritizing circular economy practices could catalyze systemic improvements in the steel industry. The results offer valuable insights for policymakers and industry leaders to design informed strategies that foster sustainable and circular practices in India's steel sector, contributing toward long-term environmental and economic resilience.





THE KIN & KEN PLAYBOOK: ALIGNING INVENTORY MANAGEMENT AND CVP ANALYSIS FOR CAFÉ EXPANSION

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Abstract

The restaurant Kin & Ken (KK), started by three University graduates in 2023, is located within the beautifully sprawling new campus of XIM University, Bhubaneswar, the temple city of Odisha. KK was conceived not as an ordinary restaurant cafe but as a vibrant hub crafted to elevate the dining experience for students across colleges and universities all over India. The idea was to create an inviting atmosphere where students could kick back, socialize, and indulge in the joy of good food with a space designed for productivity. With a modest investment of INR 30,00,000, the restaurant started to break even by the end of FY 2025. While business was growing rapidly, concerns about inventory management were bothering the young students. Issues relating to longer procurement cycles, growing inventory carrying costs, and wastage of perishables in the kitchen were increasing the overall operating costs. Competition was getting tough, and it was becoming challenging to maintain low prices in times of escalating costs. Around the same time, an option to set up the second outlet in XIMB (old campus) looked very appealing and lucrative. Against this backdrop, this case study has been prepared to deal with existing inventory management issues and apply the Cost-Volume-Profit (CVP) analysis to evaluate the feasibility of the second outlet on the old campus.





A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING A UNIVERSAL MODEL OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES IN AGILE ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract

The dynamic nature of agile organizations demands a comprehensive and universally applicable framework for performance evaluation and management. Agile projects are fundamentally driven by cost, time, and customer satisfaction, yet existing research provides limited guidance on standardized models to measure and enhance agile teams' capabilities. Prior studies employing mixed-methods approaches have contributed valuable insights but lack depth and applicability, leaving a gap in establishing a structured, adaptable performance management system. This research seeks to develop a theoretical framework incorporating cultural elements, competencies, and attributes that shape the effectiveness of performance evaluation and management in agile environments. Since software development projects using agile methodologies depend heavily on human capital, identifying critical success factors for an optimal performance management process is essential. This study draws from an extensive literature review and empirical analysis of global and multinational IT organizations practicing agile, validated through both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Performance appraisal theories and methodologies have evolved in response to changing work environments, necessitating an effective model for evaluating individual performance in agile settings. Given the transformational shift from traditional work structures to agile frameworks, there is limited literature available on agile-specific performance evaluation models, reinforcing the need for further research. This study aims to address a key gap in performance evaluation in agile environments by investigating whether existing evaluation processes remain effective when work methodologies change. The research is driven by the two hypotheses first the annual performance management system in agile organizations is ineffective in its current form and second to enhance performance management effectiveness in agile organizations, specific key factors must be identified and improved. These hypotheses stem from two fundamental research questions: how effective was annual individual performance management when applied to an agile work environment, and what adaptations could be made to the performance appraisal process to align with agile work methodologies? Although this empirical study focuses on an Information Technology (IT) product company in India, with over 100 respondents, its findings highlight universal challenges in agile performance management. Insights from this research contribute to validating the need for an improved framework that better aligns with agile workflows. The limited availability of research in this domain—possibly due to agile practices being relatively new—reinforces the importance of expanding scholarly investigation in this field. The findings and outcomes serve as a comprehensive guide to design more robust Agile Performance Management Systems and processes, offering key attributes and competencies that empower agile teams to maximize productivity, engagement, and project success. Designed with continuous improvement mechanisms, the model ensures that agile teams adapt to evolving organizational needs while maintaining long-term





effectiveness. By bridging the existing knowledge gap, this research establishes a scalable, adaptable, and universally applicable framework for performance management in agile organizations.





A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON BOOSTING MARKETING STRATEGIES OF ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMPTION IN WESTERN INDIA: AN AI-POWERED APPROACH.

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Abstract

Purpose: This research explores how artificial intelligence (AI) can help people in Western India choose organic foods more often. Studies have shown that many people hesitate to choose organic because of price, availability, and simply not knowing enough about it (Smith & Jones, 2023).

Design/ methodology approach -The research method used was phenomenology to learn how people in Western India feel about organic food. Research was conducted on 255 people based on non-random sampling methods by group discussions and online surveys to understand their experiences, beliefs, and what motivates them to choose food.

Findings- confirmed that price, availability, and lack of information are barriers. However, it was also observed how AI can help overcome these challenges, like targeted ads, personalized content, and working with influencers to get the word out about the benefits of organic food. It can also use chatbots to solve consumer queries.

Practical Implications- AI-driven marketing can help businesses understand each customer's preferences and suggest specific organic products they might like. It can also create personalized offers and rewards to keep customers coming back. **Streamlining the Process:** AI can make things smoother for businesses by predicting demand, finding the most efficient delivery routes, and using technology like blockchain to ensure the quality and origin of organic products.

Originality/Value- By using AI, a less-tried technology in organic food consumption, businesses can make organic food more appealing to people, address their concerns, and create a thriving market for organic products.





MINIMALISM IN CONSUMPTION: THE TUG-OF-WAR BETWEEN CONSCIENTIOUSNESS AND MATERIALISM

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Abstract

As consumerism increasingly defines contemporary lifestyles, it promotes endless material acquisition, which often leads to environmental degradation, resource depletion, elevated waste production, and increased carbon emissions on a societal level and mental exhaustion, heightened stress, and anxiety on an individual level (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2023). Minimalism (Wilson & Bellezza, 2022), as a consumption lifestyle, emerges as a compelling alternative to this consumerist culture. This research investigates the impact of a personality trait, i.e. conscientiousness, on consumer minimalism. This research also introduces materialism as a moderator in this relationship, using a robust mixed-method design. In the first phase, the study employs in-depth qualitative interviews (Study 1) to provide richer contextual insights of the key variables of interest. In the second phase of the study, researchers tested and validated the proposed conceptual framework derived from study 1. Using thematic analysis, Study 1 identified 6 key themes, providing a deeper understanding of the key variables. The findings from Study 2 indicated that conscientiousness significantly influences minimalist behaviour, and materialism negatively moderates this association. This study extends the literature on minimalism by introducing a personality trait as an antecedent of it. Together, these findings elucidate the multifaceted psychological dimensions shaping minimalist practices, offering valuable implications for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers striving to promote sustainable consumption behaviours.





SUSTAINABILITY VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS OF THE MILLETS CLUSTER IN NORTH COASTAL ANDHRA PRADESH: APPLICATION OF THE HOTSPOTS METHODOLOGY

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Abstract

Milletts have been a dietary staple for millennia because of their nutritional value and adaptability in stressed conditions. However, Green Revolution policies ignored millets and exacerbated poverty in rainfed-regions, where most of India's farmers reside. Malnutrition and climate-change risks necessitated major policy changes to revitalize millets. In North-Coastal Andhra, several initiatives were launched, including promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations by tribal women, thereby making the millet chain cooperative-centric. Majority of value-chain studies globally focus on vertical dimensions (economic and institutional) of the chain; minor few analyze the horizontal dimensions (environmental and social). Historically, resilient-crops and hilly-regions were overlooked in cooperative, value chain and academic discourse. This study adopting a novel methodology, bridges these shortcomings and addresses specific research gaps identified through an exploratory study[1].

Robust chains are necessary to support India's ambitious plans for the millet sector. Value Chain Analysis including cluster-mapping, stakeholder assessment (FPOs and traders) and end-market study (consumer behavior in relation to local and sustainable food) is done to inform chain upgradation strategies. Certain practices (viz., cultivating millets in input-intensive rice fallows raise sustainability concerns) highlight the need for Sustainable Value Chain Analysis (SVCA). Most SVCA methodologies do not analyze both environmental and social dimensions, are very resource intensive and not applicable for agri-food chains. Therefore, Sustainability Hotspots Analysis methodology is considered to identify the environmental and social impacts within the lifecycle, and its proven applicability in different chains. This research aligns with twelve SDGs and gains additional relevance with 2025 being designated as the International Year of Cooperatives.





GEN Z'S GREEN FOOTPRINT: NUDGING SUSTAINABLE FASHION CONSUMPTION INTENTIONS

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Abstract

Purpose- This study intends to understand sustainable fashion consumption intentions (SFCI) of Gen Z by combining norm activation model (NAM) and theory of planned behavior (TPB) with three critical factors viz., sustainability literacy (SL), climate change awareness (CCA) and social media use (SMU). By exploring the dynamic interactions among these constructs, this research offers valuable insights into the psychological and social drivers shaping Gen Z's sustainable fashion choices.

Design/methodology/approach- This study adopts a quantitative methodology, grounded in an established theoretical framework. The data was collected using an online survey from Gen Z Instagram users using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. To test the proposed hypotheses and model, a two-stage approach to structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed.

Findings- Empirical findings strongly validate the theoretical foundations of NAM and TPB, with eight out of nine proposed hypotheses being supported. Among the key determinants, CCA and SMU emerged as the most influential drivers of Gen Z's SFCI. In contrast, the expected impact of perceived behavioral control on SFCI was found to be insignificant, challenging conventional assumptions in behavioral research.

Originality/value- This study employs NAM and TPB with the combination of three unique variables (SL, CCA and SMU) to develop a model elucidating the sustainable consumption intention of Gen Z aligning with the responsible consumption and production" (SDG 12) as part of sustainable development goals (SDGs).





IMPACT OF JAY CUSTOMER ON SERVICE EMPLOYEE: A STUDY OF INDIAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The human element is imperative factors for building service quality & competitive advantages, in every service sector. However, the operating environment of these industries is very complicated. The current study has investigated the impact of jay customer on frontline service employees working in Indian hospitality industry. The research investigates the mediating role of surface acting and burnout between jay customer and customer orientation employee retaliation and intention to quit. Data was collected via questionnaire from 381 frontline employees. The research model was tested via structural equation modelling. Findings indicated that jay customers negatively affect customer orientation behaviour and leads to intention to quit the organization and increases the feeling of employee retaliation. Moreover, surface acting and dimension of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. Further research conducted interviews with different employees and manager to validate the finding. Based on the findings, theoretical contributions and suggestions for practitioners are presented.





SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE OF SUSTAINABILITY: ENCOURAGING REDUCTION IN FAST FASHION CONSUMPTION

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Abstract

The fast fashion industry, primarily driven by Millennials and Gen Z, contributes a substantial amount of environmental waste each year. Excessive consumption of clothing products from fast fashion brands such as Zara, Shein, and H&M create serious environmental threats due to short product lifecycles and high disposal rates. Reducing such consumption requires active participation from consumers, and advertising messages may serve as a powerful tool to enhance consumer involvement by increasing awareness of the environmental consequences associated with fast fashion brands.

To promote fast fashion consumers' positive intentions to reduce clothing consumption, this study proposes effective communication strategies by analysing the relative persuasiveness of language framing (native versus foreign) and the mediating role of consumer value orientations (bio-altruistic versus egoistic). By incorporating the emotional and cognitive engagement mechanisms activated through language use, this study further investigates how these communication tactics can be operationalized to drive sustainable consumption behaviour and reduce clothing consumption.

Specifically, the proposed results reveal that advertisements delivered in a consumer's native language can enhance emotional engagement among individuals with bio-altruistic values, encouraging deeper affective connections with sustainability goals. In contrast, foreign-language advertisements can reduce emotional bias and trigger cognitive engagement among consumers with egoistic values, enabling them to perceive lower behavioral and monetary costs and thereby promoting rational, sustainability-oriented decision-making. The mediation effects of value orientation on language framing provide new insights into designing sustainable advertising messages that appeal to diverse consumer segments.





NOT REAL, YET INFLUENTIAL: THE IMPACT OF VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS ON ONLINE SHOPPING INTENTIONS

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Abstract

Virtual influencers are rapidly reshaping the social media landscape, rising to prominence with surprising speed and influence. These computer-generated personas, designed with stunning realism and captivating personalities, are blurring the boundaries between the virtual and the real. Their growing presence is hard to ignore—a 2022 survey by the Influencer Marketing Factory revealed that 58% of respondents follow at least one virtual influencer. As they continue to captivate audiences worldwide, their impact on digital marketing is becoming undeniable. Market research firm KBV Research projects that the virtual influencer market could soar to \$37.8 billion by 2030, highlighting their significant role in the future of branding and consumer engagement.

For brands navigating the demands of scale, consistency, and global reach, virtual influencers offer a compelling solution. Unlike their human counterparts, these AI-driven personas can operate around the clock, transcend language barriers, and maintain a constant presence across multiple platforms—all without the limitations of time zones or physical boundaries. From a financial perspective, they also present a cost-effective alternative. According to Gartner, replacing human influencers with AI-powered counterparts can reduce campaign costs by up to 30%, eliminating expenses related to talent fees, travel, and logistics. This makes virtual influencers particularly attractive to large-scale brands seeking continuous, seamless audience engagement. This study aims to explore how virtual influencers impact customers' online shopping intentions, shedding light on their growing significance in the digital consumer journey.

Smart PLS was used to build the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to evaluate the influence of perceived media richness, perceived personalization and perceived trust on online shopping intention of customers. It was found that Virtual Influencers have a significant influence on the Online Shopping intentions of customers. The resulting model offers valuable insights for senior executives and managers in the e-commerce and retail sectors, helping them understand how virtual influencers' brand promotion videos impact online shopping behaviour. The outcome of the research is of great use to senior executives and managers in the e-commerce and retail sectors who intend to use virtual influencers to promote their brand.





BRANDING THROUGH MULTI-MODALITY: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF APPLE'S IPHONE MARKETING

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Abstract

This study explores the persuasive marketing strategies employed by Apple Inc. in promoting the iPhone on its official website through the lens of Multi-modal Discourse Analysis (MDA). Drawing on social semiotic theory, the study utilizes five core modalities—linguistic, visual, gestural, audio, and spatial to uncover how meaning is constructed and persuasion is achieved. The research uncovers how multi-modal elements work synergistically to evoke emotion, highlight technological innovation, and reinforce brand identity. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of how multi-modal strategies in digital marketing function persuasively to influence consumer behaviour and sustain brand loyalty. Findings indicate that Apple's multi-modal strategies work cohesively to construct a persuasive digital experience that reinforces brand identity, elicits consumer desire, and positions the iPhone as a lifestyle icon. This analysis contributes to the growing body of research on digital marketing and multi-modal communication in corporate branding.





TRANSLATING VISION INTO VALUE: A SUSTAINABLE PROJECT LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE PROJECT SUCCESS

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Abstract

Despite the growing global emphasis on sustainability, far too many project management techniques prioritize immediate gains over long-term, social, and environmental value. The absence of sustainability in both project leadership and project performance leads to inconsistent priorities, vulnerable stakeholder trust, fragmented team motivation, and minimal long-term effect, ultimately holding back sustainable project success (SPS).

To overcome these systemic shortcomings, this research relies on social identity theory, leader-member exchange theory, and the natural resource-based view (NRBV) to develop a project-based conceptual framework. We propose that sustainable project leadership (SPL) characterized by ethical behaviour, long-term foresight, and inclusivity can have substantial influence on SPS when implemented through two key mediators: project identification (PI) and sustainable project citizenship behaviour (SPCB).

SPL encourages project team members' emotional connection with project ideals, which leads to voluntary, long-term behaviour's such as resource conservation, ethical team conduct, and going beyond role expectations, all of which instil sustainability in project outcomes. Also, Projects can succeed on the ESG levels when PI and SPCB act as the behavioural pathways that translate leadership intention into tangible outcomes.

By placing "sustainable leadership" in project contexts, this theoretical framework contributes to the ongoing discussion about adding another pillar to the field of leadership. This framework will give organizations a way to align their project management practices with the United Nations SDGs and the broader agenda of socially responsible leadership.





MEDICAL TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON ECONOMIC GROWTH – EVIDENCE FROM SOUTH-EAST ASIA

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Abstract

South- East Asia has emerged as a major hub of medical tourism in recent years, especially in the post-pandemic era, owing to the region's low exchange rate and affordable healthcare facilities. However, despite contributing to a nation's medical revenue, a spurt in medical tourism could also have potentially detrimental effects for the economic growth of host countries. With private players gaining an increasing share in the medical tourism sector, public healthcare facilities could be crowded out, leading to a decline in labour productivity in the public healthcare sector. This would in turn dampen the positive impacts that medical tourism has on the host country's economic growth. This article empirically investigates the overall impact of an expanding medical sector on the host country's welfare, by accounting for the possible decline in workers' productivity. Our results suggest that medical tourism, on average, leads to a rise in the host nation's economic growth. However, the economic contribution of medical tourism to a host country's annual output growth rate is overestimated by an average of 6.4% if we fail to account for the negative impacts that a growing medical tourism dominated by private firms has on labour productivity in public medical facilities.





IMPACT OF E-GOVERNANCE ON SERVICE QUALITY IN INDIAN TECHNICAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of electronic governance (e-governance) on service quality perceived by students in Indian Technical Higher Education Institutions (THEIs) within the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), which emphasizes inclusive and equitable quality education for national educational transformation. As Indian THEIs digitize core academic and administrative processes, understanding how e-governance affects service delivery in technical higher education is vital for policy formulation and institutional growth. Despite substantial initiatives and investments in digital infrastructure across Indian higher education, limited empirical research exists on how e-governance affects service quality as experienced key stakeholders, particularly students. Employing a quantitative design, 500 students were surveyed from 50 public and private institutions across India and selected through stratified random sampling using a structured online questionnaire. The validated multidimensional SERVQUAL model was adapted to measure service quality across five RATER dimensions- reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness. Findings reveal that e-governance implementation improves the overall service quality of THEIs, with the most potent improvements in reliability and responsiveness dimensions. Findings affirm e-governance contribution to SDG4 targets. However, regional, institutional, and socioeconomic disparities are observed, which affect equitable access. Institutions with comprehensive e-governance ecosystems report higher levels of student satisfaction. These findings provide actionable insights for policymakers, administrators, and educators to leverage e-governance to advance National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 goals and SDG 4 targets. The study can also guide similar efforts to improve educational quality in other developing nations.





WORK CONDITIONS AND EMPLOYER SUPPORT - PERSPECTIVES FROM INDIAN COMMERCIAL DRIVERS

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Abstract

We present a comprehensive overview of the working conditions, challenges, and support systems affecting Indian commercial truck drivers. It draws upon survey data and qualitative insights from 15 truck drivers engaged in long-distance trucking to highlight the multifaceted issues impacting this critical workforce, ranging from contractual ambiguities and occupational hardships to inadequate insurance coverage and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study reveals significant disparities in employment arrangements. While some drivers experience stable relationships with firms, complete with performance-based incentives, many operate under informal, per-job agreements characterised by a lack of regulation and financial insecurity. This informality leads to drawbacks such as limited benefits, difficulties in accessing medical care (particularly during nighttime travel), and income fluctuations that complicate drivers' livelihoods. Day-to-day challenges include systemic issues like corruption at city entry points, long and unregulated working hours (often exceeding legal limits), stagnant wages despite inflation, and deductions for absences. Infrastructure deficiencies such as traffic congestion, excessive toll booths, and a lack of dedicated transport lanes exacerbate these problems. Older drivers face mental health struggles stemming from isolation and exhaustion. A critical area of concern is the lack of structured training and certification programmes in the industry. Drivers' skillsets are primarily assessed based on experience rather than formal qualifications, resulting in a skills gap and reliance on informal training methods. This creates vulnerabilities, particularly when handling specialised cargo. Many drivers invest personal funds in training for passenger bus services, perceived as more stable. Insurance coverage for truck drivers is strikingly inadequate. While cargo is typically insured, drivers are often excluded from mandatory health or accident coverage, leaving them vulnerable during emergencies. This gap persists despite the expansion of social security schemes for other gig workers. Drivers often rely on personal savings or self-funded insurance, straining their limited resources. The absence of affordable, driver-specific insurance contributes to financial instability.

The study also examines facilities provided by companies. While some employers offer occasional support like bonuses, safety gear, or food supplies, these remain inconsistent. Drivers lack proper channels to voice concerns to management, and increased competition has further reduced wages. Despite improvements in highway security, drivers still lack adequate institutional support. Suggestions for improvement include regulated duty shifts, proper parking facilities, better communication tools, and government-supported registration processes. Drivers also call for affordable housing near freight hubs, improved bottleneck management, and access to clean amenities at petrol pumps. They demand specialised insurance schemes, stronger legal protection against road blockades, and regular government feedback sessions. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and amplified the existing vulnerabilities in the





trucking sector. Drivers faced financial instability, operational chaos, and mental health challenges. Many reported inadequate support from employers and had to rely on personal savings or loans. The crisis accelerated job mobility as drivers sought more stable positions. The study underscores the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to address the systemic issues affecting Indian truck drivers. These reforms should include clearer contractual terms, improved working conditions, accessible healthcare, enhanced training, and adequate insurance coverage.





QUANTIFYING EXECUTIVE OVERCONFIDENCE: THE HUBRIS QUOTIENT AND ITS EFFECT ON FIRM PERFORMANCE IN INDIA

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Abstract

Purpose: This study explores the impact of CEO hubris on firm performance in India, offering a nuanced view that challenges the predominantly negative perception of overconfident leadership. We introduce the Hubris Quotient (HQ), a new metric designed to capture the multidimensional traits of CEO hubris. The study argues that hubris exerts a non-linear influence: while moderate levels may foster bold, innovative decisions, excessive hubris can undermine long-term performance.

Study design/methodology/approach: Drawing on data from 105 consistently listed large Indian firms between 2012 and 2022, we construct the HQ using indicators such as tenure, role duality, promoter status, compensation, and symbolic self-enhancement. Panel regression models assess the relationship between HQ and financial outcomes, including Tobin's Q and ROA.

Findings: Our results confirm a curvilinear relationship between CEO hubris and firm performance. Moderate hubris appears beneficial, promoting calculated risk-taking, while extreme hubris correlates with value erosion. This duality highlights the importance of balanced executive traits in complex market environments.

Originality/value: This study contributes a novel quantitative tool—the HQ—for assessing executive behavior in emerging economies. It also enhances understanding of how institutional and cultural factors shape CEO impact on firm value.

Research limitations/implications: As a firm-level study, it does not directly capture psychological assessments of CEOs. Future research could integrate behavioral experiments or survey-based validations.

Practical implications: Boards can use the HQ to flag potential governance risks and inform CEO selection or oversight.

Social implications: Findings underscore the societal value of transparent, accountable leadership in shaping sustainable corporate.





DRIVERS AND BARRIERS TO FINTECH ADOPTION: QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS FROM TRIBAL WOMEN-LED SHGS IN ODISHA

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Abstract

FinTech holds transformative potential for rural financial inclusion, yet its adoption among tribal women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) remains uneven and under-theorized. This qualitative study investigates the drivers and barriers of FinTech adoption in Sundergarh, Kalahandi, and Koraput districts of Odisha, aiming to uncover how social, cultural, and infrastructural factors influence adoption outcomes. Grounded in the constructivist grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) and using 7 in-depth interviews and field-based participant observations, the study applies thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to interpret community narratives. Five prominent drivers emerged: (1) Peer-led learning through SHGs, (2) Increased mobile phone access, (3) Trust in government-backed FinTech schemes, (4) Basic digital literacy through NGO interventions, and (5) Perceived convenience for money transfers and savings. Conversely, key barriers included: (1) Fear of online fraud and financial loss, (2) Low confidence in using apps independently, (3) Language barriers due to non-local interfaces, (4) Patchy network connectivity, (5) Male gatekeeping in digital access, (6) limited awareness of app features, and (7) Absence of personalized support or handholding. The study uniquely combines verbatim insights with direct observation to reflect lived realities. It confirms prior literature (Agarwal & Kaur, 2022; RBI, 2022) while adding new evidence on the sociotechnical constraints faced by tribal women. Though bounded by location and time, the findings offer actionable implications for SHG facilitators, FinTech developers, and rural policymakers. The study concludes that FinTech alone cannot empower unless it is socially embedded, linguistically inclusive, and trust-driven.





GENERATIVE AI IN PREDICTIVE MARKETING AND DYNAMIC PRICING: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS FOR E-COMMERCE AND MSMES

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Abstract

The adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in marketing and pricing activities has proven to be a game-changing force in contemporary commerce. Its fast take-up in large businesses notwithstanding, its utilization in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), especially those undergoing e-commerce transformations, is unexplored territory in extant research. This research fills that void by exploring how GenAI is being developed as applied to predictive marketing and dynamic pricing, focusing on the implications for MSMEs and digital retail ecosystems. Utilizing a bibliometric method, this article examines a handpicked set of publications from Scopus indexed between 2003 and 2025. Twelve advanced search queries were built to encompass the multi-dimensional intersections among GenAI, predictive analytics, dynamic pricing, marketing strategies, and MSME relevance. VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, RStudio, and Python were utilized to perform keyword co-occurrence, citation analysis, co-authorship mapping, and thematic clustering. Early results show intense scholarly interest in topics such as "machine learning," "personalization," and "predictive analytics," with themes relating specifically to "dynamic pricing" and "MSME" use sparser. This reflects an emerging but scattered research environment within which pricing innovation and small business adjustment have not yet fully developed in academic thinking. The research adds to the growing literature on AI-in-business by charting existing trends, pinpointing weaknesses, and suggesting a future-oriented research agenda. It further provides strategic recommendations for policy makers, scholars, and MSME stakeholders who aim to leverage GenAI for market competitiveness in digital platforms.



DOES FINANCIAL RISK TOLERANCE AND INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL MATTER IN FINANCIAL WELL-BEING? AN EMPIRICAL STUDY USING A DUAL-STAGED SEM-ANN APPROACH

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Abstract

In the context of a rapidly evolving and uncertain economic environment, financial well-being (FWB) has emerged as a crucial dimension for financial stability and the overall quality of life of young adults. Considering this issue, the study aims to investigate the impact of financial attitude (FA), financial literacy (FL), financial socialization (FS), and the mediating effect of financial risk tolerance (FRT) and internal locus of control (ILC) on FWB. To achieve these objectives, the study used structural equation modelling (SEM) and artificial neural network (ANN), a deep machine learning-based technique that uncovers the complex and non-linear relationships within the theoretical framework. Moreover, this study uses importance-performance map analysis (IPMA) to assess the importance and performance of key factors. The responses were collected from 413 Indian young adults using a questionnaire-based survey method through purposive sampling. The findings of this study reveal that FL has a significant positive impact on FWB of young adults. The striking result of our study is that FA negatively impacts the FWB. Further, the result of mediation analysis indicates, ILC significantly mediates the hypothesized relationships between FWB and all its antecedents. However, FRT only mediates the relationships between FWB and its antecedents, especially FL and FS. Consequently, the study identifies FRT, ILC, and FL as key predictors of FWB, which are also validated through the ANN and IPMA analyses. These results provide practical implications for policymakers and financial advisors to frame targeted strategies for enhancing the financial well-being of young adults.



ALGORITHMIC IRON CAGE: AUTONOMY, CONTROL AND COLLECTIVE VOICE IN PLATFORM WORK

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Abstract

Purpose: With the growing integration of digital platforms into the labour market, algorithmic management has become a central organising force in the gig economy. This study systematically reviews existing research to examine how algorithmic control shapes worker autonomy, restructures power dynamics, and fosters emergent forms of collective agency. The objective is to synthesise key insights and identify critical gaps in the literature to guide future inquiry.

Design/methodology/approach: Following the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, this review analyses 62 peer-reviewed articles published between 2010 and 2025, selected through rigorous inclusion criteria across disciplines such as management, labour studies, and information systems. A thematic analysis framework is employed to explore the interrelations between algorithmic systems, autonomy, control, and worker resistance in various gig work contexts.

Findings: The review highlights an autonomy–control paradox: while platforms promote flexibility and entrepreneurial independence, algorithmic tools governing task distribution, scheduling, and performance monitoring often constrain autonomy and reinforce top-down control. Despite these constraints, gig workers are developing new forms of collective agency through digital communities, shared resistance strategies, and informal knowledge networks to reclaim power and negotiate algorithmic oversight. Institutional, legal, and geographic factors significantly mediate these dynamics. Notably, research gaps persist in areas such as the intersectional impact of algorithmic bias, global variations in worker mobilisation, and the sustained effectiveness of regulatory interventions.

Originality/value: This review departs from technology-centric analyses by foregrounding the lived experiences of gig workers. It contributes an integrated framework to inform future research, platform governance, and policy aimed at fostering fairer and more dignified conditions in the digital labour economy.





CLIMATE FINANCING AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

Climate finance has emerged as a critical enabler in the global transition toward a sustainable, low-carbon future, particularly for developing countries like India, which face the dual challenge of economic development and environmental sustainability. In alignment with the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), India has made ambitious commitments through its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which require substantial financial resources estimated at over USD 2.5 trillion by 2030. The study aims to understand the importance of climate financing for a sustainable environment and identify the Climate Financing Strategy in India, emphasizing the need for a robust institutional framework, enhanced public-private partnerships, and integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) metrics in financial decision-making. The present study is purely descriptive, and secondary data have been used to support the understanding and show the trend of a particular phenomenon. The last 10 years of data have been considered for this study, as India adopted the NDC in October 2015. The study finds that current efforts include mobilizing domestic resources through green bonds and budgetary support, as well as leveraging international finance via bilateral and multilateral platforms. A key emerging trend is the exploration of innovative instruments such as blended finance, outcome-based financing, and carbon markets to bridge the financing gap. The study emphasizes the importance of a robust institutional framework, enhanced regulatory oversight, and capacity building. Strengthening climate finance is vital not only for India's national sustainability goals but also for advancing equitable global climate action.





OPTIMIZING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN INDIAN SMART CITIES: A MULTI-LEVEL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

This research explores the pivotal role of citizen engagement in the successful implementation of smart city initiatives in India, addressing critical challenges of urban liveability and sustainability. As Indian cities rapidly urbanize, integrating citizen participation into governance has become vital for fostering inclusive, transparent, and responsive urban development. Despite national efforts, existing engagement practices often lack a cohesive framework that accommodates India's diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts. This study proposes a multi-level conceptual framework grounded in Public Value Theory (PVT) and Social Capital Theory (SCT), emphasizing citizen engagement at individual, societal, and city levels.

The framework incorporates insights from PVT, which highlights the role of public institutions in creating citizen-centric governance through strategic value creation, and SCT, which underscores the role of trust, social networks, and civic associations in promoting grassroots participation. Together, these perspectives offer a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms driving citizen involvement in urban governance. While PVT focuses on institutional strategies and public policy alignment, SCT provides depth in analyzing the informal social dynamics that foster community cooperation. The study reconciles the divergence between the two theories by advocating for a balanced approach that leverages both formal governance structures and robust social capital.

A Delphi study was conducted with six domain experts to validate the framework's relevance, clarity, and alignment with Indian urban governance. The results reveal moderate to strong support for the model, with constructive feedback regarding the need for improved policy alignment and clearer antecedent definitions.

Policy implications span across three levels: at the individual level, emphasis is placed on skill development and motivational incentives; at the societal level, strategies include community building and civic education; and at the city level, digital literacy and municipal capacity building are critical. Although the model presents limitations—such as potential oversights of local diversity and overreliance on digital platforms—it holds strong potential for empirical application and refinement. Future research should further investigate the intersection of digital technologies, social capital, and public value in enhancing citizen engagement. The proposed framework offers a strategic pathway toward inclusive urban governance in India's smart city ecosystem.





QUIET QUITTING: EMERGING EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND THEIR IMPACT ON INDUSTRY

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Abstract

In recent years, the phenomenon of Quiet Quitting has reshaped traditional employment dynamics, signaling a profound shift in workplace engagement and organizational expectations. Rather than outright resignation, quiet quitting reflects employees' disengagement from non-essential tasks, limiting their efforts to the bare minimum required by their roles. This trend, driven by evolving work-life balance priorities, generational workforce preferences, and the growing emphasis on mental well-being, has profound implications for businesses worldwide.

This research examines the root causes of quiet quitting, including workplace dissatisfaction, lack of career progression, and changing employee values. It further analyzes its impact on productivity, talent retention, and overall business performance across various industries. As quiet quitting challenges conventional models of employee engagement, organizations must adopt innovative HR strategies to foster motivation, enhance job satisfaction, and realign performance expectations in a rapidly evolving labor market.

This study integrates psychological, economic, and managerial perspectives through an interdisciplinary approach, providing empirical insights and strategic recommendations for business leaders, HR professionals, and policymakers. By addressing the structural and cultural factors contributing to quiet quitting, organizations can mitigate its adverse effects and cultivate a more engaged, resilient, and high-performing workforce.





A MEDIATED-MODERATED MODEL WITH JOB HAPPINESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: SPIRITUALITY AT WORK AND PRODUCTIVITY AT PLAY

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Abstract

In the contemporary corporate environment, workplace spirituality has become a crucial element affecting employee well-being and persistent performance. This study investigates the complex interplay between workplace spirituality and employee productivity, with job happiness serving as a mediating factor and organizational culture as a moderating variable. This research employs theories of intrinsic motivation, affective commitment, and cultural alignment to develop and empirically assess a mediated-moderated model that explains the mechanism via which spiritual beliefs convert into productive professional behaviours in the workplace. A quantitative, cross-sectional study method was employed, collecting data from a purposive sample of 100 full-time employees across various industries in India. Standardized psychometric instruments were utilized to evaluate workplace spirituality, job happiness, organizational culture, and self-reported productivity. Statistical analysis was conducted using PROCESS Macro for SPSS (Model 7) to investigate mediation and moderation effects. The results suggest that job happiness somewhat mediates the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee productivity. Furthermore, organizational culture significantly impacts the correlation between spirituality and job happiness, suggesting that a supportive and values-driven culture amplifies the positive effects of spirituality in the workplace. These findings highlight the critical impact of organizational culture on the efficacy of spiritual activities within organizations. This study enriches the current literature on positive organizational culture by offering empirical evidence for the conditional value of workplace spirituality. It provides pragmatic insights for HR professionals and organizational leaders seeking to foster meaningful work experiences and enhance performance outcomes through culturally attuned, spiritually inclusive policies.





A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF HRD AUDIT ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN HEALTH CARE SECTOR DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOME SELECTED HOSPITALS IN WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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Abstract

This study seeks to explore HRD Audits in hospitals and healthcare sectors in a new normal condition to find the effectiveness on Hospitals' performance at a critical Covid-19 situation to limit highly contagious diseases, which develops into a pandemic scenario mandating physical distance and eventually, a national lockdown. An audit can identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of various functions in an organization (Rao, 2012). During COVID-19, the hospitals and the health sectors were facing huge pressures. The normal duties of the doctors, nurses and hospital staff are affected immensely during lockdown phases. The organisational performance and excellence of HRD got immensely affected during this period. That is the reason why the HRD audit can help an organisation to achieve the best results in terms of organizational performance.

Primary data with a sample size of 350 (n=350) was collected from four tertiary category hospitals in Paschim Bardhaman District, mainly in the Durgapur area of West Bengal, India, from a specific Indian demographic section.

This qualitative study considers three hypotheses on the HRD audit on employee turnover and organisational performance. The study utilizes the exploratory research methodology. The research design includes the explanation of the population for which the research is carried out, followed by sampling techniques, sample size, data collection and description of variables used for this study. The study uses Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) for data analysis.

According to the findings of this study, HRD Audit has shown that human resource development (HRD) significantly impacts employee turnover (voluntary or involuntary, except for internal transfer or retirement) and organisational performance at some specific tertiary category hospitals during this critical time.





MARKETS FOR MISSION: INSTITUTIONALIZING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FINANCE THROUGH INDIA' SSE

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Abstract

India is home to an estimated 2 million social enterprises, making it one of the largest ecosystems for mission-driven businesses globally (World Economic Forum, 2024). Operating across diverse sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and renewable energy, these enterprises significantly alleviate the inequalities and promote sustainable development. However, these enterprises face significant challenges in scaling the impact due to the lack of resources to sustain the operations. Addressing this financing gap, India launched its first Social Stock Exchange (SSE), bringing formal capital markets within the reach of social enterprises. The setting up of such an institutional mechanism marks a pioneering effort towards integrating impact driven businesses into formal financial structures in an emerging economy. The emergence of SSE presents a huge potential for such enterprises to access private capital via institutional support, while increasing the credibility among the investors. Yet, the question of how effective are SSEs in bridging the financing gap for mission driven businesses remain unanswered. Extant literature on social finance primarily focuses on impact investing, venture philanthropy and crowdfunding (Nicholls, 2010; Ormiston et al., 2015), with limited insights on the perception and usage of SSE as financing mechanism. Furthermore, research with respect to the role of legitimacy in financing of social enterprises (Tracey et al., 2011) lacks empirical evidence on how formal institutional mechanism like SSE contribute towards legitimacy building process. Using a qualitative research approach grounded in institutional theory (Scott, 1995), this study explores the motivations, challenges, and strategic adaptations of social enterprises engaging with SSE.





AI-DRIVEN VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS: SHAPING THE TRAVELERS' DESTINATION CHOICES

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Abstract

AI-Driven Virtual Influencers: Shaping the Travelers' Destination Choices Virtual influencers (VIFL) have shown a significant shift in the social media marketing landscape (Feng et al., 2024), particularly in the tourism and hospitality industry. These computer-generated entities are virtual characters driven by artificial intelligence. Engagement with virtual influence is impacting consumers' behaviour (Xie-Carson & Benckendorff, 2024). Most of the present exploration is qualitative in nature (Jhavar, 2024). This novel research responds to the call for investigation regarding the 'reasons for' and 'reasons against' consumers' engagement with VIFL and, consequently, its impact on destination visits. The research developed and validated the model using Behavioural Reasoning Theory (BRT). The quantitative survey of 1029 travelers was conducted, and the data were analyzed using PLS-SEM. The results reveal the 'reasons for' the consumer's engagement with VIFL are Anthropomorphic, Attractiveness, Para-social Interaction, transparency, and 'reasons against' are Risk barriers, Traditional Barriers, Creepiness, and experience barriers. Further, it is found that openness to novel technology does not affect 'reasons for' and 'reasons against'. Openness to technology positively affects attitude. Also, 'reasons for' has a positive whereas 'reasons against' has a negative influence on the attitude and intention to visit the destination. The research enhances the tourism literature related to VIFL influence and provides a fresh perspective for tourism industry practitioners by divulging the reasons (for and against) to engage with VIFL and, subsequently, the intention to visit the destinations.





INTEGRATING SOCIAL IMPACT METRICS IN MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING CURRICULA: A PEDAGOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract

This study explores the integration of social impact metrics in management accounting curricula across Indian academic institutions, focusing on faculty awareness, perceived relevance, current teaching practices, and institutional support. The primary aim is to identify the gaps and barriers to integrating social metrics in accounting education and to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing curricula. A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining a structured survey ($n = 300$) and qualitative interviews with faculty and curriculum heads across public, private, and autonomous institutions. The survey results reveal a significant disparity in awareness of social impact metrics, with private institutions showing the highest awareness (72%) and public institutions the lowest (55%). Moreover, while both faculty and students perceived social impact metrics as highly relevant, integration into core accounting courses was limited, with electives seeing more significant incorporation. Institutional support for this integration was found to be insufficient, with only 42% of respondents indicating adequate backing from their institutions. Barriers to integration included a lack of trained faculty (58%), absence of curriculum guidelines (45%), and limited access to resources (37%). The study concludes that integrating social impact metrics into accounting curricula is crucial for aligning academic programs with global business needs. It recommends increased faculty training, curriculum enhancement, and greater institutional support to overcome identified barriers. These efforts will ensure that future accountants are better equipped to address the growing importance of sustainability and social responsibility in the financial sector.





CPEC: ANALYTICAL STUDY OF TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN INDIA'S GEOPOLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DYNAMICS AFTER AFGHANISTAN'S ENTRANCE IN CPEC WITH THE SOUTH ASIAN NATIONS.

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Abstract

This paper will discuss how Afghanistan's entry into the CPEC Corridor will affect India, not only economically but also politically. This trilateral relationship raises concerns for India. It will become a strategic challenge for India because it affects the South Asian regional balance due to the power, and this will become a concern for India's security and economy. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is China's pet project, which comes under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched in 2015. The focus was to connect China's Xinjiang to Pakistan's Gwadar port through road, railway, and energy projects to clear the way for trade and develop economic relationships between these two nations. Since starting, India has raised concerns because it is passing through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The government of India has always considered this a violation of its strength and territorial integrity. India has been constantly opposing CPEC and BRI in the Indian Subcontinent. India is taking an economic, military & diplomatic way to oppose. According to other Indian researchers, China wishes to break the India and US strategic relationship as these two countries want to counterbalance China. Though CPEC is a good way to grab opportunities in trade and economy, it can also destabilize the South Asian region by antagonistic behavior, and India is well prepared to counter the situation. India apprehends that in the Taliban regime, anti-peace elements may once again play a role in anti-India activities with the help of China, along all three borders with India.



THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENHANCING INVESTMENT DECISION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL VS. AI-BASED INVESTMENT APPROACHES BY INVESTORS SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INVESTORS IN KERALA.

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of behavioral biases on AI-driven investment strategies, specifically among investors in Kerala. By exploring psychological factors such as overconfidence, loss aversion, and herd behavior, the research aims to uncover how these biases affect investment outcomes when using AI-based financial tools. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study analyses historical investment data relevant to the region and conducts interviews with local fintech experts and investors. The findings will shed light on the unique behavioral patterns of Kerala-based investors and provide insights into developing more effective, culturally attuned AI investment solutions. This research contributes to the field of behavioral finance and AI by offering strategies to mitigate bias and enhance investment outcomes for the local investor community.



ECO-DYNAMICS IN THE BRICS: UNLEASHING ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE, GREEN INNOVATION, AND NATURAL RESOURCE RENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Abstract

Purpose The purpose of this study is to investigate the dynamic interplay between environmental governance, green innovation, and natural resource rents in shaping environmental quality. by exploring this factor, the study seeks to provide actionable insights for policymakers to foster sustainable development, enhance environmental performance and address the pressing environmental challenge by emerging economics. **Design/methodology/approach** The study utilizes data retrieved from Global Footprint Network, OECD database and World Development Indicator and analysed through a novel Autoregressive-Distributed Lag (ARDL) approach. **Findings** The findings reveal that (1) in long run, environmental governance, innovation, and natural resource rent exerts a significant positive influence on ecological footprint, (2) in the short run, environmental governance and innovation intensifies ecological pressure, while the effect of natural resource rent remains statistically insignificant. **Originality** Unlike prior studies that examines environmental drives in isolation, this research offers a holistic perspective by capturing the integrative eco-dynamic of governance, innovation and resource rents in an emerging country contexts, shedding new lights on their collective influence on environmental sustainability. **Implications** By illuminating the interconnected role of governance, innovation and resource rents, this study guides policymakers of BRICS nations to craft integrated strategies that promote environmental resilience while supporting sustainable development pathways. **Keywords** Environmental Governance, Green innovation and Natural Resource Rent, Autoregressive Distributed Lag method.





EXPLORING LEARNING TRANSFER IN EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT: A MIXED-METHOD PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Purpose: Grounded in Self-Determination Theory and the Theory of Purposeful Work Behavior, this study investigates whether individual perceptions of organizational learning culture (OLC), organizational support (OS) influence executives' motivation and learning transfer, and examines the moderating role of perceived self-efficacy.

Design/methodology/approach: An explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach was employed. Quantitative data from 410 executives who attended development programs at a public company in India were analyzed using covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM). Qualitative insights were derived through thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with 34 executives using NVivo 15.

Findings: Efficacy moderated these relationships, such that executives with higher perceived self-efficacy demonstrated significantly greater motivation and learning. Qualitative data further supported these findings, identifying five core themes: (i) Employee Care and Development, (ii) Culture of Recognition and Empowerment, (iii) Confidence and Motivation for Skill Mastery, (iv) Application of Learned Skills in the Workplace and (v) Commitment to Continuous Learning and Professional Growth.

Originality/value: This paper uniquely integrates organizational factors (OLC and OS), perceived self-efficacy, and learning motivation within a mixed-methods framework to explain learning transfer in executive development. It extends theoretical insights by demonstrating how perceived self-efficacy moderates organizational influences on motivation and learning transfer in a non-Western, public-sector organizational context.





POSITIONING THE FUTURE: STRATEGIC BRAND COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING APPROACHES FOR ALTERNATE FUEL VEHICLES IN INDIA

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Abstract

Problem: While India accelerates its shift toward sustainable transportation, consumer adoption of Alternate Fuel Vehicles (AFVs), such as electric, hybrid, and CNG models, remains limited. Despite technological progress and policy support, a key barrier lies in how automotive brands communicate the value and appeal of AFVs to a diverse and often sceptical market. Consumers often face confusion due to fragmented, unclear, or uninspiring brand messages.

Solution: This study explores how strategic brand communication can be optimised to enhance awareness, trust, and aspiration around AFVs in India. Using qualitative content analysis of major automotive campaigns and interviews with marketing professionals, the research identifies effective messaging strategies, brand positioning techniques, and the use of digital platforms to influence consumer perceptions. It proposes a framework for consistent, credible, and emotionally resonant communication tailored to the Indian context.

Research Gap: Existing research on AFV adoption in India predominantly focuses on technological or policy dimensions, with limited attention to marketing communication. There is a lack of comprehensive analysis on how brand narratives influence consumer engagement and trust in the AFV category. This study fills that gap by offering a strategic lens on brand communication as a critical enabler of market transformation.





IMPACT OF ONLINE NANO-INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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Abstract

Influencer Marketing of various brands in social media is quite a common occurrence. In recent months, there is growing importance of micro or nano influencers who have less than 10,000 followers. Though influencer marketing, especially macro influencers with 40,000 to million followers have been researched, there is no significant research on the impact of nano-influencers. In this work, the researchers have created a model encompassing the impact of perceived authenticity and perceived homophily on influencer trust, which mediates the relationship between these two antecedents and purchase intention. A total of 190 valid responses were received who had purchased based on influencer recommendation. A PLS SEM model was thus created to test the hypotheses. Construct Reliability, Discriminant Validity and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) scores are all found to be within the acceptable range. Bootstrapping was conducted to test mediation.

The following hypotheses were accepted based on the path values.

H1: Perceived authenticity of nano-influencer positively impacts trust on the influencer.

H2: Perceived homophily of nano-influencer positively impacts trust on the influencer.

H3: Trust on the influencer mediates the relationship between perceived authenticity and purchase intention.

H4: Trust on the influencer mediates the relationship between perceived homophily and purchase intention.

H5: Perceived homophily of nano-influencer positively impacts purchase intention.

We reject the following hypothesis.

H6: Perceived authenticity of nano-influencer positively impacts purchase intention.

This research establishes a model for nano-influencers. In terms of practical impact, this research provides a framework to the industry on developing and nurturing nano-influencers to market their brand. It also helps the influencers to understand the factors influencing consumer trust and purchase intentions.





BLOOM'S TAXONOMY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION

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Abstract

Bloom's Taxonomy has been a core model in curriculum development, learning outcomes, and strategies for assessing learning throughout the different levels of education. Though its hierarchical framework of cognitive capabilities—from recalling to generating—has been useful at the primary and secondary education level, the model's applicability and usefulness in the university require critical consideration. This paper examines the critiques of Bloom's Taxonomy in the light of higher education today. Based on recent pedagogic research, the study questions whether the taxonomy can satisfy the richness, interdisciplinarity, and critical thought requirements of advanced learning settings. The research implies that even though Bloom's Taxonomy is a helpful framework for instructional planning, the taxonomy's rigid hierarchical structure cannot adequately represent the dynamic, process-like character of higher-level cognitive capabilities. The paper promotes a more flexible, integrative curriculum development model based on the adaptations of the taxonomy specific to the context that suit the various needs of the learners and the different needs of the 21st-century university.





"EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF NGO-LED PROGRAMS ON RURAL HOUSEHOLD'S-DIETARY DIVERSITY, AND COPING STRATEGIES IN WEST BENGAL"

Rima Bose, Dr. Nibir Khawash

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Abstract

This meticulously designed study evaluates the multifaceted impact of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)-led programs on food security and livelihood resilience among rural households in West Bengal, India. By delving into critical dimensions -dietary diversity, and coping strategies - the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between targeted interventions and community outcomes. Employing a robust mixed-methods approach that seamlessly integrates household surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews, the study sheds light on the pivotal role of community-based development initiatives in fostering sustainable livelihoods. The findings of this study unequivocally demonstrate that NGO-led initiatives have catalysed significant positive changes in rural households. Perhaps most importantly, households have developed greater resilience in the face of economic and environmental shocks, enabling them to better cope with challenges and uncertainties. The research strongly advocates for increased policy support aimed at scaling such programs, emphasizing their potential to enhance rural resilience and promote long-term food systems sustainability. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of community-based development initiatives in addressing critical challenges faced by vulnerable communities in developing regions. The implications of this study are far-reaching, and its findings have significant policy relevance. Policymakers can use the evidence-based insights and recommendations provided by this study to develop targeted interventions that promote sustainable livelihoods, improve food security, and enhance resilience among rural households.





THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENHANCING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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Abstract

In today's fast-paced and competitive work environment, organizations face growing challenges in maintaining high levels of employee performance, motivation, and loyalty. Traditional performance metrics and technical competencies, while still important, are no longer sufficient in predicting success in the modern workplace. Increasingly, emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical factor that influences how employees manage stress, interact with others, adapt to change, and align with organizational goals. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively in oneself and in relationships with others. It comprises five key dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. This research paper aims to explore the significant role of emotional intelligence in enhancing two major outcomes in organizational behavior: employee performance and organizational commitment. The central objective is to examine how employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better at their jobs and show stronger commitment to their organizations. The study also seeks to analyze the extent to which emotional intelligence can be nurtured and applied as a strategic tool in human resource management. A mixed-method approach is adopted for this research, combining quantitative data collected through structured questionnaires from employees across different sectors, with qualitative insights obtained through interviews with HR managers and supervisors. The study investigates correlations between emotional intelligence scores and performance indicators such as teamwork, leadership, adaptability, communication, and goal achievement. Additionally, it explores how emotionally intelligent employees contribute to a more supportive and cohesive work culture, leading to increased job satisfaction and long-term commitment. Preliminary findings indicate that employees with higher emotional intelligence tend to be more engaged, resilient, and cooperative. They are better equipped to handle workplace challenges, resolve conflicts constructively, and maintain positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors. These capabilities not only improve individual performance but also enhance overall team dynamics and productivity. Furthermore, emotional intelligence positively influences employees' affective and normative commitment to their organizations, making them more likely to stay with the company, support its vision, and go beyond their formal job roles. The study highlights the importance of integrating emotional intelligence into various HR practices such as recruitment, training and development, performance appraisals, and leadership coaching. Organizations that invest in building emotional competencies are more likely to foster a healthy work environment that supports both personal growth and organizational success. In conclusion, emotional intelligence is a powerful driver of employee performance and organizational commitment. By recognizing its value and incorporating EI into the





organizational culture, businesses can not only enhance employee well-being and productivity but also achieve higher retention and long-term sustainability. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on emotional intelligence and provides practical implications for HR professionals and organizational leaders aiming to create emotionally intelligent and high-performing workplaces.





UNDERSTANDING THE BROADER IMPACT OF REE(RARE EARTH ELEMENTS) PRODUCTION

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Abstract

This study investigates the environmental consequences tied to Rare Earth Element (REE) supply chains. While these elements are vital for transitioning to green energy, their production often comes with serious risks. Mining and processing REEs led to considerable ecological damage, such as eroding soil, generating radioactive waste, and polluting water. Many REE-rich areas also contend with political instability, unfair labor practices, and insufficient environmental supervision.

Our study evaluates the overall sustainability of REE supply chains. We used a multi-linear regression method to forecast the demand for REE using historical data and a sustainability goal set for 2035 in three scenarios: STEPS(Stated Policy Scenario), APS(Announced Pledge Scenario), NZE(Net Zero Emission).

Through a review of existing data and policies, our findings indicate a lack of robust sustainability certifications and regulatory controls. To improve this, we propose putting in place internationally accepted environmental standards, better worker protections, and transparent tracking systems. We also suggest that actively involving stakeholders is essential for fair resource governance and ensuring benefits reach local communities.

The major premise of this study is that environmental considerations should be the most important thing to think about when it comes to mining and the global supply of Rare Earth Elements (REEs). This paper suggests that the world should work together to find clean technologies that are good for the economy and the environment. This means that the goals of sustainable development must be closely tied to how businesses operate.





MCDM AHP-BASED ANALYSIS FOR PRIORITIZATION OF BARRIERS TO ACCESS OF AGRICULTURE FINANCE FOR FARMERS: EVIDENCE FROM MAHARASHTRA, INDIA.

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Abstract

About 0.4 million farmers have committed suicide in the past two decades in India. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the highest incidence of farmer suicide in 2022 was found in Maharashtra state in India. Limited access to institutional financing and frequent crop failures are frequently linked to debt and financial difficulties, which are among the top causes of farmer suicides. The Indian government has made sincere efforts in agricultural finance, but several barriers exist in accessing agricultural credit. Although researchers have identified and discussed barriers to agricultural credit access but these studies do not provide a basis for decision-making for the important stakeholders, such as policymakers, bankers, implementing agencies, and central and state governments, to remove these barriers. This study argues that prioritizing barriers can provide a pathway to remove barriers for stakeholders. Therefore, the study aims to prioritize important barriers to access agricultural credit by small and marginal farmers in Maharashtra, India. The Multi-Criteria Decision Making - Analytic Hierarchy Process is used for establishing criteria weights and prioritizing. In this work, primary data was collected from 60 farmers. The study has identified and prioritized the seven barriers in which Economic and financial legal and land tenure barriers and Institutional barriers have emerged as top three most important barriers, under which the top 3 subcategories of each barrier are the slow legal process of land tenure, lengthy and complex process of loan sanction and poor credit history.





KNOWING THE UNKNOWN: EXPERIMENTATION UNDER DELAYED SUCCESS

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Abstract

We consider a continuous-time dynamic principal-agent model with experimentation in a mixed-news setting. Our model is an exponential two-armed bandit framework, featuring both known and unknown risky arms, where the unknown arm can be either good or bad. The agent can achieve success and failure from both known and good unknown risky arms, while failure can be achieved from a bad unknown risky arm. We assume success to be conclusive i.e. a single success truly reveals the unknown arm's type, whereas failures are inconclusive. Although success arrives at a lower rate on the unknown risky arm than on the known arm, the unknown arm generates higher revenue for the experimenting agent. To motivate the agent to experiment with the unknown arm in spite of delayed success, the principal proposes a mechanism that rewards failures and punishes successes.





DOES GEOPOLITICAL RISK AFFECT THE GLOBAL VALUE CHAIN PARTICIPATION? THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TRADE PROTECTIONISM: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the impact of domestic and foreign geopolitical risk (GPR) on the global value chain (GVC) participation. The study further tries to identify the potential path through which GPR affects the GVC participation of a country. To achieve this, the data was collected from the TiVA (Trade in Value Added) database for 42 countries from 2011 to 2020. The study employed a two-pronged estimation strategy, starting with a random effect model for baseline estimation and then a mediation analysis to identify the mechanism behind the relation between GPR and GVC participation. Empirical results show that domestic GPR has a significant negative impact on the GVC participation of the countries. It reduces the degree of GVC participation by 2.5% to 2.7% at a significant level of 1%. However, foreign GPR does not have any significant effect on GVC participation. The reason might be that in the case of a high foreign GPR, a country can adopt trade diversion, which can delay its effect. Therefore, GPR does not have a spillover effect on GVC participation. Further, the study identifies trade protectionism as the possible channel through which the impact of GPR is transmitted to the GVC participation. These findings suggest that policymakers should use a proactive approach to minimise the adverse effects of geopolitical risk. The countries should avoid trade protectionism by promoting more free trade agreements to enhance GVC participation, which will create a win-win situation for all the countries participating in the GVC.





CLICK, CART, OR COUNTER? UNRAVELING GENDERED CONSUMER BEHAVIOR ACROSS MALLS, MARKETS, AND MOBILE PLATFORMS

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Abstract

As India's retail landscape rapidly transforms, understanding consumer behaviour across physical and digital platforms becomes increasingly vital, especially among youth. This study explores how gender and shopping format influence apparel purchasing behaviour among young adults. By comparing local markets, shopping malls, and online/mobile platforms, and applying a Two-Way ANOVA, the research investigates how these settings influence brand consciousness, price sensitivity, and shopping experience across genders.

The results reveal significant main effects of both gender and retail format, along with meaningful interaction effects. Male consumers show a higher affinity for brand-oriented experiences, especially in malls and online platforms. In contrast, female consumers emphasise affordability, variety, emotional satisfaction, and cultural uniqueness, particularly in local markets. Interestingly, online platforms serve as a middle ground, popular for convenience, speed, and accessibility, but less influential in driving emotional or tactile satisfaction.

These findings highlight the non-uniformity of gendered shopping behaviour across retail formats, suggesting that youth consumers employ strategic format-switching based on occasion, social identity, product category, and shopping motives. The study offers timely insights for retailers, mall operators, e-commerce platforms, marketing professionals, and brand strategists seeking to optimise youth engagement through tailored, platform-specific strategies.

By combining demographic (gender) and behavioural (retail format) variables, this research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of hybrid consumer behaviour in the Global South. It emphasises the need for gender-responsive, experience-driven, multi-channel marketing strategies that reflect the evolving expectations of young Indian consumers.





BELONGING AT WORK: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF INCLUSION RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONAL SETTINGS

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Abstract

The word ‘inclusion’ has come a long way in the human resource management literature, the meaning of the word being expanded and transformed, depending on the context in which it is used. The current study entails a comprehensive literature review on studies focusing on inclusion. The authors have used the PRISMA framework to deliver a rigorous and systematic literature review of inclusion articles. Using three databases, namely, Scopus, Science Direct and ProQuest, a total of n-205 articles have made it to the final list of this literature review. The results highlight the development of the construct of inclusion, how it differs from diversity in practise and the major themes found across the research papers. In addition, descriptive analysis shows that there has been an increase in the number of publications in this domain, post 2019 with majority of the empirical studies done in the US region. The paper reveals the trend analysis of articles, demonstrating the transition of focus in inclusion research over the years (1990-2025). Research on inclusion is yet to reach its heights, as most articles predominantly focus on financial inclusion. The word inclusion, itself has been studied as various constructs like inclusive climates, workplace inclusion, inclusive organisational behaviour, team inclusion, perceived inclusion, etc,. The paper also touches upon the current challenges faced by DEI propagators, in the wake of US President Donald Trump’s second term, where DEI initiatives have received a major backlash in the wake of anti DEI administrative policies. More research is warranted on this topic, given the fragmentation of the construct across several terms as mentioned above. Future research on inclusion can focus on a detailed investigation on the antecedents of inclusion, at the micro, meso and macro levels of organisational behaviour.





GREEN TAXONOMY AND SMES IN JAMSHEDPUR, JHARKHAND: BALANCING COMPLIANCE COSTS WITH MARKET OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES

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Abstract

As India accelerates its commitment to sustainability through frameworks like green taxonomy, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in industrial cities such as Jamshedpur, Jharkhand face both significant challenges and untapped opportunities. The transition to sustainable economies has brought green taxonomy frameworks to the forefront as critical tools for aligning financial flows with environmentally sustainable activities. While these frameworks offer significant opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs)—such as enhanced access to green financing, participation in sustainable supply chains, and entry into eco-conscious markets—they also impose challenges, particularly in the form of compliance costs and regulatory complexities. This paper examines how green taxonomy affects SMEs, focusing on the trade-offs between compliance burdens and market opportunities.

Through a mixed-methods approach, the study investigates the financial and operational impacts of green taxonomy compliance on SMEs across regions and sectors. It also explores how SMEs leverage green taxonomy frameworks to gain competitive advantages in emerging green markets.

The findings reveal that while compliance costs pose a significant barrier for SMEs, especially in developing economies, targeted support mechanisms such as subsidies, capacity-building programs, and simplified reporting frameworks can mitigate these challenges. The study concludes with policy recommendations to enhance the inclusivity of green taxonomy frameworks, ensuring they serve as enablers of growth and sustainability for SMEs rather than barriers. This research contributes to the growing discourse on sustainable finance and offers actionable insights for policymakers, financial institutions, and SME stakeholders navigating the green transition.





SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS AND THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF TEXTILE SUPPLY CHAINS – CASE STUDY OF PATAGONIA

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Abstract

Every year, the textile sector emits 2-8% of the world's greenhouse gases and uses the equivalent of 86 million Olympic-sized swimming pools of natural water resources. These alarming statistics show the need for the integration of sustainable operations and circular economy to reduce CO₂ emissions in textile value chains across the globe. This study aims to showcase how Patagonia has operationalized circular economy strategies in the organizational values and production systems. This study adopts a qualitative methodology to analyze the production strategies of Patagonia by use of stakeholder theory, principles of circular economy, and Nidumolu, Prahalad, and Rangaswami's Five Stages of Sustainable Company Development . Using a qualitative case study approach, this study analyses the production and marketing strategies of Patagonia, through stakeholder initiatives and third party lab assessment reports. Findings show that Patagonia's production model aligns with stages 2 and 3 of the stages of sustainable development, showcasing sustainability as a key factor in driving innovation and competitive advantage. The study contributes to Operations literature by providing a replicable, profitable model for apparel companies to integrate principles of the circular economy into its core values and production strategies, resulting in a subsequent reduction in carbon emissions, labor law violations, and waste generation.





THE SYNERGY EFFECT OF GUANXI ELEMENTS AND HEDONIC MOTIVATION ON THE IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOR TOWARDS TRIBAL PRODUCTS OF ODISHA: PARALLEL MEDIATION BY PARASOCIAL RELATION AND PURCHASE INTENTION

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Abstract

Tribal communities comprises of 8.6% of India's population and nearly 22% of Odisha's population. While numerous studies have focused on enhancing the social and economic life of Odisha's tribal population, limited research has explored the influence of social media strategies on the impulse buying behavior of the Gen Y and Gen Z customers towards tribal products. The study aims to examine the impact of the specific social media strategies namely hedonic motivation, guanxi elements, informational quality and brand identification on the impulse buying behavior (IBB) of Gen Y and Gen Z individuals. The study also studied the parallel mediating effect of parasocial relationship and purchase intention on the effect of social media strategies on IBB. The parasocial relationship consists of influencers' endorsement, social interaction and fear of missing out (FOMO). The purchase intention is created by trust-believes, instrumental support and tribal utilitarian strategies. The study collected 436 responses from Gen Y and Gen Z customers across four strata of Odisha through a structured questionnaire. The data analysis for the research is carried using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) model by the help of SmartPLS 3.00 software. All the requisites like construct reliability and validity, discriminant validity, collinearity etc. for model fit are confirmed before drawing inferential statistics. The findings of the study reveal that there is a positive significant effect of Guanxi elements and Hedonic motivation on the IBB. Moreover, the study also confirms that there is a significant parallel mediating effect of parasocial relation and purchase intention in the relationship between social media strategies on the IBB.





"INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES INTO MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: A STUDENT-CENTERED CURRICULUM DESIGN"

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Abstract

Higher education can bring a transformative change in a society through interdisciplinary study. Enhancing collaboration between academia and industry would pave the way for a future-ready workforce. Educational Partnerships can strengthen the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) by building students capacities and competencies in their curriculum. (Maganini et al., 2025) .The curriculum of an Institution should respond to the social needs of the society to promote equity by emphasising on the Social critical approach, outcome-based approach and life skills approaches .(Cravero et al., 2024)

The objective of the study is to highlight the importance of building a good Curriculum in Management Education. By understanding the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, that highlights on integration of sustainability principles into curricula, research, and institutional practices (Narkhede et al., 2025)and UNESCO's Quality Education 4.0 that discusses on the assesement of the Transversal competencies needed to develop students into a "Global citizenship". (UNESCO, n.d.)

The study also discusses on the initiative of Government of India that has developed a strong legal framework. The Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) brings out equitable development by providing strategic funding to state higher educational institutions. The Environment Protection Act of 1986 empowers the central government to implement measures for environmental conservation, initiating policies within higher education institutions (HEIs).

To meet the growing challenges in the education sector, designing a curriculum is an art for all higher education institutions. By direct interviews with the education authorities in the field of Management education the study would propose curriculum and recommend a policy for creating social and environmental values.





BLINDED BY NATURALNESS: MAPPING NATURAL FOOD EXPECTATIONS IN ONLINE GROCERY RETAIL

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Abstract

Purpose: Initially designed for consumers' informed purchases, the food-shopping support aids (e.g., filters, sorters, etc.) embedded in online grocery platforms (OGPs) are criticized for promoting suboptimal dietary choices by enabling consumers' broad, often unwarranted, expectations regarding food items. Despite this, limited scholarly efforts exist to understand how consumers employ these shopping-aids to form expectations about food. We consider a popularly (ab)used shopping-aid of food's naturalness to delineate consumers' 'immediate' and 'distant' expectations triggered by natural shopping-aids.

Design/methodology/approach: We draw theoretical underpinnings from cue utilisation and spreading activation and analyse 89,711 online consumer reviews (OCRs) corresponding to 1600 natural-categorized items listed on Amazon, to answer our two overarching research questions relating to the 'what' (content) and 'how' (linguistic) characteristics of OCRs.

Findings: Answering the 'what' characteristics, we found ten latent topics grouped into three categories: 'producing,' 'processing,' and 'final products', with 'distant' inferences dominating the natural-aid related meaning structure. Meanwhile, we analyzed OCRs' linguistic characteristics, including sentiments, readability, length, diversity, and subjectivity, to answer the 'how' aspect. We found 'distant' inferences were easier to read and comprehend, furthering the halo-based processing evoked by natural-aids.

Research limitations/implications: We contribute to the scholarship at the nexus of consumer psychology, grocery shopping, and OCR writing behavior.

Practical implications: We endeavor to inform international food policymakers and make a case for OGP's 'responsibilization' regarding the blatant use of food shopping aids.

Originality: Using a unique Amazon dataset, this study represents a pioneering effort to explain the downstream effect of attribute-based food shopping aids on consumers' expectations.





“SYNTHETIC VOICES, REAL CHANGE: INVESTIGATING THE SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS”

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Abstract

Virtual influencers (VIs) are rapidly emerging as influential agents in digital communication. This study aims to investigate the social influence of virtual influencers in fostering user engagement, focusing on *Kyra*, India's first computer generated influencer (CGI). Grounded in the CASA (Computers Are Social Actors) paradigm and Parasocial Interaction Theory, the research explores how synthetic agents, despite their non-human origins can evoke authentic emotional and behavioral responses from users.

Employing a structured quantitative survey (n = 170), the study will examine key constructs such as perceived realism, trustworthiness, value congruence, emotional resonance, and engagement intention. Respondents will be exposed to posts by *Kyra*, and their responses will be analyzed to assess levels of engagement, message credibility, and advocacy intent. To contextualize the efficacy of virtual influencers, the study will also benchmark *Kyra's* influence against that of traditional human influencers, offering comparative insights into perceived authenticity and social impact. Preliminary findings suggest that users perceive virtual influencers as credible and emotionally engaging, particularly when the messaging reflects their own values and is delivered with narrative consistency and visual coherence. *Kyra's* algorithmically curated persona and freedom from real world controversies appear to enhance her trustworthiness and effectiveness in sustainability advocacy. These insights underscore the potential of virtual influencers as strategic tools for organizations seeking to drive social impact as conscious consumer environments. This research contributes to the evolving discourse on digital influence, synthetic identity, and environmental marketing, offering actionable implications for brands.



IMPACT OF INSTITUTIONAL PRIVACY ASSURANCES: LINKING PRIVACY POLICY FEATURES, PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

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Abstract

Improper personal data handling practices by organizations can lead to various privacy harms raising customer privacy concerns. To explore the impacts of institutional privacy assurances, we study how privacy policies and their features influence customer privacy concerns. Drawing on Procedural Fairness Theory, we build a research model suggesting that customer's perceived effectiveness of institutional privacy policies impacts their privacy concerns. Furthermore, we posit that customers' perceptions about the effectiveness of institutional privacy policies are informed by their perceptions of security, transparency and control offered by the organization as indicated by the contents of the privacy policy and the perceived readability of the privacy policy. Using established measures for the constructs in our model, we propose to empirically test the research model through surveys for healthcare and online shopping websites and applications. The survey will be administered to students across Indian universities, since they frequently access shopping and healthcare sites and applications. The study is novel because the impact of the content and the design of privacy policies on customer privacy concerns remain under-studied in the extant empirical literature on institutional privacy assurances (Xu et al., 2011; Wu et al., 2012; Zeng et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2020; Guo et al., 2022). Our study will have practical implications in suggesting how privacy policies can be improved in terms of content and design. Its theoretical implications lie in the examination of the antecedents of perceived effectiveness of institutional privacy assurances and perceptions about procedural fairness in the context of privacy.

CUT BY CODE: AI LAYOFFS AND THE CRISIS OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

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Abstract

Recent layoffs in major technology firms have been justified by gains in efficiency from artificial intelligence (AI). Microsoft, for instance, recently laid off 6,000 employees as part of an AI-oriented restructuring (Soni, 2025). Instances of algorithm-driven mass layoffs, particularly within government sectors, have been documented (Kelly, 2025), while concerns have also been raised regarding Accenture's implementation of such practices (Sharma, 2023). These workforce reductions, often framed as data-driven necessities, are increasingly seen by employees as unfair, dehumanising, and ethically troubling (Ferguson, 2024).

This study employs a qualitative netnographic analysis of online posts (e.g., LinkedIn, Reddit, X, Blind) to investigate how workers perceive and respond to AI-driven restructuring. Drawing on organisational justice theory (Colquitt, 2001), psychological contract literature (Rousseau, 1995), and emerging work on algorithmic dehumanisation (Schultz et al., 2024), we explore employee narratives of betrayal, opacity, and dignity loss. Our findings reveal that when layoffs are justified by AI-based productivity gains, and especially when AI tools are used in layoff decision-making, perceptions of procedural injustice and psychological contract breach intensify (Bankins et al., 2022).

We contribute to the literature by extending theories of justice and psychological contracts into the AI era, showcasing how technological justifications reshape how employees make sense of fairness, obligation, and reciprocity in the workplace. The study explores the perception of algorithmic dehumanisation during downsizing, on how employees experience and narrate opaque, machine-enabled/mediated organisational decisions. In doing so, it invites a more nuanced understanding of justice and psychological contract breach in the context of emerging technologies. For practitioners, the findings underscore the reputational and cultural risks of algorithmic terminations, suggesting a need for greater transparency and human-centeredness in AI-enabled HR practices.

AUDITOR PERSPECTIVES ON BEHAVIORAL TRIGGERS OF FINANCIAL FRAUD: A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

Financial fraud seriously threatens social justice and corporate sustainability, erodes trust, and upends economic systems. This study examines the behavioral triggers of financial fraud in the Indian context through the eyes of seasoned auditors, in keeping with the larger role that management research plays in bringing about societal change. To create a comprehensive questionnaire that captures the essential organizational, ethical, and psychological factors influencing fraudulent behavior, a thorough review of the body of existing literature was undertaken. This study uses a qualitative exploratory research design to look into how forensic and statutory auditors perceive the behavioral elements that lead to financial fraud. A purposively chosen sample of professionals with direct experience in fraud detection and investigation participated in semi-structured interviews to gather data. The purpose of the interviews was to extract detailed information about elements various behavioral elements related to financial fraud. To find and analyze recurrent themes and patterns in the responses, thematic analysis was utilized. During data analysis, member checking and peer debriefing techniques were used to guarantee validity and credibility. In addition to offering important implications for improving internal controls, risk management frameworks, and ethical leadership, the findings provide a nuanced understanding of the human aspects of financial fraud. This study helps to build stronger corporate governance mechanisms and supports larger initiatives to support inclusive, transparent, and sustainable organizational cultures by identifying the behavioral underpinnings of fraudulent practices.



INVESTIGATING MINDFUL CONSUMPTION THROUGH THE LENS OF CULTURAL FACTORS: A MODELLING APPROACH TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

Sustainability demands sustainable and mindful patterns in consumption. With the escalating concerns towards unsustainability, this study explores factors affecting mindful consumption. The concept of mindful consumption is derived from mindfulness, which is deeply embedded in various cultures worldwide, including many religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and so on. Some spiritual practices also foster mindfulness among people. These practices cultivate a self-awareness mentality, providing insights for making decisions consciously rather than automatically. Therefore, this research seeks to understand how mindfulness driven by religious faith and spirituality fosters mindful consumption. The proposed conceptual model is grounded in the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework and is tested by analysing cross-sectional data from 358 apparel product consumer responses through an online survey. The findings showed the positive association of religious faith and spirituality with mindfulness and, subsequently, mindful consumption. The research offers practitioners and policy-makers insight into how religious and spiritual aspects can cultivate mindfulness in consumption decisions that may ultimately lead to mindful consumption and sustainability. Companies may incorporate mindfulness through religious and spiritual practices into sustainability initiatives through awareness campaigns, which can motivate individuals to adopt mindful consumption.





ADVANCING BUSINESS ANALYTICS WITH AUTOMATED MACHINE LEARNING: A PRACTICAL EVALUATION OF H2O AUTOML FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

In today's data-driven business environment, machine learning (ML) is essential for informed decision-making, yet its implementation often requires specialized expertise. Automated Machine Learning (AutoML) tools like H2O AutoML simplify model development by automating tasks such as algorithm selection and hyperparameter tuning. This study evaluates H2O AutoML against manually optimized stacked ensembles using real-world datasets from credit risk, insurance claims, and marketing domains. The results show that while manual tuning yields marginally better performance differences of 0.3–0.5% in AUC and 0.2–0.4% in accuracy, H2O AutoML provides a competitive, efficient alternative with 70–80% reduction in manual effort. An enhanced AutoML pipeline incorporating domain-specific feature engineering and adaptive ensemble pruning further narrows this performance gap, demonstrating 5–8% improvement in F1-score and 10–12% reduction in LogLoss while maintaining usability. These findings highlight AutoML's potential to democratize ML adoption in business analytics, offering a practical balance between performance and accessibility.





DAKA SUNDARAY AND RIDEX: A TALE OF COLLABORATION AND COST EFFICIENCY

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Abstract

With the advent of ride-hailing services like Ola and Uber, the travel landscape in India has seen a phenomenal transformation[1]. The market for such services is expected to reach US\$ 11.64bn by 2029, marking an annual growth rate of 8.85% during 2025-29, with a predicted 380.60 million users[2]. However, there is a different story to tell for the students of XIM University (New Campus), located in a prominent city in the Eastern part of India. A typical scene would be students waiting helplessly outside the college gate, watching an auto rickshaw[3] whizz by, either refusing to go their way or quoting exorbitant prices. During one of such frustrating moments, a conversation was sparked that led to building a *purpose* and a business venture with Daka Sundaray, a local auto-rickshaw driver. Daka, residing near the University premises, struggled to find consistent passengers for ride. When the “think-tank” students had a chance to meet with Daka, they envisioned collaboration. A simple approach with a blend of technology was identified to resolve the challenges of both parties while ensuring fairness and transparency. Discussions led to the integration of a chatbot (RideX)—an easy-to-use, student-friendly platform to check availability and fares and even connect with trusted drivers. This case is all about that collaboration, which resulted in building a community-driven cost & management accounting model that resulted in a win-win situation for both parties.





SPIRITUALITY, RELIGIOSITY AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING AT WORKPLACE: USING TCCM FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

Spirituality, religiosity, and spiritual well-being are necessary at the workplace, fostering alignment with organizational purpose and core principles to enhance holistic employee engagement. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive review on this ever-evolving research field. By utilizing bibliometric analysis, systematic literature review, and thematic analysis, this study examines 262 articles retrieved from the web of science database, from 2013 to 2023, following the SPAR 4 SLR framework. Performance analysis identifies the contributions of key research constituents, while science mapping uncovers relevant clusters within the field. This study also uses the TCCM framework to 140 ABDC-listed articles, offering insights into existing and future research theories, contexts, characteristics, and methodologies. Further, the study provided the future research themes by employing thematic analysis. Finally, this study finds four co-citation clusters, six future research themes and TCCM prospects. At the end, this study provides valuable insights for academicians and policy makers.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN FINANCIAL SERVICES: DRIVING SOCIAL IMPACT THROUGH TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has reshaped the financial services sector, driving operational efficiency and social impact. This study conducts a systematic literature review using the TCCM framework, integrated with content analysis, to analyze 96 research articles published between 2010 and 2024. The findings identify four key themes: (1) AI-driven algorithms enhancing decision-making and fraud detection, (2) predictive analytics supporting financial strategies, (3) robo-advising and personalized financial services, and (4) challenges related to compliance, trust, and ethics. AI adoption extends beyond efficiency, promoting financial inclusion, reducing biases, and democratizing access to financial services. However, concerns remain regarding ethical AI usage, data privacy, and regulatory compliance. Our analysis highlights the dominance of quantitative methods and a lack of theoretical frameworks in existing research. To bridge these gaps, we propose future research directions, including the integration of Prospect Theory, broader geographic data governance applications, and qualitative long-term studies. This review provides a comprehensive perspective on AI's transformative role in financial services and its potential to drive meaningful social impact.



WHAT MAKES HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS RESILIENT? EXPLORING DRIVERS AND OUTCOMES

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Abstract

In the face of persistent disruptions such as public health crises and resource constraints, organizational resilience has become critical for sustaining healthcare delivery and protecting societal well-being. This study examines how healthcare organizations build internal capacity to respond effectively to adversity and how that resilience influences both operational and social outcomes. The research focuses on practical drivers within organizations rather than external risk factors. It explores how strategies and everyday practices help institutions maintain continuity and adaptability during disruption.

A two-phase mixed methods approach was used. In the first phase, interviews were conducted with 30 healthcare professionals and 15 patients across public and private institutions in India. These interviews highlighted organizational features that contribute to resilience, including responsive leadership, flexible use of resources, staff engagement, and community trust. In the second phase, a survey of 550 healthcare professionals examined the relationships between these internal drivers, organizational resilience, and outcome measures based on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance.

The results show that organizations with strong internal responsiveness can anticipate change, adjust operations, and maintain consistent service quality. Resilient healthcare institutions also protect employee well-being, ensure fairness in service access, and demonstrate clear accountability in performance. These capabilities reflect a commitment to responsible management and sustainable outcomes. This study adds to management research focused on building inclusive and adaptive systems that align with broader social goals. It offers timely insights for healthcare leaders and policymakers working to strengthen institutional resilience while supporting long-term impact and public trust.





PERCEPTIONS OF AI-DRIVEN RECRUITMENT TOOLS AMONG IT SECTOR HR PRACTITIONERS: A QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

This study aims to address the gap in understanding the recruiter's perception of the overall benefit to the organisation when artificial intelligence (AI) tools are used for recruitment. There is ample research and documented evidence on AI's ability to conduct repetitive and objective tasks more efficiently in a recruitment process. However, there is limited research on the recruiter's perception about the process and the long-term impact on the employee productivity hired with the help of AI tools. The study was conducted on a sample of 150 recruiters and Human Resource (HR) professionals in the IT sector, investigating key dimensions of recruitment such as recruitment duration, time employed, employee productivity and HR satisfaction. Advanced analytical methodologies like Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) were used to understand the benefits of employing AI tools and the interplay of the key dimensions. The findings of the study provide deep insights into the perception about the role of AI in the recruitment process and areas where it can be implemented better to achieve organisational goals.





EVALUATING THE PERFORMANCE IMPACT OF IPOS ON MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

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Abstract

This study analyzes the impact of going public on microfinance institutions (MFIs) by comparing the financial performance of listed and unlisted MFIs. The study employs a quantitative approach using secondary data from a sample of listed and unlisted MFIs between 2017 and 2023. The motivation behind this research is the increasing trend among the MFIs to access the capital market. The paper evaluates key financial performance indicators such as ROA, ROE, and operational self-sufficiency, alongside metrics related to client over-indebtedness. The findings of the paper suggest that listed MFIs tend to show stronger financial performance with higher profitability and operational efficiency. However, it is also evident that listed MFIs are engaged in aggressive lending practices that may lead to a higher level of client overindebtedness. The results provide empirical evidence of mission drift among listed MFIs. Post-listing MFIs tend to focus more on profitability rather than the social objective. The findings, therefore, emphasize the importance of client protection mechanisms and social performance monitoring to ensure that the commercialization of MFIs does not come at the cost of client protection.





NARCISSISM IN COLLECTIVIST CULTURE – BROADENING THE HORIZONS

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Abstract

“What happens when the self meets the collective?” This question becomes especially compelling when examining narcissism, a personality trait marked by an inflated sense of self-importance, a craving for admiration, diminished empathy, egocentric exceptionalism, and social selfishness. Narcissism has predominantly been conceptualised within Western, individualistic societies where self-promotion and personal achievement are culturally reinforced. In contrast, collectivist cultures emphasise modesty, social harmony, and interdependence, often suppressing overt narcissistic behaviour. However, with increasing exposure to global media and the widespread use of social networking platforms, new forms of narcissistic expression are emerging, even within traditionally collectivist societies. This paper explores how narcissism is shaped, modified, and expressed in collectivist cultural contexts, particularly through digital environments. It addresses key research gaps by examining how cultural norms suppress direct narcissistic traits and how digital platforms mediate their indirect expression. Drawing on recent cross-cultural psychological studies, the paper proposes a theoretical framework that integrates cultural modulation with digital self-presentation, resulting in the emergence of hybrid narcissistic behaviours, subtle, communal, and contextually adapted forms of self-enhancement. By focusing on emerging adults in collectivist settings, the study emphasises how both traditional values and global digital trends influence identity construction. It also considers sociocultural moderators such as gender, skin tone, and familial roles. The findings offer a culturally grounded perspective on narcissism, challenging the notion of its exclusivity to Western societies and contributing to a broader understanding of self-perception in the era of digital globalisation. Keywords: Narcissism, Collectivist Culture, Social Media, Digital Identity, Cross-Cultural Studies





THE MILLIONAIRE SLUMDOG: ANALYSING THE ROLE OF INFORMAL ECONOMIES, COMMUNITY COLLABORATION, RESILIENCE AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION IN DHARAVI'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE.

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Abstract

This study relates the concept of community resilience to informal economies and urban redevelopment through the lens of one of Mumbai's most intricate urban settlements, Dharavi. Positioned as the site of analysis, Dharavi offers a compelling case of how diverse ethnic communities and occupational networks collaborate to sustain a dynamic economic microcosm within the fabric of a megacity. The research further explores targeted measures aimed at reinforcing resilience within such informal ecosystems. Challenging traditional narratives of poverty and marginalization, the inquiry foregrounds Dharavi as a site of entrepreneurial vitality and deep-rooted social cohesion. Through a critical analysis of social cohesion, survival conditions, and external perceptions of Dharavi, the paper shows how these dynamics reshape urban imaginaries and development discourses. In doing so, the study advocates for a renewed urban policy paradigm, one that acknowledges Dharavi not as a peripheral anomaly but as a central, self-sustaining contributor to Mumbai's economic and social architecture and as a living model of urban resilience.





DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE WORK-INDUCED NIGHT-TIME THOUGHTS SCALE: IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM

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Abstract

Night-time thoughts significantly affect sleep quality, which in turn influences both individual health and organizational outcomes. This research addresses a critical yet underexplored aspect of employee well-being by developing the Work-Induced Night-time Thoughts Scale, specifically designed for office workers. Drawing on presleep arousal theory, the study identifies and measures three dimensions of night-time thoughts—worry, past embarrassing memories, and anticipatory anxiety—that contribute to cognitive arousal before sleep. A multi-study approach was employed. Study 1 conducted exploratory factor analysis to establish the scale's structure. Study 2 used confirmatory factor analysis alongside tests of reliability and construct validity. Study 3 established nomological validity, while Study 4 demonstrated the mediating role of sleep disturbance in the relationship between work-induced night-time thoughts and employee absenteeism. By unveiling the hidden cost of workplace-induced cognitive spillover into personal time, this research offers a scalable tool to monitor and manage employee well-being beyond office hours. The findings have significant implications for human resource and organizational policies, emphasizing the necessity to design work environments that acknowledge cognitive boundaries between work and home. The research bridges theory and practice by addressing a real-world challenge that affects workforce resilience and community well-being. It provides actionable insights for responsible leadership, contributing to the creation of organizations that balance performance with empathy—ensuring that business success is not achieved at the cost of human health.





EXPORT OR INVEST: AN EMPIRICAL EXPLORATION OF FINANCING CONSTRAINTS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION IN ASIAN ECONOMIES

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Abstract

This study delves into the interplay between financing constraints and the strategic trade-off between foreign direct investment (FDI) and exports as alternative routes to internationalization for a panel of Asian economies. Several studies (Bernard and Jensen, 2004; Melitz, 2003; Roberts and Tybout, 1997) suggest that firms venturing into foreign markets, whether through exports or FDI, face substantial upfront costs in establishing distribution networks and customising products for foreign demand. Consequently, only highly productive firms penetrate foreign markets (Chaney, 2016; Manova, 2013). FDI involves greater initial investment due to setting up subsidiaries abroad and incurring additional production costs, while exporting entails higher marginal costs from transportation and tariffs (Helpman et al., 2004). Financial constraints, arising from firm-specific or country-specific factors, therefore play a crucial role in influencing firms' decisions to enter foreign markets and in determining their choice between FDI and exports as internationalization strategies. We empirically investigate this relationship for a sample of Asian economies, many of which are emerging markets, to shed light on the role of financing factors in internationalization strategies. By focusing on macroeconomic variables that reflect financial constraints, this study explores whether countries with more developed financial systems rely more on FDI, while those with limited access to finance lean toward export-led strategies. The findings offer practical implications for policymakers in Asian economies aiming to expand diverse international business activities and contribute to a broader understanding of the dynamics influencing global trade patterns.





ENTREPRENEURIAL AMBIDEXTERITY IN VALUE CO-CREATION: B-SLR AND FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

The paper aims to understand entrepreneurial ambidexterity and the challenges entrepreneurs face in co-creation. Extensive research has been done in co-creation from a marketing and consumer behavior perspective. The value co-creation process involves multiple stakeholders with conflicting interests. Thus, it is a sensitive circumstantial environment, involving diverse stakeholders' objectives. Entrepreneurs must co-create with them and maintain an equitable balance to capture the optimum value. The presented study adopted a Bibliometric-Systematic Literature Review (B-SLR) to understand the available literature on the Scopus database. 108 "ABDC-A*" papers were shortlisted for in-depth analysis and gap spotting. This paper provides a conceptual framework and theoretical understanding of entrepreneurial ambidexterity in value co-creation with the help of a synthesis and critical review of articles. It also highlights the entrepreneurial ambiguity in the value co-creation process, the tussle of entrepreneurs to maintain balance among the stakeholders' interests, and ensuring maximum value capture. Most importantly, it sheds light on the fact that although value co-creation is a collective task, the entrepreneur has to be a key decision maker, facilitator, and understand the value proposition of stakeholders to increase their willingness and ability to co-create. Peripheral research is done addressing entrepreneurial ambidexterity in value co-creation. Hence, peripheral research is done. Further, it also provides a future research agenda regarding entrepreneurs' roles and challenges in co-creating value for different stakeholders with conflicting interests, and simultaneously, an attempt is made to contribute a conceptual framework.





INTEGRATING DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY IN EDTECH: A CASE STUDY OF SUPERMATHS

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Abstract

This paper explored the intersection of marketing strategy and operational execution in the context of personalized online math education for K12 students across India and the United States. Supermaths, founded in 2023, provides one-on-one math coaching tailored to students from Classes 9–10 in India and Pre-Algebra through Calculus 3 in the United States. The company aims to bridge learning gaps by offering conceptual clarity and measurable learning outcomes, differentiating itself through personalization and academic rigor. The internship involved dual responsibilities in marketing and operations. On the marketing front, the intern conducted in-depth market research and segment analysis to define user personas and understand learning behaviours and challenges across target geographies. The analysis involved psychographic profiling, content consumption patterns, and platform usage, leading to a clearer targeting strategy. One of the key initiatives was the design and execution of the “Make Maths Easy Again” campaign, a digital outreach effort that utilized storytelling, student testimonials, and demo session promotions. The campaign was designed to humanize math learning and improve lead engagement. Simultaneously, search engine optimization (SEO) techniques and social media strategies were deployed to enhance visibility and attract quality leads across platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube. A structured competitor gap analysis provided actionable insights into shortcomings in rival offerings, such as lack of tutor continuity and insufficient personalization. These insights informed the strategic positioning of Super maths as a student-centric, outcomes-driven platform. On the operations side, the intern contributed to streamlining lead follow-up processes by helping to create standard operating procedures (SOPs) that ensured consistent user experience. Additionally, performance dashboards were developed to track key performance indicators (KPIs), including conversion rates, tutor ratings, and campaign returns. These tools enabled the company to make real-time, data-backed decisions.

Advanced analytics techniques, including regression analysis, were applied to marketing expenditure and conversion data. This allowed the team to identify high-ROI channels and reallocate budgets for optimized performance—demonstrating how marketing data, when paired with operational insight, can drive sustainable growth.

This study underscores the importance of integrating marketing creativity with operational discipline in EdTech startups. It illustrates how business students can apply academic learning to real-world challenges, contributing meaningfully to an organization’s strategic goals. The paper highlights the transformative role of data, process innovation, and customer-centricity in building a scalable and impactful EdTech brand.





The findings offer valuable implications for educators, entrepreneurs, and marketers looking to navigate the evolving landscape of online education, especially in personalized learning models. The paper concludes with key takeaways for balancing innovation, analytics, and execution in early-stage companies





ENHANCING OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND STRATEGIC MARKETING IN EDTECH: A PROCESS-CENTRIC INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE AT SUPERMATHS

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the dual domains of operations and marketing, with a particular emphasis on business process optimization, performance measurement, and data-driven marketing alignment. Founded in 2023, Supermaths specializes in personalized mathematics education for K12 students, offering curriculum-aligned tutoring for Grades 9 and 10 in India and Pre-Algebra to Calculus 3 in the United States. The company's growth model is rooted in personalized academic delivery combined with scalable, process-driven systems. Recognizing that consistent service quality is pivotal to scalability, the internship concentrated on strengthening internal operational workflows and ensuring alignment between process and performance. The operational dimension of the internship revolved around mapping and optimizing core academic delivery workflows, including student onboarding, tutor allocation, assignment turnaround, and session feedback mechanisms. Working with department heads, existing workflows were evaluated for bottlenecks, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies. The output of this analysis was a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that brought consistency and clarity to day-to-day operations. A key deliverable was the development of over 10 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) designed to monitor academic operations in real time. Metrics included tutor response time, attendance ratio, assignment turnaround rates, and parent satisfaction scores. These KPIs were integrated into automated dashboards using Google Sheets and basic scripting, allowing managers to conduct weekly reviews and track performance trends, compliance, and exceptions. One of the standout achievements of the internship was a 40% reduction in tutor-student mapping time, achieved by piloting a streamlined allocation model. Additionally, escalation matrices and compliance tracking tools were introduced, creating a culture of accountability and measurable improvement. In parallel, the intern contributed to strategic marketing—focusing on U.S. market research, identifying low-performing math districts, and supporting targeted outreach strategies. A key initiative during the internship was the “Make Maths Easy Again” campaign, which utilized SEO, performance analytics, and content marketing to position Supermaths as a results-focused, parent-friendly platform. This campaign was informed by insights from curriculum mapping and proficiency data across several U.S. states. A regression analysis conducted on campaign spending vs. lead generation revealed a statistically significant positive relationship, confirming the effectiveness of recent marketing efforts and enabling refined budget allocation across channels. This paper demonstrates how integrating operational systems with data-backed marketing can drive scalable growth in early-stage EdTech ventures. The study provides valuable insight into how structured process enhancements and evidence-based decision-making can contribute to sustainable service delivery and competitive differentiation. The findings offer actionable implications for startups, educators, and business professionals working at the intersection of education, technology, and management.





LOCAL ICONS OR GLOBAL PHENOMS? EMERGENCE OF BRAND HERO WITHIN ONLINE DESTINATION BRAND COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

The concept of brand heroism has emerged as a compelling phenomenon in the digital age, particularly within online destination brand communities (Lin et al., 2023; Essamri et al., 2019). Destination brands are increasingly utilizing online platforms to cultivate co-creation and promote advocacy, as they have become the primary spaces for interaction, engagement, and expression (Liu et al., 2020; Kumar & Kaushik, 2017). The concept of brand heroism highlights the important role of dedicated community members who actively support and defend a brand, leading to a positive impact on brand perception and customer engagement (Gachassin et al., 2023; Karpen & Conduit, 2020). This phenomenon underscores the power of brand advocates in shaping how a brand is perceived and how customers engage with it. This study presents a comprehensive framework for understanding the emergence of brand heroes in online brand communities (ODBCs), rooted in brand capital theory, social identity theory and the psychology of heroism.

This research primarily aims to understand the impact of social capital on destination brand pride, examine the impact of destination brand pride on self-enhancement/self-transcendence, and ultimately investigate the emergence of brand hero because of these dynamics. Secondly, ethnocentrism and cosmopolitanism are analysed as moderators in the relationships between destination brand pride, self-enhancement, and self-transcendence. Data was collected through a cross-sectional survey of 500 respondents, who are active members of consumer-led destination brand communities. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and mediation and moderation analyses were utilised to explore the interaction roles of ethnocentrism and cosmopolitanism. This study addresses several gaps in the literature. First, while research on brand communities has extensively examined customer engagement, loyalty, and advocacy, there remains limited exploration of how social capital can ascend towards brand heroism specifically within ODBC. Second, few studies have investigated the psychological and social mechanisms that underpin destination brand love, however the role of self-transcendence and self-enhancement is still unknown for forging brand heroes within these communities. Finally, this research contributes to a better understanding of how dual identity comprising ethnocentrism and cosmopolitanism interacts with destination pride to evoke such emotive states. The findings offer valuable insights for online tourism service providers, policymakers, and community managers, guiding them in developing effective strategies to foster brand loyalty and community engagement through the concept of the brand hero.



VIDEO LENGTH, TONE, AND TYPE: WHAT DRIVES TOURIST RESPONSE

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Abstract

Short-form videos are a major tool in tourism marketing, yet the combined effects of structure, tone, and content on viewer response remain unclear. This study examines how video length, emotional tone, and tourism type influence tourist attitudes, engagement, and travel intention through psychological mechanisms.

Study 1 ($N = 201$) used a 2×2 design with video length (short vs. long) and tourism type (adventure vs. religious). Short and adventure videos produced stronger attitude, arousal, and intention, with the short–adventure pairing yielding the highest persuasion. Mediation analysis showed that sensation seeking explained these effects, while religiosity had a smaller role, affecting only attitude toward the video.

Study 2 ($N = 210$) crossed emotional tone (excitement vs. serenity) with tourism type. Emotional tone alone showed limited main effects, but its interaction with tourism type was significant: excitement strengthened adventure responses, while serenity enhanced religious ones. Narrative transportation mediated tone effects on attitude, arousal, and intention, and also moderated the tourism type–intention link, amplifying persuasion under high immersion.

Together, the studies show that persuasion in short-form tourism videos depends on the fit between structure, tone, and content, highlighting the value of emotional coherence and immersive storytelling in digital destination marketing.



INVESTOR BEHAVIOUR IN THE CRYPTOCURRENCY MARKET: INSIGHTS INTO RISK, VOLATILITY, AND DECISION-MAKING

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Abstract

The rise of cryptocurrencies across financial markets has brought attention to their unpredictable nature and their efficiency. Using various GARCH models throughout 2015–2024, this study checks how different types of information play a role in shaping the volatility of cryptocurrency returns. The outcomes highlight that having the same information between traders strongly affects market volatility, since both ARCH (α) and GARCH (β) are statistically significant at the 5% level across every model. Together, the coefficients exceed one, which means the economy remains unstable over a long period. Asymmetric information was not found to be significant, which means bad or good news did not have a noticeable effect, revealing no leverage effects and a form of market efficiency that is not strong. By using the GARCH (1,1) model, it was found that a positive risk premium in the mean equation does not necessarily mean higher risks result in larger rewards. It is clear from these results that cryptocurrencies may mostly be used as speculative investments and means to protect against price changes, not as standard money. With rising vulnerability to rapid changes and bubble episodes, cryptocurrencies are seen as good choices for portfolios during economic uncertainty.



THE INFLUENCE OF ANALYST COMMUNICATION ON RETAIL INVESTOR IMPULSIVE TRADING: A PLS-SEM APPROACH

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Abstract

Retail investors usually make investment decisions based on messages received from brokerage firms and financial analysts. Baik et al. (2024) further explain how the vocal quality in the messages, especially during earnings calls, causes stock market reactions both immediately and in the near term. We extend these findings by studying the effect of paralinguistic cues of financial analysts on retail investors' Willingness to Trade. For this study, we tested a conceptual model that hypothesized the role of paralinguistic cues associated with confidence, which is subsequently mediated by competence and likeability, resulting in retail investors' willingness to trade. Data were collected from 249 retail investors after showing them the video of a financial analyst giving stock recommendations.

The analysis for the study was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (smartPLS v.4) on data validated for normality and we found that iteratively refined measurement model had good reliability (AVE=0.54). The study shows significant positive association between hypothesized paths. Paralinguistic cues is reported to have ($\beta=0.639$) positive association with Perceived Confidence (PCON), in turn, PCON positively shaped analyst Likeability ($\beta=0.445$) and perceived competence (PCOM) ($\beta=0.472$). Both Likeability ($\beta=0.220$) and PCOM ($\beta=0.131$) subsequently fostered willingness to trade. The direct effect of confidence on willingness to trade was negligible ($\beta=-0.054$), indicating mediation. The outcomes of this study contribute theoretically to improving our understanding of how the Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion may explain the negligible direct impact of confidence on willingness to trade. The results of this study will also be helpful for financial advisors/firms influencing the investment decisions of retail investors.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE ADOPTION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) BASED ROBO-ADVISORS OF INVESTMENT DECISION MAKING IN INDIA

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Abstract

Recently, financial technology has been proven to be a transformative initiative for the finance industry in the fields of banking, insurance, and financial markets. Alongside, there is a development in the artificial intelligence (AI) solutions, primarily in the stock trading evaluation and personal investment management. AI-driven robo-advisors have become one of the dominant gateways to providing automated, algorithmic financial planning without the need for much human interaction. Nevertheless, robo-advisors offer automated financial investment solutions as an alternative to hiring financial experts or advisors. This paper aims to investigate investors' willingness to adopt AI robo-advisors in investment decision-making in India. This study is grounded on the UTAUT model, considering factors, namely, anthropomorphism (AN), technology literacy (TL), performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), facilitating conditions (FC), social influences (SI), and perceived trust (PT). The primary data of the study were collected through both online and offline surveys using a structured questionnaire. The results of the study confirm that there is a significant determination of these variables on the robo-advisory adoption in investment decision-making. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing key findings and future research directions which beneficial to the stakeholders in the finance industry.



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MOBILE PAYMENTS: THE ROLE OF SERVICE EFFICIENCY, CO-CREATION, AND USER THOUGHT PROCESSING

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Abstract

Purpose: The increasing adoption of mobile payment (M-payment) systems has significantly transformed the landscape of digital transactions, offering convenience and speed. However, user retention and continuous usage remain pressing challenges. This study aims to explore how users' attitudes towards M-payment systems influence their reuse intentions. Specifically, it investigates the cognitive and behavioral factors that shape user engagement and drive sustained usage.

Design/methodology/approach: The study extends the Technology Continuance Model (TCM) by incorporating cognitive and participatory dimensions, namely, M-payment service efficiency (MSE), user co-creation participation (UCP), and user thought processing (UTP). A structured survey was conducted among 365 active M-payment users, and structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze the direct and indirect relationships among the variables influencing M-payment continuance behavior.

Findings: The empirical results highlight that MSE, UCP, and UTP significantly enhance users' positive attitudes toward M-payment platforms. These positive attitudes, in turn, foster strong reuse intentions. The study demonstrates that when users perceive M-payment services as efficient, feel involved in the value co-creation process, and experience cognitive benefits through meaningful engagement, they are more likely to continue using these platforms.

Research limitations/implications: This research provides valuable insights for M-payment service providers, policymakers, and technology developers by underlining the importance of service quality, participatory experiences, and cognitive engagement in driving long-term user retention.

Originality/value: While prior research has mainly focused on functional or technical factors, this study uniquely integrates cognitive processing and co-creation participation into the TCM framework, offering a more holistic understanding of M-payment reuse behavior.



ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the adoption intention of financial technology (fintech) namely digital financial services (DFS) for sustainable business performance (SBP) of micro women-entrepreneurs in India. Specifically, this research examines how women micro-entrepreneurs are transmitting from traditional payment systems to digital payment systems by leveraging innovative fintech tools to improve their business operations. The study's theoretical framework is grounded on the extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model. The primary data collected from 246 women micro-entrepreneurs through interview schedule. The results of the study confirm that variables namely performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and perceived trust determine the adoption of digital financial services among women entrepreneurs. But digital financial literacy and facilitating conditions are not significant. However, the adoption of DFS significantly influences the sustainable performance of women entrepreneurs. The findings of the study contributes to the existing body of literature towards digital-payment solutions for micro-businesses, within the context of the unorganized sector in particular and policy decision-making in general.



TEXTUAL CONGRUENCE IN DIGITAL FOOD CONTENT

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Abstract

With the proliferation of food-related content on various social media platforms (e.g., YouTube, Instagram, TikTok), creators are striving harder than ever before to make a lasting impression through a strategic combination of compelling captions and recipe text, driven by the relentless pursuit of visibility and engagement with viewers. Despite the growing importance of captions and recipe texts in establishing a coherent digital food content narrative, there exist limited scholarly efforts to examine the downstream effects of textual content congruence. Towards this, we investigate intra-textual congruence or incongruence between captions and recipe texts in recipe content generated by top Indian food creators. Particularly, we look into how semantic alignment between video titles/captions and underlying recipe content influences user engagement, topic generation, and craving index. Using Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) and Processing Fluency, we investigate how congruent vs. incongruent captions and recipe text (coded using the SWAP nutrition system) influence user behavior and cognitive reactions. To achieve this, we collated and analysed a unique dataset of 21 Indian YouTube food channels with over one million subscribers and at least 500 videos. Subtitles were classified as "healthy" or "tasty" using predetermined keywords, and their alignment with SWAP healthfulness codes (green = healthy, yellow = moderate, red = not healthy) was assessed using a congruence score ranging from 1.0 (full match) to 0.0 (no match), with fractional values indicating partial overlap. NLP technologies (VADER, Type-Token Ratio, and readability indices) were used to evaluate sentiment, craving-related language, and lexical patterns in comments. "Tasty-Tasty" and "Neutral-Neutral" are used to describe situations in which both the caption and the SWAP-based predicted categorization are "Tasty" or "Neutral". Accordingly, we found that high congruence, particularly in "tasty-tasty" and "Neutral-Neutral" pairings, drives increased engagement and craving responses. Meanwhile, for incongruent conditions, negative (vs positive) incongruence results in reduced engagement and evoked cravings. This study significantly contributes to existing efforts by initiating a discourse on a rarely discussed, yet significant, intra-textual congruence phenomenon. Also, we operationalise the Craving Index, a novel metric for detecting emotional food cues in user comments. These findings have practical implications for digital content providers, health communicators, and marketers, underscoring the need for semantic consistency in food-related media narratives.





INVESTING BEYOND BIAS: ROLE OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION, NORMATIVE INFLUENCE, AND PERCEIVED GENDER BARRIERS ON INVESTMENT CONTINUANCE INTENTION

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Abstract

Purpose: India's evolving economic landscape has increasingly encouraged investor participation in the financial sector to optimize investment returns. However, within the framework of a patriarchal society characterized by systemic gender discrimination, it is essential to examine the socio-cultural and psychological constraints that sustain gender disparities in financial participation despite official data reflecting positive trends. This study explores determinants of investment continuance intention among investors in two major Indian metropolitan cities.

Design/methodology/approach: The study extends the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) and analyzes the investment continuance intention of 345 Indian investors using structural equation modeling (SEM) to explore direct and mediating relationships.

Findings: The findings indicate that perceived gender barriers, access to information, and normative influence significantly shape investor attitudes, thereby reinforcing investment continuance intentions. Normative influence is extensively explored, demonstrating its significant impact on gender discrimination perception, investor attitudes, and investment continuance intention.

Research limitations/implications: This research contributes valuable insights to the existing literature by examining key drivers of investment continuance intention and highlighting investors' attitudes as a critical factor in behavioral finance. These insights offer critical implications for policymakers, financial analysts, educators, and Indian society in promoting inclusive financial participation.

Originality/value: Given Indian women's reliance on men in their lives for financial decision-making, the study broadens the understanding of gender barriers in the financial sector by illustrating its effects on investor behavior. By integrating social and psychological dimensions, this research enhances the behavioral finance literature by examining the less explored impact of gender disparity on investing behavior.





MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN STOCK MARKET RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF TRENDS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an important factor pushing stock markets' research further, such that there has been a substantial acceleration in scientific works consecrated to that area of research over few last years. There is however a limited systematic review combining available evidence in the stock market research. Therefore, this article provides a systematic bibliometric overview for the mapping of the landscape of AI applications in stock market research. Through mixed-method, relevant papers are retrieved and collected from 308 articles published from 1996-2025 Scopus database to explore the trends, pivotal contributors, and emerging research based on the bibliometric tools (VOSviewer, Bibliometrix r studio). A qualitative review of several studies accompanied the quantitative one that allowed to realise the primary AI methods, such as machine learning, deep learning, natural language processing (NLP), and computer vision. The results of the study highlights the broad application of AI for forecasting, sentiment analysis, algorithmic trading, fraud and portfolio management. In addition, new technology applications such as blockchain and digital twins were identified as possible new for the application of integrated AI. This review paper provides overview of the application of AI in stock market research in general and contribute to the body of knowledge and future research directions for researchers, academics and policy makers in particular.





ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND VALUATION TRENDS IN A LEADING POWER SECTOR FIRM

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Abstract

India's power sector stands at a pivotal juncture, transitioning from coal's dominance to a renewable-powered horizon. As of April 9, 2025, the nation's 442 GW grid delivered 1,618 billion units (BU) in FY24, with coal commanding 48% of capacity (205 GW) and 70% of output (1,132 BU). Renewables, at 43% of capacity (191 GW, with 92 GW solar and 47 GW wind), contribute 12% but are gaining ground fast. With peak demand hitting 250 GW in 2024 and projected to soar to 458 GW by 2032 fueled by industries (44%, ~660 BU), homes (25%, ~380 BU), and farms (19%, ~286 BU) this report unpacks the financial prowess, valuation trends, and sustainability strides of Grid-India and IREDA, the linchpins of India's energy transformation. Grid-India: The Grid's Resilient Anchor Grid-India, the nerve centre of India's power transmission, oversees 180,000 km of lines, schedules 4,000 MW daily, and powers ₹50,000 crore in annual electricity trades. Its cutting edge AI and forecasting tools have slashed outages by 30% since 2012, taming demand spikes of 50-75 GW during extreme weather. Yet, the sector's Achilles' heel DISCOMs, saddled with ₹5 lakh crore in debt and ₹45,000 crore in annual losses from 15% transmission inefficiencies threatens progress. Grid-India's financial stability, rooted in regulated tariff revenues, is robust but capped by its unlisted, government-owned structure, keeping valuations steady. A ₹9.15 lakh crore grid upgrade plan signals bold infrastructure growth but unlocking potential demands DISCOM reforms and expanded cross-border trade, like the 1,500 MW to Bangladesh. These steps could electrify Grid-India's operational and financial future. IREDA: Igniting Renewable Revolution IREDA, a Navratana powerhouse, is turbocharging India's green energy surge with a ₹46,670 crore market cap as of April 2025. Its financials dazzle: FY25 revenue soared 36% to ₹6,742 crore, with net profit climbing 27% to ₹1,699 crore. Earnings per share hit ₹6.32, and return on equity reached 16.54%, showcasing stellar profitability. Yet, a 6.31 debt-to-equity ratio and weak interest coverage signal leverage risks. Trading at 4.54 times book value and a P/E ratio of 27.73, IREDA's premium valuation reflects investor faith in renewables. Loan disbursements skyrocketed 41% to ₹17,236 crore in Q3 FY25, with 73% fuelling private green projects. Challenges like 1.35% non-performing assets and legal hurdles, such as the Gensol Engineering bankruptcy, loom but don't dim IREDA's momentum. Sustainability and Growth Horizon India's renewable sector is on fire, eyeing 500 GW by 2030 with ₹24.43 trillion in investments. IREDA's ₹112.9 billion in H1 FY25 green loans powers solar, wind, and battery storage (BESS), while Grid-India's grid modernization ensures renewable integration. Both align with India's 2070 net-zero goal, but coal's grip and DISCOM debts pose risks. Accelerating BESS and regional trade will fortify the grid, while IREDA's cost-effective financing drives green scalability. Conclusion Grid-India and IREDA are electrifying India's energy shift. Grid-India's steady finances need DISCOM reforms to spark growth, while IREDA's explosive performance and lofty valuations herald a renewable boom. With strategic investments and bold policies, both are poised to power a sustainable, thriving future.





A SPATIAL ANALYSIS BASED DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR TARGETED DISABILITY OUTREACH

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Abstract

With the implementation of the Unique Disability ID (UDID) card scheme in India, a national repository is created to ensure the efficient implementation of the welfare schemes and benefits for the persons with disabilities. In this regard, the scheme aims to assist the government in developing and implementing targeted interventions wherein the implementation is done at the district level. For instance, the district administration is involved in interventions such as conducting medical camps and providing support services among others. However, these services are often provided without the knowledge of the needs of particular regions, leading to inefficient allocation of resources and gaps in outreach to those in need. Leveraging the UDID database, this work develops a decision support system to assist the district administration in selecting optimal locations for targeted medical camps and support services by considering the case of the Erode district in Tamil Nadu. It presents an innovative pincode- level spatial decision support system that transforms raw disability records of a district into actionable insights and an engaging visual narrative. The system reveals clusters of regions in need and provides authorities with control to understand the needs of any particular region across a wide variety of disabilities and other factors. It can also help to reshape planning strategies and policy making in practice. Implementation of this support system can bring data-driven resource allocation into practice, promising more equitable and targeted services for the disabled community.





PROMOTER SHARE PLEDGING AND ESG PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM THE INDIAN MARKET

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Abstract

Utilising ESG scores from Bloomberg for Indian firms between 2014 and 2022, this study investigates the relationship between promoters' stock pledging and Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance in the Indian corporate setting. The findings suggest that promoters' stock pledging negatively affects ESG performance, supporting the managerial risk aversion hypothesis. Due to the margin call risk, firms reduce their investment toward long-term value-creating activities such as CSR expenditure, R&D expenditure, and dividend payout. Additionally, we found that ownership concentration moderates this relationship, with higher promoter holdings weakening the negative impact of promoters' stock pledging on ESG performance. However, the negative relationship is exacerbated by financial constraints, as these firms prioritise immediate returns above investment in ESG activities. To address any possible endogeneity issues, the study additionally uses a 2SLS technique, which validates the result's robustness. These findings highlight the necessity of regulatory frameworks to improve transparency and sustainability outcomes, and they have important implications for corporate governance practices and legislation, especially in promoter-driven organisations.



UNDERSTANDING DRIVERS OF WILLINGNESS TO PAY PREMIUM FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

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Abstract

The growing consumer demand for environmentally sustainable products along with push from United Nations (UN) have motivated companies to invest in sustainable solutions. However, this demand may not translate into actual sales due to premium pricing associated with sustainable products. Accordingly, this study aims at understanding factors that might enhance willingness to pay premium (WPP) for sustainable products. Drawing on Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory, we investigate whether customers' values could enhance their WPP via serial mediation of sustainability beliefs and personal norms. Accordingly, we subjected data from 286 customers to structural equation modelling. Additionally, we also tested for moderating effects of sustainable product innovativeness on WPP. The analysis revealed a mixed bag of results with few hypotheses being supported while others not. The findings contribute to the VBN literature by investigating individual values beyond typical environmental value. Further, by delving upon mediating and moderating relationships, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of WPP in a crucial domain of sustainable products. For managers and policy makers too, the results provide important insights in terms of boosting the factors that may enhance WPP and thus adoption for sustainable products. With this increase in adoption and the economies of scale kicking in, the prices of sustainable products might be more affordable in long term, leading to win-win situation for all. Finally, the novelty of this study lies in its direct alignment with the UN's 12th sustainable development Goal, i.e., 'ensure responsible consumption and production'.



PROFITABILITY DETERMINANTS ANALYSIS OF THE INDIAN UNORGANISED MANUFACTURING SECTOR

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Abstract

Given that the goal of this study was to examine the influence of different factors on a firm's profitability, we designed a model with three categories of profitability determinants: firm-specific, industry-specific, and macroeconomic. The analysis was performed on the state-wise Unorganised Manufacturing Sector in India during the 1993-94 to 2015-16 period. Since the designed model is formulated in a way that encompasses the dynamic aspect of profitability. The Ordinary List Square Method dynamic panel estimator was applied. Formulating such a model adds to the existing literature if one takes into account that a dynamic analysis of the drivers of profitability has not been done using data from the Indian UMS. The results of the conducted analysis revealed that a firm's size, labour cost, and industry concentration, as well as GDP growth and inflation, have a significant influence on a firm's profitability in the Indian States.



FROM INFORMATION TO ACTION: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF INFORMATION TYPE AND SOURCE ON CITIZENS' WASTE SEPARATION ATTITUDE, INTENTION, AND BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Asian Nations face an evident challenge of increasing waste generation and poor waste management due to improper waste disposal (World Bank, 2018). Experts suggest reducing waste generation at its source as the most effective way to address waste management issues (Agovino et al., 2018). Households are a vital source of waste generation, with strong waste-separation intentions and attitudes and low levels of waste-separating behavior (WSB) (Zhang et al., 2019). Appropriate information and communication are required to educate and persuade citizens toward WSB, but mere information provisioning is not enough to encourage citizens to sort waste. The content of information communicated, the authority/credibility of the communicator, and different communication resources play a pivotal role in promoting citizens' WSB. This study proposes a theoretical model based on the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework and Communication Infrastructure Theory to address this gap by conducting an experiment with 240 households of Dehradun Smart City, India, with the collaboration of a locally active non-governmental organization - Waste Warriors, and Dehradun Municipal Corporation. The study explores the relationship between information message types (infographic and animation) and circulation levels (micro, meso, and macro) to better understand citizens' self-efficacy, civic attitude, intention, and civic behavior towards waste separation. The results show that when animation is circulated at a macro level, citizens' self-efficacy, attitude, intention, and behavior are higher. The interaction effect provides strong implications for managers, government, and policymakers to understand how different message formats and sources affect and shape different human emotions, cognition, psychological, and behavioral reactions.



FUNDING DETERMINANTS FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE: EVALUATING THE MODERATING EFFECT OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

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Abstract

The present study delves into the critical discourse surrounding entrepreneurial finance by examining the influence of funding accessibility on the perceived performance of early-stage entrepreneurs in India, while also investigating the moderating role of government support. In the context of constrained financial environments, particularly prevalent in developing economies like India, the ability of nascent ventures to access adequate funding has emerged as a pivotal determinant of their growth trajectories and long-term viability (Kerr et al., 2014). Anchored in the theoretical underpinnings of the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991), Capital Theory (Schultz, 1961), and Institutional Theory (North, 1990), this study operationalizes a quantitative approach to assess the hypothesized relationships. Utilizing data collected from 387 early-stage entrepreneurial ventures, the analysis employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SPSS and AMOS software to test both direct and interaction effects. The empirical findings indicate that funding accessibility exerts a statistically significant and positive influence on the perceived entrepreneurial performance of early-stage ventures. Furthermore, government support—conceptualized as an institutional moderator—was found to strengthen the positive association between funding accessibility and entrepreneurial performance, thus emphasizing the synergistic role of policy-level interventions in fostering startup success. The study offers substantial contributions to the literature on entrepreneurial finance by empirically validating the moderating function of institutional support mechanisms. It also presents critical implications for policymakers, suggesting that proactive governmental engagement in designing tailored funding schemes and support systems can amplify the developmental outcomes of entrepreneurial initiatives in emerging markets.





BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: PREPARING INDIAN MANAGEMENT GRADUATES FOR SUCCESS IN THE EVOLVING FMCG JOB MARKET AND GIG ECONOMY

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Abstract

India's fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry offers a vibrant labor market that is always changing to meet the needs of customers and keep up with technological developments. India has more than 35,000 companies engaged in the retail of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), including both large and mid-sized enterprises. These businesses, which range from established behemoths to creative start-ups, make substantial contributions to the regional and national economies. In order to prepare management graduates for successful transitions from education to employment in this context, the research aims to investigate the crucial intersection between academic programs, industry requirements—specifically, employability skills and competencies required—and career guidance initiatives. Digital literacy, adaptability, and critical thinking are among the competencies that FMCG companies prioritize. There is a growing demand for graduates who are proficient in data analytics and digital marketing, reflecting the sector's shift towards digital transformation.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has sped up changes in consumer behavior, making new e-commerce and supply chain management skills necessary. The study uses a mixed-methods data analysis approach and focuses on the Indian job market after the pandemic. Additionally, research suggests that career counseling programs are inadequate in preparing recent graduates for the gig economy. In the post-COVID era, the gig economy has grown in popularity due to its flexible and varied job opportunities. Therefore, educational institutions must incorporate gig economy ideas into their career services to close this gap and provide students thinking about this route with resources and specialized guidance.



VIRTUALLY ATTACHED: HOW AI INFLUENCERS TRANSFORM DESTINATION DESIRE INTO TRAVEL ACTION

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Abstract

The emergence of AI-powered virtual influencers is reshaping the digital tourism landscape, offering immersive and emotionally resonant interactions that redefine consumer-brand engagement. However, there remains limited empirical insight into the psychological mechanisms that translate virtual appeal into tangible travel behaviors. Addressing this gap, the present study integrates Place Attachment Theory (PAT) with Virtual Identity Theory (VIT) to investigate the antecedents and mediators influencing travel booking intentions in AI-influenced tourism marketing. Adopting a structured quantitative design, data were collected from 428 respondents via an online survey to examine how perceived virtual influencer authenticity, emotional engagement, and place attachment affect travel intention. The study further explores the mediating role of trust and parasocial relationships, along with the moderating effect of self-exploration tendencies to capture individual-level behavioral outcomes. The findings reveal that authenticity and emotional engagement significantly enhance trust and parasocial bonding, which positively mediate the relationship between place attachment and travel intention. Moreover, consumers with higher self-exploration tendencies demonstrate stronger psychological alignment, amplifying the effect of virtual influencers on decision-making. This study contributes to the growing literature on AI influencer marketing and digital destination branding by unpacking the nuanced cognitive-emotional pathways that drive tourism behavior. The insights offer actionable implications for content creators, marketers, tourism boards, and policymakers to leverage virtual influencers as strategic assets in fostering digital desire, enhancing emotional resonance, and ultimately converting engagement into bookings within an increasingly immersive digital tourism ecosystem.



BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY IN THE REMITTANCE INDUSTRY: A BIBLIOMETRICS-BASED VISUALISATION ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The goal of the present study is to investigate the bibliometric corpus of research articles on blockchain technology and its role in the remittance industry. Bibliometric analysis is used to study the current state of the art and dynamics of research work published in a particular area of subject. A total of 109 papers were selected using a comprehensive bibliometric protocol (developed by Khanra et al., 2020) of the time span of 2010- 2025. The VOSviewer software tool was used to produce the bibliometric results. The analysis of the findings revealed a deeper understanding of the topic, including top contributing authors, also author keyword co-occurrence, and authors' keywords and index keywords overlay. It was observed from the analysis that a high volume of the research was initiated mainly in the developed nations. The trend shows growth in 2017. The current study involves an original investigation of the literature pertaining to the topic. The findings of this study advance the understanding of the existing state-of-the-art and future road of research on blockchain technology's application in the remittance industry. This study also suggests the scope of the research, recommended policies, and social impact.





TURNING THE TABLES: HOW MNEs ARE SPRINGBOARDING TO CAPTURE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL GROWTH IN INDIA VIA CVC

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Abstract

We examine the relationship between financial leverage, growth opportunities, and cross-border corporate venture capital (CVC). CVC is an instrumental growth and learning mode for established firms, yet the understanding of CVC is limited to developed economies. This study aims to bridge that gap by studying the phenomenon of MNEs investing in new ventures in emerging markets. We construct a comprehensive dataset of all the CVC investors in India, from 2010-2022. Cross-country, longitudinal analysis of CVC investments in India reveals heterogeneity among domestic and foreign firms. We find that foreign firms are less likely than domestic firms to make a CVC investment in general. However, as leverage increases, foreign firms considerably ramp up their CVC investments. Our analyses show that low-growth foreign firms use the CVC option more with increasing leverage. The results suggest that when faced with low growth prospects, financially constrained MNEs may use CVC as a “springboard” to access external growth options in emerging economies. We reinterpret the traditional springboard perspective through the market/opportunity-seeking lens to explain that MNEs springboard to high-growth emerging markets when facing financial and growth constraints from their portfolio of foreign investments. Hence, we offer new insights into how CVC serves as a tool for MNEs’ market-seeking expansion in the face of growth constraints, extending the generalizability of the springboard theory beyond its original emerging market firm context.





BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN THE INDIAN HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to thoroughly review the existing and available literature at the intersection of digital technologies and the Indian healthcare sector through a comprehensive bibliometric analysis. A total of 1285 research articles published between 2018 and 2025 were examined to identify key trends and developments. Bibliometric tools, such as VOSviewer and Biblioshiny, were employed to create bibliographic maps and visualize networks, highlighting the most influential authors, prominent articles, leading institutions, annual publication trends, and contributing countries. The analysis revealed a 15.6% annual growth rate in publications, with China and India leading the research output. Deep learning was the most frequently used keyword, followed by human and machine learning. Network analysis highlights strong core collaborations and scattered contributors, whereas thematic analysis emphasizes the dominance of Artificial Intelligence and blockchain in shaping Indian healthcare research. This study offers valuable perspectives on the worldwide research environment concerning digital health in India, emphasizing publishing results, co-authorship trends, national partnerships, and keyword co-occurrences. This study contributes to the understanding of the evolution and impact of digital technologies on shaping Indian healthcare research. Finally, the outcomes of this study can be used by future researchers, policymakers, and industry practitioners as the foundation of digital technologies in the Indian Healthcare Sector.





EMPOWERING THE MARGINALIZED: A DESIGN-THINKING APPROACH TOWARDS REDESIGNING SOCIETAL FUTURES

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Abstract

Introduction: Children from disadvantaged families leave secondary school due to poor academic performance that impacts their continuous education. Students have inadequate knowledge of fundamental subjects that dilute the significance of education system and impact the growth of these families and eventually negates societal development. The study includes the case of Stand n Stride, an NGO, working for underprivileged students, they started in 2016 with 12 children and are presently educating more than 250 children. The study will explore the transformation of marginalized children's lives by increasing their access to education and reducing drop-out rates.

Research Objectives: i) Recognize and recommend effective human-centered design interventions for problem solving in not-for-profit organizations. ii) Recommend research-based strategies to create a sustainable business model for social enterprises.

Research Methodology: This study uses a positivist epistemic approach that integrates Yin's case study methodology with Eisenhardt's theory-building method. SnS serves as the inquiry unit, with data gathered through semi-structured interviews with stakeholders (owners, students, parents, and teachers) and observations.

Proposed framework: The Double Diamond structures the innovation process into four phases-First, the discovery phase explores the motivations, challenges, and perspectives of the founders and stakeholders. Second, the define phase articulates SnS's evolution from inception to expansion, identifying core challenges. Third, the development phase analyses stakeholder partnerships and capacity-building initiatives. Last, the delivery phase evaluates the SnS business model from the perspective of sustainability.

This research is currently work-in progress. Results and analysis will be aligned with the SDG 4 & SDG 10.





ETHICAL RESONANCE FRAMEWORK: STEERING TRANSFORMATIVE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE THROUGH OB AND HRM PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL EQUITY

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Abstract

The privatisation of education prioritizes profitability over ethical and equitable development, deepening social inequalities especially in stratified nations like India. This study introduces Ethical resonance framework (ERF), a conceptual model that intertwines Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management to reorient and reimagine educational institutions driving them towards social impact, prioritizing the ethical and emotional dimensions of the organisation.

ERF fuses elements of Organisational Behaviour such as motivation, group dynamics, positive affect and emotional culture with Human Resource Management strategies such as diversity and inclusivity training and equitable access.

While ERF is developed for the domain of education, its core ideas can be applied to sectors like public health care and non-profits. ERF prioritizes intangible outcomes such as ethical character, social democratisation, ethical leadership and human dignity instead of efficiency driven metrics. This paper also advocates for the role of state's intervention in regulating private education to align with social equity goals and to empower the marginalised sections of the society.

At its core, ERF aims to bridge the gap between management theory and institutional practices. It contributes to OB and HRM literature through a transformative approach reasserting management's potential to influence structural change driven by ethical intent and inclusive design.





BEYOND TASTE: EXPLORING INFORMATION DIMENSIONS IN DINE-IN AND DELIVERY REVIEWS

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Abstract

Online reviews have become a crucial aspect of the customer decision-making process in the restaurant industry, influencing 88% of diners, with 60% viewing them as the most important factor in selecting a restaurant (Tripadvisor, 2022). While prior research has explored how surface-level features like review length, valence, and source credibility affect perceived helpfulness, it often treats reviews as unidimensional function and overlooks the rich informational content embedded in the text (Risselada et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019; Zhai et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2025). Moreover, existing work primarily focuses on Western markets, offering limited insights into emerging economies like India, where online review practices and consumer behaviour differ significantly.

To address this gap, we analyzed 3.2 million reviews from Zomato across 18 Indian cities to investigate how four information dimensions: cognitive, affective, sensory, and social, will impact perceived review helpfulness. We applied linguistic analysis, sentiment analysis, and topic modeling within a multi-method framework. Our findings reveal that cognitive, sensory, and social content enhances helpfulness, while affective content tends to reduce it. We further the understanding while considering the moderation effect of service format (Dine-in vs Ordering) and Sentiment Polarities (Negative vs Positive). Moderation analysis shows that sensory and cognitive cues are more impactful in dine-in reviews, whereas affective and social cues behave differently across sentiment polarities and service contexts.

This research contributes to the online review literature by unpacking the multidimensional nature of review content in shaping consumer decision-making. It also offers practical insights for platforms and restaurant managers to optimize review formats and presentation strategies for improved consumer trust and engagement in diverse service contexts.





FROM LOCAL LINKAGES TO GLOBAL NETWORKS: THE ROLE OF DOMESTIC SOURCING IN SHAPING GVC PARTICIPATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of domestic sourcing, which includes both domestic insourcing and outsourcing, in shaping firm-level participation in Global Value Chains (GVCs), using panel data from the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) for the period from 2010 to 2019. While prior literature emphasises foreign linkages, for example, FDI and global sourcing, we highlight domestic supply networks as critical enablers of GVC integration. Using probit and IV-probit models, we find that domestic sourcing significantly increases the likelihood of GVC participation. Further, we check the channels through which sourcing facilitates GVC participation and find that fragmentation and switching costs act as key mechanisms for domestic outsourcing, while absorptive capacity and government aid help to take advantage of domestic insourcing. The results are robust across firm size, skill intensity, and technology intensity. The findings have important policy implications for industrial upgrading, suggesting that strengthening local supplier ecosystems can serve as a viable pathway toward inclusive and sustained integration into the global value chain.





FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE: THE ROLE OF GOVERNANCE IN SHAPING CORPORATE BIODIVERSITY DISCLOSURE UNDER SDG 15 IN EMERGING ASIAN NATIONS

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Abstract

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of biodiversity disclosure practices by firms in emerging Asian countries and investigates the influence of external (country-level) and internal (firm-level) governance mechanisms on corporate biodiversity reporting under Sustainable Development Goal 15 (SDG 15). Drawing on 1,800 firm-year observations from 2016–17 to 2021–22 across India, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand, the study evaluates biodiversity disclosure using a content analysis technique. Biodiversity-specific indicators from the GRI-2016 Standards are aligned with relevant SDG 15 targets, namely, SDG 15.1, SDG 15.2, and SDG 15.5, to develop disclosure scores. Findings indicate a consistent improvement in both the level and quality of biodiversity disclosures over the years, lending support to stakeholder theory. Among the targets, SDG 15.2 consistently records the highest levels of disclosure. Employing a panel data Tobit model, the study reveals that both national governance quality and strong corporate governance significantly enhance firms' biodiversity disclosure practices under SDG 15. Furthermore, the presence of a formal biodiversity policy at the firm level is identified as a key driver of improved disclosure. Robustness checks using fixed effects regression and instrumental variable two-stage least squares (IV-2SLS) models further validate these findings. The study contributes uniquely by examining the dual influence of country-level governance and corporate governance structures on SDG 15 related biodiversity disclosure practices in the context of emerging Asian economies, offering practical implications for policymakers and corporate decision-makers aiming to strengthen biodiversity reporting frameworks.





DRIVING SOCIAL IMPACT THROUGH FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT: A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SHRIRAM FINANCE BORROWERS IN RURAL BIHAR

Samar Reyaz

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Abstract

In this day and age, social impact through financial empowerment is progressively acknowledged in India as a catalyst for rural transformation. Financial Inclusion through convenient credit, allows individuals to gain assets and get into entrepreneurship that further helps in improving the quality of their lives. This paper aims to explore the psychological and social outcome of vehicle finance rendered by Shriram Finance to rural customers. The researcher has undertaken a primary study in the five districts of Bihar (Kishanganj, Siwan, Gopalganj, Arwal, and Hajipur) and applies Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory and Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior. Hence, the researcher analyses "how access to vehicle loans shapes psychological autonomy, entrepreneurial conflict, and social adaptability." The research reveals that financial inclusion through aimed vehicle lending remarkably improves borrowers' self-efficacy and nurtures confidence in managing business and personal finances. By allowing flexible repayment options and supportive customer service, we noticed a reduction in financial stress that diminished debt and business risk-related anxieties. Also, vehicle finance access encourages a future-oriented outlook, promoting investment in children's education, business expansion, and asset build-up, thereby witnessing a positive social impact in their lives. The psychological alteration translates into tangible development in business outcomes and social standing, as borrowers become better entrepreneurs and community members. The study underscores the value of integrating psychological frameworks into microfinance management, recommending that lenders nurture self-efficacy, reduce stress, and support long-term planning. Ultimately, this research highlights the multidimensional advantages of financial inclusion as both an economic and psychological intervention in rural India.





THE ROLE OF VALUE CO-CREATION TO BALANCE CONVENIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE DAYS OF QUICK COMMERCE

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The concept of value is dynamic. Historically significant value-in-exchange is now complemented by the value-in-use, largely attributable to the co-creation paradigm of the Service-Dominant Logic. The ecosystem perspective on value co-creation highlights the role of multiple actors who integrate resources to create mutual benefits and enhanced service experiences. Although value co-creation has been investigated in numerous contexts, its discussion in the context of sustainability remains inadequate. Sustainability is one of the most debatable yet converging areas that have gained immense traction in the current times. Lifestyle changes characterised by a rising desire for ease and convenience have also sparked sustainability-centred investigations. Currently, quick commerce has become an integral part of modern living. With hyper-fast delivery and hyper-localised sourcing and fulfilment, it has also raised doubts on sustainability issues. The dark stores are energy guzzlers, and the huge fleet of delivery personnel that the sector deploys contributes to carbon emissions, besides increasing the on-road vulnerabilities. Moreover, the gig-workers are bereft of any social security cover. Given these arguments, quick commerce appears to be both a boon and a bane. This research work explores the possible role of value co-creation in achieving a balance between convenience and sustainability amidst the sustainability constraints in quick commerce. This study highlights the role of frameworks like private-public partnership, sharing economy, and community consumption in embracing sustainability through actionable measures like shared delivery infrastructure models, community-driven recycling programs and circular packaging.





"WHEN MACHINES JOIN THE MORAL MISSION: AN EXPLANATORY SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS STUDY ON AI'S ROLE IN GREEN BEHAVIOUR THROUGH ETHICAL LEADERSHIP"

Devadoss Francis

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Abstract

With more than 70% of companies recognizing the pressing need for sustainable practices to mitigate climate change, driving social change through management has never been more paramount. As Peter Drucker once said, "The best way to predict the future is to create it." In this regard, knowing how leadership styles and emerging technology together advance sustainable initiatives is crucial. This study explores the interaction between ethical leadership and AI to promote green behaviour and build socially responsible, green organizations.

Employing an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, we conducted surveys of 389 employees within Indian AI-driven companies that utilize AI in sustainability activities, and then conducted in-depth interviews with 12 sustainability leaders. Quantitative results substantiate that ethical leadership has a strong predictive influence on green behaviour, and this is enhanced when AI systems are seen as fair, transparent, and value-consistent. Institutionalized governance arrangements (e.g., AI ethics committees) also amplify this effect. Qualitative findings show that moral consistency in leaders, technologies, and institutional designs is the most important component for extended green engagement.

Our research contributes to growing scholarship on ethical-AI integration through theorizing AI as a prospective moral agent in organizational existence. It provides pragmatic advice for coordinating leadership, digital systems, and governance mechanisms to support green behaviour, most useful for managers and policymakers working through sustainability in data environments.





AI IN FREIGHT FORWARDING & SKILL DISPARITY: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Freight forwarding is a segment of the global supply chain as well as a shipping service, which provides logistic services to various industries. However, freight forwarding companies often face high operational costs, inefficiencies, unpredictable delays, and sustainability concerns. Conversely, society is continually trying to find new ways and means of offering services as this is a service-oriented society with a decreasing carbon footprint and rising consumer expectations. The social dimensions challenge, such as workforce outsourcing, lack of skills, and growing inequalities, add to this existing concern. Considering this through the lens of AI: Machine learning, robotics, and real-time tracking cut waste while optimizing logistics and warehouse management, leading to improved delivery reliability, expanding verifiable impact throughout communities. In light of the above discussion, this study aims to find that: Do AI advancements widen the gap between skilled and unskilled employees? How effectively AI can be integrated in freight forwarding while providing protection to the most vulnerable civil society groups? This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach using different databases. Clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to select relevant studies on AI integration in freight forwarding. The review synthesizes key operational and social themes, guiding the development of frameworks for sustainable and equitable AI adoption in logistics.





IS PRADHAN MANTRI JANDHAN YOJANA HAVING AN IMPACT ON THE FINANCIAL LITERACY AND FINANCIAL WELLBEING OF SLUM DWELLERS OF BENGALURU?

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Abstract

Financial inclusion is a key path for achieving inclusive and sustainable economic development of a country. Financial inclusion ensures accessibility and usage of the financial services such as loans, deposits, insurance, pension, mutual funds, etc by all people. The Reserve Bank of India and the Government of India together have taken several initiatives to achieve the goal of 100% financial inclusion. A milestone of financial inclusion in India is Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana. The scheme has entered the Guinness book of records for opening a maximum number of bank accounts. As on 21st May 2025, 55.44 crore Jandhan accounts have been opened across Rural and urban India.

The study was undertaken with the main intention to evaluate the impact of Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana on the financial Literacy and financial wellbeing of Slum dwellers in Bengaluru city. The study was descriptive in nature and data was collected from a sample of around 500 slum dwellers across Bengaluru city. Based on the literature survey conceptual model has been developed between 'Financial Literacy' and 'Financial Well-being' as the main constructs. The study applied R- Programming for statistics for analysis of data. Statistical tools such as Descriptive analysis, Inferential statistics, Confirmatory Factor analysis, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) and Multi group PLS_SEM analysis were applied for the analysis of data.

The study found a statistically significant relationship between financial literacy and financial well-being through structural equation modelling. The comparison between Jan Dhan account holders with non-Jan Dhan slum respondents revealed that the financial literacy of Jan Dhan account holders is higher compared to non-Jan Dhan slum respondents but there is no difference in the financial well-being of them whether they had Jan Dhan account or not. Thus, the study concludes that the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana has an impact on the financial literacy of slum-dwellers, but it failed to impact the financial well-being of slum dwellers in Bangalore city due to problems related to implementation of this scheme.





ENHANCING RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN INDIA THROUGH CSR: A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

India is principally a rural country, with more than 65% of its people residing there (PIB Delhi, 2023). The paper explores the contribution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in generating livelihood opportunities and economic upliftment for the rural population. The home of a scorching level of poverty, unemployment, low infrastructure and unfortunate conditions for education and health access (Verma, 2022). This paper quantitatively measures the contribution of CSR in sustainable rural development, like improving livelihood opportunities and quality of life. The paper involves through quantitative research with purposive sampling of a primary sample size of 100 from rural areas (North India) and the top 10 CSR invested companies during FY 2016-21. This research will be consistent with previous studies that identified CSR as improving various areas of concern, including promoting livelihoods through education, health, environment and more (Nanjunda, 2018). In an article by Kumar (2023) analysed how CSR could be sustainably applied to improve livelihood opportunities but encourages CSR interventions to include more financing of livelihood development programmes (Kumar, 2023). The paper will utilize theory and empirical evidence, sourced from both India and international CSR experts and academia, that describe CSR as potentially aiding inclusive growth and community empowerment (Verma, 2022) (Chauhan, 2024).

Expected outcomes include tangible enhancement and better access to fundamental services. CSR is a strategic tool for enhancing India. The study expects to find best practices and challenges in CSR implementation to provide corporations with actionable suggestions to enhance their CSR efforts and aid rural development.





IDPS AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

As sustainability is becoming an area of growing concern in our everyday life as well as for business globally, it becomes relevant for an organization to identify sustainable practices and seek innovative approaches to enhance both employee engagement and long-term employee well-being. This paper proposes to investigate Individual Development Plans (IDPs) as a strategic tool to support sustainable employee engagement and employee well-being. This research will deploy a structured questionnaire designed to introduce the concept of IDPs to employees, assess their perceptions and readiness to engage with IDPs, and explore the anticipated impact of IDPs on employee engagement and well-being by focusing on employee perspectives across diverse sectors. The findings are expected to provide actionable insights for HR practitioners and organizational leaders seeking to embed development planning within broader sustainability and well-being initiatives. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the evolving discourse on sustainable HRM by positioning IDPs as a vital mechanism for aligning individual growth with organizational goals.





THE CHAUVINISM CODE: HOW AI RECRUITMENT TOOLS HAVE DIGITIZED THE BIAS IN INDIA.

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Abstract

The onslaught of AI brought with it a new wave of hope for corporations. One can do any herculean task with one single prompt. This is just the beginning of a new age for mankind. But does this technology of the new age reduce biases or simply automate them?

Flying cars in 2025 might seem like a bit of a stretch, but the digital glass ceiling for minorities seems just right.

This proposed study aims to explore how AI recruitment systems based on historical data of the company may tend to amplify existing biases in an already majority community-dominant company, lowering the chances of applicants from minorities to make it through the screening process.

The research for this study involves two phases. The first phase will involve deep literature review from already existing studies of this issue examined internationally. Moving ahead the goal will be to identify the similar existence of biases in the Indian corporate landscape and how the biases differ in the country in terms of gender, caste, religions etc and what measures can be taken to mitigate them. The second phase involves semi-structured interviews with HR professionals and platform developers to gain an understanding on the perceptions of fairness in AI-driven recruitment processes in the country.

The research is an attempt to bridge the gap in the literature of this discussion in India where regulations over algorithmic decision making are still evolving while contributing to the broader discourse of ethical AI use in corporate.





UNPACKING ENTREPRENEURIAL DISPARITIES: GENDERED ACCESS TO ECOSYSTEMS IN UNDERDEVELOPED INDIAN STATES

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Abstract

Despite India's growing recognition as a global start-up hub, vast gender gaps in entrepreneurial success continue to persist especially in its underdeveloped regions. This study investigates gender disparities in entrepreneurial success across the urban entrepreneurial ecosystems of Patna (Bihar), Ranchi (Jharkhand), and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) using a concurrent mixed-methods design. Drawing on Spigel's (2017) framework, the research examines how cultural, social, and material ecosystem components shape entrepreneurial outcomes and contribute to systemic gender inequities. Quantitative data (496 entrepreneurs) and qualitative interviews (66 participants) reveal significant regional and gender-based differences in access to mentorship, finance, infrastructure, and social networks. While male entrepreneurs benefit from more coherent and accessible ecosystems, women often rely on fragmented, informal pathways, facing cultural constraints and institutional exclusion. Moderation analyses indicate that social network support and formal institutional backing have stronger positive effects on women's entrepreneurial success, highlighting the transformative potential of targeted ecosystem interventions. The findings emphasize the need for place-sensitive, equity-oriented policies that integrate formal support, gender-sensitive mentorship, and community engagement to build inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems in underdeveloped regions. The study contributes to entrepreneurial ecosystem theory by foregrounding the interplay between gender, place, and institutional capacity in shaping entrepreneurial trajectories in emerging economies.





THE EFFECT OF SYMBIOCENE-INSPIRED AI ON SERVICE-DOMINANT LOGIC ALIGNED CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

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Abstract

Current Artificial Intelligence models are anthropocentric by design, mimicking human cognition. They are trained on human data to recognize images using human photos and digital archives, NLP models based on human-written text, and recommendation engines that optimize for human desires. It confines AI within human limitations and anthropocentric biases. Symbiocene, a counterpoint coined by Glenn Albercht, includes non-human intelligence, where technology, architecture, and economies are designed to support sustainable intelligence. How natural processes like fungal networks, animal cognition, and weather systems, for example, can shape AI. Training models built on patterns of rainfall, migration paths, root structures, and soil communications. This paper, through a systematic academic literature review, market insights, published books, expert interviews, and TEDx Talk videos, will (1) develop a 5-layer (perception, cognition, action/response, learning, and adaptation) framework for applying non-human data sources to build AI models for customer engagement (2) address the noticeable research gap in applying non-human intelligence paradigms to customer engagement, which remains sparse and fragmented. The paper presents a novel conceptual model integrating non-human intelligence with S-D logic, redefining value co-creation, actor Interactions, and resource integration. Future research directions are proposed in customer engagement, how nature-based AI can facilitate co-creation patterns, dynamic service ecosystems, or personalized engagement. Practitioners can explore how nature-based AI can facilitate emergent co-creation patterns, dynamic service ecosystems, foster ecological values, and well-being.





WORK–LIFE BALANCE AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A BIBLIOMETRIC AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurship continues to draw scholarly attention across multiple academic disciplines. However, a noticeable gap remains in the literature synthesizing research trends at the intersection of women's entrepreneurship and work–life balance (WLB). The most recent known review of this intersection dates back nearly a decade (Agarwal & Lenka, 2015), underscoring the need for an updated and methodologically robust synthesis of this evolving field. The proposed study seeks to fill this gap by employing bibliometric analysis, supplemented with content analysis, to provide a comprehensive assessment of global research trends and emerging themes at this intersection. The dataset for this study will consist of literature published between the years 2010–2025 in the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases. The analysis will be conducted utilizing the VOSviewer and Biblioshiny software to map the intellectual structure of the field, highlight the dominant themes, publication trajectories, and uncover the conceptual clusters. The content analysis of a purposively selected set of literature sourced from WoS will uncover how scholarly narratives around WLB and women's entrepreneurship are constructed within high-impact academic discourse. This will deepen the understanding of how the conversation has evolved and how key constructs are framed across the literature. The study will offer a holistic understanding of work–life balance in the context of women's entrepreneurship by addressing a long-standing gap in the literature. By synthesizing research trends and conceptual developments, the findings aim to guide future research and support the formulation of gender-sensitive, evidence-based policy interventions.





SUSTAINABILITY AND ITS IMPACT ON MARKET PERFORMANCE AND CONSUMER PERCEPTION IN INDIA

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Abstract

Objective: To identify the different types of sustainability practices adopted by companies and evaluate consumer perceptions of these practices.

Method/Analysis: Sustainability practices of companies in India were identified through the sustainability reports provided on their websites. A questionnaire was also conducted to gather consumer perceptions of sustainable products, which was then thoroughly analysed to draw inferences.

Findings: The sustainability practices adopted by companies resulted in better financial performance, and customers showed strong support for sustainability. This indicates that following sustainable practices can lead to improved financial returns and a more favourable brand image for companies.

Applications: Managers, companies, and authorities can implement sustainable practices, as supported by our research findings.





FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BIHAR: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF BARRIERS THROUGH A MIXED-METHOD LENS

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Abstract

This study examines the key challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Bihar, an Indian state marked by limited resources and entrenched patriarchal norms. Adopting a concurrent mixed-methods approach, it combines insights from 200 survey responses, 30 in-depth interviews, and a focus group discussion (n = 13). This methodology enables a comprehensive understanding of the barriers by integrating statistical patterns with rich contextual narratives. The analysis identifies six broad categories of barriers: socio-cultural, financial, personal, legal, managerial and production-related, and ICT-related, each comprising multiple sub-domains. A conceptual framework is developed to illustrate the complex interdependencies among these barriers. Regression analysis reveals that socio-cultural norms, personal constraints, limited access to technology, and managerial challenges significantly impede women's entrepreneurial success. In contrast, financial and legal barriers do not show a statistically significant effect. By highlighting the interconnected nature of these barriers, the study contributes to the literature on region-specific entrepreneurial ecosystems. It offers new insights into how cultural and institutional dynamics shape the entrepreneurial journeys of women in Bihar. The findings also inform practical, context-sensitive recommendations for designing inclusive and responsive support systems tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs in Bihar and other similarly underserved regions.





A STUDY ON WORKPLACE LONELINESS: EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND DARK TRIAD TRAITS

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Abstract

“I am lonely at work.” This statement might look simple but carries a complex emotional reality in today’s interconnected world where workplace loneliness is emerging as a rising concern. Workplace loneliness refers to the emotional response that arises when employees think they do not have sufficient interpersonal relationships at work. This study aims to investigate the multidimensional construct of workplace loneliness by examining factors such as emotional deprivation and social companionship within the Indian workforce. The data has been collected through purposive sampling method from two different industries (Sample 1- Academia, N=163; Sample 2- Information Technology, N=196) to investigate the moderating effect of dark triad on the relationship between workplace loneliness and workplace spirituality. The influence of personality is crucial in this study particularly Dark triad personality (psychopathy, narcissism, Machiavellianism) to understand the experience of loneliness in both the samples. These traits, characterized by emotional insensitivity, self-centeredness, and manipulative behaviours, were found to significantly correlate with experiences of workplace loneliness. Therefore, suggesting that certain personalities may not only struggle to form meaningful workplace connections but may also inadvertently create social barriers. While personality predispositions may intensify the feelings of loneliness at work, our study also identifies workplace spirituality as a powerful counterforce. Our findings reveal that when employees find meaning in their work, align with the organizational values, and experience a sense of community at work, the risk of loneliness reduces significantly. Finally, this study aims to offer a better understanding of workplace loneliness by highlighting dark triad personality traits as predispositions and presenting workplace spirituality as a solution for this ever-rising epidemic of loneliness at workplace.





EXPLORING THE SUSTAINABILITY AND INCLUSIVITY OF INFORMAL FOOD VENDORS: BARRIERS AND PATHWAYS TO A GREEN TRANSITION IN THE URBAN FOOD ECONOMY

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Abstract

Purpose: The informal food service industry plays a critical role in economic development and employment generation globally in India. Despite its vast socio-economic contributions, the sector remains largely overlooked. This research aims to explore the role of the informal food service sector in urban economic growth, identifying prevailing challenges and propose policy interventions that can enhance the sector's resilience and contribution to a green urban economy.

Research Design & Methodology: An exploratory & qualitative research design using non-intrusive field observations across selected urban clusters in Mumbai, is adopted.. Observations focusing on vendor practices, customer interactions and role of authorities were majorly considered. Additionally existing policies and frameworks is also analysed through secondary data analysis.

Findings: The findings of the study demonstrate that food vendors lack basic business training and are at disadvantage due to limited Financial & infrastructural support. Most of the vendors found adopting eco-friendly behaviour for cost saving motives rather than environmental consciousness. The policies supporting the services, though formulated, lacks proper implementation. The paper highlights that despite the challenges, the sector with little policy support and affordable resources could significantly contribute to a green sustainable & inclusive urban economy.

Originality /Value: The research paper is original and focuses on the contribution of informal food service sector in the economic development and employment generation, providing a fresh perspective on how little support management and policy reforms can integrate sustainability and inclusivity for ensuring green transition in urban economy.





FROM COMPETITION TO COLLABORATION: HOW FINTECH PARTNERSHIPS TRANSFORM BANK PERFORMANCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE.

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Abstract

Purpose: In the era of rapid digital transformation, collaborations between traditional banks and fintech firms have merged as a strategic response to innovation-driven disruption. This study investigates the impact of bank-fintech collaboration on the performance of Indian Banks moderated by bank risk-taking.

Design/methodology/approach: The study utilizes unbalanced panel data from Indian banks over the period from 2015 to 2023. It employs a two-way fixed-effect regression model.

Findings: The results reveal a positive association between bank-fintech collaboration and bank stability, suggesting that such partnerships may enhance resilience through technological integration and improved service efficiency.

Practical implications: Policymakers and bank executives should recognize the stabilizing potential of fintech collaborations in enhancing operational efficiency, risk management, and digital adaptability. Encouraging such partnerships through supportive regulatory frameworks and targeted investments can strengthen the resilience of the Indian banking sector.

Originality/ value: This study is among the first to empirically assess the dynamic effects of bank-fintech collaborations on bank performance, moderated by bank risk taking, offering fresh insights into how technology partnerships influence systematic resilience.





WEAVING IDENTITY-DRIVEN VALUES INTO SUPPORT: HOW LIFESTYLE ENTREPRENEURS (RE)FRAME INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

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Abstract

While most entrepreneurs primarily focus on profit maximisation and venture growth, lifestyle entrepreneurs prioritise autonomy, intrinsic passion, and value-driven venture creation. This study investigates how lifestyle entrepreneurs engage in sensemaking processes that integrate their ongoing, processual interpretive actions with the structural constraints and resource-exchange considerations highlighted by the resource-dependence perspective. Drawing on the literatures of lifestyle entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial support organisations (ESOs), this study examines why and how founders of lifestyle ventures interpret, frame, and selectively engage with ESOs, their primary external resource providers, while balancing identity imperatives with the practical demands of venture survival as their firms evolve.

The study, which is grounded in rich qualitative data, employs an inductive process tracing methodology to analyse in-depth semi-structured interviews with lifestyle entrepreneurs spanning varied creative sectors and representatives of ESOs that pursue different strategic objectives. Our findings reveal that lifestyle entrepreneurs engage in cyclical, dynamic sensemaking loops to frame or reframe the role of ESO's based on perceived alignment with their values, the nature of resources offered and ongoing learning outcomes. Lifestyle entrepreneurs choose dominant strategies such as selective (dis)engagement and boundary management to mobilize external resources without compromising their autonomy or passion. For practitioners, ESO and policymakers, the findings highlight the need for flexible, value-aligned support mechanisms that make the distinctive logic of lifestyle venturing inclusive in the entrepreneurial ecosystem-building process. Our process framework illuminates the interplay between identity, autonomy and resource management in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, offering a robust foundation for further inquiry.





THE VOLATILITY ILLUSION: UNMASKING MISPRICING IN THE EQUITY OPTIONS MARKET OF INDIA

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Abstract

Information efficiency in financial markets is critical for accurate pricing, effective risk management, and informed decision-making. This study examines how well the Indian equity options market captures and predicts future market returns through implied volatility (IV). Drawing on a decade of data (2015–2024), the research investigates the relationship between implied volatility and realized volatility (RV), with a sharp focus on at-the-money (ATM) call and put options, where market activity is typically most concentrated and pricing is assumed to be fair. Using an E-GARCH (1,1) model, the study examines how accurately implied volatilities reflect future realized volatility and mispricing. The findings raise important questions about market efficiency and options mispricing. While call options IV show some alignment with future volatility, they still fail to absorb all the information available in historical returns. Put options IV, on the other hand, perform poorly, with their implied volatilities persistently overestimating realized volatility, pointing to systematic mispricing. This mispricing appears to stem from structural issues in the Indian financial ecosystem, particularly short-selling restrictions, which prevent effective arbitrage and price corrections. Interestingly, this inefficiency contrasts sharply with evidence from developed markets like the U.S., UK, and Japan, where implied volatilities are widely seen as reliable forward-looking indicators. These markets benefit from stronger institutional infrastructure, higher liquidity, and broader participation, which enable IV to function as an effective tool for risk pricing and forecasting. The finding is clear: despite its size and growth, the Indian options market struggles to fulfil one of its core roles, namely, price discovery. The study also reveals that historical volatility still outperforms implied volatility in predicting actual market outcomes, which undermines the practical utility of options pricing for both hedgers and speculators.

From policy perspective, the findings underscore the need to revisit regulatory constraints like short-sale limitations, promote greater transparency, and encourage institutional participation to improve information flow and market depth. Enhancing these elements could help bridge the gap between implied and actual volatility, thus improving the accuracy of options pricing and the credibility of India's derivatives market on the global stage. This research underscores the informational inefficiency and mispricing in India's options market while offering actionable reform insights crucial for enhancing investor confidence, market credibility, and India's aspirations as a global financial hub.





AI-POWERED DETECTION OF ESG GREENWASHING IN INDIAN CORPORATIONS: AN AUDIT ANALYTICS FRAMEWORK USING NLP AND FINANCIAL RATIOS

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Abstract

In a time when the need for Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) disclosures has become greater for corporate responsibility, concerns over the genuineness of these disclosures have amplified. The phenomenon of "greenwashing," or the generation of false ESG performance, undermines investor trust and dilutes the public's interest in green finance. This article presents a framework for audit analytics using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for detecting ESG greenwashing in Indian companies through the integration of Natural Language Processing (NLP) methods with financial ratio analysis.

Textual information from the sustainability reports of NSE-listed companies' annual reports is processed using NLP engines to derive sentiment polarity, sustainability buzzword frequency, and vagueness of narrative. These are supplemented with core financial metrics like CSR Spend-to-Profit margin, Environmental Capital Expenditure, and GHG disclosure uniformity. These two streams of data are analysed using a supervised machine learning classifier to identify potential greenwashing.

This research fills a major gap in current ESG research by introducing an empirical detection mechanism through artificial intelligence specifically tailored for emerging markets. This framework is both academic and regulatory in nature, providing SEBI, institutional investors, and audit firms with actionable recommendations for enhancing ESG compliance and minimizing reputational risks. This use of artificial intelligence, accounting, and sustainability disciplines incorporated in this research presents a novel perspective for responsible financial reporting for the Indian context.





REVISITING THE BOARD GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE EMISSIONS RELATIONSHIP: EVIDENCE FROM G20 FIRMS

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Abstract

The study reviews recent literature on board governance and environmental performance, which shows a consistent positive association for board independence and gender diversity, while noting mixed findings for board size, tenure, and diversity due to contextual variations. The isolated treatment of board attributes and a predominant focus on developed economies in the past literature are addressed by this study using a dataset from G20 countries (accounting for 75% of global GHG emissions). Further, it also utilizes both Emission Scores (a disclosure-based metric) and actual CO₂-equivalent emissions to examine board-emissions relationships comprehensively.

Our findings reveal that while larger, independent, and gender-diverse boards and CSR committees significantly improve Emission Scores, their impact on actual CO₂ emissions is limited. CEO duality and long board tenure negatively affect Emission Scores, while board independence and gender diversity are associated with lower CO₂ emissions. Further, these relationships are context-dependent: governance mechanisms are more effective in advanced economies due to stronger regulatory enforcement and stakeholder pressure, whereas in developing economies, their influence is weaker, often limited to symbolic compliance. This divergence suggests a gap between sustainability reporting and actual emission reductions, highlighting the need for institutional reinforcement in emerging markets.

The study contributes to the corporate governance and sustainability literature by empirically validating the Institutional Difference Hypothesis, demonstrating that board effectiveness in emissions management is contingent on national institutional frameworks. Policymakers and firms must prioritize integrated governance reforms, combining board diversity, independence, and dedicated sustainability oversight, while strengthening regulatory frameworks to bridge the disclosure-performance gap.





INVESTIGATING THE LINKAGES AMONG GREEN INNOVATION, COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON INDIAN MSMEs.

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Abstract

Purpose: Integrating sustainable innovation in the competitive strategy of Indian MSMEs is critical in accelerating sustainable business performance. The present study aims to investigate the mediating impact of competitive advantage between the relationship of green innovation and sustainable business performance.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The data was collected from 253 registered MSMEs in Delhi-NCR in India with the help of structured questionnaire embracing purposive sampling technique. PLS-SEM was utilised to verify the hypotheses.

Findings: The findings demonstrated that competitive advantage partially mediated between green innovation and sustainable business performance relationship.

Research Limitations: One of the limitations of the paper is that the data was collected using nonprobability sampling technique which may limit the generalisability of the findings.

Practical Implications: To achieve competitive advantage and sustainable business performance, practitioners and policymakers should work in tandem and formulate policies and necessary interventions to nurture Indian MSMEs by setting aside funds and invest on green innovation.

Originality/Value: The paper advances the theoretical literature by investigating both direct and indirect impact of green innovation on business performance with competitive advantage acting as mediator.





THE TRIPLE HELIX UNRAVELED: QUANTIFYING THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE BANKING PRACTICES, GREEN FINANCE, AND INNOVATION ON SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Purpose: The evaluation of sustainable banking practices (SBP) on sustainability performance (SP) of banks receives limited empirical research scrutiny, especially for developing economic sectors like India. The study fills this research gap by examining the serial mediation effect of green finance (GF) and financial innovation (FI) in the relationship between SBPs and banks' sustainability performance.

Design/methodology/approach: The paper utilizes resource-based view theory (RBV) to show how GF works in sequence with FI to affect SBPs toward improved SP. The researchers collected primary data by distributing structured questionnaires to bank professionals chosen by purposive sampling. The relationships between variables were tested using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 software.

Findings: The research shows that SBP directly influences all measured aspects, including GF, FI, and banks' sustainability performance (SP). The data shows that GF positively influences FI as well as SP, and FI plays a direct role in enhancing SP. The results confirm how GF and FI are serial mediators between SBPs and SP measurement outcomes. Participating banks in sustainable banking operations develop GF and FI in parallel setups to boost environmental sustainability.

Originality/value: The study makes progress in sustainable banking and environmental sustainability research by analyzing how SBPs relate to FI and GF to help improve SP. Additionally, the current research operates as the initial study to investigate GF and FI acting as serial mediators between SBPs and SP within India's banking sector while providing empirical support for RBV theory. The research delivers practical conclusions that managers, policymakers, and researchers can use to develop sustainability by implementing SBPs and GF together with FI adoption.





DATA- DRIVEN APPROACHES TO ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCING IN INDIA

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Abstract

The road infrastructure sector in India faces numerous challenges, including funding constraints, inefficient project management, and a lack of predictive capabilities to handle maintenance and construction. With the growing complexity and demand for road infrastructure, it becomes crucial to explore innovative solutions. Machine learning (ML) presents a promising approach for optimizing planning, execution, and financial management of road infrastructure projects. This paper investigates the current state of road infrastructure development in India, identifies key challenges in project financing, and explores how machine learning algorithms can enhance decision-making, optimize project planning, and forecast financial outcomes. Through a comprehensive analysis, this research aims to propose a machine learning framework to predict financial outcomes of road projects and assess its economic implications for India's development. The integration of machine learning into road infrastructure could potentially transform the sector, making it more efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable.





ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: EXPLORING ITS IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING AND ACADEMIC WELL-BEING

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing various sectors, with education emerging as a focal point for its application. In recent years, the integration of AI in educational settings has garnered significant attention due to its potential to enhance personalized learning experiences, immediate feedback, improve academic performance, and foster collaboration among students (Kabudi et al., 2021; Robert et al., 2024). Students Demand learning anytime, anywhere, engaging and relevant, and AI can play a crucial role in meeting these expectations by providing tailored educational resources and support in multiple modes (Pelletier et al., 2024). This impact of AI includes positive effects, such as enhanced engagement and personalized learning experiences, and potential drawbacks like reduced interpersonal skills and increased technostress. (Klimova & Pikhart, 2025; Zhu, 2024). As AI technologies develop in different forms, understanding their influence on student learning outcomes and overall academic well-being is essential (Chen et al., 2020). However, there is limited understanding of the factors influencing the impact of AI on students Academic Wellbeing. The research aims to uncover the factor leading to AI integration in education and its effects on students' overall academic experiences. To investigate the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on student learning and academic well-being, a structured questionnaire was administered to undergraduate and postgraduate students across institutions in the Pune region. A total of 273 valid responses were collected. Using Advance Statistical Techniques such Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis & Structured Equation Modelling, the study identifies key latent constructs associated with AI integration in education & Further these constructs are validated, offering a robust understanding of the underlying dynamics between AI adoption and academic outcomes. The findings could potentially guide educators and policymakers in developing strategies that maximize the benefits of AI while mitigating any negative impacts on students' academic well-being.





THE RISE OF DARK STORES IN BANGALORE: A STUDY OF GROWTH, CONSUMER PERCEPTION, AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

The rise of E-commerce and Quick commerce (Q-commerce) has led to the rapid emergence of dark stores—retail distribution centres that cater exclusively to online orders. This study investigates the operational efficiency, consumer perception, and challenges associated with dark stores in Bangalore. It uses a mixed-method approach that combines primary data from urban consumers of Bangalore with secondary data from industry reports. The study finds that dark stores significantly reduce delivery time and improve order fulfilment rates, although concerns about neighbourhood disruption and labour practices persist.





FROM CYNICISM TO SILENCE: THE ROLE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN SHAPING EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY

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Abstract

Within the post-pandemic service economy, employee disengagement and cynicism have grown exponentially, with research suggesting that more than 60% of workers worldwide experience emotional disconnection from their organizations. Despite the increased necessity for frontline staff to be brand advocates, organizational cynicism is still a critical barrier. Based on the conservation of resources (COR) theory and moral disengagement theory, this research investigates cynicism's inhibition of employee voice and undermining of advocacy behaviour, and whether servant leadership is able to buffer this negative impact. Data were gathered through structured questionnaires from 535 front-line employees in 3- and 4-star hotels in India. The survey involved the use of validated multi-item scales, and the model was tested with the use of structural equation modeling (SEM) and moderation-mediation analysis. Cynicism within an organization is deemed a strong predictor of reduced employee advocacy behaviour, explained through employee voice. Significantly, servant leadership buffers the detrimental effect of organizational cynicism on employee advocacy behaviour, such that the undermining influence of cynicism is less strong with higher levels of servant leadership. Thus, this research points to the importance of servant leadership in reducing the adverse consequences of workplace cynicism. Through targeting the negative side of workplace experience (organizational cynicism) and a positive corrective force (servant leadership) along with a key behavioural outcome (employee advocacy), the study produces findings of high theoretical significance with practical implications for HR practitioners.





MIND OVER MARKETS: EXPLORING CORE SELF-EVALUATION AND VALUE ORIENTATION IN SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

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Abstract

This study provides an in-depth analysis by integrating Core Self-Evaluation (CSE) traits and Social Value Orientation (SVO) within a structural framework aimed at exploring the intricate psychological and value-driven factors that impact socially responsible investment behaviour (SRIB). We conducted a multi-group path analysis using survey data collected from 444 Indian investors to examine how these psychological traits influence SRIB across two distinct investor categories: prosocial and proself. Our findings highlight notable and significant differences between the two groups. Prosocial investors, motivated by altruistic concerns, are influenced by traits such as neuroticism and risk tolerance, in addition to various demographic factors that shape their investment decisions. Conversely, proself investors, who prioritise personal gains, are primarily driven by their locus of control, levels of neuroticism, age, and investment experience. The observed differences in structural weights, covariances, and residuals between the two groups underscore the unique behavioural dynamics that arise from their differing value orientations. These results challenge the effectiveness of generic, one-size-fits-all approaches to promoting sustainable investing, emphasising the urgent need for tailored strategies that recognise the diverse motivations driving investor behaviour. This study significantly contributes to the behavioural finance literature by offering actionable insights that can facilitate the development of more targeted and effective socially responsible investment initiatives. By integrating psychological constructs that have seldom been explored in this context, we provide a novel perspective that enriches the discourse on sustainable investing.





ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY IN HEALTHCARE THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING: EXPLORING THE ROLES OF TOP MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

The current study investigates the effect of environmental training on sustainable organizational performance within the healthcare sector, incorporating top management support as a mediating variable and employee engagement as a moderating variable. In response to growing global emphasis on sustainability (Deshpande & Srivastava, 2023), particularly in resource-intensive sectors like healthcare, this research aims to uncover the organizational mechanisms that enhance environmental performance outcomes (Usman et al., 2023). A quantitative research design was employed, with data collected via structured questionnaires from healthcare professionals across various institutions. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to assess the relationships among variables and test the proposed conceptual model. The findings demonstrate that environmental training significantly contributes to sustainable organisational performance which is in line with findings of the previous research (Cop et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2024). Top management support was found to mediate this relationship, suggesting that leadership commitment is a crucial conduit through which environmental training influences outcomes. Additionally, employee engagement was shown to moderate the relationship, with higher engagement levels amplifying the impact of training on performance which reaffirms the findings demonstrated in the prior studies (Nguyen et al., 2024; Pham et al., 2020). The current study is subject to certain limitations, including its cross-sectional design and a sample restricted to a specific geographical region, which may affect the generalizability of the results. Future research should consider longitudinal methods and broader demographic coverage. Practically, the results underscore the importance of integrating environmental training with strong managerial support and employee engagement strategies to enhance sustainability in healthcare organisations. This research contributes original value by presenting an integrated framework that links green training to organisational sustainability outcomes, offering novel insights for both scholars and practitioners in the fields of environmental management and healthcare operations.





BEYOND EMPLOYMENT: FINANCIAL AUTONOMY AND THE PATH TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN PATRIARCHAL SOCIETIES

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Abstract

This empirical study examines the complex interplay between financial access, financial autonomy, and women's empowerment, questioning whether employment alone leads to genuine empowerment.

Women empowerment initiatives are currently based on the premise that access to economic resources would lead to improvements in women's lives. While policy efforts often focus on increasing women's workforce participation, they frequently neglect the structural and patriarchal barriers that limit women's control over financial resources. We argue that financial inclusion does not automatically equate to financial autonomy or empowerment. There remains a critical research gap on how financial access and autonomy interact to influence women's empowerment, particularly in the context of developing countries.

We employ Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to study the relationship between financial access (women's working status) and women's empowerment, mediated by financial autonomy. Further, we propose and test for the moderating role of patriarchy on the relationship between financial autonomy and empowerment.

The study finds that the path from women's employment to empowerment is mediated by financial autonomy. Employed women have greater financial autonomy which in turn contributes to enhanced relational empowerment. The education levels of both the respondent and their partner, as well as overall socioeconomic status, are important determinants of empowerment. Further, we find that patriarchy moderates the relationship between financial autonomy and empowerment. The effect is more pronounced in low-patriarchy settings while weaker in high-patriarchy contexts. These findings underscore the need for empowerment strategies that extend beyond economic access to strengthen women's agency within the household and in wider social context.





CATALYZING CHANGE: RURAL WOMEN'S BUSINESS GROWTH THROUGH INCUBATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

The growth and sustainability of rural women's businesses have increasingly drawn attention from researchers and policymakers across developing economies. While access to financial capital has traditionally been viewed as a critical enabler of enterprise growth, emerging evidence highlights that socio-cultural constraints, limited business skills, and subdued entrepreneurial aspirations often restrict the growth potential of such enterprises. Moreover, financial capital alone may not translate into productive outcomes unless complemented by appropriate capacity-building training. This raises an important research question: Are integrated support mechanisms, beyond credit, such as business training, mentoring, and market facilitation, essential for enabling the scaling up of rural women's enterprises?

Business incubation has emerged as a promising holistic intervention aimed at nurturing early-stage entrepreneurs through multifaceted support services. However, despite its expanding presence, the efficacy of incubation in enhancing the growth trajectories of rural micro-enterprises remains underexplored in the South Asian context, particularly in India, where institutional and cultural dynamics differ significantly from other regions such as sub-Saharan Africa.

This study seeks to address this critical knowledge gap by examining the role of business incubation in influencing revenue growth among rural women-led businesses in India. Drawing on a cross-sectional dataset comprising approximately 450 incubated, SHG-linked businesses, the study finds that, barring training, factors such as credit facilitation, market access, digital enablement, and formalization support significantly influence revenue growth. Importantly, the cumulative number of support services, as a proxy for holistic intervention, is positively associated with enterprise growth.





WHO IS INFLUENCING THE SEARCH? AN EXAMINATION OF FIRM-LEVEL VS. GROUP-LEVEL EFFECTS ON PROBLEMISTIC SEARCH

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Abstract

The Behavioural Theory of the Firm (BTOF) posits that when a firm's performance falls below its aspiration level, it triggers a problem-driven search, which can lead to organizational change and risk-taking (Cyert & March 1963; Kotiloglu et al., 2021; Posen et al., 2018). An important line of inquiry within this framework recognizes that behavioural responses are, at least in part, shaped by broader organizational structures—such as business group affiliation—to which the firm belongs. Business groups (BGs) constitute a dominant organizational form in many economies around the world (Carney et al., 2011; Khanna & Yafeh, 2007). Few studies have attempted to understand the role of BG affiliates and their responses to performance feedback (Goyal, 2023; Ma et al., 2023; Vissa et al., 2010). However, larger picture examining the mechanism of problemistic search and the role of BG affiliation remains underexplored. This study addresses this gap by empirically examining a sample of Indian firms over the period 1996–2024. The first part of the study examines whether the effects of problemistic search vary across different organizational change outcomes and investigates the role of BG affiliation in shaping this relationship. The second part of this study examines whether the relative size of group and firm effects varies across different search outcomes. Thus, this study enhances our understanding of when, how and why BG affiliation influences firm-level search behaviour.





THE ROLE OF NOMOPHOBIA IN STUDENT BURNOUT AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MANAGEMENT STUDENTS OF INDORE CITY)

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Abstract

In today's interconnected world, students have become extremely dependent on mobile phones. It often leads to problems like psychological distress. In this study, the role of nomophobia (fear of being without a mobile phone) will be studied in relation to student burnout and emotional well-being. The study will use a quantitative, correlational design. It will be conducted with a sample size of 200 management students, located in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The data will be collected based on three standardised instruments: the Nomophobia Questionnaire (NMP-Q), the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Student Survey (MBI-SS), and the WHO-5 Well-Being Index, along with some demographic questions. The primary objectives of the study are to explore the correlations between nomophobia, burnout, and emotional well-being, and to determine whether demographic factors such as age, gender, and year of study influence levels of nomophobia.

The data will be analysed using correlational analysis, and additional tests such as T-test and ANOVA will be used to establish the relationship between nomophobia and different demographic factors.

The study will contribute to the existing literature by shedding light on the need for digital well-being programs and targeted mental health interventions in educational settings. Mental health professionals and educators should consider incorporating coping strategies and digital literacy into student support systems. It will help to mitigate the effects of nomophobia and promote the overall emotional and mental well-being of students.





EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION OF CSR AND SDGs IN THE CONTEXT OF INDUSTRY 5.0: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

In recent years, the integration of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has become a crucial strategy for organisations aiming to align their business operations with global sustainability standards. The emergence of Industry 5.0, known by the combination of human-centric, sustainable, and resilient methodologies, creates new opportunities and problems at the intersection of CSR and SDGs. The main objective of this study is to conduct a systematic review and synthesis of existing literature concerning the relationship between CSR and the SDGs in the context of Industry 5.0. The study seeks to identify emerging themes, major challenges possible ways for using CSR for advancing the SDGs within a human-centric, sustainable, and resilient industrial framework. For this 1410 articles were retrieved from Scopus database for the period 2019-2025. A sample of 21 articles were systematically selected and reviewed using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework. The analysis and visualisation were conducted using the Biblioshiny package in R and VOSviewer to systematically map research landscape and identify the thematic clusters. The findings are organised into three key sections – descriptive overview of existing research, literature synthesis to extract the core themes and identification of knowledge gaps and scoping potential trajectories for future research. The review has identified some of the key themes namely sustainability reporting and governance, adoption of green and circular economy practices, industry innovation and technology and risks of green washing. This study is one of the few that integrates the concept of Industry 5.0 with CSR and SDGs, providing novel insights and implications for future research in sustainable industrial transformation.





QUALITY MATTERS: RETHINKING FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

Accessibility has long served as a cornerstone for financial inclusion in India, where significant advancements have been made by the Indian Government towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This effort is formally encapsulated in the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2019-2024, which needs to be revised and reformulated for the future scope. However, there remains limited focus on the quality standards and the actual utilization of financial inclusion initiatives. This study investigates the quality dimensions of financial inclusion, emphasizing the impact of financial services on the underprivileged population. The research employs a survey methodology to analyse data from various customers across rural and urban India. Key quality parameters such as service usage, affordability, customer satisfaction, financial literacy, and product suitability are examined to understand their impact on demand-side financial inclusion. The outcome of the findings shows a critical gap in digital literacy, financial awareness, and customised products or services that encumbers the effective financial empowerment of the stakeholders. The study concludes with the proposal of a framework aimed at enhancing the quality aspect of financial inclusion. This approach is crucial for promoting sustainable development and effectively increasing the financial inclusion index for India.





INSTITUTIONAL SENTIMENT DYNAMICS IN ESG STOCK PERFORMANCE-EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN MARKET

LG Honey Singh

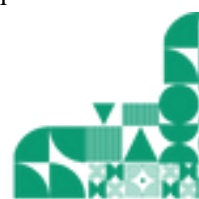
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Abstract

While ESG based investing has become mainstream in developed economies, emerging markets like India are still in its infancy in integrating ESG frameworks in its decision-making process. The behavioural dimensions are especially pronounced in ESG investing, due to the added layer of non-financial considerations, which are inherently perception-sensitive and value-driven. Moreover, the occurrence of COVID-19 pandemic has marked pandemic-triggered market volatility, inducing an influx of retail investor participation through well-developed digital platforms. This study is, therefore, motivated by the need to explore whether institutional investors have a measurable and time-varying impact on the returns of ESG stocks listed in the Indian National Stock Exchange and whether these dynamics change with the onset of COVID-19 pandemic.

The study has threefold objectives where we aim to examine whether the Institutional Sentiment has a significant impact on the ESG stock returns in India, whether these effects are non-linear and time-lagged, and lastly, whether the period of pandemic marks a structural break in the sentiment-return dynamics. The study spans a period from January 2018 to December 2024, analyzing 10 Indian companies with ESG ratings. Institutional Sentiment is measured using the daily net FII and DII purchase/sale values. Market returns are captured using Nifty50 index log returns, while trading activity is incorporated via log transformed daily trading volume. COVID-19 period is operationalized as a dummy variable with March 2020 as the breakpoint. Lagged institutional sentiment variables are constructed for t-1, t-2, and t-3 days to test for the delayed market response. The study conducts Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression to test baseline linear relationships. Quantile Regression is further used to examine asymmetric effects across the return distribution. A Chow test is then performed to detect structural breaks in the relationship pre- and post-COVID periods. Nonlinear and Interaction effects are modeled using XGBoost regressors, with SHAP values used for interpretability. The study uses Python to implement the entire analysis.

The OLS regression model shows that the institution sentiment, including its various lags, does not significantly explain the variation in ESG stock returns; even after controlling for volume and market index returns, the institutional sentiment remains a weak predictor. However, Nifty50 log returns consistently emerge as a highly significant predictor across all models. Quantile regression reveals that though the influence of sentiment remains weak overall, its marginal impact is higher in the lower and upper quantiles of the return distribution, suggesting sentiment exerts more influence during extreme market movements than during stabilized movements. Nonlinear modeling using XGBoost shows improved predictive power relative to the results of OLS models. SHAP analysis also identifies Nifty Returns and Log Volume as top predictors, and the Lagged Institutional Sentiment continues only marginal contribution. Interaction plots using SHAP dependence analysis show minimal difference in





sentiment impact when using pre- and Post-COVID periods. To conclude, this study finds that, while in theory the institutional sentiment is important, but fails to have any statistically robust or economically meaningful effect on ESG stock returns in India.





EXPLORING EXISTING LANDSCAPE, CURRENT SCENARIO AND FUTURE DIRECTION OF OIL PRICE: A BIBLIOMETRIC OVERVIEW (2002-2024)

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Abstract

The nexus between oil prices and firm-specific factors significantly influence corporate decision-making. This study aims to explore the evolution of oil price research (past, present, and future) through a bibliometric analysis. Data were extracted from the Scopus database, covering the period from 2002 to 2024. After applying exclusion criteria, 101 relevant publications were selected for analysis. Using VOS viewer and Biblioshiny (R package), the study identifies the most influential authors, productive countries, leading institutions, key journals, top-cited documents, and dominant keywords in oil price literature. To understand publication trends and citation impact, the research period was divided into three phases: Period 1 (2002–2010), Period 2 (2011–2020), and Period 3 (2021–2024). The highest number of papers (57) were published in Period 3, while Period 2 recorded the most citations (1881). Hammoudeh S. emerged as the most influential author, China as the leading country, and Central South University of China as the top institution. Energy Economics was found to be the most prolific journal. Key emerging themes include energy markets, uncertainty analysis, and price dynamics. The study also examined bibliographic coupling of countries and documents, along with international collaborations among countries for oil price research purpose. Overall, the findings offer valuable insights and contribute to shaping future research directions and contemporary perspectives in oil price-related studies.





DO FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTMENT RUN INDIAN STOCK MARKETS? AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Indian stock market being open for all kind of global investment, became one of the favorite destination among all the emerging markets for those short term investors who are running for arbitrage opportunities. The growing Indian stock market has attracted a pool of foreign portfolio investors, but they are very sensitive to information and profit, which infuse volatility in the Indian stock market because of there movement. the existing literature in this field for determinant and movement of FPI is primarily based on monthly data which is not able to capture the impact and resilience. In this research we have studied 10 year daily stock market along with 10 macro economic variables like exchange rate etc. to find out the cause, impact and resilience of Indian stock market towards FPI movement. we have used Forecast error variance decomposition, granger causality, VAR, and Impulse response function in this paper. The results are contradictory to the existing literature whether its determinants of FPI or movement created by FPI in Sensex. DII also plays a role in the giving support to the resilience to the Indian stock market from FPI movement crashes.





LABOR MARKET DILEMMA: A QUANTITATIVE FRAMEWORK TO NAVIGATE INDIA'S EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Insistent underemployment, skill mismatches, wage stagnation, and the AI automation menace are arduous tests that the Indian labor market faces. This study develops a quantitative framework using game theory and linear programming to design ideal labor policies and relevant strategies beneath the cloak of contemporary constraints.

Gaining motivation from the game theory equilibria of a zero-sum and mixed strategy, this study modeled the government's labor market strategies between skill-intensive policies and labor market deregulations, whereas employers' strategies between automation and labor-intensive developments. The model, using a payoff matrix of job gains and policy outlays, establishes that the governmental optimal approach involves weighted allocation between skill investments and deregulation with an aim to stabilize immediate gains in employment against long-term productivity.

To realize the strategic intuitions developed, a linear programming (LP) approach is used by integrating budget constraints and differential policy costs. The model explains the viability and adjustments in attaining maximum employment whereas the diminishing returns to policy investments are captured through the inclusion of quadratic terms in the model. Using Lagrangian optimization, the study detects corner solutions that intend to expand employment gains under the constraint of real-world financial limitations.

This quantitative approach indicated that although skill investment is vital, over dependence may not be financially viable. The study highlights that premeditated combination of reasonable deregulation and expenditure on targeted skill spending shall generate optimal employment. This study offers a quantitative modeling and evidence-based framework for the policymakers inclined to circumnavigate the transformation in the Indian labor market by making theoretical models conducive to policy recommendations.





A MIGRATION-THEORETIC APPROACH TO UNDERSTAND THE USE OF UPI FOR MICRO-PAYMENTS

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Abstract

India has witnessed a dramatic transformation in its digital payments landscape in recent years through the rapid proliferation of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). This study aims to understand the factors encouraging consumers to use UPI for micro-payments, i.e., low-value payments of up to INR 500, for various daily transactions, instead of using cash. Our data analysis consists of Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling. Seen through the migration-theoretic lens of push-pull-mooring framework, our study reveals that social influence and economic benefits, such as cashbacks and absence of extra charges, of low-value UPI transactions (pull factors), perceived inconvenience of cash transactions such as carrying exact changes (push factors) and switching costs, past experiences and habits (mooring factors) are critical contributors in consumer's willingness to use UPI over cash transactions for daily micro-payments. Interestingly, perceived convenience of the use of UPI did not have a significant impact possibly suggesting that ease of use is now a baseline expectation from digital payments. Extant research on fintech and digital payment adoption explain little about consumer switching behaviour from cash to digital modes, given the historical reliance on cash transactions, especially in the context of consumer micro-payments in daily lives (Kumar et al., 2025; Zhang & Mao, 2020; Hsieh, 2021). Our study has theoretical implications for fintech adoption research and practical implications for the government, fintech providers and policy-makers in promoting the penetration of low-value digital payments.





OPENING THE BLACK BOX OF ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM: A NETWORK PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial ecosystems (EEs) are central to entrepreneurship research, yet their underlying systems and processes remain underexplored. One key yet understudied dimension is the role of entrepreneurial networks in shaping EE outcomes. Networks are core elements of EEs, influencing access to resources, social capital, and venture performance. However, debates persist about whether networks alone sufficiently explain EE dynamics. This study adopts an exploratory approach to examine how networks influence EE outcomes, particularly for women entrepreneurs. I focus on two contrasting types of ecosystems: an embryonic EE and a scale-up EE to explore differences in network structures and outcomes across contexts. Using a grounded theory approach, I conduct semi-structured interviews with women entrepreneurs in Ahmedabad and Bangalore, selected via purposive and snowball sampling. Data collection continues until theoretical saturation is achieved. Although analysis is ongoing, I expect to uncover how women's entrepreneurial networks shape the development and outcomes of different types of EEs, offering a comparative network-based perspective. This study opens the 'black box' of EEs through the lens of entrepreneurial networks, emphasising the gendered dimensions of ecosystem participation. By comparing two diverse ecosystems, I contribute a novel understanding of how network structures and gender intersect in emerging economy contexts. The study is limited by its focus on two cities and interview-based methodology. However, it provides valuable insights for policy-makers and entrepreneurs seeking to strengthen EEs through informed network-building strategies.





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IMPACT OF CREDIT GUARANTEE SCHEMES OF GOVERNMENT ON SOCIAL STATURE IN RURAL AREAS OF INDIA

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Abstract

Credit Guarantee Schemes (CGSs) introduced by the government aim to enhance financial inclusion by facilitating access to formal credit for underserved segments, particularly in rural areas.

The research explores socio-economic implications of schemes on the social stature of rural beneficiaries.

The research spans 5[1] states, collecting over 2,000[2] responses via gram panchayat-level primary surveys. The survey analyzes a range of demographic (age, gender, caste, education), economic (income before/after loan, loan amount, repayment), and social variables (village participation, leadership roles, decision-making confidence). Descriptive statistics will summarize key characteristics, while inferential tests will assess group-wise differences. Regression analysis will identify factors influencing income and empowerment, and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) will be used to construct a Social Stature Index from multiple social indicators. Thematic analysis will interpret qualitative feedback on access to credit and empowerment. In addition, secondary data such as official reports on loan disbursement, default rates, and scheme-wise coverage will be analysed to contextualize the survey findings.

This data will be triangulated with primary data outcomes to validate and enhance the robustness of the research conclusions, offering a comprehensive view of the credit guarantee schemes' impact on rural financial and social empowerment.

This research supports policy, product, and strategic decisions of stakeholders such as government, banks, and MFIs





JAGGERCANE: NAVIGATING THE SWEET SPOT BETWEEN SCALABILITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Dr. Mansi A. Madan

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Abstract

This case study tells the story of how Jaggercane, a jaggery brand started in Punjab in 2021 by Navnoor Kaur and Kaushal Singh, has changed its strategy over time. Jaggercane started with the goal of providing high-quality, chemical-free jaggery as a healthier alternative to refined sugar. However, it quickly had to deal with the complicated dynamics of India's fragmented sweetener market. The brand had to deal with two problems: stiff price competition from the unorganized sector in offline markets and late deliveries in online channels even though demand was rising. To solve these problems, the founders worked with Punjab Agricultural University on agricultural research to improve soil pH and make their products last longer. They also added nut-infused jaggery variants to their product line. The brand did especially well in southern India and Maharashtra, which shows that people all over India want quality and honesty. This case study invites people to think about how a purpose-driven business can balance growth with authenticity, adapt to different consumer behaviours in different regions, and make decisions about logistics and branding when resources are limited. The case focuses on important ideas in entrepreneurship, grassroots innovation, agribusiness branding, and market education. This makes it perfect for use in courses on marketing, strategy, and sustainability.

Methodology: This case is based on a personal interview with Navnoor Kaur and Kaushal Singh, who started Jaggercane, on May 20, 2025.





RESEARCH PAPER TITLE -THE ROLE OF MICE (MEETING, INCENTIVE, CONFERENCE, EXHIBITION) TOURISM IN PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT IN HOTEL INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU REGION, INDIA.

Mohit Kumar

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Abstract

This study examines the important role of MICE (Meeting Incentives, Conference and Exhibitions) tourism is driving economic growth in the hotel industry of Jammu region, India. It investigates how MICE tourism contributes to increasing hotel revenue, improving occupancy rates, enhancing infrastructure, and generating employment. The research also analyses the strategies Hotel adopt to effectively attract and managed MICE events, including marketing efforts, service improvements, and facility investments. The findings highlight how MICE tourism supports Sustainable development and competitiveness in regional hospitality sector. The primary objectives of the study is to examine the influence of MICE (Meeting, Incentives, Conference and Exhibitions) tourism on operational performance and competitive positioning of hotels of Jammu. A mixed method research design was adopted to provide a compressive analysis. Qualitative data were obtaining through semi structured interviews with key stakeholders, including hotel managers, tourism departments officials, and event organizers. Quantitative data encompassing hotel occupancy rates and revenue figures spanning from 2014 to 2024 were systematically. Furthermore, secondary data sources such as official tourism reports and relevant industry publications were reviewed to triangulate and support the findings. The finding of the results to show the MICE tourism significantly improve hotel performance, particularly during off-peak seasons. Hotel that invest in conference facilities, event services, targeted marketing achieve better financial results and higher client satisfaction. Additionally, the MICE sector drives growth in related industries such as transportation, catering and event planning. However, Challenges remain, including inadequate infrastructure, poor connectivity, and a lack of skilled professionals. The research highlights that the tourism contributes to the economic development of Jammu's hotel industry. to all the effort this potential, understanding and cooperation among the government, public private partnership, private sector, and tourism stake holders is crucial. Together, all these facilities working together, training staff, and effectively promoting Jammu as a leading MICE destination.





FROM CRISIS TO CAMPAIGN: DIGITAL POLITICAL MARKETING IN THE AFTERMATH OF AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

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Abstract

The digital landscape has revolutionized political campaigns, shaping voter perceptions and engagement through targeted advertisements. Online political advertising has become a crucial aspect of modern electoral strategies, enabling candidates to rapidly respond to unfolding events. However, external shocks—such as political scandals, major policy announcements, or even acts of violence—can dramatically alter advertising dynamics. During the 2024 United States Presidential election, an assassination attempt (AA) on former President and Republican nominee Donald J. Trump on July 13, 2024, in Butler, Pennsylvania, marked a pivotal moment in the campaign. Such a significant event likely had profound implications for digital campaign strategies of both the Republican and Democratic parties.

This research seeks to answer the following questions: how did the assassination attempt impact the volume and frequency of political advertisements for Trump's and Biden's campaigns? Did the attempt influence the geographical distribution of advertisements, particularly in key swing states? Were there noticeable differences in response strategies between the Republican and Democratic campaigns?

The dataset for this study was obtained from the Google Ads Transparency Centre via BigQuery, focusing specifically on political advertisements displayed in the United States between June 28 and July 28, 2024. This period covers fifteen days before and after the assassination attempt (13th July, 2024), allowing for a comparative analysis of advertising trends. These advertisements appeared across various Google platforms and were distributed in multiple formats such as text, audio, and video. A total of 1133 unique advertisements were analysed, providing a comprehensive representation of political advertising behaviour during these key periods.

For the analysis, we use difference and difference (DiD), we employed both ordinary least squares (OLS) and negative binomial (NB) models, which assess changes in political ad frequency. The dependent variable in our models is Ad Count, measured separately for each political party, while the key independent variable is the assassination attempt (shock), coded as 0 for days prior to the event and 1 for days after, which represents the estimated change in ad counts resulting from the event. The study utilizes a fifteen-day pre- and post-event panel dataset at the zip code level. As a control variable, we incorporate Google Trends data, which captures daily public interest in Joe Biden and Donald Trump across online platforms. The data is collected from the Google Trends library. The dataset is structured as a panel, allowing us to track the number of ads posted by Ad_{it} in each zip code (i) over time (t).





The findings reveal divergent responses to the assassination attempt between the Biden and Trump campaigns. Biden's campaign saw a decline with a coefficient (-0.361) in ad frequency (Adf), while Trump's campaign significantly increased with a coefficient (4.674) in its ad presence. The observed variations underscore the complexity of political advertising responses to crisis events and highlight the need for further investigation into the underlying strategic and behavioural mechanisms driving these changes. This study contributes to digital political advertising and crisis-driven campaign strategy literature by demonstrating how external shocks create shifts in advertising priorities.





ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ORIENTATION: A DUAL ENGINE FOR SMES

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Abstract

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of economic development, particularly in emerging markets, yet they operate in increasingly complex, uncertain, and rapidly changing environments. In response to these challenges, this study investigates the synergistic role of Organizational Agility and Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) as a dual engine driving SME performance, innovation, and long-term sustainability.

In the current dynamic and fiercely competitive business landscape, SMEs are always under pressure to innovate and adapt. This study examines the complementary roles that entrepreneurial orientation and organizational agility play as key factors influencing the competitive advantage and long-term success of SMEs. While entrepreneurial orientation includes proactive, risk-taking, and creative behaviours that support strategic renewal and opportunity exploitation, organizational agility is the capacity of a company to quickly perceive and react to changes in the market.

The complementary functions of organizational agility and entrepreneurial orientation as two elements impacting SMEs' competitive edge and long-term performance are examined in this study. Organizational agility is the ability of a business to swiftly recognize and respond to changes in the market, whereas entrepreneurial orientation encompasses proactive, risk-taking, and innovative behaviours that promote strategic renewal and opportunity exploitation.

The research investigates how these capacities interact and support one another in promoting organizational resilience, market responsiveness, and competitive uniqueness, drawing on a survey of the current literature and enhanced by case studies that explain the relationship between organizational agility and entrepreneurship. According to the research, SMEs that actively develop both agility and an entrepreneurial mindset can innovate consistently, break into new markets, and weather shocks from the outside world. By highlighting the value of combining adaptive and entrepreneurial qualities in resource-constrained situations, the research contributes to the expanding corpus of strategic management literature. This article also explains the theories that can help promote or initiate entrepreneurial activity among SMEs.





“STUDIES ON VENTURE CAPITAL BACKING AND IPO SUCCESS: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS”

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Abstract

Drawing insights from both classical and contemporary research, this paper seeks to review, critically examine, and integrate the existing literature pertaining to the relationship between venture capital (VC) backing and the performance of firms pursuing an initial public offering (IPO). In addition to providing financial resources, strategic guidance, and advice to the portfolio companies during the pre-IPO stage (and even post-IPO), VCs also certify the superior quality of the firm. However, the degree to which VC backing correlates to better IPO performance continues to be a subject of academic debate.

This paper follows a systematic methodology grounded in the PRISMA framework, after selecting research papers from popular scholarly databases, using appropriate keywords and an inclusion criterion that ensures both quality and relevance.

The extensive literature on VC and IPO performance is categorized into three primary areas within the scope of this study: initial underpricing, after-market stock returns, and post-IPO firm performance, which encompasses operating and market performance as well as corporate governance. This paper also considers the differences in the findings between the developed markets like the U.S. and the rising nations like China and India. This paper also emphasizes the findings of the varying impact of VCs based on syndication and exit plan.

This review contributes to the understanding of whether and how venture capital backing leads to value creation for IPO firms and also outlines a framework for future research by identifying gaps in existing studies. The findings of this study provide valuable insights to academicians, investors, and policymakers.





AI INTEGRATION IN STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING: LEVERAGING PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS FOR TALENT ACQUISITION AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly being used in variety of domains in the ever-growing digital era, including human resource management (HR). AI technology can solve problems such as long employee hiring processes and retaining quality. Workforce planning is one of the critical aspects of talent management, essential for aligning organizational requirements with human capital to achieve efficiency, productivity, and long-term success. Traditional manpower planning methods usually rely on past data and reactive approaches, which fall short in today's highly dynamic labour markets driven by frequent technological advancements and evolving workforce expectations. This paper explores the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and predictive analytics into workforce planning as a proactive solution to these challenges.

This study explores the transformative potential of incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) into workforce planning, focusing the use of predictive analytics to improve decision-making processes. It investigates how AI technologies can be applied to optimize multiple facets of workforce management, including labour demand forecasting, talent acquiring, employee retention, and allocation of resource. By evaluating both historical and real-time data, AI systems can detect trends and forecast labour market trends, allowing organizations to make strategic staffing choices that align with their changing objectives. Additionally, the study discusses the application of predictive analytics in anticipating workforce requirements and detecting skill gaps, thus facilitating proactive employee development and acquisition strategies.

Methodologically, the study adopts a mixed-methods research design, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain a comprehensive perspective on the issue. Surveys and structured interviews were conducted with HR professionals and employees who utilize AI in recruitment and employee retention across different organizations and to ensure a diverse and representative sample, the study applies a combination of purposive and random sampling techniques. However quantitative data from surveys and structured interviews are analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis using statistical software such as SPSS or R. Furthermore, challenges such as ethical considerations, data privacy issues, and potential biases embedded in AI systems are also discussed. The findings underscore that by leveraging real-time insights, organizations can proactively address talent shortages, optimize hiring strategies, and create personalized retention programs. This approach helps businesses stay competitive, reduce turnover, and align talent strategies with long-term organizational goals.



DEMYSTIFYING THE SCHOLARSHIP OF PROTEAN CAREER RESEARCH: A PROBLEMATIZATION PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Protean career refers to a career directed and managed by an individual. In the contemporary world of work, external forces have numerous effects on an individual's career, such as career change, shifts, and adaptability issues. To identify these critical dynamics and spot the gaps, we have undergone a problematization review. The problematization involves the religious reading of the hermeneutical texts present in a domain. We problematized the protean career scholarship from its evolutionary doctrine to the current state of the art to offer a critical appraisal of protean career research. We have also synthesized and diagnosed the anatomy of assumptions present in protean career research and offer alternative perspectives. We examined the assumption-challenging and conforming perspectives of protean career research through the lens of problematization. Our samples cover 67 studies published in journals of high repute. We have studied the existing frameworks by highlighting the roles of external factors influencing the protean career. Our study reveals that protean careers are subject to context dependency and have an agentic interplay with not only personal values but also market disruptions. The protean paradox is context-dependent, and the protean careerist has a strong sense of job embeddedness. We have also offered both empirically refutational and non-refutational alternative arguments for future research. This study offers key managerial insights to career counsellors, human resource practitioners and policy makers.



EMERGING TRENDS IN FINANCIAL LITERACY AND INVESTMENT BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY OF INDIAN MILLENNIALS

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Abstract

In recent years, the rapid evolution of financial products and digital investment platforms has underscored the importance of financial literacy, particularly among young investors. This study examines the influence of financial literacy on the investment behaviour of Indian millennials, focusing on awareness, risk preferences, and portfolio diversification. The research adopts a descriptive research design using primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to 250 respondents aged between 20 and 35 across urban centres in Jharkhand and Bihar. Statistical tools such as correlation analysis and multiple regression were employed to determine the relationship between financial knowledge and investment decision-making. Findings reveal a significant positive correlation between financial literacy and informed investment behaviour. Respondents with higher levels of financial education were more likely to engage in systematic investment plans, equity markets, and diversified portfolios. The study highlights the urgent need for integrating financial education into the academic curriculum and leveraging digital tools for awareness campaigns. These insights can aid policymakers, educators, and financial institutions in promoting inclusive financial growth. Further research may explore regional disparities and the impact of fintech innovations on investor behaviour.





THE ROLE OF INFLUENCER MARKETING IN PROMOTING ECO-FRIENDLY ALTERNATIVES TO PLASTIC: A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR SHIFT

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Abstract

In recent years, influencer marketing has appeared as an authoritative tool to promote sustainable lifestyles, particularly through social media platforms. This research aims to scrutinize the role of influencer marketing in nurturing consumer behaviour, specifically in encouraging the adoption of eco-friendly alternatives to plastic such as biodegradable, paper-based, or reusable products. The focus of the study is to analyze how efficiently influencers can advance consciousness, positively shift perceptions, and influence purchasing decisions in favor of environmentally accountable products.

Influencer marketing involves cooperating with individuals who have a substantial and engaged following on digital platforms to endorse products or causes to their onlookers. Its soaring popularity branches from the widespread use of social media and the augmenting impact of online content creators on consumer decision-making. Assumed the vital need to reduce plastic consumption due to its environmental impact, this study explores how influencers contribute to spreading awareness about plastic-free alternatives and how their advocacy affects consumer choices.

The research adopts a **secondary research approach**, to gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how influencer-driven campaigns can shift consumer behaviour toward sustainability.





EXPLORING SOCIAL IMPACT OF GREEN FINANCE THROUGH BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study employs a bibliometric analysis to systematically explore the evolving landscape of the social impact within green finance. Knowing that green finance is a key instrument for sustainable development including environmental, social, and governance (ESG) aspects, this study looks at how its social component solves problems like inequality, labor relations, and community development. Utilizing data from the Web of Science (WOS) database, the analysis identifies publication trends, influential contributors, and thematic clusters. Findings reveal a consistent growth in scholarly output, with core themes such as 'sustainability' and 'ESG' dominating the discourse, alongside emerging topics like 'green technology innovation'. While highlighting the increasing recognition of social factors in green finance, the study also pinpoints research gaps, including conceptual heterogeneity in social impact measurement and a geographical bias towards developed markets. This review provides valuable information for researchers, practitioners, and legislators trying to increase the efficacy and inclusiveness of global green finance initiatives.



IMPACT OF RECENT REGULATORY CHANGES ON GROWTH AND PERFORMANCE OF SMALL FINANCE BANKS IN INDIA.

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Abstract

Small Finance Banks (SFBs) were introduced in India to enhance financial inclusion by providing banking services to underserved and unbanked segments. Since their inception, these banks have operated within a dynamic regulatory environment shaped by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This study conducts a longitudinal analysis to examine the impact of major regulatory changes on the financial performance of SFBs in India. Relying on secondary data from RBI circulars, and annual financial statements of SFBs, the study tracks key financial indicators such as net interest margin, return on assets, capital adequacy ratio, non-performing assets, and credit-deposit ratios. The research identifies three significant regulatory events during this period, including adjustments in priority sector lending targets, licensing conditions for transitioning into universal banks, and capital requirement modifications. Using descriptive trend analysis and panel data regression, the study evaluates how these regulatory shifts influenced operational stability and growth. Preliminary findings suggest that while some regulatory changes positively impacted the credit outreach and capital efficiency of SFBs, others posed short-term challenges in compliance and risk management. The study contributes to understanding how evolving regulations shape the strategic and financial progression of small finance banks to balance compliance with sustainable growth.



EXPLORING CROSS-CULTURAL NARRATIVES OF AI-SUPPORTED GREEN INNOVATION LABS: EVIDENCE FROM BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN THE UAE AND INDIA

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Abstract

Green innovation labs have become instrumental in reimagining sustainability education within business schools, yet the strategic integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in these platforms remains uneven and underexplored across geographies. This study adopts a cross-cultural narrative approach to investigate how AI-supported sustainability initiatives are conceptualized and implemented in select business schools across the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and India. Drawing from publicly available narratives of five institutions, the analysis focuses on how institutional context influences faculty-student collaboration and green technology adoption.

Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method, the study identifies four salient themes: (1) AI as a catalyst for interdisciplinary problem-solving; (2) the role of institutional culture in shaping collaborative practices; (3) underutilization of AI in administrative sustainability functions; and (4) the emergence of student-led grassroots innovation efforts. While UAE institutions such as MBZUAI and NYU Abu Dhabi demonstrate high-level AI research partnerships, Indian counterparts like Symbiosis International and Universal AI University emphasize community-led experimentation. Despite regional contrasts, both contexts reveal an underlying ambition to embed sustainability into digital education ecosystems.

The findings highlight the need for robust governance models, ethical guidelines, and inclusive design frameworks to optimize AI's role in academic sustainability innovation. This research contributes to the discourse on digital transformation in higher education by offering evidence-based insights into how institutional culture and strategic alignment can mediate the value of AI in green innovation ecosystems.





OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE AND STRATEGIC CHOICE: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

The relationship between ownership, strategy, and performance has been a central debate in the field of strategic management (Fitza & Tihanyi, 2017; Gedajlovic, 1993; Thomsen & Pedersen, 2000). However, the scholarship exploring the impact of ownership structure on firms' strategic choices remains incomplete (Foss et al., 2021). This study addresses this gap by examining how ownership structure influences the strategic choice vis-à-vis deviant strategy and conservative strategy of firms. Our analysis of a sample of Indian firms over the period 2011-2020 illustrates that different types of owners have differential impacts on the firm's strategic choice. This work adds to the burgeoning literature on performance differences among firms while contributing to the broader literature regarding the implications of ownership arrangement for firm strategy.



UNFOLDING THE ACADEMIC FOOTPRINTS OF CONSUMER EMPOWERMENT: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

Consumer empowerment refers to the degree of taking decisions and controlling business interactions with respect to consumers' knowledge and resources. The twenty-first-century business landscape is subject to numerous turbulences, including ambidexterity and disruptions. In order to address these grand challenges, which have primarily affected market dynamism, I attempted a systematic literature review and mapped the current trends, ongoing debates and future directions of consumer empowerment research. To meticulously conduct this review, I have adopted the PRISMA protocol to obtain and refine data from the Scopus database. Finally, 129 documents are available to synthesize the consumer empowerment perspectives and locate the agentic interactions with marketing ecosystems. I have analysed these documents to diagnose both the bibliometric aspects as well as the systematic encapsulation of the consumer empowerment construct. My result reveals aftermath of Covid-19 consumer empowerment synchronises a significant spot in the field of consumer dynamism. A sense of sensitivity and consciousness has developed among consumers when buying baby care and intimacy products. Future research can address consumer orientation with respect to disruptions, attitude shifts and turbulence. This study extended the boundary of Consumer culture theory and Social identity theory. This study helps the managers, policy makers and marketing experts to implement the concept in a market-centric information economy.



WHEN TOOLS TRAVEL: TECHNOLOGY READINESS LEVEL (TRL) EXAPTATION AND ITS (UN)INTENDED CONSEQUENCES IN DEEP-TECH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

The need for knowledge transfer among the communities of practice and the problems encountered in doing so are well documented in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship. Various tools and artifacts facilitate this process, though they sometimes create hindrance as well. In the context of technology development and entrepreneurship many of such tools and artefacts like-business model, prototype etc. have been studied as boundary objects. When we move from conventional innovations to deep-tech innovations, risk and reward ratio for various stakeholders changes dramatically. As the number of actors involved and the context of application, specifically in the case deep-tech entrepreneurship are expanding so is the latent functionality of some of these tools. This is more so when the invention from its infancy stage is being converted into a tangible outcome and pursued for commercialization. During this phase of technology development, Technology Readiness Level (TRL), originated in the space industry, is getting institutionalized across varied settings. As usage of TRL is expanding beyond homogeneous R&D teams to the iterative, multi stakeholder context consisting of-investors, entrepreneurial support organization and policy makers, we critically examine the exaptation of TRL. Further, using the Toulmin's model of argument structure we make a claim that the ongoing exaptation of TRL is likely to make it a counterproductive boundary object in this specific context of entrepreneurship. While taking a pragmatic view about knowledge transfer, we suggest novel approach to the successful exaptation of TRL and potential limits. Although some limitations of TRL have been mentioned in few of the earlier studies, comprehensiveness of our manuscript with sound argument structure, and emerging context of deep-tech in India and across other major economies fill the gap in literature and paves way forward to adopt more robust tools. Additionally, this will help the entrepreneurial support organization and other ecosystem stakeholders in making the right bets while allocating the limited resources.





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DISRUPTING THE GIANTS: HOW BLUSMART PLANS TO COMPETE WITH OLA AND UBER IN THE CAB-HAILING BUSINESS

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Abstract

Amidst the rapidly growing automobile demand in Indian cities, BluSmart has recently taken the ride-hailing market by storm with its innovative solutions focusing on sustainability and customers' needs. This case study explores the reasons behind their rise, dissecting the key factors that have propelled them to become a preferred choice for many.

Unlike Ola and Uber, BluSmart has an entirely electric fleet, leaving a cleaner environmental footprint. However, their commitment to sustainability goes beyond optics. Since they own and operate their entire ecosystem, from vehicles and drivers to charging stations, BluSmart ensures consistent quality and predictable fares, doing away with surge pricing frustrations. This control fuels their focus on rider satisfaction, with Google Maps-powered route optimization ensuring on-time arrivals. Their impact is undeniable. Millions of green rides completed, along with CO2 emissions saved, paint a clear picture of their environmental contribution. But more importantly, concrete data reveals their success in specific cities. User testimonials echo their commitment to reliability and transparency, solidifying their position as a preferred alternative.

But BluSmart isn't resting on its laurels. With ambitious expansion plans and a growing army of electric vehicles built on sustainability, operational control, and customer-centricity are poised to disrupt the industry further. Their model proves that sustainable rides can be convenient and profitable, and it's just the beginning of BluSmart's electrifying journey and the thrilling transformation of the ride-hailing landscape.





THE MONOPOLY BLUEPRINT: STANDARD OIL AND LESSONS FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract

This historical case explores how Standard Oil rose from a Cleveland refinery to a monopoly in the oil industry and reshaped the boundaries of capitalism by creating artificial barriers to entry. In 1904, investigative journalist Ida Tarbell published an extensive exposé accusing Standard Oil of predatory pricing, secret rebates with railroad companies, and political manipulation.

Using legal documents, investigative journalism, economic literature, and satirical cartoons, the case adopts a narrative analysis approach to dissect the mechanisms that enabled Standard's dominance. It also examines the company's political entrenchment, business practices and the resulting public backlash leading to its dissolution in 1911.

The controlling shareholder and public face of the company, John D. Rockefeller, faced a critical dilemma relating to the future of America's largest oil producer: Should he resist the ruling by leveraging legal appeals, political influence, and public relations to try and preserve his empire? Or should he comply strategically, using the breakup as an opportunity to diversify and restructure?

By comparing Rockefeller's dilemma to today's tech giants, the case provides a foundational lens for understanding how monopolies behave when confronted with threats to their market dominance and what tech giants can learn from the tactical successes and failures of Standard Oil. The case also critically examines the social desirability of such giant monopolies.





ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM OF INDIA'S SPACE SECTOR AND RELEVANT PUBLIC-AGENCY ANCHORS

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Abstract

The space sector of India has witnessed the crucial role of public-agency anchors in transforming it from a government driven sphere towards a feistier entrepreneurial-ecosystem (EE), yet such roles remain underexplored. Current work examines it with an embedded single case centered around India's Space EE, while acknowledging how agencies can act as ecosystem stewards (Mazzucato & Robinson, 2018). Primarily it explores how ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization) with its commercialization arm, IN-SPACe, function as ecosystem anchors- shaping and deploying the governance mechanism for new venture entry, innovation and scaling. Drawing on EE conceptual elements (Stam & Spigel, 2016), this work focuses on public-agency anchors (ISRO, IN-SPACe), startups (e.g., Pixxel, Skyroot) and other intermediary supporters (e.g., VCs, incubators, industry bodies). The research employs a multimethod approach for data collection comprising semi-structured interviews, secondary data from MoUs, white papers, budget (2010-2024) and process mapping of relevant events (e.g., IN-SPACe's 2020 launch). Thematic analysis outcome suggests some key governance mechanisms, namely regulatory clarity (e.g., licensing regimes), infrastructure access (e.g., facility sharing), milestone-based contracting and technology transfer agreements. Eventually, the research manifests a framework of "Ecosystem Governance by Public Anchors," also demonstrating a feedback loop for policy refinement based on venture success. Thus, the outcomes contribute to literature of EE in terms of pivotal role of public-agency anchors as ecosystem orchestrators and provides evidence based practical insights to policymakers in India and beyond, specifically for such dynamic and innovative ecosystem which is highly capital intensive.



INSTANT GRATIFICATION MEETS EVOLVING EXPECTATIONS: PERCEPTION OF GEN Z'S ENGAGEMENT WITH QUICK COMMERCE IN INDIA.

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Abstract

This study throws light on the socio-economic impact on quick commerce (QC), particularly its influence on consumer spending patterns across the Indian urban Generation Z's (Gen Z). The study focuses on the usage patterns, choice of applications, experience, current expectations and desired future features by Gen Z. The study adopted quantitative and descriptive statistics methodology. For data collection, this study used the cross-sectional survey with a stratified random sample to Gen Z individuals (born between 1997-2012) residing in Tier I, II and III cities across India. The comprehensive study with multi-city perception focused on influential Gen Z cohorts in India, presents the digital behaviours, values, and evolving expectations, bridging the gaps. The study provides actionable implications for policy makers focusing on the socio-economic aspects of QC. And, for industry stakeholders to refine their strategies for customer retention, service differentials and sustainable growth.



EVALUATING THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES FOR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

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Abstract

Meeting the developmental aspirations of disadvantaged populations in rural India necessitates a grounded understanding of local administrative structures, socio-economic vulnerabilities, and institutional performance. In areas characterized by remoteness and inadequate public infrastructure, the effectiveness of decentralized decision-making and participatory governance emerges as a cornerstone for achieving inclusive and sustainable outcomes. This study addresses the pressing need for ground-level evidence on how local institutions respond to and engage with the challenges faced by marginalized sections of society.

This investigation was centered around two primary aims: first, to examine how effectively Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and similar governance bodies cater to the educational, health-related, and livelihood concerns of underrepresented communities; and second, to explore the availability, reach, and impact of social protection and welfare initiatives, with particular attention to gender equity and child welfare considerations.

The research adopted a mixed-methods design, integrating structured household surveys with qualitative insights gathered through focus group discussions and interviews with key local stakeholders. Fieldwork was carried out in two rural blocks of Odisha, with analysis structured around nine thematic pillars, reflecting the Government of India's framework for localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The findings reveal low levels of community engagement in governance processes, with less than 40% participation in Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha meetings, indicating limited trust in institutional mechanisms. Social security coverage remains inadequate; Infrastructure gaps were evident; Underutilization of local resources—such as village ponds, playgrounds, and weekly markets—further limited opportunities for community-based economic development. Gender and child-focused committees reported negligible participation, underscoring the absence of inclusive planning practices.

The study offers practical insights for improving the efficacy of local governance through enhanced civic engagement, targeted outreach for welfare programs, and participatory infrastructure planning. From a theoretical standpoint, the findings contribute to the literature on grassroots governance, decentralized planning, and social policy implementation. At the policy level, the research underscores the need for capacity-building among local institutions and the integration of inclusive development frameworks to





ensure the equitable distribution of services and opportunities for India's most marginalized rural populations.





THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SHAPING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AMONG TRIBALS: A CASE STUDY IN JHARKHAND

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Abstract

Purpose- In Contemporary times, digital platform is shaping political participation but tribal population often faces significance barriers to the digital inclusion. The study examines the role of social media in the political participation among tribal communities, focusing particularly on gender-based patterns of access, engagement, influence and its impact based on fieldwork conducted in the rural area of Chandra village, Ormanjhi block, Jharkhand. The study discloses that the impact and usage of social media in political participation still barrier to the digital divide within tribal communities.

Methodology- This study is based on primary data collected through field research. The data collection was done by use of structured questionnaires embody of both close-ended and open-ended questions to capture a mix of qualitative and quantitative responses. Field research is conducted in the state of Jharkhand which focused on both male and female respondents belonging to tribal category ensuring a gender inclusive approach and to understand their access to digital platforms, level of political participation and influence of social media. Initial data collected will be used for future development of case studies and relevance statistical tools.

Findings- The results indicate that tribal male respondents mostly use smartphones and are active on digital platforms whereas tribal women currently face barriers to digital access, financial limitations, lack of digital literacy, household responsibilities, and social restrictions and political involvement, there is strong desire among them to become digitally literate and politically active.

Originality- The existing literature is centered on political participation, but this study explores the role of social media in political participation among tribal communities in Jharkhand. This study highlights how limited access, digital illiteracy, patriarchy norms affect political engagement. This study will provide valuable vision to the government, policymakers, practitioners and researchers working on social media and Political participation among tribal communities in Jharkhand.





ACROCARE - THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COUNSELLING CELL AS A MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION IN A GROUP OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

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Abstract

The increasing rates of anxiety, depression, and stress among university students highlight the urgent need for effective programs that support mental health in educational settings (Shinde et al., 2018, Taylor et al. 2022, Wasil et al., 2022). This case study focuses on AcroCare, a counseling initiative established at the Acropolis Group of Institutions in Indore, which aims to promote mental wellness among students. AcroCare represents a comprehensive approach to mental health support, marked by its ability to expand both its services and functions to meet the evolving needs of students. A key strength of AcroCare is its adherence to best practices in workplace safety, ensuring uninterrupted access to mental health resources. This study discusses the important contextual factors that allow AcroCare to operate effectively, like its channel of communication and hierarchical structure providing valuable insights for other educational institutions interested in implementing similar programs along with the present-day challenges faced by AcroCare. It serves as a model for other institutions looking to improve mental health outcomes. The findings highlight the substantial impact of campus-based mental health initiatives and underscore the importance of sustained investment in student well-being. Creating supportive environments like AcroCare is essential for helping students not only succeed academically but also maintain their holistic well-being.





INTEGRATING ANALYTICAL APPROACHES AND DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY TO MITIGATE HERD BEHAVIOUR IN FINANCE

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Abstract

This study explores a novel interdisciplinary intervention that integrates analytical decision-making tools with Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) to reduce herd behaviour in financial contexts. While behavioural finance highlights cognitive biases, it rarely considers how embodied awareness influences decision-making under uncertainty. Drawing on somatic psychology, the study introduces “embodied financial intelligence” as a framework for fostering independent and reflective financial behaviour.

A mixed-methods design was implemented with MBA students randomly assigned to control (analytical training only) and experimental (analytical training + DMT) groups. Decision-making was modelled using structured financial simulations measuring emotional regulation, decision latency, confidence, and herding behaviour. These simulations served as analytical instruments for capturing behavioural variability across scenarios and groups.

Quantitative results revealed that participants in the DMT-integrated group exhibited significantly lower herding behaviour, higher decision confidence, and longer deliberation times—markers of reduced susceptibility to social conformity and enhanced reflective processing. Mediation analysis indicated that increased confidence partially explained the reduction in herding behaviour.

Qualitative data from reflective journals and interviews confirmed these findings. Participants reported heightened somatic awareness, emotional clarity, and groundedness, which they attributed to more autonomous financial decision-making.

The integration of analytical modelling and somatic intervention suggests a new direction for behavioural finance education and practice. This study contributes to both theory and pedagogy by demonstrating that decision-making competence can be enhanced not only through cognitive analysis but also through embodied, experiential learning.





COMPETITION AND CASH COMPONENTS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF INDIAN FIRMS

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of market competition on corporate cash composition, explicitly investigating how competitive dynamics influence the allocation between pure cash and short-term investments among Indian firms. The research analyses 1,618 non-financial companies listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) from 2014 to 2023, and further focuses on five key sectors: Chemical, Ferrous Metals, Information Technology, Textile, and Wholesale Trading.

Using the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) to measure product market competitiveness, the study employs multivariate regression analysis to examine the relationship between competition intensity and cash management strategies. The findings reveal that firms systematically reduce their pure cash holdings as competition intensifies while increasing their allocation to short-term investments. However, the analysis demonstrates that pure cash maintains a higher value than short-term holdings in competitive environments.

The research addresses a significant gap in emerging market literature, particularly in the Indian context, where limited studies have examined the nuanced components of corporate liquidity management. The study's findings have important implications for financial managers, investors, and consultants in understanding optimal liquidity strategies under varying competitive pressures. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on corporate cash holdings by distinguishing between different liquidity components rather than treating them as a unified construct





SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF ENERGY MARKET INSTRUMENT: WHERE ARE WE AND WHERE SHOULD WE GO?

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Abstract

Purpose: The financialisation of the energy sector through energy exchange traded funds (ETFs) has focused on responsible investments contributing to energy finance. Pursuant to the unexplored area of energy ETFs investment, this study seeks to understand the existing literature to identify research hotspots, uncover forthcoming themes, frame future research questions, and establish their interactions with sustainable development goals (SDGs). **Design/methodology/approach:** A comprehensive review of 131 articles published between 2014 and 2024 and extracted from the Web of Science (WoS) database was performed using bibliometric analysis, cartography, and thematic review supported by the VOSviewer software and Biblioshiny package. **Findings:** Bibliometric analysis revealed remarkable academic growth since 2017; however, the contribution was skewed towards developed countries, with the USA at the locus in terms of publications. The most prolific journal is Energy Economics. The cartography results reveal four research clusters, and the thematic review centralises the focus of the studies into three primary research hotspots. Finally, a structured framework is proposed that includes three emerging themes and eight research questions and is mapped to SDG 7, SDG 9, SDG 13, and SDG 17. **Implications:** This review provides a roadmap for suitable methodologies for practitioners to assess the energy ETFs for portfolio management and diversification. **Originality/value:** This study pioneers the existing research on energy ETFs as financial investments by leveraging bibliometric, cartography, thematic review approaches, and an intellectual framework aligned with the SDGs. **Keywords:** Bibliometric Analysis, Cartography Analysis, Energy Exchange Traded Fund (Energy ETF), Responsible Investments, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), Thematic Review Paper Type: Literature review





"THE ROLE OF STRESS MANAGEMENT IN ENHANCING JOB SATISFACTION AMONG BANK EMPLOYEES"

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of stress management in enhancing job satisfaction among employees in the banking sector. The banking industry is widely recognized for its fast-paced, competitive, and high-pressure work environment, which often results in elevated stress levels among employees. Prolonged exposure to such stress can negatively affect employee morale, productivity, and overall job satisfaction. To explore this relationship, a structured questionnaire was distributed to a sample of bank employees across various departments. Quantitative methods, including statistical analysis, were used to identify major workplace stressors and assess the effectiveness of current stress management practices.

The findings reveal that factors such as workload, time pressure, lack of role clarity, and inadequate managerial support were significant contributors to occupational stress. However, the implementation of stress management strategies, such as regular mental health assessments, counseling services, time management training, and wellness programs, had a positive effect on employee satisfaction and performance. The study concluded that effective stress management not only improves job satisfaction but also contributes to employee retention and organizational efficiency. Based on the results, banking institutions must adopt comprehensive, employee-focused stress reduction programs and cultivate a supportive work environment.





REDEFINING RESPONSIBILITY: A SUSTAINABILITY-CENTRIC REVIEW OF INDIA'S DIESEL ENGINE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

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Abstract

India's diesel engine manufacturing industry is at a key turning point. Once known for high emissions and environmental impact, the sector now faces strong pressure to shift toward cleaner and more responsible practices. This change is driven by environmental concerns, stricter regulations, and a global push for sustainability.

This paper studies how leading Indian companies are responding to these challenges. Through desk research, it examines efforts to lower emissions, adopt energy-efficient technologies, and follow circular economy practices. For example, companies like Greaves Cotton are producing electric and hybrid engines and improving waste reduction systems. These actions support government rules like Bharat Stage VI and align with key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals—SDG 7 (Clean Energy), SDG 8 (Decent Work), and SDG 9 (Industry and Innovation).

The paper also looks at how companies are supporting social causes, such as skill development programs and clean water projects. However, the transition is not without issues. Smaller firms often lack the money and training to adopt new green technologies, and many workers are not yet skilled in modern, eco-friendly systems.

By highlighting both achievements and gaps, this paper provides useful insights for industry leaders, educators, and policymakers working to make the diesel engine sector more sustainable, inclusive, and future-ready.





ANTECEDENTS AND PROCESSES FOR OPEN INNOVATION IN SMES AND START-UPS: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper examines the role of People, Leadership, Resources, Culture and Strategy as potential antecedents of Open Innovation performance in SMEs and Start-Ups using the process of technology exploitation and exploration. Existing research has examined these antecedents individually, leading to the phenomena of Open Innovation. Past researchers have called for open innovation studies in emerging economies that have yet to see tremendous waves of innovation and see if the conclusions arrived at in developed economies hold good in newer economies.

Design/methodology/approach: Leveraging a quantitative research approach and employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, we gathered and analyzed data from a diverse sample of 474 employees representing various SMEs and start-ups in Bengaluru, India.

Findings: The findings underscore the significance of a talented and dedicated workforce as a driving force behind the open innovation process, emphasizing the critical need for recruiting and nurturing innovative talent within organizations. Effective Innovation Leadership emerges as a catalyst for creating an innovation-friendly environment, fostering a culture where innovative ideas flourish. Resource allocation emerges as a key determinant, with a positive correlation between resource availability and open innovation success, highlighting the importance of strategic resource investments.

Originality/value: This study will help extrapolate the Open Innovation performance and the potential application of processes to act as catalysts for Open Innovation. In addition, this study fulfils the gap of quantitative studies to be done in the field to validate the findings obtained through qualitative enquiries by erstwhile researchers.





FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: INTEGRATING DIVERSE PARADIGMS FOR ENHANCED ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

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Abstract

Organizational Resilience (OR), the concept in management research, has become quintessential due to the escalating complexity and unpredictability of today's business landscapes (Iftikhar et al., 2021; Linnenluecke, 2017). Previous research has utilized a variety of theoretical frameworks from both positivist and interpretive paradigms to investigate how organizations endure, adjust to, and recover from crises. These frameworks broadly encompass the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991), Dynamic Capabilities (Teece et al., 1997), Sense-Making Theory (Weick, 1993), and Social Capital Theory (Adler et al. 2002), among others. Despite this diversity, a major challenge remains: the absence of a unified, comprehensive understanding of OR. Positivist approaches focus on quantifiable constructs such as resource allocation and operational adaptability (Helfat & Peteraf, 2003), whereas interpretive perspectives highlight sense-making, leadership narratives, and cultural factors (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). This divergence results in gaps in the conceptualization, assessment, and implementation of OR across different contexts. This paper conducts a paradigmatic review of the OR literature, examining core theories within both perspectives and exploring their epistemological foundations. It identifies key themes, overlaps, and tensions, and suggests employing hybrid frameworks—like critical realism—to integrate structural and social dimensions of OR. The findings indicate that organizational resilience is a dynamic, multidimensional construct. It is not merely the result of strategic planning or resources but also a product of sense-making processes, stakeholder engagement (Ortiz-de-Mandojana & Bansal, 2016), and management best practices (Dimitriadis, 2021). Organizations that blend strategic capabilities with adaptive cultures (DesJardine et al., 2019; Ducheck, 2020) are better equipped to navigate crises and seize opportunities for transformation (Heikinheimo et al., 2025) (Weick & Quinn, 1999). This research enhances academic understanding by advocating for a holistic framework for OR that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods. Socio-economically, it provides valuable insights for decision-makers aiming to build resilient organizations capable of maintaining sustainable operations and legitimacy in volatile environments.





BARRIERS TO OPERATING WITH MICRO FULFILMENT CENTRES FOR E-COMMERCE IN URBAN CITIES

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Abstract

Purpose – The study examines the barriers to setting up a Micro Fulfilment Centre in enhancing last-mile deliveries in the urban city of Kolkata. As it is an emerging concept in Quick Commerce in India, it has seen tremendous growth in the past few years, but research in this domain has been relatively sparse.

Design/Methodology - This study employs an exploratory qualitative approach, conducting 15 structured interviews with senior logistics professionals in the e-commerce industry. The current research examines various barriers to Micro-Fulfilment Planning through a thematic analysis.

Findings – The results reveal that in a city like Kolkata, Micro-Fulfilment Centres (MFCs) aim to reduce costs and enhance delivery efficiency, particularly in e-commerce, where last-mile delivery constitutes 50–60% of total supply chain costs. However, MFC deployment faces dynamic, location-specific challenges that encompass environmental, political, and technological aspects. Inventory management and technology are critical in site selection. Quick Commerce isn't feasible across all pin codes due to high costs, and MFCs are more viable in areas lacking local Kirana stores, as they depend mainly on consumer purchasing power.

Originality/Value – While quick commerce is rapidly expanding, the role of Micro Fulfilment Planning in addressing last-mile delivery challenges remains under-researched. This paper contributes to the discourse by uncovering the key obstacles to planning Micro Fulfilment Centres in Kolkata, a city where such issues remain largely unaddressed.





HARNESSING HOLISTIC WISDOM: A COMMUNITY-BASED BUSINESS MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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Abstract

This paper introduces the Sustainable Rural Empowerment (SURE) Model, a community-driven business framework inspired by the visionary teachings of Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru. Designed to address chronic rural challenges—poverty, underemployment, and ecological degradation—the model builds an integrated economy through interlinked cooperative societies rooted in local ownership and democratic governance. Each society specializes in a distinct value-added process using regionally abundant natural resources (e.g., coconut) to produce coir, oil, handicrafts, and other agricultural by-products. The model further promotes circular economy principles by repurposing agricultural waste into commercially viable products and upgrading traditional practices to more water-conserving and energy-efficient methods. Cooperatives are supported by an apex coordinating body and community-based provision stores, forming a decentralized yet cohesive ecosystem. The model operationalizes frugal innovation, equitable ownership, grassroots leadership, and sustainability in alignment with ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles.

India's current development trajectory, while economically ambitious, often compromises ecological integrity. Alarming trends reported in EnviStats India 2024 and studies on biodiversity loss and water scarcity underscore the urgency of rethinking rural development. The SURE Model offers a corrective pathway by aligning ecological responsibility with economic inclusion.

Scalable and adaptable across diverse rural contexts, the SURE Model delivers tangible outcomes: diversified income, job creation, sustainable production, and environmental stewardship. It offers a compelling alternative to top-down welfare schemes, enabling resilient, self-sufficient communities rooted in cooperative enterprise and traditional wisdom. As such, it presents a practical and visionary framework for driving inclusive, sustainable, and socially impactful rural transformation in India.





TECHNOLOGY OVERLOAD IN HYBRID WORK ARRANGEMENTS: A WELLBEING PARADOX?

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Abstract

The digital transformation is restructuring the modern workplace, employees are increasingly required to engage with complex, technology-intensive platforms, particularly under hybrid work arrangements that blur the fine line between personal and professional life. This study aims to investigate the effects of technology overload on work stress, employee well-being, and productivity, with a specific focus on identifying the mediating roles of stress and well-being, and the moderating effect of hybrid work arrangements.

Grounded in the Stressor-Strain-Outcome (SSO) theory (Koeske & Koeske, 1993), the study conceptualises technology overload as a stressor that negatively affects employee functioning and employee productivity and outcomes through psychological strain. The primary data were collected from 500 IT professionals in India across a range of roles, including software development, system administration, data analysis, IT support, or project management from diverse departments, job levels (entry-level, mid-level, senior level), and different geographical locations operates in multiple regions in India.

The methodological steps involved thorough data preprocessing, evaluation of multicollinearity through correlation matrices, specification of the measurement and structural models, and estimation of model parameters. Key libraries including pandas, numpy, semopy, and statsmodels were employed to perform correlation analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) by using Python programming language

The findings highlight that technology overload significantly escalates work-related stress and simultaneously impacts employee well-being. These two dimensions act as mediating variables, explaining how the excessive technology overload is influencing employee productivity. This elevated stress affects the well-being, which leads to disengagement and reduced focus of employees. Furthermore, the hybrid work arrangements act as a moderating variable, which affects the strength of the relationships between technology overload and both stress and well-being. While the hybrid work arrangements provide flexibility and autonomy, it also exacerbates pressures for constant connectivity, which hampers the work-life boundaries.

By integrating dual mediation and moderation analysis, the study contributes to a developing understanding of employee experiences in the digitally evolving workplaces. It offers actionable insights for organisations, managers and HR professionals to create healthier work environments. Organisations





should implement strategies for digital detoxification through interventions like boundary-setting policies and well-being programs to mitigate the adverse effects of technostress. This research highlights the urgent need to address the issue of technology overload in hybrid work settings to safeguard employee well-being and maintain workforce productivity.





HARNESSING DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND GENERATIVE AI TO PROMOTE FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN RURAL INDIA: OVERCOMING CHALLENGES, HANDLING CULTURAL CONSEQUENCES, AND ESTABLISHING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

Societal exclusion in India, often rooted in discriminatory institutions and social hierarchies, perpetuates poverty by limiting access to essential services like education, healthcare, and financial tools-especially in rural areas. Efforts to digitalize India have made progress but have also intensified the digital divide, particularly among marginalized groups such as women, due to poor internet connectivity, lack of localized content, and gender-biased design of financial platforms. Generative AI (GenAI) offers further opportunities by automating complex processes (KYC, credit scoring etc.) and providing financial services in vernacular languages.

Research Problem: This research explores how digital infrastructure and GenAI can drive meaningful financial inclusion in rural India, addressing infrastructural, socio-cultural, and regulatory barriers.

Research Objectives

Evaluate the impact of digital infrastructure on rural financial inclusion.

Examine GenAI's role in enhancing financial literacy and personalized services.

Identify and analyse challenges to digital financial inclusion.

Assess cultural consequences of digital and AI-driven solutions.

Recommend AI-driven, culturally sensitive platforms for sustainable financial inclusion.

Methodology: A qualitative research approach will be used, employing purposive sampling to select participants with relevant experience and insights.

Conclusion: Harnessing digital infrastructure and GenAI can bridge the rural-urban financial divide in India, provided challenges related to infrastructure, technology adoption, cultural resistance, data security, and regulation are addressed.

Limitations & Future Research: Future research should focus on scalable, low-cost connectivity models, localized AI-based literacy programs, and sustainable public-private partnerships. Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the socioeconomic impacts and inform the scaling of successful initiatives.







EXPLORING WELL-BEING IN THE PLATFORM ECONOMY: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The rise of the platform economy has transformed the nature of work globally, raising critical concerns about the well-being of platform workers. This study aims to systematically map and analyze the existing body of research on the well-being of platform workers using bibliometric techniques. Drawing data from Scopus and Web of Science databases, the study examines publication trends, leading authors, and key journals that have contributed to this domain. A keyword co-occurrence and thematic analysis is conducted to explore the evolution of research themes and the intellectual structure of the field. Special attention is given to identifying underrepresented areas in terms of geographic regions—particularly the Global South—specific worker categories such as women and migrant workers, and different dimensions of well-being, including emotional, social, and financial aspects. The study also highlights the most frequently applied theoretical frameworks, such as the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, stress theory, and organizational support theory. Based on the bibliometric patterns and thematic gaps identified, the study proposes a comprehensive future research agenda to inform both academic inquiry and policy development. This review contributes to a deeper understanding of how platform work impacts worker well-being and where future research efforts should be directed.





BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABLE INLAND FISH FARMING: A CIRCULAR ECONOMY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Inland fish farming has gained the prominence as a next better sustainable alternative to marine fisheries, given the rising demand for fish food in the world. The shift from captured fishing to inland fishing farming is happening because of overfishing, habitat degradation. Despite technological advancement, inland aquaculture faces various challenges like disease outbreak, rising cost of feed. The principles of circular economy have gained the attention as an effective strategy to promote sustainability and make it smart inland aquaculture. The aim of the research paper is to identify the barriers in the inland fish farming in India with special focus on Uttar Pradesh and the role that circular economy principles can play. A systematic literature review has been done to determine barriers in the inland fish farming. The database of Scopus is used by using keywords like Inland fish farming, role of circular economy. The findings suggested six factors like cost of feed, lack of infrastructure, floods, poor pricing, long fish cultivation cycle, and lack of financial capital are barriers in the growth of inland fish farming. The value of the paper lies in addressing the barriers in inland aquaculture by drawing conclusions from world's successful market. It provides current and potential challenges and research direction for the future investment in both academia and industry.





DOES THE STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE MITIGATE THE GREENWASHING RISK? EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN FIRMS

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Abstract

Despite growing attention to corporate reporting, the issue of greenwashing remains largely overlooked in the literature. A persistent challenge lies in quantifying the risk of greenwashing, as existing measures fail to systematically capture the extent of misleading corporate disclosures. To address this gap, we construct the Cheap Talk Index (CTI) to quantify greenwashing by measuring the prevalence of vague and non-specific climate commitments in corporate disclosures. This study examines the association between stakeholder influence and greenwashing risk, operationalizing stakeholder influence through the Stakeholder Influence Index (SI Index). This index comprehensively captures the influence of employees, shareholders, customer groups and society. Our sample consists of 16,159 firm-year observations spanning the period from 2015 to 2024. Using a fixed-effects within-group panel model, we find that firms with stronger stakeholder influence exhibit lower levels of greenwashing risk, indicating that active stakeholder engagement enhances corporate transparency. Furthermore, our results suggest that corporate governance moderates this relationship, strengthening the mitigating effect of stakeholder influence on greenwashing risk. These findings have important policy implications, emphasizing the need for clearer regulatory guidelines on corporate disclosures. By aligning disclosure practices with strong corporate governance principles, firms can foster a culture of accountability and credibility in sustainability reporting.



AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF RETAIL INVESTORS' CONFIDENCE IN AI TOOLS FOR STOCK MARKET DECISION-MAKING

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Abstract

In the era of financial technology, artificial intelligence (AI) tools have emerged as influential decision-making aids for retail investors in stock markets. This study explores the extent of confidence that Indian retail investors place in AI-generated financial advice and identifies the factors that influence their trust and adoption. As AI-based platforms increasingly offer predictive analytics, stock recommendations, and portfolio suggestions, understanding investor sentiment toward these tools has become critical for financial service providers, policymakers, and developers. The research employs a quantitative, survey-based methodology, gathering primary data from retail investors across diverse age groups, income levels, and investing experiences. The factors like perceived accuracy, transparency, ease of use, past performance, data privacy, general trust in technology, cost-effectiveness, and peer influence are taken to understand investor's confidence in AI tools for decision making. Statistical tools such as Cronbach's Alpha, Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression, and ANOVA are used to test the reliability and significance of the relationships. Findings from this study provide valuable insights into the evolving relationship between technology and investor behaviour, highlighting areas where AI platforms can improve to build greater trust and credibility. The outcomes will contribute to policy discussions, product development, and investor education in the context of AI integration in capital markets.

MAPPING THE EVOLUTION OF E-MAIL MARKETING: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH TRENDS AND SCHOLARLY INFLUENCE

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Abstract

E-mail marketing is an online approach where companies leverage email to captivate both prospective and current clients. In the contemporary business world, it has been evolved into a dynamic digital communication strategy, shaping consumer engagement and business outreach. Multifarious qualitative and quantitative studies have been conducted in the domain of digital marketing; however, limited research has specifically explored e-mail marketing. The present study employs a bibliometric analysis to emphasize the development of e-mail marketing by using a dataset extracted from the Scopus database for the period 2000-2025. By employing the RStudio and biblioshiny software, the concurrent study examines the publication trends, journals, leading authors, influential keywords, and country analysis and collaboration. The results reveal a significant increase in publications in the year 2010 and 2023. It also highlights that PRINTING IMPRESSIONS and CHAPARRO-PELÁEZ J are the most relevant source and author respectively. KUMAR A, 2016, J MARK has received the highest number of citations, that is, 739, and terms like marketing and electronic mail are the most occurring keywords across the globe. Countries like the USA have produced the highest number of documents, such as 57 with 369 total citations, followed by India, and Spain with 17 and 14, respectively. China and the USA are frequent collaborating countries in the concerned field. This mapping offers insights into e-mail marketing's intellectual structure, guiding future research and helping academics and practitioners leverage its evolving potential in digital business.



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SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP- WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS TRANSCENDING BARRIERS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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Abstract

Sustainable leadership transcends traditional leadership by integrating long-term environmental, social, and economic goals into the core of institutional strategies. Extant literature has defined this emerging leadership as one that balances the triple goals of economy, society and environment (Liao Y, 2022). As organisations are progressively adopting sustainable development practices, aligning this vision to leadership development is essential (Dalati, et al., 2017; Piwowar-Sulej et al., 2021). Sustainability and leadership are both culture-driven and require the right ecosystem to prosper, while ensuring profitability. Research have claimed sustainable leadership to lead to organisational effectiveness through strengthening commitment, trust, sustainable financial performance, and resilience (Avery and Bergsteiner, 2011).

Within this evolving paradigm, the role of women in sustainable leadership has emerged as both vital and transformative. This study explores the unique dimensions that characterize women in sustainable leadership roles in entrepreneurship careers, emphasizing their tendencies toward inclusive decision-making, ethical governance, empathy-driven management, and a deep commitment to social equity and community development. Special attention is given to how women leaders engage with team prioritizing equal rights, encouraging participation, and fostering a culture of collaboration rather than control. Utilizing mixed research design, involving qualitative approach, in-depth interviews with women entrepreneurs and Delphi method, analysis were conducted to capture the lived experiences and leadership practices of women entrepreneurs in India. The findings reveal that women leaders not only embody the principles of sustainability, resilience, cooperation, and future-oriented thinking but also cultivate culture where all generations feel empowered, heard, and supported as part of a collective team. By identifying these distinctive traits and contributions, this research enriches the discourse on sustainable leadership and promotes gender-inclusive, intergenerational practices that foster long-term institutional and societal impact.





ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: A BIBLIOMETRIC AND SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF PRACTICES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON WORKPLACE OUTCOMES.

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Abstract

Diversity and inclusion have become central values in many organizations; however, effective implementation continues to pose significant challenges. There is still a gap between acknowledging these concepts and effectively implementing them into the everyday affairs to enhance the working climate. A thorough analysis of 126 published papers on the relationship between organizational Climate and diversity and inclusion. Data for this study was obtained from Scopus between 2015 and 2025, and it describes the Methods, industry- and particular regions findings, and undervalued mediator and moderator variables 90 of the 126 studies in this study that used the TCCM technique were classified as ABDCs, which evaluate research using four main lenses: theory, context, and characteristics. In addition, the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework will be used to ensure a transparent and systematic approach to the identification, screening, and inclusion of relevant literature. Bibliometric analysis was used for recognizing important authors, publications, and research clusters, which strengthened the systematic review. By offering a perspective on the uneven implementation of DI programs that is focused on corporate culture, this study contributes to the ongoing discussion on workplace diversity and inclusion, this synthesis is to guide future studies and assist companies in developing inclusive policies that foster creativity, improve teamwork, and create resilient, productive workplace cultures that are in line with long-term strategic objectives.





LEADING WITH PURPOSE: A WOMEN-LED MODEL TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES THROUGH ORGANIC & ECOFRIENDLY BUSINESSES

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Abstract

Introduction: Rural women's entrepreneurship drives economic and social transformation by fostering both economic participation and opportunities (Elson, 2003). Women's entrepreneurship in organic food systems serves as a catalyst for safer, more inclusive, and sustainable livelihoods for women producers. The intersection of gender and entrepreneurship merits deeper exploration. In this context, we investigate Aamon Mahila Chasi Producer Company Limited (AMCPCL), a women-led producer company that initiated organic rice & other sustainable businesses in 2020 by leveraging collective entrepreneurship, institutional collaboration, and supporting social transformation

Methodology: A case study approach is appropriate for less explored topics, which provide rich and contextual insight. Consequently, the study examines AMCPCL documents and partnership records to understand the operational model. Consequently, the study uses a qualitative method and uses purposive sampling for key stakeholders of AMCPCL through 2 FGDs and 4 in-depth interviews.

Findings: The enterprise has consistently expanded its network of women shareholders and achieved steady revenue growth through an innovative, community-centric, integrated model encompassing production, processing, and marketing. Despite positive developments, a few challenges related to the value chain, such as limited market access, consumer reach, infrastructure, and therefore lower profit margins, are prominent.

Discussion: AMCPCL should build strategic partnerships, diversify markets, institutionalise incentive mechanisms for the women producers, tap government schemes, add higher-value products, and adopt technology to enhance inclusion, consumer outreach, and commercial growth.

Implications: The study will encourage further research into similar sustainable businesses & provide valuable insights for policymakers, researchers and practitioners





FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: THE ROLE OF FINANCE IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION LANDSCAPE AND SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

The global push toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7—access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy—requires a strong focus on energy transition. This shift from traditional fuels to renewable energy (RE) sources is crucial due to rising energy demands and environmental concerns. While many studies have explored the role of financial investment in RE, there is limited research on how broader financial mechanisms—such as financial development (FD), research and development (R&D), and financial inclusion (FI)—contribute to energy affordability, accessibility, and long-term sustainability. Most of the existing studies tend to examine these factors in isolation. Other factors, such as high investment costs, technological gaps, and inadequate infrastructure, are still important barriers in the energy sector. Thus, this study uses panel data analysis to examine three factors (FD, R&D, and FI) to facilitate energy transition and sustainability. Firstly, it explores how financial markets can drive investment in RE, promote energy efficiency, and support clean technology adoption. Secondly, it assesses how R&D efforts contribute to improving RE technologies and enhancing energy distribution systems. Furthermore, it investigates how FI supports energy projects and enables widespread participation in modern energy initiatives. The findings suggest that a well-developed financial system, robust R&D efforts, and inclusive financial access are vital for accelerating the transition to clean energy. Therefore, policymakers must consider these factors and design strategies that reduce barriers, encourage innovation, and promote the sustainable use of energy. Such an approach is essential for building a resilient and low-carbon future.





INFLUENCER TYPES AND PRODUCT TYPE: A MULTI-VARIABLE ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN DIGITAL MARKETING

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Abstract

With its market worth expected to reach \$22.2 billion by 2025, a 28% rise from 2023, influencer marketing has emerged as a pillar of digital marketing tactics (Statista, 2023). The alignment of the influencer with the recommended product is another important aspect that has a beneficial effect on consumer attitudes and evaluations. However, there is limited research examining the combined effects of authenticity and product-endorser fit, especially concerning the rising trend of virtual influencers. Virtual influencers are digital entities with human-like appearances and behaviors, controlled by humans or algorithms (Byun and Ahn, 2023). This study explores when human versus human-like virtual influencers are most persuasive and why. Using source-credibility theory and the match-up hypothesis as a lens, we executed a 2×2 between-subjects experiment in which 260 Instagram users (50.8% men; age ≥ 18) viewed a sponsored post from either a real influencer or a CGI-generated counterpart endorsing different types of products. Measures included perceived source credibility, authenticity, advertisement and brand attitudes, and purchase intention. Multigroup confirmatory-factor and structural-equation modelling indicated that, across products, human influencers scored higher on credibility, authenticity, ad/brand attitudes, and purchase intention. Product type alone was non-significant. However, a significant interaction emerged. The findings clarify that perceived fit between influencer nature and product symbolism drives persuasion. The work integrates machine-heuristic perspectives with endorsement fit.





EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF SDG INITIATIVES ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE IN INDIA'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR

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Abstract

Corporate sustainability is widely seen as a strategic tool for long-term value creation, yet a significant gap persists globally and this gap is especially pronounced at the firm level in emerging economies like India. This study addresses the lack of empirical evidence on how sustainability practices affect financial performance within India's manufacturing sector, a key driver of the country's economic growth and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) progress. With the introduction of the mandatory Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) framework from FY23, there is an urgent need to understand the financial impact of SDG-related disclosures. This study focuses on manufacturing firms listed on the Nifty India Manufacturing Index, analyzing the top 10 companies over three years (FY22–FY24). It examines five SDG-aligned operational areas: Waste Management & Urban Development (SDGs 6, 11), Renewable Energy (SDG 7), Sustainable Industry (SDG 9), Circular Economy & Climate Action (SDGs 12, 13), and Sustainable Finance (SDG 17), covering seven relevant SDGs. Using 24 UN-defined SDG indicators-related statements extracted from BRSR reports with advanced AI tools, coded on a 0–4 scale with substantial inter-coder reliability with Cohen's Kappa score of 0.62, the study applies panel regression to assess relationships between SDG engagement and financial outcomes measured by Return on Assets (ROA) and Tobin's Q. Findings reveal that waste management and renewable energy initiatives significantly improve ROA, while resource efficiency, sustainable industry, and finance initiatives boost market valuation (Tobin's Q). This differentiation highlights how operational practices drive profitability, whereas strategic sustainability efforts enhance market confidence. The results help firms improve sustainability strategies and guide policymakers to enhance reporting, supporting India's sustainable industrial growth.





**CLICKS ACROSS CULTURES: A CROSS-NATIONAL STUDY OF DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES IN INDIA AND LEADING GLOBAL ECONOMIES
FOCUS: UNPACKING HOW CULTURAL NUANCES DRIVE DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES AND CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT IN INDIA AND TOP GLOBAL MARKETS—STRIKING THE PERFECT BALANCE BETWEEN GLOBAL REACH AND LOCAL RESONANCE**

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Abstract

As digital technologies break down geographical barriers, marketers encounter the challenge of crafting campaigns that resonate on a global scale while also being tailored to diverse cultural consumer behaviours. This research explores digital marketing strategies within a cross-cultural framework, specifically comparing major digital markets—the United States, China, and the United Kingdom—with India, which is rapidly emerging as a key digital player. Grounded in Hofstede’s cultural dimensions and reinforced with cross-national digital consumption statistics, the study examines how cultural values affect preferences for content, platform usage, messaging approaches, and styles of engagement. Results showcase significant differences: while consumers in the U.S. prefer highly personalised, convenience-oriented communication, Indian consumers are more drawn to emotionally engaging, family-focused stories and endorsements from trusted individuals. China's strength in ecosystem-oriented platforms (e.g., WeChat) provides a cohesive user experience, in contrast to India's diverse, mobile-centric environment. The research emphasises that a uniform digital strategy is inadequate; rather, culturally tailored approaches greatly improve user engagement, brand loyalty, and campaign return on investment. By comparing established and emerging markets, this study offers practical insights for global marketers looking to strike a balance between standardisation and localisation. The findings are particularly pertinent for multinational brands aiming to navigate the culturally intricate and digitally evolving Indian consumer landscape. This research enhances the ongoing dialogue on global marketing by highlighting the necessity for culturally aware digital strategies in the global South.





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GHOST VILLAGES AND LOST IDENTITIES: UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURAL FALLOUT OF OUT-MIGRATION IN UTTARAKHAND

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Abstract

Rural out-migration in Uttarakhand has rendered over 1,100 villages uninhabited, but the cultural consequences of this demographic shift remain critically under-examined. This study addresses that gap through a mixed-methods investigation into how prolonged urban migration affects cultural identity among Himalayan communities.

Drawing on 6,327 survey responses, in-depth interviews, and psychometric analysis using the Ethnic Identity Scale, the study finds a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -0.43$) between the duration of urban residence and cultural identity retention. As individuals remain away longer, cultural affiliation, measured through language, customs, and perceived connectedness, tends to weaken.

The novelty of this research lies in its ability to quantify cultural displacement, rather than simply describe it. Theoretically anchored in acculturation, cultural capital, and structural violence, it reframes the “ghost village” not merely as an economic artefact but as a symbol of intangible cultural attrition, a result of institutional neglect and uneven development.

Policy implications extend beyond infrastructure and employment. The findings point to the need for identity-sensitive rural development frameworks, those that treat culture not as nostalgia, but as a living asset tied to social cohesion, belonging, and resilience.

This study asks: What happens when no one returns? The answer, it seems, is not just empty homes but an increasingly fragile sense of who we are and where we come from.





FROM STABILITY TO FLUIDITY: THE RECIPROCAL ROLE OF CAREER ADAPTABILITY IN NAVIGATING FLEXIBLE CAREERS AND EMPLOYEE MOONLIGHTING

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Abstract

The world of work in the 21st century has undergone profound transformations, driven by factors such as the reconfiguration of employment relations and career structures, generational shifts within the labour force, rapid technological advancements, and the proliferation of the gig and platform economy (Tomlinson et al., 2017). These dynamic changes necessitate the integration of newer perspectives within the continually evolving career literature. Contemporary career orientations and self-management constructs — including protean, boundaryless, and kaleidoscope career models — signal a departure from traditional, employment-based relationships, highlighting how individuals' expectations and needs from their work experiences have shifted substantially over time (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Hirschi & Koen, 2021). This evolution has given rise to alternative employment forms such as flexible careers, employee moonlighting, and portfolio careers (Tran Huy, 2025).

Within this context, career adaptability (CA) emerges as a pivotal psychosocial resource, enabling individuals to navigate disruptions and transitions in increasingly fluid and uncertain work environments (Leung et al., 2021). This paper explores the intersection of career adaptability (CA) with these emerging employment forms, situating the discussion within the broader discourse on the future of work. Through an integrative literature review encompassing 62 scholarly studies, the paper identifies critical theoretical linkages, unresolved research gaps, and emerging patterns in contemporary workforce behaviour. Drawing from this synthesis, a conceptual framework is proposed, delineating the reciprocal and dynamic relationships between career adaptability and new employment arrangements. The framework explicates key antecedents, buffering mechanisms, and outcomes, offering insights into how adaptable employees strategically engage in secondary work roles alongside primary employment, and how such adaptability enhances their capacity to manage career transitions, uncertainties, and evolving vocational demands.

The paper concludes by discussing the practical implications for organizations in designing inclusive, flexible work models that support employee well-being while addressing potential organizational risks. Additionally, it contributes to theory-building by integrating fragmented insights from career and employment literature and proposes a future research agenda to guide empirical inquiry in this domain.



CONTRADICTIONS IN THE PRICING OF BANK LOANS: A CLARION CALL FOR EQUITY AND JUSTICE FOR LOW-INCOME CREDIT CARD REVOLVERS

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Abstract

High net interest rate margins on personal credit card loans of banks are promptly justified on two counts, one on their having been 'risky and unsecured' and the other on their 'increasing money supply and inflation'. But the people aspect is somehow overlooked resulting in millions of low-income borrowers paying exorbitant interest rates which drives the need for a transparent loan pricing policy that meets many Sustainability Development Goals like reducing inequalities and improving nutrition. This paper explores through hedonic regression models whether the lending rate is representative of the risk parameters. Least Squares Dummy Variables model which is helpful in bringing out the price differentials in panel data reveals that Loss Given Default in the case of India and Delinquency Ratio in the case of USA which are supposed to impact the price positively have highly significant negative impact on pricing. Besides, highly significant positive risk premiums load exclusively on Personal Loans while highly significant negative risk premiums load on Industry loans. The paper proposes an alternate pricing model to bring more accountability in the pricing, which is further corroborated by a sensitivity analysis. The relief sought in this paper is for millions of under-privileged credit card revolvers catering to achieving SDS goals of the country.



WEAVING FUTURE FROM COCOON TO GLOBAL COMMUNITY: STRATEGIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT IN JHARKHAND'S SILK INDUSTRY.

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Abstract

Jharkhand's Golden Legacy—Tasar silk represents the crown jewel of India's textile industry, being the largest producer of non-mulberry silk, known for its rich texture and natural golden sheen. This silk has long been woven into the cultural fabric of the region, reflecting centuries of craftsmanship and artisanal excellence. It plays a crucial role in the nation's textile economy, GDP, employment generation, and rural development.

This research aims to explore the growth opportunities within Jharkhand's silk industry, focusing on entrepreneurial innovation, global market expansion, sustainability, technology integration, and investment strategies. India is the second-largest silk producer in the world. As Jharkhand is the largest producer of Tasar silk in India, it holds immense potential for economic development and industry scalability in the global textile economy.

This study examines entrepreneurial innovation, highlighting the scope for startup-led business models, artisan cooperatives, and MSME-driven enterprises that can foster economic resilience. Silk production plays a vital role in social impact, supporting tribal communities and women-led businesses, enhancing financial independence, and generating employment.

Sustainability remains a core focus, with eco-friendly sericulture, organic dyeing, and ethical trade certifications ensuring long-term profitability while preserving local biodiversity and minimizing environmental impact. Technology integration further transforms the industry, with AI-driven supply chain management, blockchain traceability, and digital branding optimizing production.

Through policy analysis, case studies, and empirical insights, this research provides strategic recommendations to position Jharkhand's silk industry as a powerhouse to enter luxury fashion markets through e-commerce platforms, trade expos, and direct-to-consumer retail models, ensuring sustainable economic development and market competitiveness.



INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY ADOPTION: PATHWAYS TO ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IN ASIA

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Abstract

This study investigates how institutional quality shapes the relationship between renewable energy adoption and economic sustainability across high, middle, and low-income Asian countries. Using panel data from 2000 to 2023, we employed panel regression along with the robustness tests to analyze the dynamics among renewable energy, institutional quality, and sustainable development. The results underscore the critical importance of robust institutions in maximizing the economic and environmental benefits of renewable energy transitions. This research offers key policy insights, suggesting that investments in institutional capacity can enhance the effectiveness of renewable energy policies and drive sustainable development across diverse Asian economies.



THE NEXUS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS AND GREEN FINANCE: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA.

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aims to investigate the impact of technological progress and green finance on environmental sustainability in the context of India from 2000 to 2024, using carbon footprint as a measure of environmental impact. As a consequence of heavy dependence on fossil fuels, rapid growth of industrialization and urbanization, which contribute to impairment of the environment.

Methodology: This current study uses India's time series data from 2000 to 2024, with the carbon footprint as the procurator of the environmental impairment. STIRPAT model for measuring the non-proportional impact of technology, population, and affluence on the environmental consequences. ARDL model to establish a relationship between the dependent variable-carbon footprint—and independent variables—technological progress, green finance, industrial output, and energy consumption—in the short term or long term.

Findings: The results of the ARDL model and STIRPAT model find that negative relationship between technological progress, green finance, and carbon footprint and a positive relationship between industrial output, energy consumption, and carbon footprint in the long run. This study shows that positive contribution of technological progress and green finance to the environmental sustainability in the short as well as long term. However, industrial output and energy consumption pose a significant challenge to the environment.

Originality: It is the first comprehensive study of that nexus between environmental sustainability , technological progress, and green finance from 2000 to 2024 in India. This is the first study that considers factors beyond the CO₂ in the context of India.





ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AS A STRATEGIC DRIVER OF EXCELLENCE: EVIDENCE FROM THE INDIAN HOSPITALITY SECTOR

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Abstract

Organisational excellence is a comprehensive pursuit of continuous improvement, high performance and sustainable success across all dimensions of an organisation. The EFQM model, a framework for assessing and improving organisational performance, facilitates an organisation to identify strengths and areas for improvement across all their activities, with the ultimate goal of achieving excellence by exceeding stakeholder expectations. This study presents a framework based on the EFQM model, emphasising that meaningful employee involvement can be fostered through the alignment of policy and strategy with environmental consciousness, supported by targeted training, motivation to engage employees in environment-friendly initiatives and collaborative partnerships with stakeholders and resource allocation towards an organisation's environmental efforts. The utility of this framework is tested on a sample of 5-star hotels using a mixed-methods approach with qualitative and quantitative data. The findings suggest that incorporating environmental consciousness, into the organisational vision can be a crucial aspect of achieving excellence. Employees are found to believe that organisational excellence is achievable when policies and strategies align with environmental consciousness. Sampled hotels are found to prioritise energy conservation, followed by water conservation and waste management. The study also reveals that the marketing department of the hotels place significant importance on environmental activities, while human resources and finance departments show moderate interest. Fostering employee involvement in environment-friendly activities alongside cross-departmental collaboration is observed to be essential in the organisational excellence foray. These insights help organisations achieve excellence and align environmental responsibility, creating lasting value.





CREATING INCLUSIVE DIGITAL SMART CITIES IN INDIA THROUGH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

The National Capital Region of Delhi in India has close to 50 million inhabitants. Any region as large as this is bigger than 80% of the global countries. This region has its share of problems. Some of the major issues are crime, pollution, employment, schooling, education, transportation, food distribution, quality control, terrorism, healthcare, medicine logistics, water cleaning, recycling and water supply, recreational spaces, social civic society and governance (Bajpai & Biberman, 2021). Delhi needs smart governance, digital governance and proper resource allocation to mitigate some of these issues. Smart city (or Smartification of Cities) is one of the promising policies of the Indian government, which involves organising the city services through which technologies, digitalisation, smart data collection; leading to smart allocation of resources and information helping the city manage complex socio-economic issues. Delhi is an interesting research setting because it has huge problems and the population of Delhi continues to increase. Addressing its needs would have learning for other global-south cities that are experiencing similar levels of urban growth and urban challenges.

In this setting, we study how social enterprises help in making cities smart. In particular, we study the city of Delhi and regions surrounding Delhi known as NCR (national capital region). Within the theoretical frames, we apply stakeholder management, cross-sector collaboration, and Capability Approach.

How social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurial business models lead to funding, organising and inclusive smart city in Delhi?

What are the successful case studies around Delhi that effectively lead to inclusive citizenship?

How do the practices of social enterprise organisations lead to the “smartification” of Delhi?

Using the framing of cross-sector collaboration and capability approach, we explore how social enterprises can help individuals manage the labyrinths institutional and bureaucratic corridors of smart cities. We took the case of Delhi as it is the fastest growing city of India having almost 30 million residents. We took interviews of 13 social enterprises providing services to marginalised residents of Delhi. The research primarily consider the exploratory cross-sectional case-based study, and multiple case based studies to explore and find answers to questions related to the agency of social entrepreneurship in effective, inclusive, self-sustainable smart city projects.





We found that social enterprises organise, collaborate, innovation and manage to lead towards inclusivity and sustainability. They work towards providing capabilities to individual thus giving them agency. Social enterprises act as “user interface” between needy and institutions. This study enhances our understanding of social entrepreneurship and help us understand how social entrepreneurship can be used as a tool for enhancing the smartness of smart cities, leading to effective funding, organising and inclusiveness.





GENDERED EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS - IS IT DIFFERENT?

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Abstract

In India's economic development, women entrepreneurs are proving to be a driving force behind the national progress. But their road is frequently paved with obstacles resulting from ingrained gender stereotypes, poor financial means, and limited involvement in professional networks. With an eye towards the effect of the startup ecosystem on women entrepreneurs, this study investigates the gendered experience of entrepreneurship in India. The study intends to pinpoint the major obstacles that women encounter and the extent to which governmental measures have assisted in reducing these problems by means of analysis of financing accessibility, networking possibilities, and mentoring. To provide a whole picture of the scene, the study uses a mixed method combining quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews. The results highlight how gender inequalities still affect entrepreneurial performance even if programs and policies that intervene have increased. Women entrepreneurs battle investor prejudice, little representation in senior roles, and inadequate mentoring programs catered to their needs. The research underlines the necessity of a more inclusive startup environment supporting women with focused and targeted funding initiatives, mentoring networks, and governmental policies removing gender-specific entrepreneurial obstacles.



AI FOR WORKFORCE RESKILLING AND REDEPLOYMENT: A STRATEGIC HR PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This research paper study the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in workforce reskilling and redeployment from a strategic human resources (HR) perspective. The study employs a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis. The methodology includes a systematic literature review, followed by a series of structured interviews with HR professionals and AI experts. Additionally, a survey was conducted to collect quantitative data from a diverse sample of organizations across various industries. The findings reveal that AI technologies can significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of reskilling and redeployment processes. AI-driven tools facilitate personalized learning experiences, enabling employees to obtain new skills more rapidly and align with evolving organizational needs. Furthermore, the study identifies key challenges, such as data privacy concerns and the need for continuous adaptation of AI systems to modify workforce dynamics. The research underscores the importance of strategic HR management in leveraging AI for workforce transformation, emphasizing the need for a collaborative approach between HR and technology teams. The paper concludes by offering practical recommendations for organizations looking for implement AI-driven reskilling and redeployment initiatives, highlighting the potential for AI to drive sustainable workforce development and competitive advantage. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the strategic integration of AI in HR practices, offering insights for both academics and practitioners in the field.

ALGORITHMIC MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE AUTONOMY: A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD IN THE GIG AND HYBRID WORK ECONOMY

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Abstract

The rise of algorithmic management, i.e., the use of data-driven systems to monitor, evaluate, and make HR decisions, has transformed organizational workforce dynamics, particularly within gig platforms and hybrid workplaces. While these technologies bring in superior efficiency and objectivity, they may also pose a threat to compromise critical human needs such as autonomy, trust, and psychological safety. This study explores the paradoxical impact of algorithmic management on employee autonomy and job satisfaction in the Indian context, with a focus on gig economy workers and employees in hybrid work environments.

Using a mixed-methods approach, we combine in-depth interviews with HR professionals and platform workers, and survey data from employees across tech-enabled firms. In order to investigate how algorithmic control affects motivation, wellbeing, and performance outcomes, the study combines the Self-Determination Theory with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model. Findings are expected to shed light on the complex trade-offs between technological control and human agency, offering theoretical contributions to Organizational Behaviour and practical insights for HRM policy and design in tech-mediated workspaces.



THE ROLE OF INTERNAL FACTORS IN DETERMINING STARTUP OUTCOMES IN INDIA

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Abstract

As of May 11, 2025, approximately 90% of startups globally, including in India, fail within their first five years [1]. This trend has remained consistent over the past five years, with no signs of improvement [2]. A TimesPro article [3] published on May 14, 2025, cites poor market research, inadequate funding, weak leadership, and poor execution as the top four reasons behind these failures — all internal factors within startups' control.

This empirical study explores how internal factors influence startup performance in India. Data was gathered from 30 startup founders through in-depth interviews (#10) and surveys (#20). A novel framework based on design thinking was employed and mixed methods approach for analysis. Thematic Analysis, using Grounded Theory, was used to identify four core themes after achieving theoretical saturation. These themes informed seven key internal factors, which were then analyzed using fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA).

Grounded Theory highlighted four critical aggregate themes: understanding customer needs, founder resilience, sound financial planning, and team building. The fsQCA results indicated that combinations of these factors significantly influence startup outcomes, depending on variables like founder demographics, startup stage, and sector.

Additionally, founders shared valuable recommendations for aspiring entrepreneurs, rooted in their own experiences. These insights not only shed light on internal drivers of failure but also offer practical guidance to increase startup success rates.

This research reinforces the need to address internal challenges in startups and shows how founder-driven strategies can enhance entrepreneurial success, contribute to solving societal issues, and boost India's economic growth.





FROM PRESSURE TO PERFORMANCE: MULTI-LEVEL MECHANISMS LINKING PARADOXICAL LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE RESILIENCE IN SCALING VENTURES

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Abstract

Paradoxical leadership (PL), defined as a style of leadership in which leaders adopt seemingly contradictory yet interrelated behaviours to simultaneously meet structural and follower needs (Zhang et al., 2015), is an emerging construct that has been found to positively influence employee resilience (Franken et al., 2020). Employee resilience (ER), defined as the capacity to continuously adapt and flourish, even in the face of challenge, (Luthans et al., 2010) is an employee level construct that benefits young, small, entrepreneurial ventures in their scaling journey to become established organizations (e.g., Santoro, et al., 2021). Despite the established relationship between PL and ER, little is known about the boundary conditions of this relationship at multiple levels (Batoool et al., 2023), especially in the context of scaling ventures (Palmié et al., 2023). Literature notes that managers' mindfulness (MM) may improve ER (Wibowo & Paramita, 2022). However, despite the various positive implications of MM on employees' well-being and performance (Zhou et al., 2022), research on the moderating role of MM on ER is still lacking (Urrila, 2019).

Research recognizes that in extremely uncertain organizational contexts, such as that of scaling (Raby et al., 2022), employees' task adaptivity (TA) related to their roles is an important behaviour that will allow employees to manage the challenges of scaling (e.g., Van Lancker et al., 2023). Previous research has noted that ER is a precursor to their TA (Strauss et al., 2015). However, this relationship has not been empirically tested.

This study addresses the identified research gaps by examining employees' ER as a mediator and MM as a moderator in the relationship between PL and TA. Using the Conservation of Resources (COR) perspective (Hobfoll et al., 2018), we propose and test a multi-level model linking managers' use of PL and employees' TA. Drawing on the COR logic, we theorize and test the mediating role of ER and the moderating role of MM on this relationship.

Using a randomly selected sample of 219 employees and 33 team managers in a scaling venture, we found that PL was associated with increased ER both directly and indirectly through TA. Further, this impact was enhanced when the MM was high. The findings of this study contribute to understanding how and when managers' PL behaviours impact employee resilience during scaling. Furthermore, the results of our study find that MM is an important psychological resource that results in a resource gain spiral to enable employees to adapt their tasks to the rapid internal transformation during scaling. From a practice standpoint, team managers using PL styles also need to be mindful of their employees during scaling as this can have strong implications for ER and their TA. Our study integrates resilience research and





entrepreneurial scaling literature to provide new insights into theorizing and analyzing multi-level perspectives and highlights the role of the teams' leadership during scaling. Our study also aligns with independent calls for a more process-based understanding of scaling.





ALIGNING PEOPLE AND PRACTICES: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY ON ORGANIZATIONAL ENERGY IN INDIAN HEALTHCARE

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Abstract

With increasing burnout, disengagement, and issues facing the Indian healthcare system, it becomes vital to nurture organizational energy, which refers to a shared state of enthusiasm and vigor among employees. The current study investigates the complex dynamics of the interplay between individual dispositions and organizational practices in shaping organizational energy in Indian hospitals.

Previous stages that identifies dispositions and practices through semi structured interviews and validation by experts, this research employs a mixed-methods approach. In the initial stage, qualitative data are collected through semi-structured interviews with doctors, nurses, and administrators of renowned hospitals. Thematic analysis examines how organizational practices facilitate or hinder dispositions in actual work situations.

To further consolidate and get structural validation for such results, the next stage employs MICMAC and DEMATEL approaches. MICMAC is employed to categorize the variables—i.e., dispositions and practices—into drivers, dependents, linkages, and independent parts, thereby making their systemic impact and dependence within the hospital ecosystem. DEMATEL is used to identify causal interdependencies between the variables and determine high-impact levers that can be taken care of.

Findings from the preliminary analysis highlight that leadership support and organizational culture, recognition, enable the articulation of essential dispositions including resilience, altruism and collaborative. On parallel lines, lack of participatory management and inconvenient way to manage resources are seen as impediment to mobilization of personal strengths with less energy & disengagement.

Illustrating both contextual understanding and quantitative measurement, the study provides practical recommendations for hospital administrators to align individual dispositions with organizational practices for sustainable organizational energy.





UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN MALLS: THE ROLE OF MALL ENTERTAINMENT THROUGH THE LENSES OF ESCAPISM AND LEISURE RELAXATIONAL SATISFACTION

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to examine the effect of mall entertainment elements in predicting consumer behaviour. In addition, it examines the mediating effect of escapism and leisure relaxational satisfaction on the impact of mall entertainment on revisit intention.

Design/methodology/approach: The study data were collected from 405 respondents of the two major shopping malls in Mumbai, India. Partial least squares path modelling was employed to test the structural model.

Findings: The findings show that mall entertainment has a significant influence on revisit intention, escapism and leisure relaxational satisfaction, and escapism and leisure relaxational satisfaction have a significant influence on revisit intention. Furthermore, escapism and leisure relaxational satisfaction partially mediate the relationship between mall entertainment and revisit intention.

Implications- The study reveal the importance of mall entertainment and its impact on escapism, leisure relaxational satisfaction and revisit intention that may stimulate mall managers and operators in building retail strategies to reinforce repeat visitation of customers at the shopping malls.

Originality/value- This study adds to the literature by consolidating the aforementioned constructs together that is based on the methodical conceptual model. It is distinctive as it unravels the mediating role of escapism and leisure relaxational satisfaction in clarifying the relationship among the underlying constructs.





INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE: THE IMPACT OF INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION ON SERVICE INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Innovation is essential to every organization's future success. In addition to helping businesses remain competitive in the market, innovation is crucial for economic expansion and higher productivity. New ideas are essential to solve important issues and developing nations are in greater need of them than ever. Introducing new innovations is crucial to staying competitive and relevant in the hospitality sector, here providing the greatest client experience is the top priority. In order to achieve sustainable performance for the hospitality industries, the current study investigates the intricate relationships among Innovative Organizational Culture, Employee Job Satisfaction, and Service Innovation, which are not addressed in the earlier studies. Sustainable Organizational Performance has become an essential concept in management, blending sustainability with performance metrics. It pertains to an organization's capacity to sustain and enhance its economic, social, and environmental outcomes over the long term. It incorporates the triple bottom line approach, considering profit, people, and planet when evaluating organizational success

This is a cross-sectional study using a mixed method approach. Employees of several hospitality establishments in and around Bangalore, including upscale hotels and resorts, are the population for this study. Sample consists of 230 employees including managers. A cluster analysis is carried out in Python-Google Colab to explore the different clusters in this sector based on the organizational culture. Further to determine how innovative organizational culture, employee job satisfaction, and service innovation are interrelated in hospitality industries, structural equation modeling is conducted. A moderation analysis using the identified clusters is carried out to analyze the influence of different clusters in Innovative Organizational Culture-Service Innovation relationship. The mediation effect of Employee Job Satisfaction on the above relationship is explored using structural equation modeling. Further text mining in Google Colab is carried out on the qualitative data collected, to identify the sustainable performance of the selected companies.

The results show that, Organizations that prioritized autonomy, creativity, risk-taking, and environmental responsibility showed much better employee satisfaction levels and more frequent adoption of service innovations. Notably, organizational culture and the hotel industry's capacity for service innovation were found to be significantly mediated by employee job satisfaction. The results of the qualitative analysis and the moderating effect of several clusters further demonstrated how organizational culture combined





with sustainable practices produced meaningful work experiences, which in turn improved employee engagement and brought about creative service solutions. By putting forth an integrated theoretical framework that views sustainability as a strategic driver of innovation and employee satisfaction rather than just a compliance requirement, the study adds to the body of previous literature. These results imply that hospitality managers can gain a competitive edge through improved service offerings and support economic, social and environmental sustainability objectives. This can be done by developing an organizational culture that concurrently values innovation, employee well-being, and sustainable practices. Future studies should examine how these relationships change in various cultural contexts and hospitality subsectors.





FROM BRANDING TO BONDING: RESPONSIBLE MEME MARKETING FOR GEN-Z'S EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

In today's digital ecosystem, meme marketing has evolved into a powerful communication tool for brands aiming to engage Generation Z, an audience drawn to humour, cultural relevance, and authenticity. This paper explores how meme-based content serves not only as a means of brand engagement but also as a medium for fulfilling Gen-Z's deeper psychological and social needs, such as identity expression, emotional connection, and community belonging. Anchored in Social Identity Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory, the paper examines the influence of meme marketing on brand perception, emotional loyalty, and the construction of digital social identities.

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, including a structured survey of 100 university students and qualitative analysis of meme campaigns by leading brands. The paper also focuses on identifying how humorous content can be crafted responsibly to support emotional well-being and inclusive narratives, rather than perpetuating stereotypes or superficial trends. Findings suggest that while humor enhances visibility and engagement, emotionally intelligent and socially inclusive memes significantly strengthen brand attachment and perceived authenticity.

Building on these insights, the paper proposes a conceptual framework for responsible meme marketing, offering practical guidelines for aligning humor with ethical branding. The study contributes to the emerging discourse on ethical digital branding and offers actionable insights for marketers aiming to align meme strategies with both commercial and social impact objectives.



NEXUS BETWEEN ESG DISCLOSURE AND THE MARKET EFFICIENCY: MEDIATION EFFECT OF INFORMATION ASYMMETRY.

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Abstract

We investigate whether the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) disclosure can contribute towards proliferating the market efficiency by scaling down the firm mis-valuation or not. The study also attempts to capture whether ESG disclosure practices help in abating the Information Asymmetry (IA) existing in the market. Finally, the study digs out the mediating impact the IA channels have on the market efficiency in an ESG-rich disclosure environment. For that purpose, we undertake a sample of ESG-compliant firms from “BRICS” nations. Adopting panel regression measures, we find that high ESG portfolios can better mitigate the IA channels, particularly the market-related and investor sentiment ones. Moreover, such portfolios also reduce the Agency Costs of the firms. ESG disclosure brings additional transparency, which is readily available to investors among different groups of traders. However, IA doesn’t moderate. Instead, they mediate the relationship between ESG and market valuation. We found that in Brazil and China, ESG disclosure escalates the deviation from the true valuation of the overvalued firms, while it shrinks the deviation of the undervalued firms, thereby causing market inefficiency. In other countries, the effect remains unaffected. This study encourages the firms to enhance ESG disclosures to offer resiliency during economic downturns, offer retail investors a valuable investment opportunity, and give lenders better access to a firm-specific non-financial set of information.



HARNESSING FINANCIAL LITERACY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT: A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE ON RETIREMENT PLANNING IN MANIPUR

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Abstract

The ever-changing economy and employment market landscape insists on early and informed retirement planning. This study aims to delve into the intersection of financial literacy, demographic factors and retirement planning behaviour among the youth in Manipur, India, focusing on driving social impact through enhanced financial awareness and management education. Despite raising global attention on financial preparedness, retirement planning is the most neglected area among younger populations, particularly in economically transitioning regions like Northeast India. The key objectives include assessing the current level of financial literacy, identifying demographic influencers (such as income, education, and gender), and evaluating attitudes and behaviours related to retirement planning. The paper adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from youth aged 18-35. The findings suggest a significant gap in financial literacy, especially concerning long-term savings, investment options, and pension schemes. While many participants recognise the importance of financial planning, few engage in proactive steps toward retirement preparedness. The study highlights the crucial role of targeted financial education, culturally relevant interventions, and inclusive measures to bridge this knowledge gap. By emphasising youth perspectives, the research underscores the transformative potential of financial literacy in fostering economic resilience and social empowerment. The paper aims to promote better financial preparedness to embed retirement planning within broader financial literacy frameworks, enabling young individuals to contribute meaningfully to sustainable social development.



ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES FOR ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVE DISORDER: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental condition characterised by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, which can significantly impact an individual's quality of life (National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), 2024). This paper explores the role of assistive technology (AT) in improving the daily functioning and well-being of individuals with ADHD by conducting a systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis. A comprehensive search was performed using Scopus and Web of Science databases, following PRISMA guidelines to identify relevant studies. The findings highlight that ATs, such as mobile applications and cognitive support tools, have enhanced task efficiency, emotional regulation, time management, and learning outcomes for individuals with ADHD. However, usability issues, stakeholder engagement, and the need to personalise interventions remain. The paper underscores the necessity for a holistic approach to AT implementation, including collaboration among caregivers, educators, and individuals with ADHD. Future research should focus on developing adaptive, AI-driven solutions, addressing cultural considerations, and evaluating the long-term impacts of AT interventions. This study contributes to the growing discourse on leveraging technology to bridge gaps in ADHD management and enhance the overall quality of life for affected individuals.



BUDDHIST-INSPIRED LEADERSHIP STYLE AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORKPLACE WELLBEING IN THE BANKING SECTOR

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to explore the impact of Buddhist Inspired Leadership Style on employee performance and mediating role of workplace wellbeing. The study intends to identify specific leadership dimensions rooted in Buddhist philosophy that can effectively enhance employee outcomes within the banking sector.

Methodology: This investigation employed a quantitative approach, collecting data from 313 employees working in commercial banks situated in Butwal Sub-metropolitan City. The data was gathered using a structured questionnaire through purposive sampling. The analytical techniques utilized included descriptive statistics, measurement model assessment, evaluation of convergent and discriminant validity, bootstrapping, and Necessary Condition Analysis.

Findings: The results revealed that all five dimensions-Mindful Awareness, Compassionate Action, Ethical Conduct, Non-Attachment, and Right Livelihood-are crucial for practicing Buddhist-Inspired Leadership in the banking sector. Both Buddhist-Inspired Leadership Style (BILS) and Workplace Wellbeing (WW) have a positive and significant impact on employee performance. Additionally, workplace wellbeing was identified as a partial mediator in the relationship between Buddhist leadership and employee performance, with a more substantial indirect effect observed.

Implications: Commercial banks are encouraged to integrate Buddhist-inspired leadership practices into their human resources and leadership development strategies. Training programs that emphasize mindfulness, emotional awareness, and compassion should be developed for team leaders and managers. Furthermore, banks should establish workplace wellbeing initiatives, including mental wellness programs and stress-reduction activities, to maximize employee potential. Policymakers, HR departments, and leadership trainers should weave these value-based principles into the organizational culture to foster a more engaged, balanced, and high-performing workforce.





ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ENHANCED FRAMEWORK INTEGRATED WITH GOAL PROGRAMMING MODELS: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON HEALTHCARE SUPPLY CHAINS

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Abstract

In the healthcare environment's resource-constrained landscape, effective supply chain management is pivotal for the distribution of lifesaving materials and services (Betcheva et al., 2021). This research analyzes the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with Goal Programming (GP) as a hybrid optimization technique, explicitly considering the Healthcare Supply Chain as a primary domain where the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain, Cold Chain, and Blood Supply Chain as sub-domains can improve decision-making and resource optimization (Oddoye et al., 2009). While GP offers a rigorous approach to optimize resource use under constraints, AI augments the ability of the system to predict by providing forecasted value needs, supply chain risk assessment, and real-time decisions (Dubey et al., 2024). These include control from dynamic inventory and production planning to cold chain logistics and scheduling of donors, managing the delicate logistics of blood storage, particularly during emergencies such as pandemics (Fahimnia et al., 2017 & Papalexli et al., 2022). The approach ensures adaptive and data-driven optimization by leveraging AI-generated forecasts as input parameters for LP models (Lu et al., 2025). The combination of techniques increases performance and reduces wastage, builds a more responsive and resilient healthcare system, and increases supply chain reliability. This paper outlines specific use cases, practical implications, and a strategy for AI-GP modeling aimed at healthcare systems (Rifai et al., 1990). Also, this paper highlights the real-world value of blending AI and GP in creating next-generation healthcare supply chains and directions to future courses of action through a systematic literature review.



DIGITAL FASHION: WILL INDIAN CONSUMERS ACCEPT IT?

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Abstract

The fashion industry has moved towards dematerialization, giving birth to digital fashion. Digital fashion is creating a buzz on social media and in Western culture. With the advancement of 3D design tools, digital fashion has now become an end product brought by consumers. These advanced tools are helping the new age designers to bring their imaginations to life. The Indian market has still not been introduced to it. Nowadays, the younger generation is more inclined towards their real-world appearance rather than their real-world appearance. Digital fashion can give a way for these consumers to see fashion in the upcoming days. But, whether digital fashion will be accepted by the Indian consumer is a bigger question in the fashion world. This study aims to provide an understanding of whether Indian consumers will accept digital fashion or not. In-depth interviews with fashion enthusiasts and individuals with limited understanding of fashion will be conducted to assess their understanding of digital fashion. This will be followed by photo-elicitation methods with the same set of samples used in interviews. This study contributes to the literature by giving an overview of the acceptance of digital fashion in the Indian marketplace.

DETERMINANTS OF SWITCHING AND CONTINUED USAGE INTENTION IN HYDROCARBON TRANSPORT TRANSITIONS: THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN, HEALTH OUTCOMES, AND SERVICE QUALITY

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Abstract

The transition from fossil fuel-powered to electric three-wheelers represents a critical step toward sustainable public transportation. This study examines factors influencing adoption and continued usage of electric three-wheelers among drivers in Kerala, India. Using the Push-Pull-Mooring framework and Extended Expectancy Confirmation Theory, this research focuses on drivers as primary users, addressing their unique challenges, often overlooked in prior electric vehicle research. Data from 457 potential electric three-wheeler drivers, analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), reveals that environmental concerns, operating costs, non-monetary incentives, and perceived health benefits significantly drive adoption intentions, while showroom service quality has no impact. The study identifies that while electric three-wheeler drivers value the environmental benefits and enhanced comfort provided by electric vehicles, they still have concerns about the physical environment of hydrocarbon transport and performance of EVs compared to hydrocarbon-powered vehicles.



QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF DISPOSITION EFFECT EXHIBITED BY MUTUAL FUND MANAGERS IN INDIA

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Abstract

Behavioural finance increasingly emphasizes the profound impact that psychological biases can have on investment decisions in the financial markets. One particularly significant bias is the Disposition Effect, which manifests when fund managers tend to prematurely liquidate profitable investments while persistently retaining underperforming assets, a behaviour that can lead to suboptimal portfolio performance.

This study delves into the presence and implications of the Disposition Effect among Indian mutual fund managers, a group that wields considerable influence over market dynamics and investor returns, largely due to the vast pools of capital they manage.

We meticulously analyze a comprehensive decade-long dataset of open-ended mutual fund portfolios, applying the measurement approach initially developed by (Odean, 1998) for individual investors. This methodology was subsequently refined for the context of mutual fund managers by (Cici, 2012).

Our empirical findings not only confirm the existence of these behavioural biases among Indian fund managers but also provide critical insights that could inform and enhance fund management strategies.





STUDY OF DYNAMIC TRADE NETWORK UNDER DISRUPTION

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Abstract

In recent years, global trade has been affected by many unforeseen events, such as COVID-19, Oil shocks, and wars, which have disturbed trade among countries and their supply chain network structures. This research examines the structure of enterprise trade networks and their characteristics under dynamic events (attacks). It also offers an analysis of the impact of attacks on trade networks. The network and node centrality measures reveal dominant nodes (countries) and their influence on the trade networks. A numerical illustration of the proposed methodology on global trade data is presented. It provides insights that the topology of trade networks changes under attack, where trade networks are vulnerable to specific types of attack. This study helps to improve trade network stability and risk assessment and provides suggestions for policymakers and governments to make optimal decisions to build a robust trade network.





A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

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Abstract

Purpose: Management This study aims to explore the intersection of Sustainable Human Resource (S-HRM) and employee well-being, emphasizing their alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It investigates how sustainable HR practices contribute to organizational and societal sustainability, particularly in achieving SDGs related to decent work, gender equality, and well-being.

Design/methodology/approach: A bibliometric analysis was conducted using data from the Scopus and Web of Science databases, spanning 2004–2024. Keywords such as “sustainable HRM,” “employee well-being,” “SDGs,” and “green HRM” were employed. The PRISMA framework guided the study selection. Analytical tools including VOSviewer and Bibliometrix (Biblioshiny) were used to identify key authors, institutions, thematic clusters, and co-citation networks.

Findings: The analysis reveals increasing scholarly interest in S-HRM post-2015. Key themes include green HRM for environmental sustainability (SDG 12), sustainable work practices for decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), inclusive HRM for gender equality (SDG 5), and CSR-linked HR practices promoting well-being (SDG 3). Sustainable HRM is shown to enhance ethical accountability and workforce engagement while advancing the SDGs.

Research limitations/implications: The study is limited to literature from selected databases and may not capture regional or non-English contributions.

Practical implications: Findings guide HR practitioners in aligning HR strategies with global sustainability goals, improving employee outcomes and organizational performance.

Originality/value: This study offers a novel synthesis of S-HRM literature, highlighting its critical role in achieving the SDGs and identifying emerging research avenues including technology integration and cultural context.





MODELLING OF KEY STRATEGIC DRIVERS FOR SUSTAINABLE HUMANITARIAN SUPPLY CHAINS

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Abstract

The efficiency of Humanitarian Supply Chains (HSCs) is limited by highly challenging operating environments, which presents a critical failure point in global disaster response. Achieving Long term Effectiveness, which measures our competitive advantage, requires a shift from reactive approach based on operational and logistics to a proactive Strategic approach. Which systematically balances the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) of social impact, environmental oversight and resource viability. This study proposes that highly impactful and long-term performance is dependent on the deployment of Dynamic Capabilities—the organizational procedures for sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring resources and the strategic hold of Relational Capital via a Collective Strategy. We address a major research gap by identifying and structurally modelling the key strategic drivers. Using a rigorous two-stage approach-1. Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) to describe the hierarchical causality and 2. MICMAC analysis to determine strategic authority and to establish a clear-cut framework. This model provides an important strategic roadmap for humanitarian leaders. Thereby guiding resource allocation towards core capabilities that ensures long term impact and driving sustainable improvements in disaster response and recovery efforts.





THE ROLE OF DIGITAL EXPERIENCE IN INFLUENCING PATIENT REVISIT INTENTION: A STUDY OF SELECTED NABH-ACCREDITED HOSPITALS IN KOLKATA, INDIA

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Abstract

In today's digital world, hospitals are using technology to make healthcare easier and better for patients. This study looks at how digital tools—like online appointment booking, teleconsultation, personal health records (PHR), and electronic health records (EHR)—affect a patient's decision to return to the same hospital for future care. The research focuses on the outpatient departments (OPDs) of selected NABH-accredited hospitals in Kolkata, India. It explores how digital experiences affect what patients feel (perceived value) and how satisfied they are after using these services. It also studies how these feelings influence their intention to revisit the hospital. The study also looks at how health literacy and understanding of cultural needs (cultural sensitivity) affect how patients use and feel about digital tools and get satisfy. Data was collected through a structural questionnaire from OPD patients who had used digital hospital services and had visited the hospital more than once. The results show that when patients have a good digital experience, and they understand the information and feel respected culturally, they feel more satisfied and are more likely to return to the hospital. These findings help hospital managers understand the need for easy-to-use digital services, patient education, and respect for cultural differences. This can enhance patient satisfaction, encourage repeat visits, support in hospital revenue and strengthen its brand image —especially in healthcare setting and urban areas where patients come from diverse backgrounds.





FROM INITIAL ENGAGEMENT TO FINANCIAL WELL-BEING: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF INVESTMENT APPS USAGE

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Abstract

The study is aimed to investigate the factors affecting the investment decisions and continued use of investment apps, leading to the enhancement of financial well-being. The model is proposed and tested in two time period (T1 and T2) allowing to examine the causal relationships in two different time periods. The study adopted two-time differential wave study, T1 and T2. At T1, the model proposed FOMO effect, Future time perspective, perceived behavioural control and perceived ease of use, whereas at T2, technology factors such as task-technology fit and information quality are hypothesized to influence the continued intention to use broking apps and further influencing financial literacy. Finally, at T2, continued intention to use is tested to explain its impact on financial well-being. The hypotheses are tested using structural equation modelling from a sample of 511 (at T1) and 437 (at T2) respondents from Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities of India. The study findings suggest that future time perspective, perceived behavioural control and perceived ease of use significantly impacted investment decisions at T1. At time T2, task-technology and information quality significantly influence continued intention to use, whereas financial well-being is dependent on continued intention use investment apps. The study adopted longitudinal research design enabling to explore temporal causality and behavioural aspects which the cross-sectional studied did not capture in the previous studies. This study also offer nuances in theoretical advancements and practical implications for fintech providers and policy for positive financial outcomes for users.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND HUMAN INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION FOR FLEXIBILITY IN HUMANITARIAN SUPPLY CHAIN

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Abstract

Humanitarian supply chains (HSCs) are networks established in response to catastrophic events that disrupt disaster areas. These supply chains involve diverse stakeholders focused on providing relief materials, evacuating victims, and restoring affected communities. Efficient management of HSCs is critical for saving lives. In this context, HSC stakeholders continually seek ways to improve their operations. Integrating artificial intelligence and human intelligence (AI-HI) presents various opportunities to transform HSC operations. Previously, humanitarian organizations (HOs) have utilized AI-HI integration for forecasting, performance measurement, and data collaboration. Researchers have associated AI-HI integration with resource optimization, decision support, agility, resilience, and transparency. However, concerns have been raised regarding the role of AI-HI in facilitating the flexibility essential for HSCs to address unforeseen circumstances. To address this research gap, the current study explores the implications and applications of AI and HI integration in HSCs and how it can regulate flexibility. A theoretical framework has been developed using the resource-based view, where capabilities enabled by AI-HI integration serve as a moderating variable between flexibility and sustainable HSC performance. Additionally, measures have been proposed for the identified capabilities. The proposed model can be further empirically evaluated using structural equation modelling. The study uniquely provides propositions and insights for leveraging AI-HI in HSCs, considering flexibility. HSC stakeholders can use the findings to explore AI-HI adoption strategies for improving sustainable performance.



DIGITAL PORTRAYAL OF SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM: A THEORY-BASED CONTENT ANALYSIS OF INDIAN TOURISM WEBSITES

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Abstract

Sustainability is getting more prominence in tourism industry which also leads to become a fundamental value proposition and also influencing consumer decisions and corporate branding all over the world. This study will help to find out how Indian travel and tourism industry have induced sustainability in their digital marketing by analysing the content on their websites. This analysis will help to find out the contents in websites of different tourism industry such as both government and non-government. While examining the contents it will help to find out the websites which are more focused towards sustainable practices and how they promote tourism as a sustainable product. The findings shows that even though sustainability is highlighted as a key value, there is considerable variation in the extent and sincerity of its presentation. Many companies display shallow or usual sustainability claims, while only a few shows comprehensive and transparent integration of sustainable practices into their business models. These differences raise critical questions about greenwashing and the effectiveness of digital communication in adopting a sincere sustainable tourism behaviour. This study aims to contribute to the current body of scholarly discourse on sustainable tourism marketing by revealing how corporate websites are leveraged to construct sustainability-oriented brand identities and influence consumer perceptions in the Indian travel academic work on sustainable tourism marketing. It will explore how websites are employed to create brand identities centred around sustainability and influence consumer perceptions in the Indian travel sector. Furthermore, the research will offer practical recommendations for tourism companies looking to enhance the loyalty and strategic coherence of their communication about sustainability.





UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF ECO-FRIENDLY PACKAGING ADOPTION: AN ISM AND MICMAC-BASED INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

With environmental issues at the forefront of the global economy, the demand for eco-friendly packaging has become increasingly compelling for both businesses and consumers. Accordingly, it is essential to understand the factors that influence consumers to adopt eco-friendly packaging solutions. The purpose of this study is to identify the key factors that encourage consumers to embrace eco-friendly packaging and to explore how these factors interact. To determine the contextual relationships among these drivers, the study employs Interpretive Structural Modelling (ISM) and Matriced' Impacts Croisés Multiplication Appliquée à un Classement (MICMAC) analysis. Drawing from existing literature and expert consultations with practitioners, policymakers, and industry professionals, eleven key factors were identified. A hierarchical structure was developed using ISM and MICMAC to classify and analyse both the direct and indirect effects of these drivers. While the ISM model establishes linkages among the drivers, the MICMAC approach provides insights into their dependence and driving power. To overcome individual limitations of these methods, an integrated approach was adopted. Although the study may be limited by the subjective judgments of the expert panel and the potential exclusion of certain relevant factors, it nonetheless provides valuable insights into the key drivers of consumer adoption of eco-friendly packaging. By taking a holistic approach—unlike prior studies that often focus on a single factor—this research contributes to the academic literature through a comprehensive exploration of the enabling factors using ISM-MICMAC analysis. It also offers practical implications for businesses aiming to enhance sustainability and for policymakers working to foster a more sustainable consumer environment.





THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC SPEAKING FORMAT AND PEER FEEDBACK ON STUDENT SELF-ESTEEM: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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Abstract

Purpose: This longitudinal study aims to explore the effects of offline and online public speaking activities on the self-esteem of undergraduate students. Additionally, it also examines if peer feedback has a moderating effect on this relationship. The research is based on the theoretical underpinnings of the Sociometer Theory (Leary and Baumeister, 2000) and the models of Public Speaking Anxiety (Popov et al., 2015; Kalra & Siribud, 2020), which state that the self-esteem of an individual keeps fluctuating and that it may vary depending upon social acceptance.

Method: The study was conducted on 216 undergraduates who were randomly assigned to three different groups: group A- offline public speaking, group B- online public speaking and group C- no public speaking (control group). The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) was used to measure the self-esteem of these participants at 3 intervals: baseline, after the first presentation, and after the second presentation.

Result: A linear mixed effect model fitted by Restricted Maximum Likelihood (REML) was used to analyse the data, which revealed a significant decline in the self-esteem of the participants of both group A and group B, with participants who presented offline showing greater decline, contrasting with group C, which showed no significant temporal changes. The moderating effect of peer feedback was not significant in an offline setting, suggesting the anxiety and stress associated with live audiences can overshadow peer feedback (Popov et al., 2020). On the other hand, for the online group, peer feedback was associated with a decline in self-esteem, likely due to the unavailability of non-verbal cues in virtual settings (Koban et al., 2023). The control group did not report any significant changes.

value: The findings of this study expand the current understanding of the impact of hybrid learning and feedback on student psychology. The study emphasises the role of effective feedback and interventions like practising mindfulness before public speaking that can lead to enhanced self-perception.





UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' DIGITAL BEHAVIOUR SPILLOVER: PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS ON THE USE OF GEN AI.

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Abstract

As Chat GPT along with other generative AI tools are getting more and more incorporated into university life, and their influence is growing beyond simple convenience to something much more intricate. The phenomenon known as "digital behavioural spillover" (DBS), which is investigated in this study, occurs when students' use of AI for academic support and other digital behaviours start to affect other aspects of their lives. Generative AI was first used to manage time constraints or academic overload, but it is now associated with more profound behavioural and psychological impacts. Along with their reliance on these tools, students often report emotional difficulties such as imposter syndrome, procrastination, cognitive overload, and decreased metacognitive awareness. These subtle shifts imply that the usage of AI may be changing how students study as well as how they see themselves and approach learning in general.

While the growing adoption of AI has sparked debate, most research to date focuses on productivity or ethical concerns. Yet, an emerging body of work has started to explore behavioural consequences. For instance, AI tools like Chat GPT are used widely for generating essays, summarizing lectures, and solving complex problems (Bahroun et al., 2023; Abbas et al., 2024). Though helpful, their misuse may lead to shallow learning, task avoidance, and the erosion of students' confidence in their own abilities (Chaudhry et al., 2023; Chan et al., 2023). In high-pressure academic environments, such dependency may quietly contribute to increased stress and diminished self-efficacy (Yilmaz & Yilmaz, 2023a). Despite these signals, a coherent framework for understanding these spillover effects—especially one that captures both cognitive and emotional dimensions—is still missing. This study aims to fill that gap.

Using a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach, the research begins with interviews and focus groups to explore students' lived experiences of DBS. These narratives will be analysed through grounded theory to define the construct and generate scale items. A second phase will include a survey to validate the DBS scale and test hypotheses related to the mediating role of DBS between academic stressors—like time pressure and workload—and outcomes such as memory loss, procrastination, and impostor syndrome (Hinkin, 1998; Choi & Moran, 2009; Clance, 1985). This dual-phase method ensures both depth and generalizability.

Preliminary themes that surfaced from student narratives include cognitive fatigue, disturbance of daily routines, emotional displacement resulting in decreased academic confidence, and cognitive exhaustion from excessive AI usage. These results highlight how the use of AI might go from beneficial to detrimental if left unregulated. This study's conceptualization and measurement of DBS not only adds to a fresh theoretical framework but also provides educators and counsellors with useful resources to help students use AI in a more self-aware and healthy way. Keywords: Generative AI, University Students,





Self-regulated Learning , Metacognitive Awareness, Procrastination, Impostor Syndrome, Digital Behavioural Spillover (DBS).





THE ROLE OF CENTRAL BANKS IN MANAGING ECONOMIC FLUCTUATIONS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ADVANCED AND DEVELOPING ECONOMIES.

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Abstract

In the current scenario, many researchers and economists try to analyze the difference between the economies of developed and developing countries, which makes it a crucial factor in policy formulation. The central bank is considered to be the epitome of the economy, and hence it is of vital importance to analyze the difference in its roles and functioning in both the economic setups of developed and developing economies.

Taking a case study between the US and Indian economy, this paper makes a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the roles and functioning of their central banks, establishing a contrast between them and evaluating their effects on the economic conditions of the country. The economic conditions are studied on various parameters like GDP growth rate, Agricultural output, FDI, and FII inflows. A regression model with an R-squared of 96.42% is also established between the credit policies and agricultural output in the Indian economy. The study shows that the central banks in a developed economy focus mainly on controlling inflation and economic stability, whereas in a developing economy, along with economic stability, the central bank focuses on economic growth and financial inclusion in the economy. This develops the grounded theory that the monetary policies of the central banks are dependent on the level of development in the economy and can also be considered as a factor to distinguish between the developed and emerging economies.





BUSINESS GROUP AFFILIATION AND WORKING CAPITAL MANAGEMENT: IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE, GROWTH, AND MARKET OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Business groups (BGs)—firms that, though legally independent, are bound together by a constellation of formal and informal ties and are accustomed to taking coordinated action (Khanna & Rivkin, 2001)—constitute a dominant organizational form in many economies around the world (Carney et al., 2011; Khanna & Yafeh, 2007; Kinger-Hans et al., 2024). The phenomenon of BGs has also attracted sustained scholarly attention over the last three decades. However, within the extensive literature, the strategic use of working capital by BG-affiliated firm remains notably underexplored. This study aims to investigate the working capital management (WCM) policies and efficiency of BG-affiliated firms in India and compare them with standalone firms to understand how these differing approaches influence firm performance, growth, and market share. Indian BGs, known for pyramidal ownership structures and internal capital markets (Cuervo-Cazurra, 2006; Khanna & Palepu, 2000), may tend to exhibit more aggressive WCM practices compared to standalone firms, which typically face greater financial constraints and operational vulnerabilities (Gopalan et al., 2007). This study empirically tests these hypotheses drawing on a longitudinal panel data of Indian listed firms for the period 2011 to 2020. The study highlights significant differences in WCM practices and outcomes, shedding light on how organizational affiliation impacts the effects of liquidity management. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on corporate governance and financial strategy in emerging markets (La Porta et al., 1999; Singh, Jain, & Yadav, 2020), offering actionable insights for policymakers and financial managers in the Indian context.





DO CRYPTOCURRENCY FUTURES TRANSMIT OR ABSORB SHOCKS DURING CRISES? EVIDENCE FROM A TIME-FREQUENCY CONNECTEDNESS FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

The study investigates the evolving interconnectedness between cryptocurrency futures and traditional financial futures, particularly during periods of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the FTX collapse. Using the TVP-VAR frequency connectedness approach, the study examines how return shocks and volatility propagate across cryptocurrency futures and major asset class indices, such as equities, bonds, commodities, and currencies. Our findings reveal that cryptocurrency futures show strong short-term co-movements and act as net receivers of systematic shocks during crises while offering limited long-term integration. Gold and Bond futures maintain their status as safe-haven assets, with gold acting as a key long-term shock transmitter. Total connectedness increases sharply during crises, driven by heightened short-term spillovers, highlighting the growing systemic relevance of cryptocurrency derivatives.

The study contributes to the growing body of literature by adopting an index-based, multi-frequency approach that captures structural shifts in market dynamics, providing insights into systemic risk and asset behaviour under stress. The findings guide regulators and policymakers in designing more resilient frameworks that include digital assets. Ultimately, the research highlights the changing role of cryptocurrency futures from speculative tools to integral, though vulnerable components of global financial systems.





UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER CLUSTERS FOR FULL-PRICED PRODUCTS: A CLUSTERING APPROACH

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Abstract

In the increased competitive e-tailing, offering products with reduced-pricing has become a common strategy among sellers to attract customers. However, not all consumers are driven by such strategy. There is a lack of research, especially, in the field of consumer-clustering of such consumers in Indian market context. This study explores consumer behaviour in online shopping environments without the influence of reduced-pricing using a clustering approach, focusing on consumers who are willing to purchase products at full price. Primary data were collected from 125 consumers. The objective was to investigate attitudinal and demographic characteristics that influence online purchasing decisions in absence of any rebate in product price. Statistical analyses were applied to investigate the association between these characteristics. Whether and when consumers would opt for full-priced products even when alternatives with rebated price were available was studied. A clustering model was built to understand these dynamics better. Performance of the clustering model was checked and it was found moderately accurate. Results reveal that a distinct group of consumers does not hesitate to buy products at full price, despite the availability of rebated options. These consumers tend to value factors such as brand reputation, loyalty and quality assurance with the product or seller more than price reductions. Understanding the characteristics of this consumer segment enables businesses design pricing strategies that do not solely rely on rebates. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour in a market where rebates are the norm but not always necessary.





UNRAVELING THE GREEN CHAIN: HOW GHRM PRACTICES BUILD EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT THROUGH SEQUENTIAL BEHAVIOURAL PATHWAYS

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Abstract

Organizations face an unprecedented challenge in today's sustainability-driven economy: authentically integrating environmental stewardship into human capital strategies while fostering genuine employee commitment that transcends superficial compliance. Despite the rapid proliferation of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) initiatives across global industries, a critical knowledge void persists regarding the intricate psychological mechanisms that transform green HR practices into lasting emotional bonds between employees and their organizations. This theoretical gap represents more than an academic concern—it constitutes a strategic blind spot that undermines billions of dollars in corporate sustainability investments worldwide. While organizations increasingly implement sophisticated green recruitment, training, performance management, and reward systems, the conspicuous absence of empirically-grounded theoretical models explaining how these practices systematically cultivate employee commitment leaves practitioners operating in conceptual darkness.

The current research offers predominantly fragmented insights, revealing positive correlations between green HR practices and various employee outcomes but consistently failing to illuminate the complex sequential behavioural pathways through which these relationships actually unfold in organizational contexts. This study directly confronts this critical theoretical and practical gap by developing and empirically testing a comprehensive sequential mediation framework that systematically reveals how GHRM cultivates deep emotional bonds through multiple interconnected behavioural pathways, fundamentally grounded in Social Exchange Theory principles. A rigorous cross-sectional survey design was employed with 572 employees from diverse organizational contexts to investigate the sequential pathways linking GHRM practices to employee affective commitment through specific behavioural mediators, utilizing validated measurement instruments and advanced statistical modeling techniques.

Comprehensive analysis confirmed significant direct effects of GHRM on both Employee Green Behaviour and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour towards Environment, providing robust support for foundational theoretical hypotheses. Notably, Employee Green Behaviour demonstrated positive influence on affective commitment, while Organizational Citizenship Behaviour towards Environment revealed unexpected negative relationships with commitment outcomes. Both green behavioural constructs significantly predicted organizational attraction, which subsequently influenced affective commitment through distinct pathways. Sequential mediation pathways were systematically confirmed





through both behavioural routes, with the integrated model explaining substantial variance in affective commitment.

These findings fundamentally challenge prevailing assumptions about uniform green behaviour effects on commitment. Unlike Bombiak and Marciniuk-Kluska (2018), our results reveal that discretionary environmental citizenship behaviours may paradoxically create role ambiguity and cognitive dissonance, negatively impacting commitment, contrasting sharply with task-related green behaviours that enhance commitment through clear role fulfillment and expectation alignment, extending Williams and Anderson's (1991) theoretical framework into environmental contexts. The robust GHRM-EGB relationship significantly surpasses previous findings by Saeed et al. (2018), while our sequential mediation model advances considerably beyond Boiral and Paillé's (2012) direct effects by revealing organizational attraction as a crucial intermediary mechanism, supporting but significantly refining Jabbour's (2011) theoretical propositions.

This research provides unprecedented insights through three groundbreaking theoretical contributions: comprehensive sequential mediation framework incorporating parallel mediators, differential behavioural pathway analysis revealing distinct effects, and innovative multi-pathway Social Exchange Theory application within environmental contexts. Organizations should strategically design GHRM practices emphasizing clear environmental role expectations while carefully managing discretionary activities to avoid counterproductive role confusion.





NURTURING EMPLOYEE AGILITY THROUGH SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: DRIVING GREEN INNOVATION ADOPTION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN INDIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

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Abstract

India is the world's sixth-largest exporter of textiles which contributes significantly to the GDP of the entire country, responsible for generating employment for more than 45 million people and considered as the second largest in terms of employment generation next to agriculture sector. Regardless of its economic significance, this sector has significant obstacles with regard to employee welfare and environmental sustainability. Every year, 7,800 kilotonnes of garbage are produced by this industry. Being one of India's most water-intensive industries, water consumption across textile segments varies considerably like Integrated cotton mills use between 5,625 and 5,720 cubic meters per day, fabric processing units consume 271 to 877 cubic meters etc. Additionally, the ecological footprints of producing cotton and synthetic fabrics from their raw materials are 16.64 -18.17 gha/ton and 10.2 - 11.87 gha/ton respectively. In terms of waste volume, the textile sector produces the 3rd highest amount of dry municipal solid waste after the plastics industry in India. These figures highlight the significant need for sustainable interventions by the organizations. External stakeholders, particularly environmental regulatory bodies are also putting pressure on the industry to adopt more ethical and sustainable practices but ongoing problems like low employee engagement, hazardous working conditions and a lack of environmental awareness continue to impede the achievement of sustainability goals. In response to this scenario, implementing socially responsible human resource management has become crucial. SR-HRM integrates social responsibility into HR functions by promoting ethical labour standards, prioritizing employee well-being, offering green training and driving sustainability initiatives. These efforts not only improve workplace conditions and ensure compliance with regulations but also cultivate a culture of accountability and environmental awareness. Industries like textiles which are frequently criticized for their working conditions and carbon footprint can gain trust, can attract socially conscious people, meet market and regulatory demands by adopting SR-HRM practices. It has been observed that the SR-HRM practices empower employees, increase their organizational commitment and ultimately developing a workforce which is agile that can support innovation with a focus on sustainability specifically in sectors like textiles which are prone to and suffered with environmental issues.





NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY: A VALUE AT RISK ANALYSIS OF INDIAN MUTUAL FUNDS FOR INFORMED AND INCLUSIVE FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING

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Abstract

Purpose: In today's dynamic financial environment, the need for reliable tools to measure investment risk has become increasingly important for investors, fund managers and policymakers. The growing complexity and interconnectedness of financial markets have amplified exposure to market risk, underscoring the need for precise and adaptable risk assessment frameworks. Value-at-Risk (VaR) has emerged as one of the most prominent methods for quantifying market risk across financial institutions and broader investment avenues, such as mutual funds. However, its true value lies in how accurately it can estimate actual risk exposure. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of VaR in estimating the risk associated with Indian mutual funds and to examine how mutual fund flows are linked to market volatility.

Design/methodology/approach: For this purpose, we have used daily Net Asset Value (NAV) data from 2014 to 2024 for the top five mutual funds in each category i.e, equity, debt, and hybrid mutual funds. Both absolute and standard VaR models are applied to estimate fund-specific risk levels. To assess the dynamic relationship between mutual fund flows and market volatility, the study employs a Value-at-Risk (VaR) model along with impulse response analysis.

Findings: The results indicate that VaR is a useful and reasonably accurate tool for capturing risk across different mutual fund categories. Moreover, a strong positive relationship was observed between mutual fund flows and market volatility, particularly in equity-oriented funds, suggesting that higher inflows are associated with increased market risk.

Research limitations/implications: While this study focuses on top 5 performing mutual funds from 2014 to 2024, it offers a strong foundation for understanding risk dynamics only in 3 fund categories. The use of standard models provides clarity, and future research can build on this by incorporating broader datasets and advanced techniques to capture deeper market complexities.

Originality/value: This study uniquely integrates Value-at-Risk (VaR) risk measurement with impulse response function approach to analyse the interplay between mutual fund flows and market volatility in the Indian context. It provides novel insights into risk measurement and offering practical value to fund managers, policymakers, and investors in emerging markets.





TECHNICAL AND NON-TECHNICAL INNOVATION IN SHAPING EMPLOYMENT AND GENDER DIVERSITY: EVIDENCE FROM MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN A LARGE DEVELOPING ECONOMY- INDIA

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Abstract

Innovation plays a vital role in employment in manufacturing firms. The technical (product and process) and non-technical (organisational and marketing) innovation through its compensation and displacement mechanism affects the aggregate employment and gender diversity. In this study, we examine whether technical and non-technical innovation impacts the employment and facilitates gender diversity in a developing country context by taking the case of manufacturing firms in a large developing economy, India. To this end, we use cross-sectional data of about 3,487 manufacturing firms provided by the World Bank Enterprise Survey (WBES) and World Bank Innovation Survey Follow-up for India (2014). We employ Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), Instrumental Variables (IV)-based two-stage Least Squares (2SLS), and IV-based two-stage Generalized Methods of Moments (GMM) to evaluate it. Our analysis indicates that both technical innovation (particularly process innovation) and non-technical innovation (especially marketing innovation) contribute to overall employment growth via the compensation effect. However, technical innovations, notably process innovation, also demonstrate a displacement effect, leading to a decline in female employment within non-production occupations. In contrast, product innovation is associated with a compensation effect, fostering increased female employment, particularly in production roles. Conversely, non-technical innovations, particularly organizational and marketing innovations, are associated with displacement effects, leading to a relative decline in female employment compared to males, especially in non-production roles. These results have minor variations with the firm size. Policymakers should actively foster research and innovation, particularly product innovation, and place emphasis on vocational training programs aimed at enhancing female skill levels to support their labor market participation. Such measures can facilitate the greater inclusion of women in the context of both technical and non-technical innovations, thereby advancing gender diversity within the workforce.





EXAMINING INDIAN FREEDOM STRUGGLE USING GAME THEORY MODELS

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Abstract

The Indian struggle for independence stands as a powerful reminder of human endurance, collective action, and strategic decision-making. It is a story of choices and consequences that shaped the destiny of billions.

Spanning decades, this movement provides fertile ground for examining cooperation, conflict, and negotiation, making it a beautiful case for study through the lens of game theory.

The paper models the century long movement, from the Revolt of 1857 to the Independence of India, into games to analyse the underlying decision-making dynamics. By reconstructing the payoff structures and strategic options available to the decision-makers during these events, the paper aims to predict the optimal choices or rational behaviour based on utility-maximising principles and model how a rational actor (*homo economicus*) would have behaved under the strategic circumstances faced by British colonists and Indian nationalist leaders.

What emerges is a tension between *homo economicus* and *homo sapiens*. By juxtaposing predicted equilibria against actual turns of history, the paper reveals when rationality bent under the weight of circumstances—offering fresh insight into how conditions culminate into decisions.

This research contributes to the interdisciplinary field combining economic modelling, historical analysis and strategic decision making. It advances our understanding of when rational choice models succeed or fail in explaining political behaviour, particularly in contexts where ideological and cultural convictions play significant roles.

Through identifying where rational assumptions break down in historical contexts, this work contributes to ongoing discussions about the scope of economic theory in political analysis and the application of game theoretic methods to real life strategic decisions.





RETHINKING TALENT STRATEGIES: EXPLORING THE INTERPLAY OF EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION AND EMPLOYER BRANDING IN INDIA'S WORKFORCE.

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Abstract

In today's contemporary business, the acquiring and retaining top talent has emerged as a significant factor for success. Employer Value Proposition (EVP) and Employer Branding (EB) has highlighted their role in attracting talent. This research explores the influence of EVP and EB on Talent Acquisition and Retention, using mixed design.

Research objectives

To examine the relationship between EVP and EB and Talent Acquisition.

To examine the relationship between EVP and EB and Talent Retention.

Methodology: Quantitative Phase – structured questionnaires were administered to 150 employees across industries. Data analysed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation (SPSS).

Qualitative Phase - A semi structured open-ended interviews were conducted with 10 employees to capture their perceptions and experiences. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

Key Findings

EVP and EB: Moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.271$, $p < 0.01$).

EVP and TA: Positive correlation ($r = 0.279$, $p < 0.01$).

EVP and TR: Weak positive correlation ($r = 0.196$, $p < 0.05$).

EB and TA: Weak positive correlation ($r = 0.191$, $p < 0.05$).

Managerial Implication

Refine EVP – Co-create with employees to ensure alignment, enhancing EVP to attract Talent.

Translate EVP in Talent Retention – Using EVP in daily practices as retention drivers.

Align EVP and EB – Align EB as a support not substitute, it amplifies EVP.

Regular Checks – Regular audits to identify the gaps and recalibrate practices.





FROM INCOMPLETE TO UNFAIR: ASSESSING THE BIAS OF MISSING DATA IMPUTATION

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Abstract

Missing data handling is a very serious step in business analytics. This is the first step in the data analytics pipeline. Hence, the succeeding steps can go terribly wrong if the initial missing data handling is not performed properly, leading to poor predictions and invalid inferences [1]. Some of the techniques in missing data handling are: mean, median, mode, K Nearest Neighbor (KNN), Iterative, and Forward Fill imputation techniques, which are also called “Missing Not at Random” (MNAR) [1].

“Unfairness or bias” is an issue in poor missing data handling. A biased model treats different groups inhibiting systematic difference. Previous studies have shown that MNAR imputation techniques can bring bias in the models but from a non-empirical perspective. The most serious in this bias is the one associated with protected or sensitive attributes such as gender and race [3]. This study compares the bias using fairness metrics such as demographic parity, equal opportunity after performing imputation techniques with MNAR on 10 datasets, with 2 sensitive attributes such as gender and race. Our comparative analysis shows that MNAR techniques can introduce bias in the data but improvement in the accuracy. We also found out that the MNAR techniques also introduce bias on the sensitive attributes ranging from 0.66 (indicating lower bias) to 1.56 (indicating higher bias). The initial results shed light on future researchers to consider fairness metrics into consideration while missing data handling. The findings can also open the forum for discussing theories for missing data handling incorporating bias, where little studies are happening.



UNTANGLING THE DIGITAL WEB: A FUZZY AHP-TOPSIS APPROACH TO PRIORITIZING SCF DIGITIZATION CHALLENGES IN INDIA

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Abstract

This study presents a novel approach to identifying and prioritizing the critical challenges hindering the digitization of Supply Chain Finance (SCF) in India, with a focus on small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Despite growing interest in digital SCF platforms, adoption remains slow due to complex, interrelated barriers. Objective 1 is to systematically classify these challenges into five core dimensions—technological, organizational, financial, regulatory, and supply chain ecosystem—along with 25 specific sub-factors. Objective 2 is to evaluate and rank them using an integrated fuzzy multi-criteria decision-making framework. By combining Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (F-AHP) with Fuzzy Technique for Order Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (F-TOPSIS), the study captures the uncertainty in expert judgments and delivers a nuanced prioritization of digital barriers. The results reveal technological challenges as the most dominant, with “lack of IT infrastructure” emerging as the most critical sub-factor. Resistance to change, fragmented digital maturity among supply chain partners, and regulatory ambiguity were also significant. This hybrid fuzzy framework offers a rigorous, data-driven foundation for decision-makers to design targeted interventions. The study contributes original insights by aligning fuzzy logic with SCF digitization, an area with limited analytical exploration in the Indian context.

COMPARATIVE ADVERTISING REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

Comparative advertising, characterized by the direct or indirect juxtaposition of a brand's offerings against those of its competitors, has emerged as a salient and often contentious strategy within contemporary marketing discourse. This paper undertakes a comprehensive review of the extant literature on comparative advertising, with the objective of synthesizing key theoretical and empirical insights while identifying prevailing research gaps. Prior studies have predominantly employed quantitative and experimental designs, focusing on effectiveness metrics such as attitude change, recall, and purchase intention. However, limited attention has been accorded to the socio-cultural, psychological, and ethical dimensions that influence consumer interpretation of comparative claims. In particular, the role of contextual factors—such as cultural norms, regulatory frameworks, and media platforms—remains underexplored, especially in the context of emerging economies like India. This review further highlights the need for deeper inquiry into consumer responses to elements such as humor, tone, and perceived fairness in comparative advertisements. In response, the paper proposes a future research agenda that advocates for the integration of qualitative methodologies, cross-cultural analyses, and platform-specific investigations. Such an approach is imperative to advancing a more nuanced and contextually grounded understanding of comparative advertising in an increasingly complex and fragmented media environment.

ENHANCING CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN SMALL ENTERPRISES: A STUDY OF ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEMS AND CHATBOTS

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Abstract

The study investigates how small enterprises start using online payment systems and chatbots to link with their customers. Using online payments with immediate transactions, electronic receipts, and reminders helps increase company efficiency and satisfy customers. The study deals with primary data through structured surveys and interview data from over 250 small business owners, following the purposive sampling technique. The regression model is used to examine the role of online payment and chatbots in the business and the industry. The study found that people's use of online payment methods significantly enhances transaction methods and customer-business relationships. As a result, internet payment tools allow small businesses to build better connections with their clients. Chatbot usage and awareness would increase, enabling small firms to depend more on digital technology to improve their market position.



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THE ROLE OF CORRUPTION IN SHAPING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY IN INDIA: A QUANTILE REGRESSION APPROACH

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of corruption on CO₂ emission in India by utilizing panel data from 19 Indian states spanning the period 1993 to 2020. The analysis reveals a positive and significant relationship between corruption and CO₂ emissions, with the adverse impact of corruption becoming more pronounced at higher emission quantiles. These findings support the institutional quality hypothesis, which posits that weak governance and high levels of corruption undermine the effectiveness of environmental regulations. Consequently, this leads to increased illegal industrial activities and overexploitation of natural resources, thereby intensifying environmental degradation.



LEADERSHIP STYLE OF TRADE UNION LEADERS AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK MOTIVATION IN PUBLIC EYE HOSPITAL

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Abstract

Purpose: The study aims to examine the influence of leadership styles (Transformational, Transactional, Servant, Laissez Faire) of trade union leaders on employee engagement in a public eye hospital in the Rupandehi district. It further investigates the mediating role of work motivation in this relationship.

Methodology: Data were collected from 253 unionized employees using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics and bootstrapping techniques were employed to analyze the data and test the mediation model.

Findings: The results indicate that transformational and servant leadership styles are the best leadership style to enhance employee engagement when practiced by trade union leaders. Moreover, work motivation was found to partially mediate the relationship between leadership style and employee engagement, suggesting that motivated employees are more likely to be engaged when led by effective union leaders.

Implications: The findings underscore the importance of adopting appropriate leadership styles within trade unions to foster employee motivation and engagement. Hospital administrators and union leaders should focus on leadership development programs that emphasize transformational and servant leadership behaviours. Enhancing work motivation can serve as a strategic lever to improve overall employee performance and satisfaction in public healthcare institutions.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY, FOREIGN INVESTMENT, AND CARBON EMISSIONS IN INDIA: EVIDENCE FROM ADVANCED COINTEGRATION AND CAUSALITY ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The present study examines the impact of Environmental Policy Stringency (EPS) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on carbon emissions in India, while also considering the influence of natural resources (NR) and financial development (FD). For empirical analysis, the Bayer-Hanck cointegration technique is employed. To estimate long-run relationships, the study applies Fully Modified Ordinary Least Squares (FMOLS), Dynamic Ordinary Least Squares (DOLS), and Canonical Cointegration Regression (CCR). Additionally, the Breitung-Candelon spectral Granger causality test is used to explore causal linkages. The cointegration results confirm the existence of a long-run association among the variables. Findings indicate that both EPS and FDI, along with their interaction, contribute to increased carbon emissions. In contrast, NR and FD are found to aid in reducing emissions. The causality analysis reveals that EPS and FDI exhibit short-, medium-, and long-term effects on carbon emissions, whereas NR and FD influence carbon emissions only in the short and long term. The study concludes that existing environmental policies and foreign investment frameworks in India are insufficient in curbing carbon emissions, emphasizing the urgent need for more rigorous environmental regulations and enhanced investment in green technology and innovation.



UNLOCKING SUSTAINABLE VALUE: ROLE OF ESG EXPENDITURE IN SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION OF INDIA'S AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Purpose: ESG has evolved beyond its origins as an extension of CSR and a mere compliance obligation, now serving as a fundamental driver for creating sustainable firm value. It not only depicts the societal inclination of a firm but also shows a firm's perspective towards sustainability. Though the ESG expenditure affects a firm's value in numerous ways, this research concentrated on the role of ESG expenditure in creating financial value of a firm, and how this expenditure lead to creation of sustainable model of a firm.

Design/methodology/approach: A comprehensive review of literature is conducted to analyse the existing study on the role of ESG expenditure in the sustainable transformation of India's automobile industry. To undertake objectives, the present research employs statistical tests namely, correlation, random effect models and dynamic panel regression on the five years' data (2019-2024) of top 5 automobile companies of India. The companies are selected on the basis of their market capitalization. ESG expenditure, Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Equity (ROE), Net Profit Margin, and Price-to-Earnings (P/E) Ratio are considered as variables for the study.

Findings: The study reveals that the ESG expenditure positively influences the value of selected automobile companies of India through various channels. It has a positive impact on financial indicators of a firm's financial performance. Furthermore, the research demonstrates that embracing ESG initiatives enhances Indian automobile companies' appeal to investors and contributes to increased market share. The research also depicts the mediation and moderation effects of ESG expenditure in the sustainable model of automobile companies of India.

Originality: Although there are numerous studies being conducted on the related theme, this research adds to the existing literature by emphasizing on the multifaceted role of ESG expenditure in creating value of a firm. It highlights the different dimensions of ESG expenditure of selected automobile companies and their association with the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Research limitations/implications: The study is limited by the availability of comprehensive statistical data on different dimensions of ESG expenditure of selected automobile companies of India. Future research could discover the effect of specific financial services namely, digital finance and microfinance, on different demographic groups and geographic regions.

Practical and Social implications: Government and policy makers can update the existing ESG compliances on the basis of the discoveries of the present study. Likewise, it provides direction to other





companies and sectors in complying ESG norms. It also aids investors at micro level in taking their investment decisions.

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FROM PRACTICE TO THEORY: UNDERSTANDING ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM DYNAMICS THROUGH GLOBAL EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH-BASED INSIGHTS

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to explore the macro-level components that underpin the success of Entrepreneurial Ecosystems (EEs). To achieve the same, this study addresses two key objectives: (1) identifying and analyzing the macro-level drivers of successful EEs based on the top 40 global ecosystems (featured in the 2024 Startup Genome Report) and (2) examining the intellectual structure and research trends in the EE domain through a bibliometric analysis of Scopus-indexed literature.

Methodology: To achieve this, a dual-method approach was adopted. Firstly, a qualitative content analysis was conducted on the “reason to move” dataset in the Startup Genome Report. For ecosystems where specific motivations were explicitly mentioned, these were directly taken into account and coded into six macro-level categories. In cases where such explicit data was absent, a composite score was computed using weighted sub-category indicators outlined in the report. Secondly, a bibliometric analysis of 2,403 Scopus-indexed documents was performed using VOSviewer software.

Findings: The findings highlight human capital, market opportunity, and business environment as the most critical macro-drivers across top ecosystems. The bibliometric analysis reveals rising interest in themes such as digital innovation, resilience, and gender inclusivity.

Originality: This study is unique because it combines insights from a global ecosystem ranking with a large-scale review of academic research. By bringing together practical data from the Startup Genome Report and trends from scholarly literature, it offers a complete picture of what makes entrepreneurial ecosystems successful. It also highlights the importance of making these ecosystems more inclusive and focused on innovation.





BEHAVIOURAL BIASES OF EQUITY INVESTORS: A STUDY ON THE SOUTHERN REGION OF ASSAM

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Abstract

This paper aims to identify the presence of behavioural biases among individual equity investors and their relation to different demographic variables of the respondents. The study uses the “Mann-Whitney test”, “Kruskal Wallis test”, and “multiple regression analysis” to examine survey data of 358 individual investors in the Southern part of Assam. The results unveil the presence of certain behavioural biases such as disposition effect, representativeness bias, anchoring bias, herding, and overconfidence among individual equity investors. This finding confirms that individual equity investors deviate from the rationality assumption of investment decisions in the presence of certain behavioural biases. The results show that overconfidence, herding, and anchoring bias significantly differ across various demographic variables under the study. Gender, education, occupation, annual income, and investment experience are the prominent demographic variables causing significant differences in behavioural biases of individual equity investors. Further, the study confirms a significant influence of different categories of demographic variables on identified behavioural biases. Middle-aged equity investors are found to be more overconfident and have less disposition effect; whereas female investors are prone to have a greater level of herding bias. Regarding gender, males tend to be more overconfident than females about their skills and stock market knowledge. Experienced investors tend to have less herding bias but more anchoring bias. The study's findings have implications for individual equity investors in understanding the rationale behind investment decisions. Further, Financial advisors can effectively understand their clients' decision-making processes and promote financial awareness programs for individuals.





EXPLORING THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE INVESTMENT PLANNING OF PHYSICALLY DISABLED: A FUZZY AHP APPROACH

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Abstract

Investment decisions are often influenced by several factors such as socio-economical, psychological and demographics characteristics. Inequality is a social problem in developing countries. Many a times, disabled people face discrimination during employment opportunities which might lead to poverty and hence would be important to examine how these people invest their resources and what factors do they consider while making investment decisions. A considerable amount of research has been done on these dimensions among the general population while very limited amount of research is done disabled employees and the factors influences their investment decision.

The objective of the current study is to identify the factors having a bearing on the financial decisions of physically disabled and prioritize their influences on the investment decision of disabled people. Convenience and snowball sampling method was used and a structured questionnaire using five-point Likert scale was circulated among disabled people. Total 327 responses were obtained. Data analysis technique employed a confirmatory factor analysis to confirm the factors followed by the fuzzy analytical hierarchical process (Fuzzy AHP) to prioritize them. The factors such as trust, financial literacy, risk tolerance, income stability, accessibility to financial services, social security benefits, technological adaptability, and psychological confidence was considered, and the preliminary findings reveals that the trust is the most prioritised factor influencing the investment decision of disabled. The research offers key findings to policy makers, financial advisors to design financial product and literacy program tailored for disabled employees.





FASHION WASTE CONTROL AND TREATMENT – A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Due to fast fashion, companies encourage the consumers to buy more and more clothes even if they do not need actually, just because it may go out of fashion in near future. On an average, in US, a particular person wears a specific apparel only for eight to ten times before it is thrown away (approximately 11 million tons). These discarded apparels often end in landfills where they cause further pollution, since they contain harmful chemicals like lead, pesticides, fertilizers etc, and remain in the soil for several decades, sometimes century, to fully degrade. In view of above background, the following study focuses on the given research questions –

R. Q. 1 – What is current level and state of affairs of the academic literature pertaining to Fashion Waste Treatments?

R. Q. 2 – What themes and trends are emerging from present literature regarding Fashion Waste Treatments?

The primary aim of this research is to perform bibliometric analysis for providing the overview of the current studies in Fashion Waste Treatment & Control.

Co – occurrence keyword analysis led to the identification of four clusters and co – citation analysis led to the identification of three clusters. Thematic Analysis led to the identification of future research areas and the current research domains.





THE IMPACT OF OWNERSHIP ON CORPORATE SHORT-TERMISM: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

This paper contributes to the study of corporate short-termism by examining the time horizons of listed Indian firms and the influence of ownership identity and structure on the same. As a comparative measure of firm time horizons and degree of short-termism, we adopted Implied Discount Rate (IDR) – a market-based measure.

The study involved two steps: (i) calculate IDR's for firms listed on National Stock Exchange (NSE) over a 10-year period (FY2016 to FY2025), (ii) study the influences of different ownership configurations on firm time horizons.

This study provides a novel application of IDR in the Indian context, and goes further to offer valuable insights into the relationship between ownership structure and corporate short-termism. From IDR trends over the period we observed greater short-termism during periods of economic distress. We further observe differences in IDR trends by Industry as expected.

Ownership structures in Indian firms are unique, especially with the concept of “promoter” which represents the dominant ownership category, while it's defined to indicate control and influence. Over the past decade, institutional investors have emerged as another important and influential category. Ownership has strong corporate governance implications in India and we delve deeper into these ownership categories to study their individual and mutual implications on time horizons and long-term sustainability of listed Indian firms. This research highlights the heterogeneity in investors' temporal preferences and underscores the importance of designing governance mechanisms that align firm strategies with long-term growth objectives.





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“WORK-FAMILY ENRICHMENT AS A CATALYST FOR INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT: INSIGHTS FROM LIVED EXPERIENCES”

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Abstract

Purpose: The study aims to examine how Work-Family Enrichment (WFE) can serve as a meaningful pathway for fostering inclusive, human-centric, and socially responsible management practices. Unlike traditional approaches that focus on managing the conflict between work and family, WFE emphasizes the positive interactions between work and family domains. It highlights how skills, experiences, and emotional strengths developed in one sphere can contribute to leadership development, employee well-being, and equity in organizations.

Methodology: The study employs a qualitative narrative research design. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with twenty professionals from various sectors. Participants are selected based on their dual roles in family and professional life, such as caregiving, parenting, and managing household responsibilities. Thematic Analysis has been used to analyze the data.

Findings: Different themes like family as a source of workplace strength, Leadership through lived experience, Supportive structures that enable enrichment, and Whole-self work identity have emerged. Participants described how family experiences enhanced workplace competencies, how organizational support and a shift from “balance” to “enrichment” helped foster resilience and inclusion.

Originality: This study explores how WFE serves as a conduit for inclusive and socially responsible management, positioning it not just as a personal benefit but as a strategic driver of systemic organizational well-being.





INDIA'S IBC AND EARNINGS MANAGEMENT: A QUASI-NATURAL EXPERIMENT ON SHARE-PLEDGING FIRMS

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Abstract

Beyond altering investment decisions, the extent of literature posits that promoters among share-pledging firms alter financial reports to maximize their personal gains and safeguard their ownership. We extend this literature by investigating whether the strengthening of lenders' rights moderates promoters' opportunistic behaviour. To test this, we exploit India's recent Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), a regulatory change primarily aimed at ensuring the timely resolution of insolvency cases while maximizing asset value, thereby strengthening lenders' rights. Utilizing data from listed Indian firms spanning from 2012 to 2022, we employ a difference-in-differences (DID) model to examine the impact of IBC on earnings management practices among share-pledging firms. The findings reveal that the propensity to manipulate earnings is stronger post-regulation, likely driven by the fear of triggering margin calls and forfeiting the benefits of ownership, such as voting rights and dividend receipts. Overall, this study provides insights into the impact of exogenous events on promoters' financial reporting strategies in the context of share pledging and offers valuable recommendations for regulators, policymakers, and other stakeholders in emerging markets.





TRIGGERING A SHIFT? HOW INDIA'S 2018 LTCG TAX REFORM AFFECTED STOCK RETURNS AND INVESTOR HOLDING PERIODS

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Abstract

Long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax is the levy on the profit from selling financial assets such as stocks, held for more than a year. The study analyses the impact of long-term capital gains (LTCG) taxation on stock returns and investment behaviour in India. A dataset comprising of total 169 companies listed in the nifty large midcap 250 index, with data spanning from 2011 to 2024 is taken into consideration. The 10% LTCG tax, introduced by the government in the 2018-19 budget, is examined for its effect on market performance and investor behaviour. The main aim of the research is to determine whether LTCG tax lowers stock returns and encourages investors to hold for a longer period, thus making an investor exhibit less trading frequency. For this, a fixed effects (FE) panel EGLS model is used to study variations in stock returns, while the average holding period of assets is investigated through the generalized method of moments (GMM) model. The findings reveal that the LTCG tax significantly influenced stock returns and the average holding period of assets, with observable changes in investor behaviour. The tax altered trading patterns, leading to adjustments in how long assets were held. A key discovery of the study is that a positive relationship was found between the interaction of LTCG and market capitalization with the average holding period, which indicates that LTCG promotes long-term investment behaviour, mainly among large-cap firms. The results provide valuable insights for policymakers in designing tax policies that balance the need for revenue generation with the goal of maintaining a stable and efficient market.





IMPACT OF AFTER HOUR CONNECTIVITY ON EMPLOYEE WELLBEING: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The widespread use of the internet and mobilization of information and communication technologies have made employees follow the “Anytime Anywhere” work culture worldwide. This urge of constant connectivity even during non-working hours had adversely impacted employee well-being globally. Work Connectivity Behaviour After Hours (WCBA) refers to employees using mobile wireless devices such as email to manage work-related tasks after working hours without any contractual obligation. However, existing literature on such behaviour remains fragmented and disseminated across fields. The current study conducted a systematic literature review of existing literature on WCBA recognizing themes and underlying theories via a rigorous review of existing work coupled with identification of gaps in the intellectual capital and studying of such behaviour. This study focuses on behavioural construct of “Always on Work” culture which incorporates a thorough understanding of “Technology-Assisted Supplemental Work” along with WCBA. A conceptual model of behavioural constructs has been developed after integrating prominent themes and identified constructs. The study lays upon an abridged form of understanding WCBA through the lens of social cognitive learning and technology adoption. The current study stresses on understanding the interplay of individual and social factors emanating from the aforementioned theoretical models, thereby laying down a comprehensive examination of the impact of WCBA on employee well-being. The findings aim to assist corporate leaders and human resource practitioners in formulating appropriate policies that could address the challenges emerging from adverse effects of WCBA.



THE ROLE OF CORPORATE CHARACTERISTICS ON ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING AND DISCLOSURE PRACTICES OF INDIAN MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

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Abstract

Environmental reporting has gained significant importance in recent years due to the growing global emphasis on sustainability and corporate responsibility. The present study investigates the impact of corporate characteristics, including firm size, leverage, age, liquidity and corporate governance, on the environmental reporting and disclosure practices of Indian manufacturing companies. The study includes 268 manufacturing companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange, comprising seven sectors such as Basic Materials, Consumer Cyclicals, Consumer Non-Cyclicals, Energy, Healthcare, Industrials and Utilities over ten years from 2013–14 to 2022–23. The model of this study is theoretically based on agency theory. Corporate characteristics have been examined as independent variables, while environmental reporting and disclosure serve as the dependent variables. In analysing the data, this study utilized panel data analysis. Based on the Hausman test, the fixed effect model was used to examine the effect of predictors on environmental reporting and disclosure practices. The findings reveal that firm size, age and corporate governance have significantly enhanced corporate reporting and disclosure practices. The practical implication of this research is that well-structured corporate governance, along with firm size and longevity, can drive better environmental reporting and disclosure, ultimately fostering greater investor confidence and aligning businesses with global sustainability standards.



ASSESSING CLIMATE VULNERABILITY OF PUBLIC HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN SYSTEMS IN INDIA

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Abstract

India's public health systems are increasingly vulnerable to the escalating effects of climate change, as extreme weather events like heat waves, floods, and cyclones interrupt the supply of key medical resources and jeopardize the continuity of service. These disruptions have exposed structural and operational weaknesses in public health supply chains, especially in areas with fragile infrastructure and restricted adaptive ability. Though there are a few studies conducted in the past, those focused on climate adaptations of health systems, we worked under this current study to evaluate, objectively, the climate vulnerability of public health supply chains in several regions of India with a focus to develop an evidence-based adaptive framework for sustainable and climate-resilient public health logistics and suggest some policy implications. Thematic analysis is applied to interview data, while secondary data will go through content and trend analysis. Using a spatial and temporal analysis, based on data collected using semi-structured interviews with public health officials and supply chain stakeholders. The developed framework is validated through the WHO Health System Building Blocks (World Health Organization, 2021) and the IPCC Risk Model (IPCC, 2014), integrating concepts such as risk, which results from the combined effect of hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. The outcomes are also validated through secondary data analysis from national health information systems, disaster response documentation, and policy papers, which highlighted a few supply chain aspects, including cold chain efficacy, procurement flexibility, infrastructure robustness, and emergency logistics effectiveness. The findings suggest location-specific vulnerabilities. Future phases will incorporate stakeholder input to refine the framework and inform adaptive policy recommendations.





UNPACKING THE EMOTIONAL PATHWAY: THE ROLE OF BRAND CO-CREATION IN DRIVING BRAND HAPPINESS AND BRAND EVANGELISM

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Abstract

Brands operate in highly competitive markets where understanding customer needs and preferences is essential for creating value. A key approach to achieve this is through brand co-creation where customers actively collaborate by contributing their resources (skills and knowledge) alongside those of the firm to generate value together. Recent studies have identified brand evangelism as a result of customer involvement in the brand co-creation process. This study aims to deepen the understanding of how firm-led co-creation influences consumer emotions, specifically focusing on its impact on brand happiness and brand evangelism. The research focuses on the skincare industry to examine the proposed relationship. The theoretical model was tested using structural equation modeling, and the mediating effect was assessed using PROCESS MACRO (Hayes Model 4). The study targeted Indian consumers familiar with skincare products. Data was collected from 284 participants.

The findings revealed a significant indirect effect of brand co-creation on brand evangelism. Additionally, the direct effect remained significant even in the presence of the mediator suggesting that brand happiness partially mediates the relationship between brand co-creation and brand evangelism. These findings indicate that involving consumers in new product development and innovation process helps build stronger emotional connections serving as an effective strategy for brand sustainability. This insight will help marketers recognize the importance of consumer participation in these processes to foster brand evangelism.





CONFRONTING THE DILEMMA OF SUSTAINABILITY AND CONSUMERISM: A CASE OF HANDLOOM

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Abstract

Purpose: Climate change and the growing need for sustainability have paved the way for innovations in the fashion sector. This paper explores the linkage between sustainable fashion and responsible consumerism concerning the handloom sector. Handloom, a slow fashion choice curated indigenously, is relevant to the purpose of the study.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A qualitative exploratory case study approach is used to identify the nuances of the handloom ecosystem. This case study uses semi-structured in-depth interviews, intercept interviews, secondary data, field observations, and existing literature analysis. The participants involved are the stakeholders of the handloom value chain.

Findings: Based on the thematic analysis, areas of convergence are proposed that can be further leveraged to foster inclusivity and social equity in sustainable fashion marketing. The findings can be further used by marketing managers and practitioners to create strategies for sustainable fashion marketing. It will be insightful for the state-of-the-art literature and existing theory in capacity building, community empowerment, and equitable businesses.





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HIGH-SKILLED LABOR DISPLACEMENT DUE TO AUTOMATIONS: STRATEGIC APPROACH TO MANAGE UNCERTAINTIES

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Abstract

This paper analyses how emerging technologies—particularly artificial intelligence (AI)—are impacting existing market players, with a specific focus on high-skilled labour within the value chain. As AI adoption accelerates across industries, many skilled professionals and service providers perceive it as an existential threat, marking a significant civilizational shift in the workplace.

Historically, automation driven by software (IT) and industrial robots has predominantly affected low-skilled jobs. In contrast, modern AI technologies—such as Generative AI (GenAI)—are now directly challenging high-skilled roles. These include fields like healthcare diagnostics, software development, creative industries (content writing, storytelling, music composition, visual arts, film editing, dubbing), financial analysis, and research.

Similar to how companies have traditionally developed non-market strategies, there is now a pressing need for a strategic approach to manage the risks associated with high-skilled labour displacement (a company's value chain market players strategy). In the past, labour issues were typically resolved through negotiations with unions. However, as entire job categories come under threat from AI, it is uncertain whether such traditional negotiation models will remain effective. Could this shift disrupt everyday business operations? The recent protests by the Hollywood writers' union over AI usage raise this very question. Will other professional groups soon follow?

This paper aims to explore these issues and propose a framework for identifying the factors that could disrupt current business models. It will also offer strategies for addressing the challenges and managing high-skilled labour to mitigate potential risks.



COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC AND CROSS-BORDER MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS – EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

Indian companies are vigorously pursuing inorganic growth through domestic and cross-border acquisitions. With the extent of M&A literature primarily focused on short-term significant abnormal returns of stockholders in acquiring companies, a need arises for research on the long-term impact on the financial health of acquiring companies. The purpose of this study is to analyse the differences in the long-term financial performance of domestic and cross-border M&A during the period of 2012 to 2022, using accounting ratios for a sample of listed Indian acquirers by employing a Difference-in-Difference (DID) model approach. The results implied that cross-border M&As destroy performance more when compared to domestic M&As in the post-M&A period. Furthermore, a regression analysis was conducted to determine the impact of various deal-specific characteristics, and it was observed that cash acquisitions have a negative impact on performance. The research findings play an important role as it is the first to use a DID approach from an Indian perspective and paves the way for other emerging markets to consider, which adds to the literature. With its stable democracy and growing economic strength, India acts as both a precedent and a bridge for numerous nations around the world.



HR GHOSTING: THE SILENT EMPLOYER BRANDING KILLER

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Abstract

Employer ghosting—the practice of abruptly ceasing communication with candidates during the hiring process—is a growing concern in modern recruitment. Traditionally associated with candidates, recent trends indicate a significant rise in employer-side ghosting, affecting job seekers at various stages—from application review to post-interview and even after a job offer. This breakdown in communication not only damages the candidate experience but also has long-term consequences on employer branding and hiring efficiency.

This research specifically focuses on employer ghosting within the Information Technology (IT) sector, a highly competitive and dynamic industry where recruitment processes are fast-paced, and candidate mobility is high. Due to the strong presence of IT professionals on social media, networking platforms, and employer review sites, recruitment practices in this sector are highly visible, making it an ideal context to study employer ghosting.

The study aims to:

Analyse the prevalence of employer ghosting across various stages of recruitment in the IT sector.

Assess the impact of HR ghosting on employer branding and job seeker perception.

Understand how ghosting affects different levels of IT professionals (entry-level, mid-level, senior roles).

Identify potential causes of ghosting and explore candidate reactions and coping mechanisms.

To achieve these objectives, the study employs a mixed-method research approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with job seekers and HR professionals in the IT industry. Additionally, the study synthesizes data from industry reports, research papers, and recruitment trends to provide a holistic view of employer ghosting and its long-term implications.

The insights gained aim to assist HR professionals, hiring managers, and business leaders in developing more effective and ethical communication practices throughout the hiring process. By addressing employer ghosting, organizations can enhance their employer brand, improve candidate trust, and strengthen their ability to attract top IT talent in an increasingly competitive hiring landscape.





ENHANCING AUTOMOTIVE CYBERSECURITY THROUGH AI AND MACHINE LEARNING: A MULTI-LAYERED FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

The automotive sector is advancing rapidly with autonomous driving, connected vehicles, electric mobility, and shared transportation. Modern vehicles, now complex cyber-physical systems, integrate ECUs, V2X communication, telematics, and cloud services, which improve safety and efficiency but also increase cybersecurity risks due to greater connectivity. This research proposes an AI and machine learning (ML)-based framework for real-time threat detection and response in connected vehicles. A multi-layered cybersecurity architecture is introduced, featuring secure authentication, encrypted communications, and ML-driven intrusion detection for real-time anomaly recognition. Blockchain mechanisms secure firmware and Over-the-Air (OTA) updates, ensuring integrity and traceability. Hardware Security Modules (HSMs) protect critical cryptographic operations, while AI enhances sensor-level anomaly detection. The framework aligns with international standards, including ISO/SAE 21434 and UNECE WP.29. Validation involved expert consultation, real-world case studies, and comparison with existing security models, assessing practicality, scalability, and robustness. The findings support a “security by design” approach, emphasizing proactive risk management throughout the vehicle lifecycle. The study highlights the need for standardized protocols, continuous threat monitoring, and collaboration among industry stakeholders to boost system resilience. Ultimately, this framework is tailored for connected and autonomous vehicles, aiming to secure automotive systems, protect user data, and mitigate remote threats. By promoting secure adoption of smart automotive technologies, it helps build public trust in intelligent transportation systems and supports safer, privacy-preserving mobility.





WHY CONSUMERS USE QUICK COMMERCE SERVICES? MIXED METHOD INSIGHTS USING THEORY OF CONSUMPTION VALUES

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Abstract

Will quick commerce penetrate Indian markets and alter the digital business sector? While studies focusing on penetration of digital technologies and innovative business models are dense, sufficient research in this emerging area is lacking. In the modern time ruled by immediacy and convenience, consumer behaviour and dynamics play decisive role for the success of evolving business model, quick commerce is no such exception. This study primarily relies on Kozinet's Netnographic approach to understand the drivers in terms of consumption values to use quick commerce services. User reviews from four major quick commerce service providers were considered in the qualitative study. Reviews confirming to rigorous selection criteria were included in this study (262 user reviews). These reviews were further subjected to two-stage coding approach resulting in thirty-five initial codes leading to six major themes. Further based on the themes explored in qualitative study, conceptual model was developed underpinning on Theory of Consumption Values. The hypotheses involved in quantitative framework were tested using CB-SEM yielding interesting insights about the nature of quick commerce adoption. This method involves 494 responses of varied demographics collected using both random and snowball sampling methods. The result confirmed the positive impact of functional value, conditional value, social value and epistemic value on purchase intention while emotional values do not have significant role in quick commerce adoption. Also, test of moderation confirmed the crucial role of post-purchase convenience in terms of robust return and refund mechanisms. The study has valid implications for understanding and shaping consumer behaviour in this evolving quick commerce business model.





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TEAMING WITH MACHINES: EXPLORING TRUST IN HUMAN-MACHINE TEAMS

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Abstract

The integration of human-machine teams into organisations offers opportunities as well as challenges for the future of work. As intelligent machines are becoming an integral part of today's work life, it is important to understand the nuances of trust in the collaboration between humans and machines. The research on trust in human-machine teams is rapidly growing across diverse fields like psychology, robotics, and human-computer interactions. However, conceptualisation and in-depth understanding of the concept of trust remain inconsistent across diverse disciplines. This paper tries to explore this aspect through a thematic review of literature to capture the themes in relation to the concept of trust in human-machine teams. This paper synthesizes the current literature to provide a deeper understanding of the aspects of trust in human-machine teams.





GREEN BONDS AND SUSTAINABILITY: AN EVOLVING PARADIGM FOR EMERGING ECONOMIES

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Abstract

The urgency to address climate change has intensified the need for innovative financial mechanisms to support global sustainability transitions. Green bonds have emerged as a crucial instrument to promote an effective way to support sustainability (Ng, 2018). Green bonds offer a lower cost of debt for financing sustainable projects to issuers, and an investment opportunity to support transitioning to a greener economy to investors (Teti et al., 2022). The green bonds proceeds enable businesses to raise capital for environment-friendly projects that support a sustainable future (Bhutta et al., 2022) and switch to renewable energy production in the short and long run to promote the transition to alternative energy (Alharbi et al. (2023). Extant research resonates with how finance is critical to reducing fossil fuel dependency and promoting sustainability[1]. While prior research has primarily focused on developed economies, this study explores the impact of green bond issuance on environmental performance in emerging markets, using country Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) scores as a benchmark. With data spanning from 2013 to 2023, this study investigates three key relationships: (1) green bond issuance positively influences environmental outcomes, (2) countries in emerging markets that issue green bonds exhibit better SDG performance than their non-issuing counterparts, and (3) the green bond issuance vary significantly across different geographical regions (Asia, Africa, America, and Europe). This study presents empirical insights, in the context of emerging economies, on diverse impacts of green bonds that play a pivotal role in sustainability efforts and offers valuable guidance for policymakers and investors seeking to optimize green finance strategies for maximum environmental impact.





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UNPACKING THE BACKPACKER EXPERIENCE: EXPLORING THE FACTORS INFLUENCING USER ADOPTION OF HOSTEL ACCOMMODATIONS THROUGH A TEXT-MINING ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Hostels form a significant tourism segment, particularly favoured by backpackers and solo travellers. In comparison to other accommodations, hostels are affordable, have lower carbon footprint, and possess unique community-building setups. As hostels are highly beneficial for building sustainable tourism and enabling low-budget travel, this study investigates the multifaceted factors influencing user adoption of hostels. User reviews from hostels and aggregator platforms posted on Google Play Store and Apple App Store are analyzed. Topic modelling of the text corpus led to six factors affecting user adoption of hostels: value for money, service effectiveness, ease of use, service quality, accessibility, and trustworthiness. Using theories on service quality and technology acceptance model, hypotheses are formulated for each factor to assess their impact on user experience. The star rating and sentiment score of each review are used as dependent variables, while topic scores corresponding to each review are used as independent variables, in two models of regression analysis, to find that some factors have a higher influence than others. These findings offer implications for hostels, aggregators, and decision-makers to enhance guest experiences, attract and retain travellers, and promote sustainability in tourism. This study contributes to the literature on backpacking and low-budget accommodation by analysing user-generated content available globally. Also, practical implications would enable platforms to increase user adoption of hostels and contribute towards the Sustainable Development Goals.





REDEFINING LEADERSHIP IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: EXPLORING GENERATION Z'S EXPECTATIONS FROM B-SCHOOL LEADERS IN KOLKATA

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Abstract

As Generation Z occupies the classrooms of B-schools in Kolkata, their academic leadership models are compelled to change with pace. Often regarded as “digital natives,” these students possess unique expectations—the result of social awareness, inclusivity, and a need for mental well-being—alongside their fluency with technology (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Different from their predecessors, Gen Z students expect academic leaders to be empathetic, fully present and involved, technologically proficient, and willing to share power in decision-making (White & Gen, 2019). Transformational, authentic, student-centric rather than hierarchical leadership styles are increasingly preferred by students.

This research analyses the management education region of Kolkata in terms of Gen Z’s expectations of leadership. It highlights the need for B-school leaders—administrators, faculty, and mentors—to evolve in engaging and relevant ways

Gen Z values consistent feedback, personalized mentorship, real-world learning, and institutional accountability (Singh & Dangmei, 2016; Cilliers, 2017). Their digital-native mindset also demands seamless technology integration in academic delivery and leadership communication (Prensky, 2001).

Through a synthesis of literature and emerging trends in Indian higher education, this abstract outlines how aligning leadership approaches with Gen Z preferences can enhance student satisfaction, institutional reputation, and educational outcomes. As competition among B-schools intensifies, meeting these generational expectations is not merely a strategic advantage—it is a necessity. The findings call for a paradigm shift toward more adaptive, emotionally intelligent, and inclusive leadership in business education.



IMPACT OF SUPERVISOR'S NON-VERBAL IMMEDIACY BEHAVIOUR ON SUBORDINATE'S SILENCE. ROLE OF PERSONALITY AS A BUFFER.

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Abstract

This study aims to examine how a supervisor's nonverbal immediacy behaviours—such as eye contact, posture, gestures, facial expressions, and vocal tone—influence employee silence within organizational settings. Grounded in Communication Accommodation Theory and Trait Activation Theory, the research seeks to explore whether and how employee personality traits, the Big Five, moderate this relationship. While prior studies have addressed various factors contributing to silence, such as organizational climate, leadership style, and verbal communication, the role of nonverbal supervisory cues remains largely overlooked. This study intends to fill that gap by investigating the impact of supervisors' nonverbal communication on employees' willingness to voice or withhold opinions. By adopting a survey-based design and collecting data from employees in service-based organizations, the research will provide deeper insights into how nonverbal behaviours of supervisors and subordinates' personality traits interact to shape the silence behaviour of subordinates. Ultimately, the study seeks to broaden the understanding of employee silence by identifying both behavioural and dispositional antecedents, offering practical implications for leadership communication practices.



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THE ROLE OF SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUNDS IN SHAPING ESG PERFORMANCE AMONG FAMILY-OWNED ENTERPRISES: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This paper aims to study the "Role of Sovereign Wealth Fund Investments in shaping the Environmental, Social, and Governance performance in Family Firms". The existing academic literature in this area primarily focuses on institutional investors as a board category and their impact on corporate governance and the ESG performance of the family firms. This paper specifically seeks to isolate and analyse the role of sovereign wealth fund (SWF) investments in shaping the ESG performance in family firms. This paper acknowledges that "ESG parameters and taxonomy" are still evolving. However, in this paper, we will use parameters agreed upon at the UN climate conventions and generally accepted parameters by other researchers





EMPLOYEE SENTIMENT ANALYSIS AND ITS IMPACT ON CORPORATE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE: A MACHINE LEARNING PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Employee satisfaction and sentiment are widely recognized as crucial factors influencing organizational outcomes, including productivity and overall firm performance. Traditionally assessed through surveys, the proliferation of online platforms like Glassdoor.com has generated extensive, freely available datasets of employee reviews. These unstructured text reviews offer rich insights into employee opinions on various aspects of their workplace. Using Machine Learning (ML) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), researchers are increasingly applying text mining and sentiment analysis techniques to extract meaningful information from these datasets. This paper reviews recent studies that investigate the relationship between employee sentiment, as captured from online reviews using ML/AI methods, and the financial performance of companies. The reviewed literature employs various ML/AI techniques for text analysis, including sentiment analysis, topic modeling, and word embeddings to quantify employee opinions and identify salient job satisfaction factors. These derived sentiment measures and factors are then linked to corporate financial performance metrics such as Return on Assets, Tobin's Q, and Market-to-Book ratio. The studies consistently find a statistically significant positive association between employee sentiment and subsequent firm performance. Furthermore, ML/AI techniques enable the identification of specific cultural values or job satisfaction factors, such as pride in the company, job security, quality of management, career prospects, accomplishment, and compensation, as important predictors of firm value and operating performance. This review highlights the growing utility of ML/AI for transforming unstructured online employee feedback into actionable insights, demonstrating its potential to deepen our understanding of how the employee experience is reflected in corporate financial outcomes.





ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE: AN INDEX BASED APPROACH

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Abstract

Resilience can be defined as the capacity to persist, adapt or transform in the face of a change, requiring preparedness, risk avoidance and flexible response capabilities, and Organizational Resilience as the ability of organizations to anticipate, avoid and adjust to shocks in their environment. The aim of this study is to arrive at an index for an organization, which can effectively be used to its check their resilience readiness towards unprecedented disasters attributed to climate change. As resources and capabilities contribute to the competitive advantage of any firm thereby making it more resilient, contributing factors for the same are being derived from the extensive review of available literature. The resources considered to be possessed by firm are being Valuable, Competitive, Superior and Non-Substitutable and Inimitable, while for capability are Adaptability, Anticipation, Alignment Ambidexterity and Innovation. A primary survey on these factors was conducted spanning across industries and the obtained data is converted in Likert scale whose reliability is tested using SPSS. Further, Entropy, a MCDM technique is employed for obtaining the weights for each factor, because Organizational Resilience being a multidimensional path dependent latent variable cannot be used directly as an explanatory variable. The obtained weights are multiplied with the relevant responses and put in the construct to obtain the resilience index of a particular firm, and then plotted in a matrix to understand their resilience readiness, leading to discussions on the managerial implications and strategic recommendations.





DO INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AFFECT POST-IPO OPERATING PERFORMANCE? EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN FIRMS

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Abstract

This study predominantly seeks to examine the alteration in the operating performance of Indian firms transitioning from private to public ownership. Our analysis delves into empirical investigation of the nexus between institutional ownership, corporate board attributes and firm's operating performance during the five years subsequent to an initial public offering (IPOs) in India. The study entails an empirical analysis of 94 financial and non-financial firms' initial public offerings (IPOs) listed on National stock exchange from 2015 to 2019.

Using dynamic panel estimation, eventually study findings indicate that in terms of operating cash flow and net return on total assets, banking and non-banking institutional ownership concentration exhibit a significantly inverse association in the initial years following the firm's IPO. It indicates that owing to the prolonged gestation period of long-term assets, they are primarily interested in yielding listing gains and then divest. However, in the later period, this situation has improved significantly, indicating that mature firms in the market are a safer haven for such investors.

Furthermore, the inclusion of more independent directors on the board improves operating performance, especially in the post-IPO period. Conversely, Non-executive directors (simultaneously holding multiple directorships) whose inclusion are subject to a regulatory ceiling significantly inversely impacts operating results. Typically, the increased inclusion of such category directors undermines shareholders' trustworthiness and raises questions about the corporate board's transparency. Consequently, whole-time directors become less inclined to strive for higher operating performance. This, in turn, may become detrimental to the firm's overall operating results. Nevertheless, afterwards, it has also improved.





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ANALYSING INTER-ATTRIBUTE CONFLICTS IN CREATIVE CLIMATE DIMENSIONS: APPLYING TRIZ INVENTIVE PRINCIPLES FOR RESOLUTION

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Abstract

The organizational climate, which is characterized by specific attributes like freedom, idea support, trust, risk-taking, and playfulness, nurtures creativity, which can be further refined and modelled into innovations. The synergy of these attributes creates a positive psychological and social environment that encourages innovation, employee participation, and openness to new ideas. These dimensions of creative climate tend to host inherent contradictions and tensions. For instance, the concept of individual autonomy may contradict organizational alignment and coherence, while encouraging open debate and analysis can sometimes destabilize emotional safety and psychological comfort. Such conflicts between attributes, if unresolved, can hinder creativity and dampen overall organizational effectiveness. This research study critically explores these conflicts in established creative climate models, with particular reference to a well-established 10-dimensional model that has shaped organisational studies.

To deal with these challenges, this research deploys the Theory of Inventive Problem Solving (TRIZ) in the context of organizational climate. TRIZ is a systematic and logical problem-solving method initially created for engineering and product development. By translating contradictions among creative climate characteristics to TRIZ's contradiction matrix and inventive principles, this method provides logical and innovative solutions for alleviating tensions and developing a balanced environment with potential for sustainable creativity, thereby supporting organizational innovations.

This interdisciplinary research fills the gap between organizational psychology and innovation management by showcasing how TRIZ may be applied to increase the social and psychological systems that support creativity. It gives HR practitioners, managers, and change agents a workable and replicable method for systematically resolving conflicts in creative environments, ultimately leading to sustainable organizational innovation and development.



AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF USER EXPERIENCE OF NEW AGE BLOCKCHAIN-BASED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

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Abstract

Social media has become an important part of everyone's life. It has transformed how we connect, communicate, and share information, as well as socially interact. The prominent Web 2.0-based social media platforms that enable connection, information sharing and communication are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Quora and many others. However, these Web 2.0 social media have been criticised because of the lack of data privacy, centralised ownership, and autonomy over a user's generated content (James et al., 2017). These challenges have remained unaddressed for a decade. But now, it can be addressed by leveraging the inherent capabilities of blockchain technology. Blockchain, the underlying technology of cryptocurrencies, has shown its potential to transform media platforms through its characteristics like immutability, transparency, security, and decentralisation (Nofer et al., 2017). Utilising blockchain technology's peer-to-peer features enables it to establish a decentralised, safe, anonymous, and traceable content distribution network. New-age social media platforms integrate the principles of blockchain technology with their social media features to create a more transparent, secure, and user-centric online environment. This innovative approach has the potential to revolutionise the way we interact, share information, and protect our digital identities on the internet. Some of the emerging blockchain-based social media platforms are Uhive, Steemit, Mastdon, Mcommunity, Ushare and Phaver. These platforms allow different social engagement activities like sharing short videos, micro-blogging, writing blogs and articles, photo sharing, and socialising with friends.

The literature on blockchain-based social media has started to emerge recently, and hence, there is an enormous scope to study different dimensions of blockchain-based social media. Recent studies on blockchain based social media have focused on understanding the user incentive mechanism of platforms (Liu et al., 2022), understanding information sharing (La Cava et al., 2021) and analysing content sharing (Kapanova et al., 2020) on such platforms. Understanding the experiences of users with these new kinds of social media platforms is very valuable. However, there has been no such study done on the experience of users on these social media platforms.

In this paper, we have studied the experience of users with blockchain-based social media platforms. For our study, we have considered five platforms, namely Dcircle, M community, Uhive, Mastdon and Phaver. To understand the user experiences, we have leveraged user-generated reviews available on the Google Play Store. User reviews are the customer's voice and are rich in information expressing customer experience, motivation, problems and perceived benefits (Chatterjee, 2019). A total of 5000+ reviews were extracted using Python-based crawler for further analysis. The user reviews were analysed using the



text mining technique LDA (Latent Dirichlet Allocation) method (Blei et al., 2003), which is a topic modelling algorithm. Topic modelling helps to capture the hidden structures of unstructured data like user reviews. LDA is based on the Bayesian probability model, which assumes that every document is a collection of probabilistically distributed topics and that every topic consists of probabilistically distributed words.

Hence, the study aims to add value to the emerging literature on blockchain based social media by studying the user experiences.





“THE ROLE OF HUMAN FACTORS & ERGONOMICS IN SUSTAINABILITY & EMPLOYEE WELLBEING : A CRITICAL REVIEW”

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Abstract

Human Factors and Ergonomics (HFE) uses human biology, psychology, engineering, and design to create and apply knowledge and techniques for optimizing system performance while protecting employees' health, safety, and well-being. Keeping employees secure, engaged, and happy with work is a part of employees' health, safety, and well-being. Gaining knowledge about sustainability and ergonomics may lead to solutions and suggestions for advancing Industry 5.0.

HFE and sustainability support social sustainability and individual growth while fostering productivity, efficacy, and efficiency. This review aims (1) to explain the role of HFE in social sustainability and growth via ph596

ysical & cognitive ergonomics and (2) to provide a strategic approach to integrate challenges of HFE into Industries 5.0. Ergonomics analyzes the bridge between the research studies and industrial practices in order to maximize the efficiency of processes by keeping in view the well-being of employees. There has been a plethora of existing research on physical ergonomics, but there has been a dearth of research on the integration of cognitive ergonomics. The review has identified a number of obstacles to integration, including (1) changes in societal perspectives, (2) the future of human labor in Industry 5.0, (3) climate change and sustainability, (4) the future of education and training, (5) the future of personalized health, better understanding of human factors and ergonomics. and (6) life, technology, and the metaverse.





FINANCIAL DISTRESS AND INVESTMENT DECISIONS: EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN COMPANIES

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Abstract

Financial distress (FD) poses significant challenges for firms, particularly in emerging economies like India. It reflects a firm's deteriorating ability to meet financial obligations and often culminates in outcomes such as default, insolvency, or liquidation. Since the introduction of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in 2016, India has witnessed a sharp increase in corporate insolvencies, with over 8,000 companies entering formal insolvency proceedings under the IBBI. Amid such developments, understanding how distressed firms navigate critical financial decisions, especially investments, is essential, as these choices directly influence firm survival and recovery.

Investment decisions under distress diverge considerably from those made under normal financial conditions. Existing literature indicates that while financially healthy firms base investment decisions on value-maximizing principles, distressed firms often deviate due to liquidity constraints, bankruptcy pressure, and misaligned managerial incentives. Some underinvest in profitable ventures due to capital scarcity, while others overinvest in risky projects in a last-ditch effort to avert collapse. These impaired investment behaviours—motivated by risky debt structures, agency problems, and short-term survival instincts—pose serious implications for firm performance and stakeholder outcomes.

Despite the significance of these dynamics, scholarly attention has largely centered on investment behaviour in healthy firms and developed markets. The limited literature that does address financially distressed firms often focuses on external investments (e.g., M&A, market expansion) rather than internal capital budgeting decisions. Moreover, many studies define financial distress using narrow proxies such as the Altman Z-score or Ohlson's model, omitting more comprehensive legal and institutional indicators.

This study aims to fill these gaps by investigating the internal investment behaviour of financially distressed Indian non-financial firms during the post-IBC period (2016–2024). By leveraging firm-level insolvency data from the IBBI, along with financial data from Bloomberg and the CMIE Prowess IQ database, this research offers a multidimensional measurement of FD, encompassing financial health metrics and legal proceedings. Investment behaviour will be assessed via changes in fixed assets, capturing both investment and divestment activities.

The study adopts a panel data approach, analyzing NSE-listed firms through regression models that control for firm-specific characteristics, macroeconomic trends, and sectoral differences. This empirical framework allows for the isolation of distress-related effects on investment decisions. Furthermore, the study emphasizes heterogeneity among distressed firms, acknowledging that firms with high investment opportunities behave differently from those with limited growth prospects.





The findings of this research are expected to yield critical implications. For managers, the results can inform more effective capital allocation strategies under distress. Creditors may use these insights for better risk evaluation and debt structuring. For policymakers—especially institutions like the IBBI—this study offers evidence to refine insolvency policies and corporate governance frameworks, ensuring they are responsive to the nuanced investment behaviours of distressed firms.

In sum, this research contributes to a more extensive understanding of FD and corporate investment behaviour in emerging markets. It offers a timely and policy-relevant inquiry into how Indian firms navigate investment decisions during financial crises, potentially influencing recovery outcomes and long-term sustainability.





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THE ROLE OF AI INFLUENCERS IN SHAPING CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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Abstract

The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence in marketing has given rise to virtual influencers digitally created personas that engage users across social media platforms. This study explores how specific characteristics of AI influencers namely physical and social attractiveness, perceived trustworthiness, expertise and parasocial relationships affect consumer behaviour, particularly purchase intentions. Drawing on responses from 153 participants, the research employs a quantitative approach using reliability analysis, ANOVA, chi-square tests and multiple regression to assess the impact of these attributes.

Findings indicate that trust, emotional connection and perceived expertise play a critical role in shaping consumer engagement. Parasocial relationships emerged as the strongest predictor of the purchase intent. While physical appeal-initiated attention, lasting influence driven by credibility and emotional resonance. The study also notes that younger demographics are more likely to follow virtual influencers, although employment status showed no significant effect on perception.

Beyond marketing implications, this research contributes to the broader discourse on ethical and sustainable business practices. Virtual influencers offer the potential to reduce environmental impact, represent diverse identities and deliver constant brand messaging – highlighting their role in inclusive and responsible communication strategies. By bridging human psychology with technological innovation, the study underscores how this research can inform the design of AI tools that not only drive performance but also support societal well-being and sustainability.





DARK SIDE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN EDUCATION SECTOR

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Abstract

In recent years, many studies are done on the dark side of AI in different domains. This paper intends to give a comprehensive literature review regarding what are the different negative impacts of AI in education sector and how to overcome them. The findings are first presented in terms of number of studies published per year, in terms of country, subject area and most cited articles and then in terms of six themes. 1) Psychological & social impact of AI 2) Academic dishonesty 3) Ethical concerns 4) Impact of AI on quality of education 5) Economic inequality & digital divide 6) Impact on teachers and then solutions are provided to mitigate the negative impact of AI. This study finds that due to over reliance on AI tools, there is loss of skills like critical thinking, decision making, creativity, reading & writing skills for students. Excessive use of AI tools also leads to stress, laziness, loss of concentration and poor memory. Due to various generative AI tools, incidents of AI generated assignments, AI assisted cheating & plagiarism has increased among students. In some educational institutions, AI systems collect student data related to their demographics & behaviour, so there are privacy & security concerns related to hacking and misuse of student data. There is an issue of algorithmic bias & discrimination in the admission system of an institute as data was biased on which algorithms are trained leading to poor quality admission. Also, many times it is found that AI tools are giving inaccurate information and not able to adopt diverse learning style impacting emotional & social learning of students. Negative impact found on teachers include job insecurity due to AI automation, excessive surveillance, loss of research skills due to overuse of AI. Solutions to mitigate negative impacts are following, training students and teachers on responsible & ethical use of AI tool, clear AI guidelines and policies are needed in educational institutes, employing bias mitigation techniques and improve quality of training data for AI models, improve explainability & transparency of AI decisions, AI should be used as a supporting tool and teacher-student interaction learning should be priority, for complex and sensitive decisions human should always be in loop not only AI based decision. Finally, future research directions are provided like how to utilize generative AI in research without violating the principles of research ethics, how to enhance learning of students using AI tools with academic integrity, maintaining a balance between usage of AI tools and student's cognitive and emotional well being, reducing biases in algorithms and increasing AI explainability, AI's role in surveillance and its impact on employee's performance, productivity, motivation and turnover.





AI-DRIVEN CONVERSATIONAL INTERFACES AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT: EVIDENCE FROM THE INDIAN BANKING SECTOR

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Abstract

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into banking sector has transformed service delivery, particularly through the rise of AI-driven conversational interfaces such as chatbots and virtual assistants. This study investigates how these interfaces influence customer engagement in the retail banking context. Grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Raza & Tursoy, 2025; Kimiagari & Baei, 2022; Davis, 1989), and Customer Engagement Theory (Williams & Mackay 2020; Brodie et al., 2011), the research explores the interplay between perceived technological value and relational engagement outcomes.

The data collected through a structured survey of 350 retail banking customers in India who interact with AI-enabled platforms (e.g., HDFC's EVA, SBI's YONO), the study applies Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships among perceived usefulness, interaction quality, satisfaction, and select dimensions of customer engagement. Findings indicate that perceived usefulness and trust in AI systems significantly mediate the effect of chatbot interactions on emotional and behavioural engagement.

The research contributes a conceptual integration of TAM and SDL within a customer engagement framework, offering insights into how conversational AI functions as both a service tool and a value co-creation mechanism. From a managerial perspective, the results underscore the importance of trust-building features and personalized interactions in chatbot design. By highlighting the evolving role of AI in customer relationship management, the study provides a foundation for future inquiries into conversational AI, user trust, and long-term engagement in digital banking ecosystems.





STARTUP DREAMS, UNEVEN PATHS: A SOCIOECONOMIC DEEP DIVE INTO ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION CAMP

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Abstract

This study examines 30 years of data (1992–2025) from two national entrepreneurial summer camps in India – one for youth and one for children – to profile participants’ demographics, socioeconomic status (SES), and potential program impact. We performed descriptive and inferential analyses of participant characteristics (age, gender, grade, parents’ jobs, SES Tier, distance travelled, and home state) using the given EDII dataset for the "Adventures for Youth" (1992–2025) and "Stimulus for Children" (1994–2025). Key results show that both camps draw mostly male participants (70.5% men in Youth vs. 65.9% in Children), mostly from rich origins (Tier 1 SES: 55% of youth, 61% of children) and from the host state ($\approx$ 50–70% from Gujarat). State-level variety grew over time (participants hailed from $\sim$ 3–5 states in the 1990s to over a dozen lately), but gender and SES disparities persisted. Reflecting more general geographic draw, the youth camp has a greater average age (mean $\sim$ 17.8 years) and travel distance (median 332km) than the children's camp (mean age $\sim$ 14.0 years, median distance 0 km). Two young people and five children participated sharply less in the 2020 epidemic; partial recovery followed later. The data imply, in keeping with the literature, that young people from higher-SES, business-oriented homes are overrepresented (parents often entrepreneurs or professionals). This could influence entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Hopkins, 2020) and intentions (Jannesari, 2022). Policy ramifications include the requirement of focused outreach to women, rural youth, and impoverished groups—noted as disadvantaged in entrepreneurship by OECD, 2017—to increase inclusion. By empirically tracking program reach and participant composition, this longitudinal profiling closes a gap in entrepreneurship education research. Future projects should assess long-term results (e.g., skill development, company formation) of these camp alumni.





FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND FOOD SECURITY: MODERATING ROLE OF DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

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Abstract

As digital transformation reshapes financial landscapes, its role in addressing fundamental development challenges like hunger is becoming increasingly significant. This study examines how digital infrastructure strengthens the relationship between financial inclusion and food security. The paper focuses on BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) nations because they represent a group of large emerging economies characterized by rapid digital transformation, expanding financial systems, and persistent food security challenges. Financial inclusion as an independent variable is measured through three key indicators: ATMs per 100,000 adults and commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults. The paper measures the dependent variable, food security, using the prevalence of undernourishment and represents digital infrastructure through the percentage of the population using the Internet. The analysis employs a panel regression model covering BRICS countries over 17 years from 2005-2022. While prior research explores the roles of financial inclusion and digital development separately, few studies have investigated how digital infrastructure may condition the effect of financial access on food security. Results reveal that digital infrastructure significantly strengthens the positive relationship between financial inclusion and food security. The study contributes to the literature by highlighting the critical role of finance and technology in enhancing development outcomes. Policy implications highlight the need for integrated strategies that simultaneously expand digital infrastructure and financial access, especially in rural areas. Promoting digital financial services, improving internet connectivity, and enhancing financial and digital literacy can collectively strengthen food security outcomes, ultimately leading to the achievement of SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).





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CEO COMPENSATION IN FIRMS UNDER DISTRESS : EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

CEO compensation in firms is one of the key instruments in corporate governance. The determinants, components and effects of CEO Compensation on firm attributes have been researched and explored in many Journals in Management, Economics, Finance and Strategy areas. The objective of this paper is to explore the dynamics on CEO compensation, especially in financially distressed firms and firms under a financial distress risk. Even though there is a good amount of literature on the relationship between CEO compensation and Firm performance, the dynamics of the CEO compensation in the firms under a financial distress is worth exploring and understanding especially in a country like India. This paper aims to capture the effect of firm distress level in CEO Compensation, while controlling for firm attributes.





INTEGRATING CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE VALUE CREATION: A TRANSFORMATIVE BUSINESS APPROACH TOWARDS SDG 12

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Abstract

The rising culture of consumerism has created an unsustainable demand on environment causing degradation and resource scarcity. Businesses operating under a linear economy model using take make use discard technique, are facing resource constraints and reduced profitability due to their overutilization of resources. They are being encouraged to adopt circular economy (CE) model of production which is a closed-loop system that turns waste into resources, fostering a sustainable economy. While CE principles are increasingly recognized for their sustainability potential, their role in comprehensive business transformation remains inadequately conceptualized. The objective of this study is to review and synthesize the literature and provide a thematic and conceptual understanding of integrating CE principles into business operations, thus supporting value creation. We used PRISMA to conduct an integrative review of 231 papers extracted from the Web of Science database. The study's findings identify six themes, comprising, sustainable development, value creation, green logistics, sustainable production, innovation, eco-entrepreneurship. By using a triple bottom line approach, this study proposes a conceptual framework that outlines how key CE practices can be integrated into core business operations which can create holistic value for society, environment, and economy. This study contributes to the circular economy and sustainability literature by providing a comprehensive perspective and conceptual framework for business transformation. It combines environmental responsibility with long-term business competitiveness and societal well-being through sustainable and responsible production systems, thus achieving goal 12 of sustainable development.

Keywords: Circular economy, Sustainable value creation, Business transformation, Circular business model, Responsible business, SDG 12





"STRATEGIC AGILITY AND TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION IN INTERNATIONAL MARKETING: A FRAMEWORK FOR DIGITALIZATION IN GLOBAL MARKETS"

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Abstract

The digital revolution has significantly transformed the landscape of international marketing, compelling firms to rethink and reshape their strategies in an increasingly interconnected and technologically advanced world. This study investigates how digitalization is influencing international marketing strategies, emphasizing the shift from traditional models to more agile, data-driven, and platform-based approaches. Digital tools have enabled firms to expand their global reach, customize offerings, and engage consumers across borders with unprecedented speed and precision. As firms navigate varied institutional environments and cultural contexts, they face challenges in standardizing versus localizing digital strategies. The study explores how companies leverage digital ecosystems, artificial intelligence, real-time analytics, and automation to enhance decision-making, customer engagement, and operational efficiency. It also addresses issues related to data privacy, cybersecurity, and the adaptability of firms in managing global digital platforms. Emerging patterns suggest a need for dynamic capabilities that allow firms to continuously adapt to technological changes and market disruptions. The integration of digital strategies within broader international marketing frameworks offers opportunities for innovation, competitive advantage, and long-term sustainability. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how firms can align their marketing strategies with digital advancements to compete effectively in global markets. By synthesizing recent developments, the study proposes a comprehensive framework for digital international marketing strategy and outlines directions for future research. It highlights the importance of strategic agility, technological integration, and culturally nuanced approaches for achieving success in the digital age.





POLITICAL CAPITAL AS A STRATEGIC ASSET IN CROSS-BORDER M&AS

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Abstract

Corporate political activity (CPA) is a critical non-market strategy used by firms, particularly to deal with institutional voids. In weaker institutional environments, firms frequently rely on political connections as their strategic asset. These connections help firms navigate ineffective institutional environments and provide access to critical resources. However, do these political connections help firms in major investment decisions like M&A? This study addresses this research question by investigating how the politically connected board interlock influences its likelihood of being acquired by foreign firms.

The study combines social network theory with institutional theory to explain how increased political connectedness of the target firm initially boosts acquisition probability because of anticipated benefits from these connections. These connections initially increase the attractiveness by minimizing regulatory uncertainty while providing critical resource access and demonstrating legitimacy to potential acquirers. The likelihood of acquisition decreases after reaching a specific threshold of political connectedness because excessive political ties indicate excessive dependence on political capital and create inefficient market transactions. Highly connected firms become less attractive to acquirers because their excessive political involvement creates reputational risks and regulatory challenges and restricts post-merger flexibility.

We conceptualized political connectedness as the degree centrality of politically linked board members, capturing the extent of a firm's embeddedness within political networks. Using panel data of NSE 2000 firms from 2006 – 2023, we found a curvilinear relationship between degree centrality and acquisition probability. Our findings reveal an inverted U relationship such that acquisition probability rises first and then decreases with increasing degree centrality.





RECONFIGURING INNOVATION METHODOLOGIES TO LEVERAGE STRATEGIC RESILIENCE IN TECH-DRIVEN STARTUPS IN INDIA: A SWOT AND PATINFORMATICS-DRIVEN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Background: Innovation methodologies such as *Design Thinking*, *Lean Startup*, and *Agile UX* have been widely adopted across technology organizations. While multinational corporations (MNCs) deploy these frameworks with structured success; tech startups struggle with inconsistent results, oscillating between breakthrough and breakdown.

Problem Statement: Despite the theoretical promise of innovation frameworks, their effectiveness within Indian tech startups is inconsistent; working as structured systems in MNCs and unpredictable in startups.

Aim: This research investigates the dichotomy in adoption, adaptation, and impact of innovation methodologies in contrasting organizational contexts. Further, it decodes the real-world impact, performance variance, and rational portability of innovation methodologies across Indian tech startups and MNCs.

Methodology: A mixed-method approach and evidence-based tools to identify systemic gaps and opportunities for contextual adaptation were adopted. It comprises of 39 publications and patents across renowned databases over last 5 years. Further, SWOT and Patinformatics-based thematic convergence were performed.

Findings: MNCs benefit from structured, cross-functional implementation, and innovation ambidexterity. In contrast, Indian startups show fragmented, founder-driven adoption with low scalability and inconsistent returns. Design thinking yields high ROI in MNCs but often fails in startups due to contextual misalignment and lack of prototyping infrastructure.

Conclusion: This research contributes a transformative lens for innovation methodologies and propose a novel framework—*Adaptive Innovation Praxis* (AIP)—to recalibrate innovation around startup-specific constraints and growth inflection points. This study proposes future research areas for the academic community to resolve the issues of inconsistent results for the tech startups in India, while enhancing long-term strategic resilience.





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ANALYSING THE ROLE OF FOREIGN INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS IN STOCK MARKET VOLATILITY: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

The main motive of this study is to explain the impact of FIIs on volatility of Indian stock market and by taking in to the consideration the two major indices of Indian stock market i.e., Sensex and Nifty. This Study was conducted by using monthly data from January 2001 to December 2020. The target of this study is to find out the impact of FIIs on any of the evaluative variables included in the study. For this purpose, ADF test, Correlation analysis and GARCH tests have been applied. It was established that SENSEX and NIFTY volatility had risen over time, but that it had peaked during the financial crisis and subsequently fallen again. Over time, especially during times of crises, FII volatility has also increased. A highly positive association between FIIs, SENSEX and NIFTY was found via correlation analysis. According to the findings of the GARCH test analysis, SENSEX, one of the important index that represent the Indian stock market, is much more volatile than it was in the preceding periods and was also significantly more volatile due to FII investment. Therefore, the findings indicate that the volatility of the Indian stock market and FIIs has grown over the course of the study. There is no denying that FIIs play a historic role in the expansion of the stock market, which ultimately uplift country's economy.



FROM CLICKS TO CONSUMPTION: THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING ON SUSTAINABLE PURCHASE INTENTIONS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

The increase in sustainable consumers compels corporations to vigorously promote their products via social media marketing, while the emergence of social media as a preeminent platform for marketing and consumer interaction has fundamentally altered the landscape of digital advertising, presenting novel opportunities to advocate for sustainable consumption and ethical purchasing practices. The research employs the web-based advertising value framework, uses and gratification theory, and elaboration likelihood model to analyze the impact of emotional appeal, incentives, advertising credibility, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on consumers' purchase intentions in social media advertising. We gathered data from 501 offline surveys conducted with young consumers who had experienced social media marketing, yielding significant insights into their attitudes and actions. The findings indicate that electronic word-of-mouth and advertising amusement are the paramount elements affecting advertising attitudes, exceeding the impacts of informativeness, credibility, and emotional appeal. These findings highlight the crucial influence of electronic word-of-mouth and entertainment in molding consumer perceptions of social media advertising, especially in the promotion of sustainable products and behaviours. This research offers a complete framework for understanding the elements that influence customers' purchase decisions in social media advertising by incorporating electronic word-of-mouth, incentives, and emotional appeal into the advertising value model. These insights enhance theoretical comprehension and provide practical advice for marketers aiming to synchronize their advertising tactics with responsible consumption, production, and climate action.



PRIORITIZING SERVICE QUALITY ATTRIBUTES IN PRIVATE BUSINESS SCHOOLS: A KANO MODEL APPROACH

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Abstract

Purpose: This study is an attempt to evaluate stakeholder satisfaction in B-schools under Private Universities. The research is set out to highlight the essential requirements from a student's perspective and prioritize their needs based on their influence on the overall level of satisfaction.

Design/methodology/approach: The Kano Model has been applied to assess the satisfaction of students as it contributes in a two-fold capacity to examine service quality in higher education institutions. It can be used as a framework to decide which features and characteristics should be prioritized while delivering a service. At the same time, it can be used as a foundation for defining and benchmarking service quality against other institutions in the educational landscape.

Findings: A total of 120 responses have been derived from students of four eminent private b-schools in the state of West Bengal. Classification of the service quality elements into different Kano categories has been conducted by feeding the responses to the Kano Evaluation Matrix. The categorization includes basic, attractive, one-dimensional, indifferent, and reverse attributes. The student satisfaction index has been calculated to derive the impact of each service quality dimension on satisfaction. The influence of student requirements on the extent of satisfaction and dissatisfaction has been plotted on a graph.

Originality/value: This paper will aid related authorities in prioritizing their strategies and focusing on improving those requirements that will bring about a higher level of satisfaction and loyalty among students toward their institution.





SEGMENTING THE GREEN CONSUMER: A MARKETING STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

As sustainability becomes central to consumer consciousness, green marketing is no longer a niche strategy but a necessity for modern businesses. Yet, reaching green consumers effectively requires more than generic appeals to environmental values. This conceptual paper develops a strategic framework for segmenting green consumers, integrating insights from consumer psychology, environmental behaviour literature, and marketing theory. The proposed framework categorizes consumers based on their environmental involvement, motivation types, and purchasing behaviour, offering marketers a structured approach to tailoring green marketing strategies. By highlighting distinct consumer profiles from environmentally committed to eco-passive, the paper offers practical implications for targeted communication, product positioning, and value proposition development. This work contributes to the evolving discourse on sustainable marketing by providing a theoretical foundation for future empirical research and strategy design.





"FOSTERING ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH UPI ADOPTION: EVIDENCE FROM RURAL INDORE, INDIA"

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Abstract

Unified Payments Interface (UPI), a mobile-based digital payment system, has revolutionized financial transactions in India by offering fast, secure, and accessible financial services. This transformation holds significant potential for promoting **economic sustainability**, particularly in rural areas, by integrating underserved populations into the formal financial system and reducing dependency on cash-based transactions. This study examines the determinants of UPI adoption among rural residents in Indore district, Madhya Pradesh, using Binary Logistic Regression on primary survey data. Key factors positively influencing UPI usage include younger age, male gender, higher educational attainment, specific occupational categories, and higher income levels. In contrast, caste, religion, marital status, and ownership of Jan Dhan Yojana (JDY) accounts did not significantly predict UPI usage.

The research is driven by the pressing need to align financial inclusion initiatives with broader sustainability goals. Despite the ambitious outreach of PMJDY, many rural communities still face socio-economic and infrastructural challenges that hinder their digital financial participation. The study not only evaluates UPI adoption across diverse rural segments—including women, low-income households, and marginalized groups—but also assesses the role of JDY in facilitating digital financial behaviour.

Indore district was selected due to its strategic position as a commercial hub with a strong urban-rural interface, making it an ideal setting to study digital financial adoption trends in peri-urban and rural contexts. The findings underscore that tailored financial literacy campaigns, youth engagement, gender-sensitive initiatives, and income-based incentives can promote broader and more inclusive digital adoption, thereby strengthening economic sustainability through enhanced financial access, reduced transaction costs, and improved economic participation.

The paper proceeds with a detailed literature review, methodology, statistical findings, discussion, and concluding recommendations for policy and practice.





“NAVIGATING THE LIVE STREAMING LANDSCAPE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF USER AND SELLER EXPERIENCE”

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Abstract

With the exponential growth of digital retail, live streaming has emerged as a revolutionary instrument that allows the seller for real time display and product promotion while additionally transforming how customers interact with the brands (Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut, 2020). Live streaming provides an immersive experience that effortlessly incorporates e-commerce features into social media platforms by emphasizing on transparency and interaction (Guo et al., 2022). To explore the behavioural patterns, motivations and challenges faced by the stakeholders, this study conducted qualitative analysis of both the sellers and customers of Delhi-NCR.

In consideration with the research gap and the objectives of the study, semi-structured interviews of 15 customers and 15 live sellers were conducted. The participants who have attended several live sessions or have shopping experience through live streaming were purposively chosen. The MAXQDA software was used to acquire an extensive understanding of the concept.

Theoretically, this study enhances the knowledge about the characteristics and adoption of live streaming commerce. Practically, this study extends the understanding of digital belonging by the adoption of live streaming commerce and promotes pleasant interactions. The findings contribute to the socio-digital dynamics shaping live streaming commerce and provide meaningful practical implications for fashion retailers seeking to use this medium or increase their presence in it. This distinctive characteristics of live streaming commerce have made it beneficial for small retailers.





ACTORS AFFECTING GREEN CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN INDIA

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Abstract

India has recently become the fourth-largest economy in the world demonstrating how fast the country is growing. However, this rapid development also brings serious challenges, particularly environmental pollution and the wastage of natural resources. As people become more aware of these problems, many are trying to live in an eco-friendly way. The increased interest in green products is a strong indication of this shift. Although green products are becoming popular in India there is still not enough research that clearly explains what influences Indian consumers to actually choose green products. Most of the existing studies focus on other countries or do not use detailed data specific to India. This study aims to understand which factors influence people in India to buy green products and what encourages them to make more environmentally responsible choices. We collected responses from 151 people through a structured questionnaire and analyzed the results using multiple regression. The findings show that social norms, awareness, and environmental concerns are three main factors that affect the purchase of green products. These findings provide valuable insights to businesses and the government to create better products, campaigns and policies that support sustainable choices and make it easier for people to select green products.





ICT ACCESS, FINANCIAL INCLUSION, AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: EVIDENCE FROM DISTRICT-LEVEL PANEL DATA IN INDIA

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure across India has opened new avenues for advancing financial inclusion, particularly among women. Yet, the extent to which ICT-driven financial inclusion translates into women's economic empowerment remains an underexplored area. This study investigates the relationship between ICT access, financial inclusion, and women's empowerment at the district level in India, using secondary data from nationally representative surveys.

Leveraging data from the Global Findex (2014, 2017, 2021), the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), we construct a district-level panel dataset to examine how mobile penetration and internet access impact women's financial inclusion, measured through bank account ownership, digital payment usage, and access to formal credit and insurance. Furthermore, we explore whether increased financial inclusion leads to improvements in women's economic empowerment, captured by labor force participation and decision-making autonomy within households.

Our findings aim to contribute to the growing discourse on digital financial inclusion by offering gender-disaggregated insights, highlighting the importance of ICT not merely as a tool for access but as a catalyst for broader social and economic empowerment. The study's outcomes are expected to inform policy strategies geared toward inclusive digital finance and gender-equitable development.



MODELLING THE ROLE OF AI-BASED INTERVENTIONS IN YOUNG CONSUMERS' FASHION PURCHASES THROUGH LIVE STREAM COMMERCE

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Abstract

Digital technologies have opened a new world of opportunities for businesses globally. These tools play a pivotal role and are recognized as a prominent source of communication, entertainment, information, and education. This study examined the role of AI-based interventions like personalization, nudging, and purchase forecasting in driving intentions to purchase. The study used a mixed-method approach employing semi-structured interviews engaging 27 Gen Z respondents based on their previous e-commerce shopping experiences. Furthermore, a quantitative study was designed based on inputs received from the qualitative research. Quantitative survey involved 387 respondents to validate the findings of qualitative study. Results revealed active variables, chatbots, recommendation systems, and AI-driven product listings as drivers of purchase intentions. The study provides inputs to Indian e-commerce firms looking to engage young consumers through live streaming. Research has further implications for the effective use of AI-based technologies in e-commerce.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into organizational operations has revolutionized work practices and significantly influenced organizational culture. This intersection has recently attracted academic and practical interest as AI integration reshapes organizational and employee values and norms. However, scholarly understanding of the AI culture interplay remains unexplored and fragmented, underscoring the need for a comprehensive review. Therefore, this study maps the scholarly research landscape on AI and organizational culture. Identifying gaps in the literature offers a new synthesis that enhances understanding in this field. The study employed a bibliometric review, analyzing n-266 peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2024. Databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science were searched using keywords like “Artificial Intelligence”, “Organisational Culture”, “AI Integration”, and “Cultural transformations” for the study. These were analyzed for publication and citation patterns and visualized with bibliometric mapping tools, VOSviewer, to reveal co-authorship and keyword co-occurrence networks. Boolean operators (AND, OR) refined the search to capture relevant literature. Inclusion criteria focused on peer-reviewed studies addressing AI’s impact on work practices and organizational culture. The study found that AI improves decision-making, encourages innovation, and cultivates a learning culture by redefining roles and mitigating biases in human resource practices. Concerns regarding job displacement, ethical implications, and the necessity for reskilling remain prevalent. Organizations exhibiting robust AI capabilities and adaptive cultures demonstrate superior performance. This study demonstrates the potential of AI to align with organizational values, facilitate cultural transformation, enhance engagement, and improve performance.





EVIDENCE OF OVERREACTION AND UNDERREACTION OF INVESTORS IN THE INDIAN STOCK MARKET

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Abstract

This paper delves into the behavioural tendencies of investors in the Indian equity market, with a particular focus on the phenomena of Overreaction and Underreaction of investors, which present a direct challenge to the assumptions of market efficiency. Drawing upon behavioural finance literature, the study investigates whether investor psychology and structural inefficiencies cause stock prices to diverge from their fundamental values. The research analyses weekly stock returns over a four-year horizon, using data from a selection of consistently traded firms listed on the S&P BSE Sensex. Companies were sorted into winner and loser portfolios following the method developed by De Bondt and Thaler (1985), based on their Cumulative Abnormal Returns (CAR) during the formation period. A market-adjusted return model was applied to compute Abnormal Returns (AR), Average Abnormal Returns (AAR), and Average Returns, which were then analysed across multiple timeframes to identify pricing anomalies. The findings reveal compelling evidence of Overreaction of investors, particularly in portfolios composed of high-visibility stocks, which tend to reverse in price during subsequent periods. In contrast, Underreaction of investors is more apparent in portfolios containing undervalued firms, where price adjustments unfold gradually over time. The recurring nature and statistical reliability of these patterns suggest that behavioural inefficiencies are embedded in the market's functioning. Though focused on large-cap stocks, the findings offer key insights into investor behaviour and suggest practical relevance for investment and regulatory strategy in emerging markets.





AN ASSESSMENT OF RETURN ON INVESTMENT IN VOLUNTARY CARBON MARKETS: INSIGHTS FROM LITERATURE AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

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Abstract

Carbon markets, both compliance and voluntary, are increasingly pivotal in global climate change mitigation efforts. Voluntary Carbon Markets (VCMs) have garnered substantial interest by enabling the trading of carbon credits across diverse sectors. This study examines the Return on Investment (ROI) outcomes of VCM-linked projects, synthesizing empirical evidence from literature reviews and insights from stakeholder interviews. The review spans empirical studies focused on economic performance, social co-benefits, and environmental impact, revealing that 26.7% of the literature examines economic trade-offs involved in VCM implementation, while 20% focus on comprehensive cost-benefit analyses. However, a critical gap persists in standardized ROI frameworks that capture both quantitative and qualitative benefits. To bridge this gap, in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, project developers, community members, NGOs, and verification bodies associated with select carbon offset projects in India. Their insights highlight ROI not merely as a monetary return but also in terms of enhanced livelihoods, ecosystem restoration, and social capital formation.

The findings indicate that co-benefits such as biodiversity protection, increased agricultural productivity, and strengthened community resilience often outweigh short-term financial gains, making VCMs a promising avenue for sustainable development. This study concludes that integrating stakeholder perspectives into ROI assessment frameworks can provide a more holistic understanding of VCM performance.

Future research should explore longitudinal impact assessment, sector-specific ROI benchmarking, and the role of regulatory frameworks in scaling high-integrity VCM projects globally and within India.





THE INTERSECTION OF SOFT POWER AND GREEN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT: A PATHWAY TO LOWERING SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS

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Abstract

Increased supply chain emissions by manufacturing units pose a major threat to the natural environment. Rising environmental concerns and pressure from government and environmental bodies to minimize the adverse ecological effects of supply chain activities have led to the adoption of green practices called green supply chain management (GSCM) in the manufacturing industries. Ultimately, supply chain management is a labor-intensive process that depends on human labor and necessitates their participation. Thus, it is essential that human involvement be ecocentric. An influential factor behind employees' ability to make independent choices and their resulting actions is the organizational culture that encourages purposeful acts within the organization. Based on this reasoning, the study examines the influence of green culture and employees' green behavior on green supply chain practices for achieving sustainable performance. A questionnaire was designed using a validated scale from previous research, and 280 responses from supply chain professionals from different manufacturing sector industries were finalized. PLS-SEM methodology was deployed to validate the data empirically. The result of the paper demonstrates that the organization's ecocentric soft power would help improve green supply chain management practices, thereby improving the organization's sustainable performance. Additionally, the paper illustrates how the ecocentric soft power and green SCM would help reduce Scope 3 emissions. This research would benefit managers and practitioners by focusing on building an ecocentric soft power in their organization to support a sustainable supply chain.





WASTE, WORK, AND WORSHIP: A CLASSIC CASE STUDY OF MAHAKUMBH 2025

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Abstract

Mahakumbh 2025 was a massive mass movement, approximately 600 million, on the face of earth and managing such a huge event is a humongous task. In this article, the authors tried to present the entire effort of efficient event management through a case study. The study uses secondary data from government papers, media documentation, and NGO briefs to supplement primary data from semi-structured interviews with 20 domestic visitors and 25 sanitation workers. A variety of viewpoints from many stakeholders are captured in the study, which emphasises the operational difficulties of preserving hygiene, the perceived efficacy of sanitation systems, and the sociocultural elements affecting public engagement and service delivery. It also considers the need for infrastructure adaptability, communication, and worker dignity in guaranteeing efficient waste disposal during religious mega-events.

This case offers logical insights and recommendations for the future, which add to the body of knowledge in academia and policy thought. It makes recommendations for inclusive, scalable tactics for upcoming high-density events, paying special attention to equitable resource distribution, behavioural modification, and stakeholder engagement.





THE SILENT EXODUS: EXPLORING THE RISE OF QUIET QUITTING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR HRD IN INDIA

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Abstract

In the post-pandemic Indian workplace, “quiet quitting” has surfaced as a nuanced yet pervasive form of employee disengagement. Characterized by employees performing only the essential duties of their roles without additional effort or emotional investment, this phenomenon is particularly prevalent among early-to-mid-career professionals in high-demand sectors such as IT, consulting, and start-ups. This qualitative study investigates the lived experiences and meaning-making processes of quiet quitting among 30 professionals aged 23–35 across five major Indian cities. Semi-structured interviews reveal that factors such as limited growth opportunities, transactional leadership, value incongruence, and emotional exhaustion contribute significantly to internal withdrawal. Respondents frequently expressed feelings of being “used but unseen” and “drained yet replaceable,” indicating a deeper psychological and existential disconnection from their professional identities. Anchored in Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, the study analyzes how motivational deficits and the erosion of emotional resources contribute to disengagement. The hybrid work environment has further intensified this trend by blurring personal-professional boundaries while failing to foster meaningful recognition or interpersonal connection, what participants termed “emotional silence.” In response, the paper proposes a human-centric HRD framework focused on- job redesign to promote ownership and creativity, values alignment through narrative-driven engagement, personalized career development planning, empathetic, relational leadership development and integration of reflective practices into HR systems. The findings underscore the urgency of shifting from transactional to purpose-driven, emotionally intelligent organizational cultures within the Indian context.





TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION IN LUXURY: EXPLORING PATTERNS OF AUGMENTED REALITY USAGE AMONG LUXURY SHOPPERS

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Abstract

As luxury brands embrace technological innovations for multichannel retailing, they are integrating immersive technologies like augmented reality (AR) to elevate brand experiences (Javornik et al., 2021) and drive sales (Nawres et al., 2024). However, luxury shoppers' AR adoption remains gradual, with significantly higher interactions driven by hedonic explorations than immediate purchase (Vogue, 2023). The extant studies have largely focused on AR attributes influencing online purchases or brand experience, overlooking the nuanced ways of luxury consumers' engagement with AR (Agarwal & Kumra, 2024). Noting this gap, this study aims to:

- Identify various modes of AR usage among luxury shoppers, and
- Explore the underlying mechanism guiding their chosen engagement pattern

To fulfil these objectives, luxury shoppers with past AR usage experience were interviewed. Analyzed using Gioia's framework, the findings present a synthesis-based Typology of Luxury Shoppers' AR Usage Modes explained at three levels. Level one presents the three parameters (frequency of luxury purchases, price and/or discount sensitivity, and openness towards AR usage) and eight sub-parameters of the typology. These represent the boundary conditions within which the shoppers make their AR usage decision. Level two demonstrates the interplay across these dimensions, leading to the identification of four AR usage modes, namely: Ubiquitous AR Usage, Webrooming, Showrooming, and Marginalised AR usage. Lastly, level three unravels the cognitive and experiential factors guiding luxury shoppers' preferred AR usage mode. Conclusively, the study demonstrates a holistic framework that elucidates current AR usage patterns among luxury shoppers while presenting the crucial areas for improvement.





ENVIRONMENTAL - DRIVEN ACQUISITIONS AND MARKET RESPONSE: A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW OF GREEN M&AS

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Abstract

ESG (Environmental Social and Governance) issues are having an expanding impact on corporate strategies, and specifically, the execution of Mergers and Acquisitions (M&As). With changing demands from investors and regulators, ESG-related transactions are a strategic tool to drive long-term value and reputational advantage for acquirers. This paper seeks to conduct a scoping review of the academic ESG-focused M&A literature and its impact on shareholder wealth. It aims to analyze intellectual themes, research emphases, and the changing impact of ESG on M&A decision. Adopting a bibliometric method, the article examines 84 peer-reviewed articles produced between 2002 and 2025, employing VOSviewer and Biblioshiny to visualize the intellectual structure, co-author networks, research clusters, and citation patterns of this nascent area. Key themes identified are the role of ESG in the M&A process, the financial impact and shareholder returns of ESG led transactions and Regulatory and market pressure and its impact on the outcome of deals. The current study highlights the strategic relevance of ESG for current M&A as well as its multilayered effects on sustainable finance and firm development. This analysis also presents a future research agenda and underscores the importance of a comprehensive examination of how ESG strategies meet shareholder expectations.





COMPETENCIES OF THE DIGITAL WORKFORCE: REVIEW OF THE 21ST-CENTURY COMPETENCY DEMANDS AND RESEARCH DOMAIN

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Abstract

Over the last decade, rapid technological advancements brought by the fourth industrial revolution have created an urgent need to understand the impact that technology has on the modern workforce. This sociotechnical revolution has its impact on human resources, in which the issue of changing job profiles, fading of old monotonous jobs, and changing competence demands are assuming a critical role in organizational success. The goal of this research is to understand the competency demands of the modern digital workforce to ensure organizational success in the era of advanced digital technologies. This paper performs a hybrid domain-based systematic literature review employing the TCM-ADO frameworks to identify the modern competencies of the digital workforce. This review, combined with Bibliometric analysis, attempts to adopt a scrupulous approach to featuring qualitative and quantitative insights. 82 peer-reviewed articles, from 2010-2023, were analyzed to uncover publication trends, influential works, intellectual structure, and widely used theories, contexts, methods, and antecedents, determinants, and outcomes were also reported. Our analysis identifies 125 unique competencies, categorized into five broad groups based on literature, namely, domain-specific, technical, action-oriented, managerial competencies, and personality attributes. The study provides valuable insights for managers and HR professionals in navigating digital transformation. It offers a structured framework for the recruitment, training, and development of the workforce. Organizations may use these findings to design upskilling programs that align with the current digital demands of the industry. Additionally, the findings highlight the need to foster a culture of continuous learning, adaptability, and upskilling.





MACROECONOMIC FACTORS AND BANKING STABILITY IN INDIA: A THEORETICAL EXPLORATION OF POLICY, GROWTH, AND FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

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Abstract

Stability in the banking sector is essential for macroeconomic balance, financial resiliency, and economic growth. This paper investigates the theoretical underpinnings that relate the stability of the Indian banking system to macroeconomic parameters such as interest rates, inflation, exchange rate dynamics, economic growth, and employment patterns. The study creates a conceptual framework that clarifies how these macroeconomic dynamics interact to affect financial institutions by combining well-known economic theories including Monetarism, Keynesian Macroeconomics, and Financial Intermediation Theory.

The framework emphasizes that while high interest rates and unemployment provide systemic threats to the banking industry, moderate inflation, stable exchange rates, and robust economic development promote financial stability. The policy tools that can lessen volatility are also assessed in this research, such as fiscal policies meant to balance economic swings, financial restrictions, and monetary interventions.

The study adds to current conversations on India's banking resilience and the strategic policy measures necessary for sustained financial intermediation by combining theoretical insights with empirical trends. Future empirical studies and policy decisions in the Indian banking industry are built around the suggested theoretical framework.





THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN E-BANKING SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW OF THE SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

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Abstract

Introduction: E-banking emerged as game changer as a consequences of explorative growth in Information technology, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Data Analytics and Big Data, Cloud Computing, Biometric Authentication and Robotic Process Automation. E-banking services are not only providing cashless digitized self –services but also availing 24*7 convinces to the internet and mobile banking customers (Chaimaa et al., 2021; Mostafa, 2025). E-banking has been enumerated as New age Banking System, the banks are heavily relying on this service channel in order to increase the customer satisfaction. For that reason it is becoming very important to measure the interplay of scientific literature available among e-banking service quality and customer satisfaction in this faster moving world (Egala et al., 2021).

Review of Literature: There has been a continuous research going on E-banking service quality and customer satisfaction with every passage of time measuring the EBSQ gaining importance because of its intangible nature, increase in customer usage and customer expectation from the service (Arora & Sandhu, 2018). (Parasuraman et al., 1985) defined the service quality measurement gap and gave the SERVQUAL model, in order to measure the customer's expectation of the service and the perceived customer experience of the service as quality is quintessential for banking industry. Further (A. P. Parasuraman et al., 1988) modified the scale and taken 22 variables grouped in to five significant dimensions. Many researcher like (Cronin. Jr & Taylor, 1992) and (Babakus & Boller, 1992)also challenged the SERVQUAL Model with their very popular models. (Cronin. Jr & Taylor, 1992) developed the SERVPERF model. (A. Parasuraman et al., 2005) developed the E-S-QUAL model for measuring the electronic service quality with 22 item scale. (Cronin. Jr & Taylor, 1992; A. P. Parasuraman et al., 1988) identified service quality as a tool to measure customer satisfaction.

Methodology: This study employed a bibliometric analysis using SCOPUS database where we executed a pre-established search query. The search string includes the keywords focused towards the E-banking Service quality and Customer satisfaction. Using the PRISMA a total number of 188 documents were found from a period ranging 2001-2025. The extracted data were analyzed using Bibliometrix and VOS viewer software.

Result and Discussion: The findings shows that E-banking Service quality research is still in nascent stage. The annual scientific production follows a more or less a zigzag pattern over the years. International





Journal of Bank Marketing the most relevant source for e-banking service quality and customer satisfaction and publishing the highest number of documents.

Managerial Implications: The interplay between e-banking service quality and customer satisfaction is a paramount area of study as the acceptance of e-banking services among the consumers is growing.





A CASE STUDY FOCUSING ON THE INTEGRATION OF KAIZEN CULTURE TO ELEVATE EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION TO FOSTER ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

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Abstract

Purpose: The expansion and sustainability of India's manufacturing sectors are vital to the economic growth of the nation. The increase in global competition poses various challenges, like less productivity, processing time, and waste management. To confront these challenges and boost the competitiveness and sustainability of manufacturing industries, the Kaizen strategy has become increasingly preferred. This paper intends to explore the benefits of successfully applying the Kaizen approach for the organizational growth.

Research Methodology: The case study method is applied, and statistical instruments are used for data analysis. A survey with a five-point Likert scale is constructed to gather data from two manufacturing firms, from Human Resources professionals and members of the Kaizen team.

Findings: The Kaizen method, although not widely utilized in Indian organizations, still used by numerous companies to boost employee motivation and foster growth. This study investigates various determinants found in the literature that are essential for the successful implementation of Kaizen and the growth of an organization, driven by motivated and satisfied employees.

Scope/ Limitations: This study may offer valuable insights for professionals and experts looking to enhance kaizen implementation in other sectors within India. It is vital to highlight that the study is restricted to only two organizations. Researcher may explore these same factors in a broader context, involving different industries and multiple organizations.





LEADING WITH DIFFERENCE: CULTIVATING NEURODIVERSE LEADERSHIP IN INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

Workplace inclusion of neurodiverse individuals poses challenges and opportunities for leadership (Roberson et al., 2021; Szulc, 2020). This paper addresses two critical questions: how neurodiverse individuals can emerge as leaders and how leaders can foster inclusive environments that enhance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belongingness (DEIB). Neurodiversity, linked to creativity and problem-solving, remains underutilized due to traditional organizational structures and systemic barriers. Using a two-phase approach, we conducted a bibliometric review to identify four key themes: inclusion of neurodiversity through HRM and leadership, social and developmental challenges of neurodiverse individuals, mental health of adults and emotional well-being, and the cognition, creativity, language and education of neurodiverse employees. These insights informed the development of an integrative model rooted in sociomateriality (Mutch, 2013) and liminality (Söderlund & Borg, 2018). The model outlines four change management stages awareness, interest, trial, and adoption to promote neurodiverse leadership and inclusivity. Sociomateriality aligns organizational practices with equity, while liminality addresses transitional challenges, fostering identity reconstruction for neurodiverse employees. The findings emphasize a dual focus on empowering neurodiverse individuals to become leaders and equipping current leaders with inclusive strategies. Practical recommendations include tailored accommodations, leadership training, and mentorship programs. This approach not only enhances DEIB but also contributes to broader societal goals, such as reducing inequality and promoting decent work (SDG Goal 10 and Goal 8). This study offers actionable insights for redesigning HR systems and advancing neurodiverse leadership while encouraging further research into diverse cultural contexts and longitudinal outcomes.



INDIAN GOODS AND SERVICES TAX REVENUE RECITAL

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Abstract

To analyse the trends in Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue, the current GST revenue will be compared with the revenue from the previous Value Added Tax (VAT) regime. The study analyses the trends in indirect tax revenue within the context of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) to determine its progressiveness. It employs the Indirect Tax Turnover Approach, using the values and anticipated revenue for the GST regime based on the financial year 2013-14 as a baseline, projecting forward to the financial year 2024-25 with an annual growth rate derived from the Gross Value Added (GVA) at Basic Price for current prices, as reported in the National Accounts Statistics (NAS) of India via the EPWRF India Time Series database. The projected revenue under the GST regime is compared with the actual revenue for the financial years from 2017-18 to 2024-25 to identify GST revenue trends in India.



FORECASTING ABSENTEEISM IN THE MODERN WORKPLACE: A PREDICTIVE HR ANALYTICS APPROACH TO STRESS AND BURNOUT

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Abstract

Employee absenteeism due to stress and burnout is the growing challenge in the modern workplace. It also possesses significant impact on the organizational performance in today's demanding work environment. This research uses Job Demand-Resources theory to understand as well as examine how job demand as well as available resources affect employee wellbeing and contribute to employee's absenteeism. Forecasting as well as predictive HR analytics will be used to identify employees at risk by analyzing data on job support, work load, engagement and wellness variables. Further, machine learning models will be used to predict employees risk of stress induced absenteeism by detecting patterns linked with resource depletion and burnout. This research aims to provide HR professionals with early warning, enabling them to proactively implement HR interventions to reduce absenteeism and improve employee wellbeing. Further, this research will offer actionable model for reducing unplanned absenteeism and managing well-being of employees.





FROM RISK OVERSIGHT TO RECOVERY: EVALUATING RMC EFFECTIVENESS IN FINANCIALLY DISTRESSED FIRMS

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Abstract

Risk management is the systematic process of identifying, assessing, and mitigating threats or uncertainties that can affect the organization (Gibson, 2023). A large number of behemoth corporations have faced significant failures in risk assessment and management practices, as evidenced by firms such as Lehman Brothers and Barings Bank. In India, while the Risk Management Committee (RMC) is not mandatory, companies have begun to utilize it as a sound governance practice for managing various levels of risk and for identifying actions that could adversely affect the firm (Hines and Peters, 2015). RMC, comprising experts, can enhance corporate governance through risk mapping, risk mitigation, and internal controls. It supports the board of directors in an oversight role to safeguard shareholders' interests and achieve the firm's objectives (Sadaa et al., 2023). The RMC holds overall responsibility for monitoring, evaluating, and approving the company's enterprise risk management framework and related practices. Accordingly, the committee is tasked with overseeing the company's actions and implementing measures to mitigate risks to the greatest extent possible.

Especially during Financial Distress (FD), which is characterized by the inability of a company to meet its financial commitments, encompassing failure, default, insolvency, and bankruptcy (Altman et al., 2019), the role of RMC becomes crucial. While the establishment of an RMC may not entirely eliminate the risk of bankruptcy, it can contribute to more accurate risk mapping, monitoring, and the implementation of effective mitigation strategies (Malik et al., 2021). When managers are aware of these risks and potential threats to the organization, the likelihood of FD is also reduced. Since the establishment of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI), 8,308 companies have entered the Corporate Insolvency and Resolution Process (CIRP). Of these, 6,247 cases have been resolved, with approximately 43% culminating in liquidation and 19% resulting in the approval of a resolution plan (IBBI, 2025). With FD affecting a growing number of firms, its impact can be detrimental to various stakeholders and to the industry as a whole. These developments have raised concerns about corporate management and the capacity to mitigate severe risks. Although the literature clearly documents that the adoption of a RMC enhances corporate governance quality and reduces firm risk—ultimately improving performance (Karim et al., 2022; Malik et al., 2021)—none of these studies have examined this relationship in the context of financially distressed firms. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of RMC effectiveness on FD as well as on firm performance within an emerging market context, specifically India.

This study will focus on non-financial companies listed on the NSE of India from 2016 to 2024. Data will be extracted from the CMIE Prowess IQ database, Bloomberg, and IBBI records. The effectiveness of RMCs will be measured through proxies such as committee presence, size, frequency of meetings,





independence, expertise, and disclosure. FD will be measured using comprehensive definitions encompassing financial health and legal outcomes. The study aims to provide insights for policymakers, managers, and creditors regarding how RMC structures influence risk resilience and firm performance.





FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION: HOW MARKETING STRATEGIES INFLUENCE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TOWARD ACHIEVING SPECIFIC SDGs

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Abstract

As global challenges related to climate change, social inequality, and unsustainable consumption intensify, marketers are increasingly expected to play a proactive role in driving societal transformation. While awareness of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has grown, a significant gap persists between what consumers know and how they behave. This study investigates how marketing strategies can bridge this awareness–action divide by influencing consumer behavior in alignment with three high-impact SDGs: Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Gender Equality (SDG 5).

Grounded in signaling theory, the theory of planned behavior, and the behavioral branding literature, we adopt a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data were collected from 350 consumers across India and the United Kingdom, while 15 in-depth interviews were conducted with senior marketing professionals engaged in sustainability-led campaigns. The results demonstrate that emotionally resonant storytelling, value congruence, and perceived brand authenticity significantly enhance consumers' behavioral intentions toward sustainable action. Emotional intensity and perceived efficacy act as mediators in the relationship between campaign exposure and sustainable behavior, supporting recent empirical findings in moral consumption and prosocial branding (Gürhan-Canli et al., 2022; Luchs et al., 2021).

Furthermore, our findings emphasize that the presence of micro-action pathways—such as clear next steps for product choices, donations, or advocacy—substantially improves consumer follow-through. Brands perceived as genuinely committed to the SDGs elicited greater trust and behavioral engagement, whereas superficial or performative campaigns triggered skepticism (Nyilasy et al., 2023). Interview data further revealed that consumers are increasingly attuned to inconsistencies between brand messaging and operational practices, making transparency and impact reporting crucial to campaign effectiveness.

We offer a conceptual framework outlining the mechanisms through which marketing campaigns translate awareness into action. This includes three key levers: emotional appeal, social norm alignment, and behavioral friction reduction. The study advances marketing theory by clarifying how brands can function as agents of change within the broader sustainable development agenda. Managerially, the findings provide a roadmap for designing marketing initiatives that not only build brand equity but also mobilize consumers in support of the 2030 Agenda.





By integrating consumer psychology, sustainability communication, and strategic brand management, this research positions marketing as a catalyst for systemic change and offers both theoretical and practical contributions to the evolving discourse on purpose-driven marketing

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THE BRIDGE WE FORGOT TO BUILD, WHY TRAITS ALONE WON'T EXPLAIN SME INTERNATIONALIZATION

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Abstract

SME international expansion is vital for global economies. The micro foundations approach, examining how individual actions shape firm outcomes, is valuable for understanding SME internationalization, given manager's significant influence. However, managerial actions and decision-making, and the link between individual attributes and firm international success, lack precise definition in current theories. Research indicates these actions are frequently generalized, static, or lack granular mapping, resulting in an inconclusive and contradicting evidences. Hence, this paper attempts to address this inconsistency.

This paper primarily argues that a refined micro foundational framework, by systematically centering and elaborating managerial actions, leads to a stronger, dynamic, and integrated explanation of SME internationalization. Drawing insights from Coleman's (1990) multi-level "bathtub" model, we develop a conceptual model. This conceptual framework maps pathways from macro-context (Node A), to individual attributes (Node B), through individual actions (Node C), to firm outcomes (Node D). These A-B-C-D linkages are organized as distinct yet interconnected "modules." This modularity is crucial for systematically isolating, theorizing, and reintegrating the role of managerial actions within Node C.

The framework focuses on a stronger understanding by moving beyond research focused on direct links between individual traits and firm success (B-D explanations). Its key contribution lies in explicitly detailing Node C, thereby prompting a necessary examination of managerial actions opportunity evaluation, resource mobilization, strategic decision-making, and networking. It also incorporates macro-context (Node A) influence on these actions and allows articulation of full "A→B→C→D" pathways, providing a holistic view that addresses the "incomplete view" and lack of "granular mapping" noted in literature.

Furthermore, the proposed model cultivates a dynamic understanding. Centering on "actions," inherently processual, encourages a shift from static depictions of managerial influence to examining sequences and adaptations over time. It allows modeling how managers might alter actions (Node C) based on feedback from international outcomes (Node D) or contextual changes (Node A), capturing internationalization's evolving nature. Our proposed modular Coleman framework provides an underlying structure for mapping constructs from these diverse theories to different nodes (A, B, C, D) and modules (A→B, B→C, C→D, A→C links), facilitating organized knowledge development and addressing field fragmentation.





In conclusion, by clarifying conceptual ambiguities around managerial action, this conceptual model contributes to the literature as follows: First, it advances a richer model that explains the complete, dynamic, and interconnected nature of how individuals drive SME internationalization. Second, a blueprint for future empirical research to investigate micro-foundational "modules" and "full pathway" models with greater precision. Third, a foundation for developing nuanced, context-sensitive, and empirically testable theories, responding to calls for cumulative knowledge in this domain.





HOW COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE SHAPES OPEN-SOURCE PROJECT FUTURES AFTER CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP SHOCKS

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Abstract

Open source software (OSS) offer vital projects benefiting significantly from corporate sponsorship. This support can supercharge development and adoption. But what happens when a major corporate sponsor steps back or pulls out? This change can be a serious jolt. Some OSS communities navigate these transitions and continue to thrive, while others see their activity dwindle and their communities shrink. This study asks: why the difference? We believe a crucial part of the answer lies in the project's *pre-existing community governance structure* – how it was already set up to make decisions and manage contributions *before* the sponsorship shock hit.

The connection between corporate involvement and OSS health is well-noted; changes in sponsorship can dramatically alter a project's course, much like losing key developers can impact productivity (Zhou et al., 2016; Russo Latona et al., 2024). While different OSS governance models exist (Noni et al., 2014), and it's known that governance is vital for sustainability, we lack a clear, data-driven picture of how specific, established community governance setups help or hinder projects when they face the specific shock of reduced corporate backing. Our research aims to fill this gap by investigating how pre-existing governance characteristics moderate a project's trajectory after such an event.

We propose the following hypotheses, to be tested using data from GitHub projects:

1. H1: A significant reduction in corporate sponsorship is associated with increased project stagnation (e.g., fewer code commits, slower responses to issues).
2. H2: A significant reduction in corporate sponsorship is associated with increased contributor exodus (e.g., fewer active core developers).
3. H3: The negative impacts of sponsorship reduction (stagnation/exodus) will be *less severe* in projects with more effectively decentralized leadership structures prior to the shock. We reason that distributed decision-making and broader community ownership, as seen in resilient projects like the Linux Kernel, foster greater adaptive capacity when central support wavers.
4. H4: The negative impacts of sponsorship reduction will be *less severe* in projects with more formalized and enabling contribution processes prior to the shock. Clear, well-documented pathways for contribution can preserve crucial knowledge and maintain operational stability, especially when key personnel depart (on Apache projects).

Our study will analyze a sample of corporate-sponsored OSS projects on GitHub, identifying those that experienced a clear reduction in corporate support. We will collect data on project activity (commits,





issues, pull requests) and contributor engagement for periods before and after this "sponsorship shock." Governance characteristics – such as leadership decentralization (e.g., distribution of influence among maintainers) and contribution process formalization (e.g., clarity of contribution guidelines, review protocols) – will be measured based on project data and documentation from the pre-shock period. We will use regression models with interaction terms to test our hypotheses, controlling for factors like project age, size, and popularity.

This research will offer valuable insights. For open source communities, it can help identify governance designs that build resilience against the unpredictable nature of external support. For companies, it can inform more sustainable ways to engage with and, if necessary, disengage from OSS projects.





DO FIRM-SPECIFIC FACTORS AFFECT CORPORATE BORROWINGS DIFFERENTLY ACROSS LIFE-CYCLES?

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse the determinants of borrowings of Indian manufacturing across different life cycles using firm-specific data from 2011 to 2024 for a sample of 1,953 firms listed in BSE & NSE. For this purpose the firms have been categories into five life cycles based on the classification proposed by Dickson (2008). The study employs Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression to examine variations in borrowing behavior as firms transition through different stages of their life-cycle. The study reveals that the firm-specific factors affect differently across life cycles. The effect of profitability remains negative at all levels of the life cycle denoting that profitable firms prefer lesser amount of debt as they generate sufficient fund from the operation. Similarly, firm value has a weakly associated in early stages but it becomes significantly positive during the maturity, shakeout, and decline stages, indicating increased leverage for firms perceived strong market valuations. Firm size shows a positive influence on borrowing, particularly during the maturity stage of firms indicating that that larger firms have better access to credit markets. Further, Firm age shows a negative association with borrowings during the early life-cycle stages, but loses significance in later stages. Similarly, Collateral ability of firms becomes an increasingly important factor during the growth and maturity stages, supporting the role of asset tangibility in creditworthiness while its effect reverses in the decline phase. Furthermore, the study examines R&D effect on borrowings and finds a consistently negative and significant impact on borrowing up to the shakeout stage, reflecting the higher risk profile and lower tangible assets associated with innovative firms.





DOES CSR TRULY ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AMONG CEMENT MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN INDIA?

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Abstract

The current study centers on analyzing whether corporate social responsibility practices ensure true environmental sustainability among cement manufacturing firms in India or not. The study is based on a panel dataset of 58 cement manufacturing firms for the period ranging from 2014 to 2024. The required dataset is sourced from CMIE Prowess database, and the firm level energy intensity is considered as the measure of environmental sustainability of the firms. We have employed the fixed effect regression and the two-step system GMM model for the empirical analysis. Interestingly, we find that the CSR practices do not truly reflect environmental sustainability among the sample firms. Rather, CSR leads to an increase in firm level energy intensity as per the empirical evidence. Hence, we find that the cement manufacturing firms are using the CSR phenomenon strategically and are found to be involved in decoupling and greenwashing behavior. Additionally, we find that investment in better quality raw material and technological advancement can bring down the intensity of energy usage. On the other hand, larger and older cement manufacturing firms are found to be energy intensive. The empirical insights derived from this study can help Indian cement companies to recheck their sustainability practices. The study also provides a distinctive perspective of sustainability to social activists, researchers, and policymakers about the environmental dimensions of CSR.





THE (NON-) CRONY EXPERIENCE: A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF HOW ORGANIZATIONAL CRONYISM SHAPES EMPLOYEES' IDENTITIES AND OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Organizational Cronyism (OC) – favouritism based on personal ties rather than merit – remains underexplored in Indian workplaces despite its profound implications for employee relations and organizational integrity (Mousa et al., 2025; Turhan, 2014). Prior research has investigated its consequences (Chen & Ren, 2023; Evdokimov et al., 2022; Khatri et al., 2006; Khatri & Tsang, 2003); however, limited attention has been paid to the subjective view of how and why employees identify themselves as in-group (crony) or out-group (non-crony) members. Understanding OC from employees' lived experiences is crucial, as it is their perceptions that shape different individual and group-level work outcomes. Guided by Social Identity Theory (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, 2024), our research explores how employees form their identities as cronies or non-cronies and what the consequences of their perceptions are for workplace attitudes, behaviours, and well-being. We adopt an exploratory qualitative approach and analyze 32 employee interviews by deploying Gioia's methodology (Gioia et al., 2013). Findings reveal that crony and non-crony identities emerge from network centrality, access to resources, and moral evaluations of favouritism. Cronies report benefits such as accelerated career trajectories and stronger commitment, while also grappling with performance pressures, outgroup hostility, and self-worth issues. Conversely, non-cronies experience marginalization, diminished voice, eroded trust, increased stress, and intent to withdraw. Participants also shared OC-driven coping behaviours, which help in managing resource scarcity and social exclusion. These findings are particularly critical in the Indian context, where hierarchical structures and relational norms can exacerbate OC's effects. Our study's insights fill a critical research gap by offering a nuanced understanding of OC's impact on employee identities and their workplace behaviours. Practically, our findings underscore the urgency of implementing transparent, merit-based practices to foster fair, equitable, and inclusive work environments with sustainable social and organizational impact.





ENSURING DIGNITY FOR PLATFORM WORKERS: IDENTIFYING GAPS IN INDIA'S NEW LABOUR CODES THROUGH GROUNDED UNDERSTANDINGS OF DIGNITY

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Abstract

The foundational purpose of law is to protect the life and dignity of its citizens (Baxi, 2002). However, dignity is a complex, subjective, and evolving concept, especially within the rapidly changing world of work driven by digital platforms. India is currently home to an estimated 77 lakh gig and platform workers, a number expected to grow to 2.35 crore by 2030 (NITI Aayog, 2022). Despite their increasing significance in the economy, existing legal frameworks have largely failed to address their needs adequately, offering little protection in terms of fair wages, job security, or working conditions (Mehrotra & Ghosh, 2021). However, the newly proposed Labour Codes, particularly the Code on Social Security, 2020 and the Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, 2020, represent the first formal legal recognition of platform workers in India. But sadly, these codes adopt a top-down, policy-centric approach, offering minimal engagement with the lived experiences and real-world expectations of dignity from the workers' standpoint.

To overcome this gap, the study adopts a three-phase interdisciplinary design to explore whether the new legal provisions truly align with platform workers' expectations of dignity. In Phase I, a grounded theory approach is used to analyse in-depth interviews with food delivery workers in Hyderabad, generating an organic, bottom-up understanding of what constitutes "dignified work." Key themes include algorithmic fairness, autonomy, recognition, safety, income stability, and voice—all central to their lived dignity. In Phase II, a doctrinal legal analysis is conducted to map the specific provisions within the new Labour Codes that relate to platform and gig workers. The analysis highlights areas of inclusion (such as social security registration and welfare schemes) but also exposes critical omissions, particularly around grievance redressal, collective representation, and algorithmic accountability.

In Phase III, a framework analysis is undertaken to examine the gaps between legal provisions and dignity expectations. The findings reveal significant misalignments, emphasising the need for bottom-up insights to inform top-down legal reforms. This study contributes to management and legal scholarship by showing how field-based, qualitative management research can enrich legal frameworks, especially in emerging labour sectors. It reinforces that dignity, while abstract, is best understood and protected when law listens to those it seeks to serve.



MODELING GREEN HRM PRACTICES WITH INCREASED ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE (IEP): A SYSTEM DYNAMICS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The paper attempts to give a unique standpoint on establishing a system dynamic (SD) model that addresses the real-time problems associated with green human resource management (GHRM) practices and increased environmental performance (IEP). Based on the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) theory perspectives, the study applied the system dynamics (SD) method to draw a generic causal loop diagram (CLD) Model to understand the complex and dynamic behavior between GHRM and IEP. Further, the model structure is validated using quantitative data from 555 executive-level employees of manufacturing industries in India. The study found twelve important loops (10 reinforcing and 2 balancing) in the Model. Loops R1-10 show reinforcing behavior in the system. However, B1-B2 represents the balancing behavior. The study tried to analyze different loop behaviors in the Model and provide a solution to the problem associated with GHRM and IEP achievement. The study contributes to the literature on GHRM and IEP by identifying essential variables that impact the dynamic relationships. Further, the paper attempts to develop a robust model for the stakeholders. Furthermore, the proposed Model will provide guidelines to stakeholders with dynamic questions on how to embrace environmental performance within GHRM practices. The paper's findings have presented an exclusive worth to the GHRM and IEP literature as it employs SD methods to understand the complexity and dynamism in the relationships. There is significantly less research on GHRM where the SD approach is applied, particularly in a developing country setting like India.



DECODING ESG PERFORMANCE IN INDIAN CAPITAL MARKETS: A DUAL-MODEL ANALYSIS OF QUANTILE AND ROBUST MODERATION EFFECTS

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Abstract

Introduction: This study investigates the financial performance implications of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices in Indian listed firms, with a particular focus on the moderating effects of firm-specific characteristics such as volatility and size. While prior literature has reported mixed results on ESG-performance linkage, this research aims to disentangle this relationship by employing both quantile regression and robust modelling frameworks to uncover distributional and outlier-insensitive dynamics.

Methodology: The analysis is based on a cross-sectional dataset of 97 firms listed on the NIFTY 100 index, combining ESG scores, financial indicators, and one-year stock returns sourced from Capitaline and NSE. The study employs quantile regression to explore variation in ESG impact across different performance quantiles (ROCE, RONW, PBIDTM), and robust linear modelling (RLM) to control for heteroskedasticity and influential observations in stock return models. Moderation effects are tested using interaction terms: $ESG \times Volatility$ and $ESG \times Firm\ Size$ (log of total assets). Sector-fixed effects and key control variables (debt-equity, payout, current ratio) are also included.

Results: Quantile regressions reveal that ESG performance is more positively associated with financial outcomes in lower and middle quantiles of ROCE and RONW, suggesting a reputational or trust-building advantage for underperforming firms. Robust regression models identify a significant positive interaction between ESG and firm size on stock returns, indicating that larger firms are more likely to convert ESG efforts into market value. Conversely, the interaction between ESG and volatility is weak or negative, implying limited ESG benefits for riskier firms. Diagnostics including VIF, residual plots, influence analysis, and added-variable plots support the validity of model assumptions.

Discussion: The findings demonstrate that ESG's financial effects are neither linear nor universal, but instead conditional upon firm characteristics such as size, risk, and sector. ESG contributes meaningfully to shareholder value primarily in larger, low-volatility firms, while its benefits are muted or absent in smaller or more volatile companies. This dual-model approach offers actionable insights for investors, boards, and policymakers seeking to operationalize ESG strategies effectively within emerging market contexts.





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THE GREEN PERSUASION: UNRAVELLING THE EFFECT OF SUSTAINABLE ADVERTISEMENT ON YOUNG CONSUMERS

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Abstract

As the growing concern for environmental protection and sustainable living continues to rise, there is a notable shift occurring in consumption patterns. To meet the needs of present and future generations, it is crucial to consume in an environmentally friendly and responsible manner. The examination of sustainable consumption's influence on consumer behavior and the utilization of ecologically friendly products is increasingly garnering research interest. The realms of advertising and media have consistently exerted significant influence over consumer decision-making and consumption patterns. It is necessary to conduct research on how sustainable advertising impacts the consumption behaviors exhibited by consumers. The objective of this research paper is to analyze the process of sustainable advertising and its effect on the promotion of sustainable consumption among Indian consumers. The collection of primary data was conducted through in-depth interviews with the customers. The researchers employed the convenience sampling technique to select participants for the purpose of gathering primary data. The results of the study indicated that there are three key components of sustainable advertising, which are recognition, reinforcement, and retention. The findings suggested three phases of sustainable communication such as Recognition, Reinforcement and Retention. These findings explain the phenomenon through S-O-R theory. Furthermore, the study suggests theoretical and practical implications to researchers and managers.





AAE MODEL OF METAVERSE SHOPPING: A NEURO BEHAVIORAL APPROACH

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Abstract

The metaverse's fast rise as a collaborative and immersive virtual space has led to widespread excitement among marketers and researchers exploring its possibilities for consumer engagement. Although it is promising, the fine grain interplay of neurobehavioral variables and purchase intentions in these immersive worlds is largely unknown. The purpose of this study is to fill the gap by exploring the effects of attention, arousal and engagement, as major neurobehavioral reactions, on the metaverse consumer purchase intention. It also explores the mediating roles of perceived attractiveness, cognitive load and perceived uncertainty. The study employs a two-stage methodology. In the first stage, the study adopted a quasi-experiment aiming to record real-time neurophysiological responses of users who interacted with metaverse shopping environments wearing the Emotiv EPOC+ EEG headset. After exposure, test items to measure perceived cognitive load, attractiveness, uncertainty (purchase), purchase intention, and so forth, are administered. The second stage generalizes the inquiry with a wider survey-based approach and applies standardized measures which reflect behavioral and psychological reactions (e.g., cognitive and affective responses) to metaverse shopping among a large and diverse group of respondents. Expected contributions and conclusions We expect this research to provide insights into the complicated interrelationship between neurobehavioral responses and the metaverse purchase intention. In particular, increased state of attention, arousal, and involvement is proposed to have a positive impact on purchase intention, with cognitive load, perceived attractiveness, and indication of uncertainty as the potential mediators of the effect. This research has academic as well as practical implications. Bringing the neuro and psychometric perspectives together, this research provides an innovative approach to the comprehension of consumer decisions in immersive digital environments and implications for marketers to design productive strategies in the metaverse. This research is also in line with recent consumer neuroscience and immersive technology literature for indicating the salience of neurobehavioral and psychometric variables in the process of making a purchase. At the end of the day, the research will establish a solid footing for continued research, and best practices that marketing and retail functions can follow using the metaverse.





DECIPHERING SOCIAL CAPITAL FORMATION: THE VITAL ROLE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL DIVERSITY IN A VIRTUAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

This study investigates the moderating impact of Diversity Challenges Management as an intervention on the relationship between diversity perception and various dimensions of social capital in a virtual working environment. The analysis establishes a positive connection among diversity perception, diversity management, and social capital. Notably, a negative relation is also identified between the cognitive dimension of diversity perception and individual aspects of social capital. This study validates a positive association between diversity perception and diversity management with relational and structural social capital in virtual environmental settings. However, diversity perception is negatively related to cognitive social capital. This negative relation is overcome by addressing measures of individual challenges in management as an intervention. The results present that effective individual challenges to management can enhance structural and cognitive social capital formation. Whereas organizational challenges management is effective only for relational capital formation. Survey data from 564 virtual team members in India's Information Technology industry professionals are analyzed using SMART PLS-based structural equation modeling. The findings of this research affirm that diversity perception and challenges can be surmounted in the virtual working environment. However, the present study sheds some light on the need to manage organizational and individual challenges, differently in the virtual working environment, and much research is required to develop innovative practices to overcome the difficulties identified. Additionally, it aligns with prior studies in emphasizing that social capital should be considered at the sub-dimension level. The implications and future research are discussed.





DECRIMINALIZATION OF ECONOMIC OFFENCES IN INDIA: A STEP TOWARD EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

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Abstract

In recent years, the Government of India has undertaken significant efforts to decriminalize certain economic offences, especially those embedded in corporate and regulatory frameworks. This shift reflects a growing recognition that criminal sanctions for minor or technical non-compliance often deter entrepreneurship, slow down investment, and contribute to legal overreach. The objective of this paper is to explore the evolving relationship between economic reforms and criminal law through the lens of decriminalization, assessing its implications for the Indian business ecosystem. The paper critically examines legislative changes in key statutes such as the Companies Act, 2013, and the Income Tax Act, where several provisions imposing criminal liability have been amended to include civil penalties or administrative actions. It highlights the role of policy institutions like NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in shaping this reform narrative, aimed at enhancing India's "Ease of Doing Business" ranking and fostering a more investor-friendly climate. Using a multidisciplinary approach, the paper evaluates both the economic rationale and legal consequences of this trend. While decriminalization promotes business confidence and reduces the burden on the criminal justice system, it also raises concerns about accountability and regulatory enforcement. The study includes comparative insights from jurisdictions like the UK and Singapore, where economic offences are largely dealt with through civil and administrative channels. Ultimately, this paper argues that selective decriminalization—if implemented with robust regulatory safeguards—can strike a balance between economic growth and legal compliance. It calls for a nuanced approach that distinguishes between willful fraud and procedural lapses, ensuring that the law continues to deter serious offences while not unduly penalizing genuine business activity. This research is timely and relevant, offering critical insights into how India can realign its legal framework to support sustainable economic development without compromising the rule of law.





AI-DRIVEN TRANSFORMATION IN HR: ALIGNING EFFICIENCY WITH SOCIAL IMPACT IN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

As organizations navigate the complexities of the modern workplace, Human Resource Management (HRM) stands at the forefront of integrating technology to drive both operational efficiency and social impact. This paper explores the strategic role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in reshaping HR functions to foster inclusive, data-informed, and ethically grounded decision-making.

Drawing on a practical study involving an AI readiness survey conducted among employees across various departments in a large manufacturing setting, the research examines the current level of AI awareness, perceived benefits, concerns, and training needs within HR. The findings highlight how AI tools, such as recruitment automation, performance prediction models, learning & development personalization, and engagement analytics—are capable of not only optimizing workforce management but also promoting fairness, transparency, and well-being.

Employing a mixed-method research approach, the study includes quantitative analysis of survey data along with qualitative insights from structured discussions with professionals in HR and related functions. The paper emphasizes critical success factors for AI integration, including leadership alignment, ethical frameworks, inclusive design, and effective change management practices. It also explores challenges such as resistance to adoption, data governance, and skills gaps.

The research illustrates that when HR digital transformation is aligned with social objectives, such as employee inclusion, mental well-being, and equitable access to opportunities, it becomes a strategic lever for long-term organizational resilience. This integration of technology and social consciousness not only enhances organizational behaviour practices but also helps bridge the gap between profitability and purpose.

This paper adds to the growing dialogue on responsible innovation in Human Resource Management by presenting a framework for AI implementation that is ethical, socially conscious, and functionally efficient. It emphasizes the need to integrate human values at the heart of digital transformation, ensuring that HR remains central to building workplaces that are not only productive but also fair and sustainable.





GROWTH DRIVERS IN INDIAN SMES: VENTURE CAPITAL VS. PRIVATE EQUITY

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Abstract

Small and Medium Enterprises play a big role in helping developing nations, like India, to grow, since they make up a large share of industries and jobs. These SMEs play a key role in the Indian economy by employing 40% of people and accounting for 45% of manufacturing output (Prasad et al., 2023/2024). Venture capital and private equity are common ways small and medium-sized businesses get funded, but they make businesses grow differently (Cumming & Cumming, 2010). This study investigates what encourages growth in Small and Medium Enterprises in India by comparing the roles of Venture Capital and Private Equity. A sample of 100 non-financial firms operating in Bihar and Jharkhand was analysed using logistic regression to understand their behaviour and success. It also looks at how these investment types shape things like the number of jobs, adoption of new inventions, and market expansion, and compares these results for SMEs in different fields and at different growth stages. Usually, SMEs get their funding from their own equity and short-term loans from banks when they start their business or grow it further, according to Prasad et al. (2023/2024). A number of small businesses have now started depending on unconventional forms of funding, including private equity funds and venture capital. Many innovative businesses are unable to secure money from traditional lenders because they do not have a lengthy credit history and no collateral (Prasad et al., 2023/2024). As per the findings, venture capital helps these startups with funding and knowledge to allow them to expand, find new ideas, and beat the competition. Small and medium-sized enterprises in India have started relying on venture capital and private equity to overcome funding problems, make the most of new opportunities based on different life cycle stages, and live a long and sustainable life.





BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS AND FINANCIAL RISK TOLERANCE OF RETAIL INVESTORS IN DELHI NCR

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper studies the impact of big five personality traits on financial risk tolerance of retail investors. The big five taxonomy model includes dimensions of neuroticism, agreeableness, openness to experience, conscientiousness and extraversion traits. These traits can change the risk tolerance level of individuals, in terms of their investment decisions. This paper analyses all the research conducted on this relationship. The stockbrokers and fund managers can benefit from the results as they advise on personalized investment strategies and risk management practices. These drivers also impact broader market trends and lead to instabilities. So, this study is crucial for financial advisors, investors, and policymakers. Past studies show that most of the traits have a significant relation and few have an insignificant relation with the financial risk tolerance of retail investors. A questionnaire has been developed and primary data collected will be used for the final analysis in terms of retail investors in Delhi NCR.

Practical implications: The retail investors should make investment decisions after taking into account the influence of personality traits and their risk tolerance. The financial advisers can analyse this relation in terms of clients and then advise them accordingly.

Social implications: All types of investors can gain insight into the relationship between personality traits of individuals and their risk tolerance levels.

Originality/value: The interrelation of big five taxonomy with the risk tolerance of retail investors in Delhi NCR has been analysed.





PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPENSATION IN REMOTE WORK: EVIDENCE FROM GIG ECONOMY PLATFORMS

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Abstract

The shift toward remote work and the expansion of gig economy platforms following the COVID-19 pandemic have fundamentally altered labor market dynamics. This study explores the relationship between productivity and compensation among workers engaged in remote gig jobs across various sectors such as freelance digital services, delivery, and micro-tasking. Using data collected from leading gig platforms, the research examines how remote work environments impact worker output and earnings.

The analysis reveals mixed effects on productivity: some workers benefit from flexible schedules and the elimination of commuting, which enhances their efficiency. Conversely, others struggle with home distractions and limited managerial oversight, which can hinder performance. Compensation mechanisms on gig platforms—often based on customer ratings, task completion speed, and algorithmic adjustments—reflect these productivity differences, resulting in varied earning outcomes.

Additionally, the study highlights disparities in compensation linked to worker demographics, task complexity, and platform policies. Although remote gig work offers flexibility, many workers face income volatility and lack traditional labor protections, raising concerns about fairness and economic security.

This research contributes to ongoing discussions about the evolving nature of work in the digital economy. The findings underscore the importance of designing platform compensation systems that balance productivity incentives with equitable pay. Policymakers and platform developers can use these insights to foster a more sustainable and just environment for remote gig workers as the future of work continues to evolve.





DARK PATTERNS AND CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING: DETERMINING THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MANIPULATIVE INTERFACE DESIGN

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Abstract

In today's digital economy, user interface designs play a critical role in shaping consumer interactions with websites, apps, and online services. Among these are dark patterns—design tactics intentionally structured to influence users into making decisions they might not have made with full awareness also sometimes known as deceptive patterns. These include tactics like confusing language, hidden opt-outs, and visually deceptive layouts. While often subtle, such patterns can significantly affect consumer behavior and financial outcomes.

This research investigates the economic consequences of dark patterns by analyzing how they alter decision-making processes. Drawing on concepts from behavioral economics, the study explores how interface designs exploit psychological tendencies such as inertia, urgency, and loss aversion. Through case studies and industry analysis, it highlights the most prevalent forms of manipulative design and their measurable impacts, including increased consumer spending, unwanted subscriptions, and decreased autonomy.

The study also examines the broader implications for market efficiency and consumer trust, while comparing regulatory efforts in different regions. In conclusion, the research underscores the need for ethical interface design and proposes strategic policy interventions to promote fairness, transparency, and accountability in the digital space.

Objectives of the Study include to categorize the most frequently used dark patterns in digital commerce and services, to investigate their influence on consumer spending, subscription rates, and personal data sharing, to examine the broader economic effects, including market inefficiencies and reduced consumer trust, to review existing legal frameworks and consumer protection policies in various countries, and to offer recommendations to improve interface transparency and support fair digital practices.

This research contributes to understanding the economic risks posed by manipulative design and emphasizes the need for clearer regulations and ethical standards in the digital economy.





ENTREPRENEURIAL INERTIA AS A STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING INSTRUMENT

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Abstract

This essay repurposes the concept of entrepreneurial inertial to highlight how it can be capitalized as an instrument for superior decision-making in contrast to the traditional conceptualization of it being a hindrance to the entrepreneurial processes. Building upon the intentional usage of time as an organizational resource, we emphasize reflexivity and articulation as tools to strategize inertia. Thus seen, entrepreneurial inertia can be conceptualized as an instrument that can be operationalized to achieve entrepreneurial objectives. The extent of inertia and the associated risks, however, varies based on the stage of entrepreneurship. This characteristic can be further capitalized upon to integrate the strategic and intentional exploitation of entrepreneurial inertia. Our essay contributes to the literature on entrepreneurial inertia in two ways, first by elaborating the different nature of entrepreneurial inertia in multiple phases, and second by emphasizing the opportunity for capitalizing and superior decision making by bringing in the strategic and intentional usage of time.





ALIGNING IMAGE WITH IMPACT: CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT AND CONSUMER TRUST IN INDIAN CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING

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Abstract

Celebrity endorsement is a popular strategy in cause-related marketing (CaRM), often used to increase campaign visibility, build credibility, and create emotional appeal among consumers. While it is generally believed that celebrity involvement improves consumer engagement and strengthens brand outcomes, existing studies show inconsistent results. These differences often occur when there is a weak connection between the celebrity's image and the social cause being promoted. This study explores how the match between a celebrity and a cause influences consumer attitudes, trust, and intentions to support the campaign.

Set in the Indian context, where celebrities significantly influence public opinion and consumer choices, the research focuses on how people respond to campaigns based on their perception of the celebrity's cause fit. It also examines how a celebrity's authenticity and expertise affect consumer evaluations of the brand and the campaign's message.

Findings indicate that when there is a strong match between the celebrity and the cause, consumers are more likely to trust the campaign, develop a positive attitude toward the brand, and express a greater willingness to support it. However, when the celebrity seems unrelated to the cause or lacks credibility, consumers tend to become skeptical, leading to reduced engagement. These effects are even stronger when the celebrity is associated with controversy.

This study contributes to the limited research on celebrity endorsement in CaRM and highlights the importance of selecting endorsers who are perceived as genuine and relevant to the cause. The results offer practical guidance for marketers aiming to design more effective and trustworthy cause-related campaigns.





THE FLEXIBILITY PARADOX: CO-CREATING WORK ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH POWER, CULTURE, AND MANAGERIAL DISCRETION

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Abstract

Flexible working arrangements (FWA) are often presented as empowering tools within modern human resource management, however, their practical implementation in the Global South is not thoroughly explored. This research examines how flexibility is collaboratively defined, negotiated, and challenged within Indian IT companies. It highlights that FWA are perceived more as culturally influenced and emotionally negotiated privileges rather than mere formal rights. Utilizing 36 qualitative interviews with IT professionals, including new parents, HR managers, single employees, and former employees, this study applies reflexive thematic analysis along with the Gioia methodology to reveal the underlying tensions involved in the practice of workplace flexibility.

Moving beyond surface-level descriptions, the findings reveal a paradox of flexibility that goes beyond superficial observations: although FWA are officially recognized to bolster organizational legitimacy, their practical implementation is influenced by informal hierarchies, cultural norms, and discretionary authority. For women caregivers, flexibility is often perceived not as an inherent entitlement but rather as a conditional privilege, entailing emotional labor, constant self-regulation, and anxiety over possible withdrawal of benefits. Men who seek to challenge traditional caregiving roles face stigma, thereby reinforcing existing gender-based divisions of labor. This complexity is examined through two theoretical frameworks: Institutional Legitimacy Theory and Psychological Contract Theory to understand how flexible work is both legitimized and constrained within the same organizational context.

The research presents three significant theoretical contributions. First, it expands Institutional Legitimacy Theory by incorporating relational legitimacy, a type of context-based emotional validation negotiated within teams, and influences the genuine adoption of formally established FWAs. Second, it enhances Psychological Contract Theory by framing flexibility as a moral economy instead of a mere transactional relationship, where access is earned through exceptional performance and adherence to norms. Lastly, it critiques the separation of symbolic HR practices from practical realities in the Global South, thus questioning the neoliberal perspective on choice-based flexibility.

Insights drawn from comparisons with Germany and the United States reveal that, although FWA policies are adopted worldwide, their implementation heavily relies on relational and cultural factors. In India, the backing of management for flexibility frequently diminishes when faced with performance demands, indicating a gap between established HR policies and the actual experiences within organizations.





Ultimately, the study calls for a relational reframing of flexibility, one that goes beyond symbolic policy adoption and instead prioritizes trust, equity, and structural embedding. Addressing the imperatives of social change requires dismantling invisible power asymmetries and reimagining flexibility as a co-created, inclusive practice rooted in relational justice.



MODELING PURPOSE-DRIVEN TOURISM TO INDIA: A BAYESIAN APPROACH WITH CROSS-CATEGORY DEPENDENCE

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Abstract

Tourism is a key contributor to economic development, playing a significant role in boosting GDP and generating employment. Understanding the determinants of tourism can provide valuable insights for policy planning and sectoral growth. This study focuses on inbound tourism to India from 62 countries and examines the impact of two primary factors: the relative economic strength of the tourists' countries of origin and their levels of freedom, both in comparison to India. Tourist arrivals are categorized based on the purpose of travel—business, leisure, visiting friends and family, medical, and other reasons. Our study investigates how economic and freedom factors influence travel under each of these categories.

Recognizing that tourist arrivals for different purposes are likely interdependent, we adopt a Bayesian modeling framework that incorporates an error covariance structure to capture these dependencies. This approach allows us to account for unobserved factors that may jointly influence multiple travel categories, enhancing the robustness of our findings. The results reveal a significant positive impact of the relative economic strength and currency exchange rate on inbound tourism to India, across categories. Interestingly, relative freedom status does not show a statistically significant effect. A strong dependence is observed between visits for medical purposes and the visits of the Indian diaspora, indicating that many non-resident Indians return to India for healthcare services. These findings offer important implications for tourism promotion strategies, particularly in targeting countries with favorable economic conditions and large Indian expatriate communities.



PROFIT WITH PURPOSE: 5TH GEN IMC FOR PEOPLE, PLANET AND PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR INTEGRATING TRANSPARENT, STAKEHOLDER-FRAMED, AND NUDGE-BASED SUSTAINABILITY TACTICS ACROSS INTERNATIONAL MARKETS.FOCUS: 5P IMC FRAMEWORK, TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE OUTCOMES

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Abstract

This research presents a detailed framework for 5th-generation Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)—"Profit, People, Planet"—which integrates financial success, societal health, and environmental responsibility within unified marketing approaches used in global markets. Drawing inspiration from the foundational model of Stewart Pearson and Edward Malthouse, the study outlines a multi-stakeholder integrated marketing communications (IMC) strategy that harmonises messaging across traditional, digital, and experiential platforms.

The study is grounded in a mixed-methods design. Phase 1 involves a content analysis of 5th-generation IMC campaigns from companies in India, Europe, and China, illustrating how these organisations communicate their triple-bottom-line commitments. Phase 2 utilises field experiments targeting key sustainability communication strategies like transparency through third-party certifications and clear disclosures boosts legitimacy and brand trust, stakeholder messaging that contrasts individual benefits with societal advantages to evaluate message impact, green advertising that balances emotional and informational aspects while reducing the risk of greenwashing, behavioural nudges (such as green defaults and social proof cues) were used to assess their effect on consumers' intentions to make eco-friendly purchases.

The metrics assessed include consumer trust, purchase intent, and actual behaviour. Initial hypotheses suggest that campaigns incorporating transparency framed around societal benefits, particularly when backed by visible certifications, will achieve the highest levels of trust and conversion rates. Furthermore, it is anticipated that digital nudges with strategic disclosures and emotionally balanced green advertisements will generate greater engagement than purely informational campaigns or vague nudges.

By fusing strategic IMC, behavioural science, and sustainability communication, this research contributes both theoretical insights and practical applications. The resulting IMC toolkit details effective combinations of transparency, stakeholder messaging, advertising balance, and nudging techniques designed for cross-cultural implementation, allowing brands to promote profit while responsibly enhancing social and environmental outcomes.





EXAMINE CIRCULAR ECONOMY INITIATIVES, RESILIENCE STRATEGIES, AND HUMAN-CENTRIC APPROACHES ENABLED BY INDUSTRY 5.0: INSIGHTS FROM CASE STUDIES

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Abstract

As industries across the globe transition into a new era of digital and sustainable transformation, *Industry 5.0* has emerged as a paradigm that redefines the relationship between humans and machines, emphasizes circular economy models, and builds systemic resilience. This research explores how Industry 5.0 is not just a technological leap but a holistic evolution—one that integrates automation, artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) with human creativity, well-being, and sustainability imperatives. The study focuses on three foundational pillars of Industry 5.0: circular economy initiatives, resilience strategies, and human-centric approaches, using a multi-case analysis of pioneering companies including Philips, ABB, BMW, and Siemens.

Through detailed case studies and secondary data analysis, this research highlights how these industry leaders are applying circular economy principles such as resource reuse, closed-loop systems, eco-design, and sustainable supply chain practices. At the same time, the study explores resilience strategies designed to mitigate disruptions—such as pandemics, cyber threats, and global supply chain failures—by embedding adaptability, predictive maintenance, and digital continuity into core operations. Human-centricity stands out as a central theme, demonstrating how collaborative robotics (cobots), ethical AI, and personalized manufacturing are redefining industrial workflows, promoting worker safety, skill development, and job satisfaction.

The qualitative research methodology combines strategic framework analysis with comparative insights to uncover best practices and measurable outcomes. The study identifies a clear shift from efficiency-driven automation (Industry 4.0) to ethically grounded, sustainable, and inclusive innovation (Industry 5.0). Companies are not only enhancing competitiveness but also aligning with broader global goals such as the European Green Deal and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This research proposes that Industry 5.0, when integrated with circular and resilient frameworks, can be a powerful enabler of long-term economic and environmental value. It also recognizes the current gaps in policy, measurement standards, and organizational readiness, which need to be addressed to accelerate widespread adoption. By presenting actionable insights and a strategic roadmap derived from real-world applications, the study aims to guide industries, policymakers, and researchers in embracing Industry 5.0 as a blueprint for future growth—one that is intelligent, adaptive, ethical, and above all, human-centered.





IMPACT OF INSTITUTIONAL IMPRINTING ON BOARD INTERLOCK UTILIZATION: HETEROGENEITY IN FIRM RESPONSE TOWARDS INDUSTRY CONDITIONS

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Abstract

Board interlocks have been found to aid firms in mitigating uncertainties by facilitating imitation of their interlocked firms' strategies and actions, ranging from takeover defences (Davis, 1991), mergers and acquisitions (Ahsan et al., 2023; Haunschild, 1993), internationalization (Connelly et al., 2011; Yildiz et al., 2023), market entry decisions (Ang et al., 2018), product development (Mazzola et al., 2016) and corporate R&D investments (Han et al., 2015; Oh & Barker, 2018). These studies have conclusively established that interlocks play a crucial role in conveying knowledge, information, and learning about partner firms' activities to the focal firm, enabling it to engage in better-informed decision-making.

Existing studies have assumed that focal firms, which are the recipients of information coming in from multiple and heterogeneous interlocked partners, respond and assimilate the diverse information in the same way. If this were true, then it would have led to gradual homogenization of firms and significant levels of similarity in their strategies. But this is not observed in practice. In this study, we depart from the assumption of homogeneity among recipient firms.

We base our conclusions on the R&D investment strategies of a sample of Indian firms from 2001-2022. To introduce heterogeneity among focal firms, we merge organizational imprinting theory with the research on board interlocks. We find that firms incorporated before the year 1991, during which liberalization reforms were introduced in India, which saw a transition from a state-controlled to a free-market economy, developed an imprinted set of capabilities that represented the artifacts of a heavily regulated, protectionist, non-competitive period (Goyal, 2025; Popli et al., 2021). To survive in the post-reform era, where conditions were entirely different, these firms relied on information from board interlocks to R&D intensive partners to replace their now redundant inherited capabilities to ensure survival.

We next introduce three main environmental characteristics: industry dynamism, munificence, and concentration, to highlight how firms selectively rely on their interlocks to formulate responses to environmental conditions based on the extent of their imprinting. This demonstrates that a reliance on interlocks increases in the presence of uncertainty.

This study thus makes an important theoretical contribution by drawing upon organizational imprinting theory to explain another novel role of board interlocks in aiding firms to improve their imprint-





environment fit. This study also helps explain why homogeneity among firms is difficult to achieve due to each firm's unique set of practices, routines, cultures, structures, and logics, which were incorporated during their formative years and bear major marks of their formative environment. Thus, even in unfavourable industry conditions, certain firms find it difficult to overcome their limitations and must search for ways to reduce the effect of their ingrained or imprinted capabilities. Such mechanisms can include relying on their corporate board networks.

Practical implications include attempting to build awareness of each firm's unique features that pose a barrier to acquiring new knowledge and capabilities. We also attempt to advance an understanding of different business environments within which firms operate and provide guidelines on when to rely on board interlocks.





GREEN MARKETING IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE ROLE OF ECO-FRIENDLY CAMPAIGNS IN SHAPING BRAND IMAGE

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Abstract

In modern trade, environmental sustainability has developed as a key concern for consumers and businesses alike. In the digital age, green marketing has become an essential strategy for brands aiming to boost their image and maintain consumer loyalty. Using secondary data, this study analyses current literature, statistical data, and case studies to understand the effectiveness of digital green marketing strategies in shaping brand image. This research paper investigates the influence of eco-friendly campaigns on brand perception, exploring the efficiency of digital platforms in promoting sustainable practices. This paper also explores the role of eco-friendly marketing campaigns in shaping brand image, examining how digital platforms facilitate green marketing initiatives. Through a comprehensive literature review and analysis of case studies, the study explains the collaborative relationship between green marketing initiatives and brand image, offering insights into best practices and potential challenges. The findings indicate a positive relationship between eco-friendly marketing initiatives and enhanced brand perception, highlighting the necessity for validity and transparency in such campaigns. It also indicates a growing preference for sustainable brands, highlighting the impact of transparency and digital engagement on brand credibility.





APPLICABILITY OF MINIZINC FOR SOLVING CLUSTERING PROBLEMS

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Abstract

This research explores using MiniZinc, an optimization and constraint programming tool, to model and solve clustering problems. Clustering problems have wide applications in areas like BioInformatics, Data Mining, Social Network Analysis, and Data Clustering, to name a few. Variants of the clustering problem are known to be NP-hard, especially for large data sets. Three elements of MiniZinc help to model and solve the clustering problem. This includes using the inverse constraint, which is necessary for constraint representations. The inverse constraint can be useful in instances where there exist complex relationships between cluster elements or between cluster elements and data points. Symmetry breaking is also an important aspect of solving clustering problems, which can be achieved using the value precede chain constraint. In clustering problems, symmetrically equivalent solutions can exist, which may prevent an efficient search of the solution space. The value precede chain constraint in MiniZinc provides the ability to avoid redundant computations and can improve the solution time for large instances. The third element is the use of a global cardinality constraint to ensure lower and upper bounds on the number of elements in each cluster. The global cardinality constraint can be beneficial in applications where specific cluster sizes are required. A sample clustering problem is modelled and solved using these three constraints to demonstrate the ability of MiniZinc to handle such problems.





SOCIAL IMPACT OF SPACE TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: INDIA'S CASE

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Abstract

Space era began in 1957 with the launch of Sputnik by USSR. India's space journey began in 1962 with the sole focus on application of space technology for the benefit of society. Today India came a long way with citizen centric services enabled through space technology. The Indian space programme value chain generates many social benefits such as livelihood support, socio-economic security (food, water, energy, health, shelter, and national security), environment & eco-system, disaster risk reduction, enabling efficient governance towards inclusive growth, and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This paper attempts a case-study based approach to assess the multidimensional multisector impacts of space programme. By examining the space sector industries, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), academia and society as a whole, this paper illustrates how space benefitted national stakeholders through supply contracts, partnerships, academic collaborations, Spin-offs, patents, International cooperation and generated immense societal benefits such as skill development, tele-education, tele-medicine, improving quality of life, and enhancing public service delivery. Using case studies, secondary research, and policy analysis, this paper highlights the practical strategy adopted by India in exploiting space technology for social transformation and provides insights for other emerging economies.



ENHANCING CUSTOMER EQUITY THROUGH DYNAMIC BRAND EXPERIENCE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND RELATIONSHIP AND PURCHASE INTENTION

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of dynamic brand experience (DBE) on customer equity (CE) components—value equity, brand equity, and relationship equity—and its subsequent effect on purchase intention (PI). While prior research has explored brand experience in traditional settings, this paper integrates digital transformation factors (e.g., AI-driven personalization, immersive branding, and omnichannel engagement) to assess their role in shaping consumer perceptions. Additionally, the study examines brand relationship quality (BRQ) as a mediator, recognizing that deeper emotional and relational bonds influence purchase decisions. Using a structural equation modelling (SEM) approach, this study provides empirical evidence from multiple industries (luxury, technology, and e-commerce), offering theoretical and practical implications for modern marketing strategies.



CHARM, CONTROL, AND CHAOS: HOW DARK TRIAD LEADERS SHAPE (AND SHAKE) WORKPLACES

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Abstract

India's hospitality industry is undergoing rapid transformation, propelled by shifting customer expectations, sustainability initiatives, and digital innovation. However, this progress is undermined by persistently high employee turnover rates (30–50%), with one critical factor being toxic leadership. Few research studies have been conducted on this leadership attribute in the hospitality sector. Hence, this study is an attempt to bridge the significant gap in empirical research examining the specific influence of Dark Triad personality traits in the Indian hospitality sector—particularly their nuanced effects on organizational commitment and employee silence. This study investigates the impact of toxic leadership traits—specifically those associated with the Dark Triad (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy)—on organizational commitment, employee silence, and ultimately, employee retention.

Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates survey data and in-depth interviews with hospitality employees across organizational levels. Using the Dark Triad Personality Scale and Meyer & Allen's Organizational Commitment Scale, the data were analyzed through statistical techniques, including Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings reveal a paradox: moderate levels of Dark Triad traits may contribute to assertiveness and innovation, whereas elevated levels result in toxic leadership climates, psychological distress, increased employee silence, and attrition.

Anchored in Social Exchange Theory and organizational commitment frameworks, the study highlights that empowering leadership—marked by fairness, trust, and recognition—fosters open communication and reduces turnover. In contrast, leaders with high Dark Triad traits suppress voice behavior and erode workplace cohesion.

This research contributes uniquely to the Indian hospitality context, offering actionable insights. It calls for leadership development programs, inclusive HR policies, and psychologically safe workplaces to support a more sustainable and engaged workforce. Future studies should extend these findings across industries and cultural contexts.





WHAT DRIVES INDIAN CONSUMERS TO PURCHASE VEGAN PRODUCTS?

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Abstract

This study investigates the key drivers influencing Indian consumers' purchase decisions for vegan products, focusing on the mediating role of ethical concerns and health consciousness. Drawing upon a survey of 500 Indian consumers across various demographics, this research employs a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach to analyze the relationships between perceived benefits (health, environmental, animal welfare), social influence, product availability, ethical concerns, health consciousness, and purchase intention towards vegan products. The findings reveal that while perceived health benefits and social influence directly contribute to purchase intention, ethical concerns and health consciousness significantly mediate these relationships. Specifically, consumers who perceive greater health benefits or are more influenced by their social circles are more likely to develop stronger ethical concerns and health consciousness, which, in turn, positively impact their intention to purchase vegan products. Furthermore, product availability also plays a crucial role, indirectly influencing purchase intention through its effect on both ethical concerns and health consciousness. This study provides valuable insights for marketers and policymakers seeking to promote veganism in India by highlighting the importance of appealing to consumers' ethical values and health aspirations.





THE INFLUENCE OF CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF DOMESTIC PRODUCTS: AN APPLICATION OF THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

India's consumer landscape has long been shaped by socio-political movements such as the Swadeshi Movement and the recent Make in India initiative, both of which underscore the importance of economic nationalism and self-reliance. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the research looks into how customer ethnocentrism influences purchase intentions for domestic items. The study uses three important constructs—attitude, subjective standards, and perceived behavioral control—to investigate the psychological and social factors that influence consumer choices.

A structured questionnaire with 31 Likert-scale items was distributed to 201 respondents in the Delhi NCR region using internet channels. Constructs were operationalized to assess consumer ethnocentrism and TPB factors, with purchase intention serving as the dependent variable. Probability-based random sampling was used to improve impartiality, but geographical concentration remained a limiting issue. The results indicate a strong positive link between customer ethnocentrism and purchase intentions for domestic items. Furthermore, all three TPB components were found to have a considerable influence on customer behaviour, with attitude emerging as the strongest predictor. The findings underscore the role of psychological traits and socio-cultural norms in affecting consumption behaviours.

This study explores how consumer ethnocentrism influences the intention to buy domestic items, using the Theory of Planned Behavior as a prism. By revealing how national pride and social pressure influence purchasing decisions, the study provides new insights for marketers trying to connect emotionally with consumers and promote locally created products. According to the findings, appealing to consumers' sense of belonging and patriotism can lead to huge marketing chances for businesses targeting local markets.





INEFFICIENT YET ENDURING: REVISITING BUSINESS GROUP PERFORMANCE IN INDIA

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Abstract

Business Groups (BGs) play an important role in many economies around the world, especially in emerging economies. However, the literature remains largely inconclusive regarding the question: *Do BG firms outperform non-BG firms?* Using a large sample of Indian BG and non-BG firms, we re-examine this critical question by focusing on the market-based performance (proxied by Tobin's Q) of these two groups. Our results show that compared to standalone (i.e. non-BG) firms, BG-affiliated firms have a significantly lower Tobin's Q. Moreover, we find that compared to stand-alone firms, BG affiliated firms show a significantly lower production efficiency and inventory efficiency. Lower production efficiency and inventory efficiency have a direct and significant negative association with firm performance. Our results also indicate that BG firms tend to expend more on strategic activities (e.g., distribution expense) which hampers firm performance.

Examination of these three channels shows that BG affiliated firms tend to perform poorly due to lower production efficiency, lower inventory efficiency, and higher distribution expenses. Despite this evidence, we find that BG firms hold a persistent presence in emerging economies. As a plausible explanation for this puzzling trend, we find that not all BG-affiliated firms perform poorly vis-à-vis standalone firms. Because influential BG firms drive the strategic directions of a BG structure, their on-par performance with standalone firms is likely to encourage them to continue with the existing BG structure and utilize available network supports.





CULTIVATING RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FROM THE GROUND UP

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Abstract

This study focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of a bottom-up approach for rural entrepreneurship, specifically through the introduction of mushroom cultivation in SC and ST communities in Kozhikode, Kerala, India. The study utilizes an institutional theory framework to study this community-driven initiative at the macro, meso and micro levels. At the macro level, it focuses on the structural barriers stemming from social exclusion; at the meso level, it looks at the role of meso-level actors and embeddedness in enabling community participation; and at the micro level, it analyzes how resource mobilization affects individual participation.

The methodology employed for this study is action research, a participatory approach that allows action researchers to collaborate closely with the community members through iterative cycles of planning, action, and reflection. This methodology was well-suited for the context of bottom-up interventions, as it facilitated active engagement with the community, enabling a deeper understanding of local dynamics. Data was collected through interviews, participant observation, memos, and field notes over a 1.5-year period from October 2023 to March 2024, focusing on three rounds of mushroom cultivation in both the SC and ST communities. The action research approach also allowed for flexibility in adapting to the needs of the communities, with changes in cultivation methods implemented based on real-time feedback and observations.

The findings of the study reveal that the bottom-up approach is more effective in the ST communities compared to the SC communities. The success in ST communities can be attributed to their strong internal social cohesion, collective orientation, and embedded cultural practices, which facilitated trust, cooperation, and shared responsibility. These factors aligned well with the participatory nature of the bottom-up approach, allowing for successful implementation and scalability of the mushroom cultivation project. On the other hand, the SC communities faced greater challenges, primarily due to weaker social cohesion, individualistic social structures, and internal competition, which hindered collective action and the overall effectiveness of the initiative.

The study contributes to the understanding of rural entrepreneurship in marginalized settings and underscores the importance of tailoring interventions to the specific institutional and social dynamics of each community. Future research could further explore the long-term sustainability of such initiatives and examine how these findings can be applied to other marginalized groups in different regions.





DATASET REPOSITORY FOR ACCOUNTING FRAUD DETECTION IN INDIA USING MACHINE LEARNING

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Abstract

Accounting fraud continues to pose serious threats to financial transparency and corporate integrity, particularly in emerging economies like India. With the increasing digitization of financial records and regulatory scrutiny, leveraging machine learning to detect fraudulent patterns has emerged as a compelling research avenue. However, a major barrier to progress in this field is the lack of robust, representative, and publicly available datasets specific to Indian accounting practices. This study proposes the design and development of a comprehensive dataset repository tailored for accounting fraud detection in the Indian context.

The proposed repository will consolidate structured financial data from diverse sources—including annual financial statements, audit reports, stock exchange disclosures, and regulatory filings—while integrating contextual attributes such as industry classification, governance indicators, and historical enforcement actions. In this context, it is also important to pay attention to data anonymization and privacy laws. Labeling will be conducted using a combination of expert annotation and publicly disclosed fraud cases from Indian regulatory bodies like SEBI and MCA.

The repository aims to enable supervised and unsupervised Machine Learning applications, including anomaly detection, classification, and risk scoring. By offering a standardized benchmarking platform, this initiative seeks to foster reproducible research and enhance early-warning systems for fraud detection. The study also addresses challenges such as class imbalance, evolving fraud typologies, and data heterogeneity.

Ultimately, this work contributes toward building a research-enabling infrastructure that empowers academics, regulators, and financial institutions in India to develop more data-driven, adaptive, and interpretable fraud detection systems.





GAME THEORETIC STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM PHARMACEUTICAL ENTERPRISES IN INDIA

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Abstract

The Indian pharmaceutical sector is a major contributor to world health, providing over 60% of worldwide vaccines and 20% of generic drugs by volume. At the core of this industry is a vast network of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which not only offer backward and forward links to major companies but also play a vital part in domestic distribution, affordable drug manufacture, and international exports. Notwithstanding their vital contribution, Indian pharmaceutical MSMEs work in a difficult environment characterised by strong price competition, regulatory scrutiny, uneven market participation, and ongoing underinvestment in innovation. Although the technical efficiency, cost structures, and export potential of these companies have been much discussed in the current literature, relatively little has been paid to their strategic behaviour under competitive and legal restrictions. By using a game-theoretic lens to analyse how Indian pharmaceutical MSMEs make interdependent decisions in important areas, including pricing, production, compliance, exports, and innovation, this work aims to close that gap. Game theory offers a rich framework to simulate the intricate and sometimes contradictory incentives these companies encounter, so as to clarify both less-than-ideal results and chances for strategic coordination. Using data from 399 Indian pharmaceutical MSMEs, this paper captures the complex strategic terrain by applying a suite of classical and modern game-theoretic models: Prisoner's Dilemma, Bertrand and Cournot models. According to the data, different market segments show different conflicting behaviours. In undifferentiated generic markets, MSMEs compete fiercely for prices in line with Bertrand equilibrium outcomes, drastically reducing profit margins. Empirical data emphasises the seriousness of price wars by showing that practically 25% of the companies under observation have either zero or negative earnings. On the other hand, manufacturing trends for active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) such as paracetamol more closely fit Cournot competition, in which companies compete by raising output levels. This deliberate overproduction has especially caused surplus capacity, market saturation, and declining profits in the markets for commoditised chemicals.

Models of strategic behaviour regarding regulatory compliance draw on the Prisoner's Dilemma framework. Under this situation, individual businesses have short-term goals to evade or ignore laws in order to lower compliance costs. These results show that fragmented and disorganised decision-making produces generally less than ideal results, so reducing global confidence in Indian generics. Export strategies show a similar lack of coordination in situations when companies fight for overlapping foreign markets with identical products, so undermining national competitive advantage and increasing intra-industry rivalry.





The results of the research have important ramifications for industrial strategy and strategic management in the Indian pharmaceutical industry. The study emphasises the need for public-private cooperation systems and cooperative models that might match business incentives with sustainability across the industry. Policy recommendations call for centralised procurement systems to offset the effects of all-pay auctions, coordinated manufacturing planning to prevent overcapacity, and the creation of shared R&D infrastructure to handle spillovers of innovation. By combining competitive strategies with cooperative institutional frameworks, Indian pharmaceutical MSMEs can move from scattered competitiveness to more effective and durable equilibrium outcomes.





MAPPING THE FUTURE WITH DIGITAL LEADERSHIP: PIONEERING DIGITAL UPSKILLING FOR AN ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE THROUGH THE LENS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION.

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Abstract

To explore the function of employee digital upskilling for sustainable employment, as well as the importance of digital leadership in promoting digital transformation and its effects on sustainable organisational performance. The study identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of $n=80$ articles from 91,682 using the PRISMA approach. The findings show that upskilling and digital leadership have emerged as critical elements influencing employees' future employability and the long-term performance of their organisations. The study highlights the significance of digital leadership and capabilities in fostering long-term organisational success. The rapid digitalisation of the workplace today reflects the growing need for digital skills, which calls for a framework for HR managers to understand how digital skills are incorporated into the workplace. The study's findings highlight the need to enhance employees' digital abilities through tailored training programs that ensure they can use digital resources effectively, a task that HR professionals should give top priority. Additionally, the digital ecosystem shows that e-readiness, knowledge, management, ICT use, and digital skills have a big impact on how well a firm performs. The study is a unique approach to understanding the importance of "Digital Skills" upskilling in promoting sustainable performance, achieving through digital leadership, and fostering future employability in Digital Transformation. Further, it explores whether an organization's sustainability performance could be enhanced by empowering its workforce with digital skills through digital leadership. Its lack of specificity necessitates an empirical study to evaluate its application in diverse sectors. Also highlights the significance of workers' upskilling.





FROM PLAY TO PURPOSE: ENGAGING YOUTH IN E-WASTE MANAGEMENT THROUGH GAMIFIED EDUCATION

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Abstract

Electronic waste (e-waste) represents one of the fastest-growing global waste streams, fueled by rapid technological advancements, consumerism, and planned obsolescence, leading to environmental degradation through soil and water contamination and posing public health risks. Despite rising global concern, awareness and responsible e-waste management remain limited, particularly among youth—a demographic that heavily consumes digital technology. This paper explores the potential of gamification and educational tools to bridge the knowledge-action gap in youth e-waste behavior by aligning learning strategies with their digital fluency and engagement preferences. Gamification, involving the use of game elements in non-game contexts, has shown promise in increasing motivation, participation, and knowledge retention in environmental education. When applied to e-waste management, gamified tools such as mobile apps, augmented reality (AR), interactive storytelling, and quizzes can effectively engage young audiences. Drawing from global literature and case studies, the paper identifies five gamification strategies that significantly enhance e-waste awareness and behavioral change: reward systems (points, badges, certificates), social competition (leaderboards, peer challenges), immersive narratives (interactive storytelling and gamified comics), experiential learning (AR simulations showing the impact of e-waste), and participatory design (youth co-developing apps or educational content). These approaches have demonstrated measurable impacts on cognitive engagement, emotional connection to environmental issues, and the adoption of sustainable behaviors such as proper e-waste segregation, recycling, and peer advocacy. Case studies like the Eco-Schools Initiative in Europe, UNEP's Green Game Jam, and India's E-Stars project illustrate the scalability and cultural adaptability of gamified interventions. For instance, mobile applications like Recycle Hero and Trash Tycoon employ reward-based learning to instill recycling habits, while AR classroom modules enable students to explore virtual dumpsites and understand the consequences of e-waste mismanagement. Such tools foster not only deeper conceptual understanding but also civic responsibility and peer-to-peer learning. Nevertheless, several challenges persist in implementing these tools effectively, including unequal digital access, insufficient localization of content, limited inclusion in formal education systems, and the risk of gamification fatigue if novelty wears off. To address these issues, the paper recommends that policymakers, educators, and NGOs invest in sustainable, long-term gamification initiatives; ensure inclusive access to digital learning tools; co-create culturally relevant content with youth input; and rigorously measure behavioral outcomes using evidence-based frameworks. Ultimately, the integration of gamification and educational technologies into e-waste awareness campaigns holds transformative potential to cultivate environmentally responsible behavior among the digitally native generation. By tapping into youth interests and digital capabilities, stakeholders can nurture a generation that is both technologically adept and environmentally conscious,





actively participating in sustainable e-waste practices that benefit communities and ecosystems worldwide.

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FINFLUENCER SENTIMENT AND STOCK MARKET DYNAMICS: A VAR-BASED ANALYSIS OF TEMPORAL SPILLOVERS

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Abstract

The growing influence of Finfluencers digitally native individuals who offer investment opinions across social platforms has added a new and largely unregulated layer to the way market sentiment is shaped. This study explores the extent to which such Finfluencer commentary drives short-term fluctuations in stock market performance. Drawing on a comprehensive dataset of firm-level recommendations, we employ natural language processing techniques to quantify sentiment embedded in these communications (Tetlock, 2007; Loughran & McDonald, 2011).

To analyse how this sentiment evolves and interacts with market variables, we apply a Vector Autoregressive (VAR) model. This framework enables us to trace both immediate and lagged feedback loops between Finfluencer sentiment and stock returns. Early results may suggest that optimistic commentary from Finfluencers tends to amplify short-term stock returns, particularly in firms with high retail investor participation and minimal institutional analysis (Barber & Odean, 2008). Conversely, negative sentiment may tend to exert its influence more gradually but with sustained effects aligning with established behavioural finance insights on investor attention and cognitive biases (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Barberis et al., 1998).

Impulse response analysis further may indicate that these sentiment effects typically peak within two trading days and dissipate within a week, highlighting their transient but potent impact. By uncovering how decentralized digital narratives shape market outcomes, this research offers practical implications for regulators, algorithmic traders, and investor education initiatives, particularly in emerging markets experiencing rapid digital financial participation.





WORKPLACE DYSTOPIAS: POWER AND CONTROL IN MODERN ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

The modern workplace is witnessing an unobtrusive but earth-shaking transformation within power relations and organizational control procedures, leading to what can only be termed nascent "workplace dystopias." Critically examining how today's organizations, within industries and geographies, are now increasingly relying on overt and covert control procedures, which chip away at employee well-being, autonomy, and psychological safety, under the guise of sophisticated human resource (HR) practices, research takes a multi-dimensional examination of the evolved nature of organizational toxicity.

With an Organizational Behaviour (OB) prism, power theories, control, violation of the psychological contract, and workplace deviance are integrated to challenge these dystopian procedures. Of special interest, the HR department as both facilitator and, ironically, abuser of toxic regimes is repeatedly critically interrogated. Research analyses the use of technology-facilitated surveillance as a weapon, blurring of work-life borders, and the enforcement of fear-based regimes against trust and participation. Further, processes of hyper-control such as location tracking during personal times, summary terminations and lower-level processes, and emotional display micromanagement signify an alarming change from command-and-control hierarchies to systematic behavioral micro-management.

Special attention is given to the gap between generations, with special attention to rising tension between the emergent expectation among Gen Zs for autonomy, flexibility, and emotional safety, and legacy organizational culture resistant to these evolved norms. The essay analyzes how the onset of the post-millennial workforce, i.e., Gen Z, entering the workforce poses both challenge and revelation of the threshold to toxically dysfunctional HR practices, while at the same time inducing new kinds of organizational control masquerading as "productivity" and "discipline." This creates an unstable double-speak whereby the language and culture of employee-friendliness coexist with practices harmonious with digital Taylorism and Orwellian surveillance.

Using several actual events documented within the Indian and international environments, this essay contributes to the growing body of work on organizational futures, organizational ethics, and sustainable HR practices. It highlights the urgency for organizations to redesign their ways of approaching leadership, psychology-safety, and ethical HR practice. Analysis culminates with a proposal of a conceptual lens to diagnose and cure toxically dysfunctional work culture, and makes an argument for a more human-centered organizational approach to align organizational interests with employee dignity, autonomy, and well-being. Implications are significant for HR leaders, organizational behaviourists, and policy planners who need to generate digitally resilient and psychologically safe workplaces. As organizations face trade-





offs between efficiency, control, and employee enthusiasm, this essay is a timely caution against power left unchecked and organizational ethics stewardship.

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BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF NUDGES IN PROMOTING SAVINGS IN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

This paper will discuss how behavioral economics relates to financial inclusion, and therefore it will discuss how behavioral nudges can influence the savings behavior of low-income earners within Nagpur district in the state of Maharashtra in India. The research is based upon grounding behavioral theory, which has proven to be useful in saving, like the present bias, status quo bias, loss aversion, and the potential usefulness of cleverly administered, subtle behavioral interventions, e.g.; default options, social norms messages, reminders, commitment devices. The system of a stratified random sample entailed putting 386 respondents through a structured questionnaire covering both urban and rural low income communities. The hypothesized relationships between latent constructs, behavioral nudges, financial literacy, behavioral intention, trust in financial institutions as well as actual savings behavior were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Both, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and the reliability and construct validity were confirmed in the measurement model. In the results of the structural model, it was found that behavioral nudges have a positive and significant direct impact on the savings behavior and an indirect impact through financial literacy as well as behavioral intention. Confidence in the financial institutions was also revealed to moderate relationships between nudges and savings behavior. Theoretical framework could be supported as overall model fit indices showed an acceptable fit. The results also stress the need to incorporate behavioral design in financial inclusion policies, which outlines the impact of cost-effective evidence-based interventions to encourage savings in marginalized groups over the long term. The paper will have useful implication to policy makers, financial service providers, and development practitioners who wish to promote resilience and inclusion in financial services based on behaviorally informed practices.





GROWTH STRATEGIES FOR SOHRA ORANGE INDUSTRY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract

This market study evaluates the commercial potential of Sohra Oranges, a unique citrus variety cultivated in Meghalaya's high-rainfall regions. Through field research and market analysis, we identify key challenges including post-harvest losses, limited processing infrastructure, and fragmented distribution channels. Our findings demonstrate significant opportunities in value-added product development, particularly in organic juice concentrates and premium fresh fruit segments. The study outlines practical strategies for improving supply chain efficiency, including collective farming models and targeted branding initiatives. We also highlight export potential to neighboring countries where demand for specialty citrus is growing. These evidence-based recommendations provide a clear pathway for enhancing farmer incomes while establishing Sohra Oranges as a distinctive regional brand in competitive fruit markets.





PERFORMATIVE EMPATHY IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISES; EXPLORING EMPLOYEE NARRATIVES FROM MISSION DRIVEN ORGANIZATIONS IN INDIA.

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Abstract

Social Entrepreneurial discourse usually frames empathy as an essential moral cornerstone of mission driven leadership. Nevertheless, empathy can also play an important institutional role through its performance, politicization and selective enactment. This study uses a qualitative inductive research design incorporating the accounts of 34 employees from a cross section of 11 social enterprises of India. Using Bourdieu's theory of practice as the analytical lens, it posits empathy as symbolic capital and delineates the process of internalizing strategic ambiguity and empathic asceticism in the context of social enterprises. By uncovering the latent tension between external legitimacy and internal cohesion, it also foregrounds the under explored challenges of compassion fatigue and institutional trust erosion. The resultant 'Empathy Governance Matrix' attempts to elaborate an unequal distribution of emotional resources between internal employees and external beneficiaries. It problematizes empathy from an ethical archetype to a tool of emotional governance. As some social enterprises increasingly risk identity drift, institutional fragmentation and moral disillusionment, the instrumental use of empathy in inspiring, disciplining and silencing specific stakeholder groups emerges as a critical factor.

This empirical analysis aims to contribute to the research literature by underscoring how at times empathy is strategically curated and becomes relationally uneven. It augments the concepts of emotional labor, symbolical capital, identity work and social entrepreneurial ethics. It also offers practical implications for leadership, governance and investor evaluation frameworks in the social impact domain.





ENERGY TRANSITIONS IN DEVELOPING ECONOMIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RENEWABLE AND NON-RENEWABLE PATHWAYS

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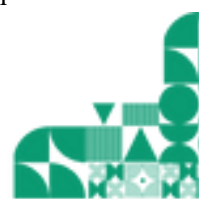
Abstract

Energy poverty and the need for sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels remain among the most pressing challenges for developing nations in the 21st century. Despite global momentum toward the Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7) ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. According to the IEA (2023), approximately 775 million people are without electricity access, and 2 billion lack clean cooking fuel. This widespread energy deficiency hampers economic development, undermines health outcomes due to household air pollution, and perpetuates socio-economic inequalities. The global energy landscape is undergoing a significant transformation, but the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy (RE) sources remains uneven, particularly in resource-constrained settings. Moreover, innovation in clean energy does not always guarantee fossil fuel displacement, revealing a complex policy and market interface that requires deeper investigation.

This study addresses these concerns by examining how public investment in renewable energy (PIRE), energy innovation (EI), energy intensity (EIN), and institutional quality Index (IQI) impact the energy transition (ET) in developing countries. Using a panel of developing nations from 2000 to 2023, this research formulates a dual-model structure to assess both the enhancement of renewable energy capacity and the reduction in fossil fuel consumption. Importantly, we construct an Energy Transition Index (ETI) and use it as an instrumental variable to ensure robustness and mitigate endogeneity in the estimation process.

Our empirical strategy includes panel econometric techniques such as the Driscoll-Kraay estimator and the System Generalized Method of Moments (SGMM). The analysis begins with diagnostic testing for multicollinearity, cross-sectional dependence, and unit roots, followed by cointegration analysis using Westerlund test. The findings demonstrate that PIRE and EI significantly promote renewable energy deployment, while energy intensity negatively affects clean energy uptake. Interestingly, institutional quality shows a mixed influence: while governance frameworks may support transition efforts, the evidence suggests inefficiencies in converting institutional capacity into actionable outcomes. SGMM results, validated by Hansen and Sargan tests, further confirm the reliability of the estimations, indicating that public investment and innovation are critical levers for advancing the energy transition in developing nations.

From a policy perspective, the findings suggest several recommendations. First, governments must prioritize RE investments in electricity generation while ensuring environmental safeguards. Second, targeted subsidies and public R&D support for clean technologies are essential to stimulate innovation and bridge the green finance gap. Third, enhancing institutional quality and governance mechanisms can





improve the efficiency of public spending and catalyze further private-sector participation. Lastly, policymakers should consider the non-linear and asymmetric impacts of these drivers and develop region-specific frameworks for accelerating the energy transition.

This study contributes both empirically and theoretically by integrating macroeconomic, technological, and institutional variables into a comprehensive framework for energy transition analysis. It provides a novel methodological contribution by applying the ETI in a robust GMM framework, offering actionable insights for both academics and policymakers aiming to achieve a low-carbon future in the Global South.





REVISITING THE REPURCHASE PARADIGM: A DUAL ROLE OF REGRET AND PERSONALITY TRAITS IN CONSUMER LOYALTY

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Abstract

In an increasingly competitive and consumer-driven market, understanding the psychological mechanisms influencing customer retention is vital. This study investigates the role of post-purchase regret as a mediating factor between customer satisfactions and repurchase intention, while also examining the moderating influence of personality traits, particularly within the Big Five model. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 250 consumers who had recently made offline purchases. Using regression, mediation, and moderation analysis via SPSS and the PROCESS macro, the study found that customer satisfaction positively predicts repurchase intentions; however, this relationship is partially mediated by post-purchase regret. Furthermore, personality traits—especially neuroticism—moderate the strength of the regret-repurchase link, amplifying the negative effect of regret. The findings offer critical insights for marketers to reduce customer churn by addressing emotional aftereffects and personalizing engagement strategies based on consumer personality. This research contributes to the literature by integrating affective and individual-difference dimensions into consumer behavioural models.





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IDENTIFYING DRIVERS AND BARRIERS OF CBDC ADOPTION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aims to identify the ‘*Reason for*’ (Drivers) and ‘*Reason Against*’ (Barriers) influencing the customer intention to use Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). It uses qualitative study to identify the potential motivators for UPI users that drive them to adopt CBDC or look forward to using it in the future. Additionally, this paper lists the potential inhibitors impacting CBDC adoption.

Design/methods/approach: Using purposive sampling, the data has been collected from 30 UPI users inside the mall through semi-structured interviews. To ensure multiple geographies and markets, the data collection has been done in 11 key Indian cities that possess high-tech malls and attract customers from diverse groups. Thematic analysis (*Corbin & Strauss 1990* inductive coding) is employed to identify and document the themes derived from the interview data. As theoretical support, the study was built on the ‘Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT)’.

Findings: This research found four reasons for adopting in-store technologies: Technophilia, Faster Digital Payment, Relative Advantage, and Rewards (like cashback in UPI). Additionally, six barriers were identified: Lack of Awareness, Privacy Risks (Anonymity in Transactions), Perceived Redundancy, Interoperability Issues, and Limited Merchant Acceptance.

Originality/ Value: This is the first scholarly investigation that provides the potential drivers and barriers to CBDC adoption among customers.

Implications: This paper has several implications for central banks, policymakers, and digital payment service providers.





MASSTIGE CONSUMPTION: A “QUALITATIVE” STUDY OF INDIAN MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z

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Abstract

Nowadays, the consumption of masstige is an alluring area among researchers from various disciplines. Even though earlier inquiries on masstige consumption have postulated a numeral of apparatuses to measure brands as masstige, their attitude & sentiments, purchase intention, and so on. Surprisingly, scholars lack a “drivers, and barriers identification” that uses a consumer-based approach to measure the masstige consumption tendencies as a trait. This study investigates masstige consumption as a behavioral trait, exploring the drivers that encourage and the barriers that deter long-term engagement with masstige brands. The study adopts a qualitative research design as an exploratory investigation into masstige consumption as a behavioral trait. However, purposive sampling was conducted with 25 respondents who use mass-market products across various categories, including fashion, cosmetics, electronics, and dining experiences. Data collection spanned approximately eight weeks, allowing for the iterative processing of themes as they emerged. In addition, thematic saturation was achieved at the 21st interview, in the sense that no further themes emerged from the subsequent responses, which showed evidence of sufficient data (Guest et al., 2006). To ensure the reliability and credibility of the data, member-checking was conducted; selected respondents read and verified the accuracy of the interpreted themes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The studies found three major aggregate dimensions—consuming mass in a consistent behavioral trait. “Psychological drivers, aspirational lifestyle, symbolic affordability factors. Situational 'constraints' were found to be significant impediments, like "skepticism regarding brand authenticity, perceived product homogeneity, sensitivity to price, and saturation of the market that leads to brand fatigue and disengagement from it over time.” It defines masstige consumption as a "behavioural trait rather than a mere preference. Bridging motivational factors and decision-making reasoning, this study thus leads to a better understanding of why consumers switch or remain loyal over time regarding masstige brand engagement. This research shows that masstige consumption is a dynamic evolving trait moulded and influenced by psychological, economic, and perceptual factors.





EMPLOYEE WELLBEING – AN EMERGING PREREQUISITE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ORGANIZATION AND PERSONAL CAREER GROWTH: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study is to conduct a systematic literature review to consolidate knowledge on all perspectives influencing employee wellbeing in an organization and to offer an integrated theoretical framework that views employee wellbeing as a dynamic, multi-level construct affected by a variety of stable and changeable elements, including social relationships, leadership styles, organisational climate, societal values, and personal strengths. Major emphasis is also given to understand the innovative ways of dealing with mental illnesses through counselling, practice of mindfulness, healing oneself of past Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Strength Based Therapeutic Recreation (STR), Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT), Supportive Supervisor Training (SST), daily appreciation, after-hours connectivity, psychological detachment from work, within individual and organizational boundaries. To understand the dynamics within the keywords for the literature review, the SPAR-4-SLR methodology is used, which provides a comprehensive extraction of literature using 'employee wellbeing' as the guiding keyword through the SCOPUS database for the post-pandemic era (2020-2025). A list of 33 A and A* articles was finalised to craft the present literature review and to analyse the research gap. As awareness of mental health continues to rise and individuals take greater ownership of their career paths, employee wellbeing has become essential for the long-term viability and sustainable growth of any organisation. According to the literature, employers now also view a healthy work environment as an essential prerequisite for retaining talent. According to previous research, organisations are adopting multiple initiatives to enhance both workplace culture and employee wellbeing. Researchers have also begun exploring this shift from various perspectives, especially in the post-pandemic era. From the plethora of literature, it is found that an employee who has undergone personal healing and maintains strong connections with their immediate supervisors, as well as their environment, is better positioned to contribute meaningfully to the long-term success of an organisation. Personal healing serves as the foundation, gradually influencing broader organizational dynamics through positive and interconnected relationships. Moreover, a multifaceted approach to wellbeing can provide a broader perspective to help address all related factors and, in turn, promote the sustainable development of an organisation through its employees' wellbeing. A research agenda is subsequently outlined for the future, emphasising the use of participatory methodologies that prioritise employee voice, cross-cultural and longitudinal studies, and increased attention to underrepresented populations. Emphasis is placed on the need to explore digital wellbeing in hybrid work environments, the role of ethical leadership in fostering psychological safety, and the potential of strength-based interventions in enhancing individual and collective thriving. This review aims to bring conceptual clarity to a rapidly expanding yet fragmented field, providing scholars and practitioners with a cohesive foundation for advancing theory, informing policy, and designing





interventions that cultivate wellbeing not as an afterthought, but as an integral component of meaningful and productive work.





CSR INITIATIVES FOR THE TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN KARNATAKA: A STUDY

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Abstract

India, despite being widely recognised for its rich and diversified culture, still has failed to define the term “tribe”. It has largely been inherited from the definition provided by D. N. Majumdar in the Imperial Gazetteer. “A tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, and occupying or professing to occupy a common territory. Tribes are usually not endogamous, although they may have originally been so” (Majumdar, 1992). Tribal development in India since the post-colonial period has been a complex issue. It refers to the social upliftment of the tribal community, which is at different stages of socio-economic and cultural realism of growth (Dr Parandamulu Ch). It is evident, businesses are closely linked to society as they rely on consumers, natural resources, and human capital, which in turn create solutions to the needs and wants of society. Though modernisation and industrialisation have created ample opportunities and facilities for tribals, they have also brought significant cultural shifts. While the mainstream population might view “development” as providing education, infrastructure development, and socio-economic development but it has also affected their traditional way of living. Section 135 of the Companies Act 2013 describes that every company should donate 2% of its net profit from the preceding year to corporate social responsibility (CSR). Therefore, it is a strategic framework which helps businesses in making better decisions and operates in a way that improves livelihoods and the welfare of society. This study examines the CSR initiatives carried out in the state of Karnataka by NGO’s associated with companies that concentrate on Tribal development. This study evaluates and analyses the challenges encountered by NGO’s while implementing CSR activities into practice. It also aims to demonstrate successful CSR initiatives that shaped tribal development. This study focuses on secondary data that is exploratory in nature. Information is derived from secondary sources such as government reports, CSR reports, research articles, and reports from NGO’s. The scope is limited to CSR initiatives carried out by NGO’s partnered with companies to support tribal development in the state of Karnataka. This analysis reveals that there are a number of CSR programs that focus on tribal development but differ greatly in terms of design, implementation, impact and scope. This study concludes with a recommendation that CSR initiatives must go beyond philanthropic plans and adopt a community-centric approach and a core focus on considering their cultural heritage.





LEVERAGING GAME THEORY TO ADDRESS ABUSIVE SUPERVISION

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Abstract

The integration of game theory into human resource management (HRM) offers a strategic framework for addressing abusive supervision and optimizing human resource development. This study applies game theoretic principles to explore how organizations can mitigate abusive supervision through strategic decision-making models and enhance HRD investment by fostering continuous development frameworks aligned with both organizational and employee goals. We introduce a novel model for organizational interactions, combining cooperative and non-cooperative game theory, aimed at reducing power imbalances, promoting collaborative engagement, and improving overall organizational health and productivity. Game theory provides a strategic lens for understanding supervisor-subordinate interactions as a series of decisions with interdependent outcomes. Our proposed model uses Nash equilibrium to identify stable behaviors patterns that discourage abusive practices while encouraging positive and constructive supervisory techniques. By balancing rewards for constructive behaviors and penalties for abusive conduct, we establish a supportive behavioral equilibrium as the optimal approach for both managers and subordinates. This equilibrium creates a self-regulating system in which supervisors are motivated to cultivate positive relationships, knowing that such efforts lead to enhanced performance and a healthier organizational climate. Preliminary results from pilot tests suggest a significant reduction in abusive incidents and an increase in employee job satisfaction, demonstrating that this game-theoretic approach can effectively recalibrate incentives and mitigate toxic behaviors in hierarchical environments. In the context of HRD, game theory highlights the long-term value of consistent investment in employee development as a strategic asset. By framing firm-employee interactions as a repeated cooperative game, organizations can boost productivity through ongoing HRD initiatives, fostering loyalty and minimizing the risk of employees seeking external opportunities after training. HRD strategies are conceptualized as cooperative games, with mutual benefits—manifested in improved productivity and enhanced organizational reputation—shared between the firm and its employees, thereby strengthening a cycle of investment and retention. A resource allocation model illustrates how frequent HRD engagement leads to enhanced employee collaboration, as evidenced by higher job satisfaction and improved skill retention. This research demonstrates how game theory can transform HRM practices, turning potential conflicts into collaborative opportunities. By aligning individual and organizational interests through structured incentives, companies can build a more cohesive and productive workforce. Future research could extend this model to various cultural contexts and examine its applicability across different organizational structures. This paper offers a foundational framework for managers seeking to leverage game theory as a strategic tool for resolving workplace conflicts and maximizing HRD investments.





A MELODIC MIND: INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF MUSIC-INTEGRATED MINDFULNESS ON MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

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Abstract

The research investigates how music and mindfulness treatments affect the academic performance, stress management, and general well-being of management students in Bangalore. Students in management education frequently experience stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion due to the demanding setting. The study of this interventional study is to determine whether music session and guided mindfulness practices can improve students' mental health, concentration, and general academic engagement. This study included a sample of management students from particular Bangalorean institutions. Assessments were done both before and after the intervention to track improvements in stress levels, emotional health, and cognitive performance. The outcomes show notable gains in stress reduction, improved mental clarity, and improved academic performance, indicating that the use of music and mindfulness in educational programs can be a useful strategy for raising student achievement and wellbeing. Graduate students pursuing degrees in management participated in this study. Using a questionnaire, data from 215 respondents who were enrolled in various private universities were gathered and assessed during a non-probability covariance sample technique. This research conducts an empirical study using statistical tools of correlation, kmo bartlet test, HTMT test, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) to study the hypothetical model. Both the music and mindfulness groups had significant reductions in stress and anxiety, according to the data, with the mindfulness group performing marginally better. When compared to the control group, academic performance and focus also improved in both intervention groups. These results imply that among management students, music and mindfulness interventions can be useful strategies for fostering mental wellness and academic achievement.





DEAR GOOGLE, DON'T BE EVIL.

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Abstract

This case study, titled “Dear Google, Don’t Be Evil,” examines the stark disconnect between Google’s longstanding reputation as a model employer and the controversial manner in which it executed mass layoffs in early 2023 (Duffy & Thorbecke, 2023; Mallick, 2023). Once celebrated globally for its employee-first culture, innovative 20% free time policy, generous perks, and its founding principle of “Don’t Be Evil,” Google’s decision to terminate over 12,000 employees—via impersonal late-night emails—stirred public outcry and internal disillusionment (Coulter, 2023). For many Googlers, the abrupt severance was discovered only when their employee credentials failed to work, or when they received an unexpected email titled “Notice regarding your employment” in their personal inboxes.

The case unfolds through the experiences of Clara, Li Chen, and Nivesh (fictional) —employees who personify the emotional toll of these layoffs—and explores how this once tightly-knit, mission-driven workforce was left grappling with shock, anxiety, and loss of trust. Notably, the layoffs came with no clear rationale or pattern, affecting tenured employees, those on medical leave, and even some on vacation. The opacity of the process and the lack of humane communication mechanisms triggered widespread criticism, protests, and an open letter from over 1,400 employees demanding accountability and compassion (Tabahriti, 2023). Set against broader macroeconomic factors—such as post-pandemic over-hiring, rising costs, stock market pressures, and shifting technological priorities—the case also highlights the business rationale behind Google’s restructuring. Yet, it questions whether cost-cutting and shareholder value must always come at the expense of dignity and corporate values. It reflects on Sundar Pichai’s leadership style, contrasting his thoughtful, diplomatic persona with criticisms of delayed decision-making and increasing risk aversion in the company’s culture.

Drawing from industry-wide layoffs (Blogs, 2023), expert commentary, social media sentiment, and alternative approaches adopted by peer organizations, this case challenges students to critically assess the short-term gains and long-term repercussions of layoffs—on employee morale, corporate reputation, and organizational effectiveness (Avrukin, 2023). It further prompts reflection on the role of strategic HRM and leadership in navigating downturns without eroding the psychological contract with employees (Press, 2017; Sucher & Westner, 2022).

Ideal for courses in Human Resource Management, Strategic Leadership, Organizational Behaviour, and Business Ethics, this case invites robust discussion on responsible downsizing, internal communication, and alternatives to layoffs in dynamic business environments. Ultimately, it poses a critical question: Can a company known for being different afford to act just like everyone else in moments that matter most?





THE INFLUENCE OF MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS ON SHAREHOLDER VALUE AND MARKET RETURNS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE INDIAN CEMENT INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Sustainable corporate growth has become increasingly important in today's highly competitive business landscape—particularly in the cement industry, where companies face strong domestic and global rivals. To stay ahead, many firms are adopting mergers and acquisitions (M&As) as a strategic route for expansion. These deals help businesses reduce competition, enhance operational efficiency, gain technical capabilities, and better utilize available resources. This study explores how M&A activity impacts both investor sentiment and the financial performance of acquiring firms in the Indian cement sector. A dual-method approach is adopted, combining financial ratio analysis—including metrics such as the Current Ratio, Liquid Ratio, Net Profit Ratio, Gross Profit Ratio, Return on Net Worth (RoNW), Return on Capital Employed (RoCE), Earnings Per Share (EPS), Dividend Per Share (DPS), Debt-Equity Ratio, and Interest Coverage Ratio—with event study methodology. The analysis focuses on selected cement companies listed on Indian stock exchanges, chosen based on market capitalization. Data were sourced from credible platforms such as the National Stock Exchange (NSE), Money control, Yahoo Finance, and company annual reports. The event study uses an estimation window of 250 trading days, covering a period from 281 days to 31 days before the M&A announcement, along with an event window of ± 30 days around the announcement to assess how the stock market reacts. To determine the statistical relevance of abnormal returns (ARs), t-values at a 95% confidence level are used. The financial ratio analysis spans a five-year period—two years prior to the merger, the year of the merger, and two years post-merger—to evaluate operational efficiency. The findings reveal that abnormal returns were largely positive across all companies studied. Notably, post-merger ARs for Ambuja Cements and ACC were statistically significant and positive ($AR > 1.96$), indicating strong investor confidence. Although the ARs for Dalmia Bharat and Jaypee Cements were not statistically significant, they were still positive. Moreover, the ratio analysis indicates improvements in liquidity, profitability, and solvency for all the companies in the post-merger phase. In conclusion, the study finds that investors are responsive to M&A events, and such transactions contribute positively to shareholder value as well as the overall financial health of acquiring firms.





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INFLUENCE OF MORAL POTENCY ON ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, ETHICAL CULTURE AND JOB OUTCOMES IN AN INDIAN CONGLOMERATE

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Abstract

Research in the area of Moral Potency has established that it is a source of competitive advantage for organisations. Moral Potency is a characteristic of a leader who not only recognizes moral value violations but also has the courage to raise their voice against the perpetrators. This holds significance in the present global scenario where instances of value violations are increasingly prevalent and are a cause of concern for governments, investors, shareholders, employees and customers. This study investigates the origins of moral potency and evaluates its impact on ethical leadership and job-related outcomes like job satisfaction, job performance and turnover intentions. Further, the study also examines the impact of ethical culture as a mediator on the above relationships. Implications on theory and practice are discussed.





REIMAGINING VIKSIT BHARAT@2047 THROUGH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

India's developmental ambition under Viksit Bharat@2047 envisions a fully developed, inclusive, and resilient economy by its 100th year of independence. Achieving this vision, however, requires a paradigm shift in how economic growth is conceptualized, managed, and delivered. Traditional models of development—either state-led or market-driven—have achieved substantial GDP growth but failed to ensure distributive justice, livelihood security, and equitable access to essential services. Structural inequalities based on region, caste, class, and gender remain deeply entrenched. Currently the fourth largest and fastest developing economy in the world as per the IMF World Economic Outlook 2025 report, India must look beyond conventional growth models and adopt frameworks that prioritize and accelerate inclusive growth. Against this backdrop, social entrepreneurship emerges as a strategic lever. Social entrepreneurship is a mission-driven approach undertaken by individuals, groups, or start-ups to develop, fund, and implement innovative solutions to pressing social, cultural, or environmental challenges. Social entrepreneurs set out to develop and fund solutions that directly address social issues with impact on communities, societies, and the world at large while trying to generate revenue by operating within the confines of the market economy. (WIPO). By integrating social purpose with market-based approaches, social enterprises can fill critical gaps in service delivery, generate employment, build local capacities, and catalyze innovation in sectors such as healthcare (e.g., Aravind Eye Care), education (e.g., Teach for India), agriculture (e.g., Digital Green), food security (e.g. Akshaya Patra Foundation), supporting social entrepreneurs (e.g., Action for India), fostering early-stage social-enterprises (e.g., UnLtd India), driving financial inclusion (e.g., Rang De), etc. Yet despite the presence of over 3.4 million civil society organizations in India, many social enterprises are underachievers. This paper proposes a management research agenda grounded in development economics and strategic management that positions social entrepreneurship as a mainstream economic actor in India's growth story. It identifies three core research domains: (1) Hybrid Organizational Strategy, which investigates how social enterprises sustain mission-driven operations while maintaining financial viability and scale; (2) Impact Measurement and Evaluation, which emphasizes the need for alternative metrics—such as Social Return on Investment (SROI), Theory of Change models, and multidimensional development indices—that move beyond GDP and financial performance; and (3) Ecosystem Innovation, which explores the enabling role of policy instruments (e.g., Social Stock Exchange, Atal Innovation Mission), digital infrastructure, outcome-based financing, and public-private-community partnerships. If supported by coherent policy, capacity-building, and financing mechanisms, India's social enterprise sector is projected to contribute over USD 100 billion to GDP and generate millions of jobs by 2047. Management research can play a pivotal role





by generating empirically grounded insights, scalable organizational models, and actionable policy frameworks that integrate behavioural, institutional, and systems-based thinking. This paper contends that social entrepreneurship should not only be recognized but also treated as a central pillar of India's inclusive economic strategy, driving participatory growth, economic justice, and sustainable development in the nation's journey toward Viksit Bharat@2047.





PREPARED OR UNPREPARED? EXPLORING HOW EDUCATIONAL TRAINING PREPARES SPECIAL EDUCATORS FOR THEIR CAREERS

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores how the educational training prepares special educators for the realities of their professional careers in India. Semi-structured interviews with fifteen practising special educators were conducted, and thematic analysis explored the lived experiences of these individuals and identified the overarching themes. The analysis unearthed four themes: ‘curriculum relevance’, ‘gaps in practical training’, ‘emotional demands and coping strategies’ and ‘on-the-job learning’. Participants shared that the curricula emphasized more on providing solid theoretical foundations in areas like child psychology, inclusive education policy and the pedagogical techniques rather than field-based exposure, behaviour management training and emotional readiness training. These educators were also vocal about the stress and anxiety associated with the profession, as it is one that involves a lot of emotional labour. The analysis also showed the significance of informal and peer-based learning. Three theoretical frameworks: Kolb’s experiential learning, Hochschild’s emotional labour and social learning are used to map the findings observed. By documenting the real voices of the special educators, this research brings out insights into the current special education training programs, with recommendations for practice and policy. There is a need to make changes to the existing curriculum and incorporate more practicums, emotional resilience modules and a focused effort to improve the professional skills of the special educators.





STUDY ON DIFFERENT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS AND THEIR IMPACT ON HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS OF DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES

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Abstract

Since AI-HRM is interdisciplinary, that is, while the development of AI-driven HR tools depends on developments in technology, the use of these instruments and their outcomes depend on data from behavioral science, which is a field outside the scope of HRM. Researchers in a range of disciplines have advanced knowledge of AI-HRM. The current study's main goal is to categories various AI technologies and understand how they affect various businesses' HR operations. A thorough evaluation of the literature was done in order to achieve the stated goal. Many different electronic platforms were examined to find relevant journals, research papers, publications, and articles. The study findings revealed that the use of AI in HRM is growing increasingly common. Several of the conventional HR procedures, including hiring, onboarding, performance management, and learning and development programs, are being streamlined by AI-driven technologies. Moreover, AI has the potential to have significant impacts on HRM by automating monotonous tasks and removing bias from the selection process. AI can support career advancement, employee engagement, and organizational planning. Additionally, the use of AI can help provide more personalized and customized career advancement opportunities to employees and increase employee engagement.

The primary aim of the present study is to identify the different AI tools and comprehend their impact on the HR functions of different industries. To accomplish the given aim the following objectives have been proposed- to determine the types of Artificial Intelligence Tools used in Human Resource Operations, to comprehend the impact of Artificial Intelligence Tools on the Productivity and Efficiency of Human Resource Operations, to assess the industry-Specific Applications of Artificial Intelligence Tools and technologies, to conduct Cross-Country Comparisons for the use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Human Resource Functions.

AI transforms HRM by bringing cutting-edge methods and resources that simplify a range of HR tasks. This study focusses on the many artificial intelligence (AI) developments transforming HR processes. AI can help promote organizational strategy, improve staff engagement, and foster career advancement.





GREEN MARKETING STRATEGIES IN JHARKHAND: A STUDY OF BUSINESSES IN RANCHI AND THEIR SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES

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Abstract

As environmental sustainability becomes a global priority, green marketing has transitioned from a trend to a business necessity. This study, titled “Green Marketing Strategies in Jharkhand: A Study of Businesses in Ranchi and Their Sustainability Practices,” aims to explore how local businesses—especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs)—in Ranchi are incorporating sustainable practices into their marketing and operations. The research seeks to evaluate whether these efforts reflect genuine environmental commitment or are primarily used as tools to attract eco-conscious consumers.

Methodology: The study adopts a qualitative approach, combining field observations, structured interviews, and case studies. It examines a diverse sample of enterprises from the retail, manufacturing, and service sectors in Ranchi. Key focus areas include eco-friendly packaging, responsible sourcing, energy-efficient operations, green-themed digital outreach, and community engagement. Additionally, consumer perspectives are analysed to understand the level of trust and support for these green initiatives.

Findings: The research reveals a growing awareness among Ranchi’s businesses about the importance of sustainability. Some SMEs have begun implementing environmentally friendly practices and are using green marketing strategies to differentiate themselves. However, many businesses face significant challenges—such as financial limitations, lack of technical knowledge, and inconsistent consumer trust. There is also a notable gap between intent and implementation, with some businesses engaging in superficial green branding rather than substantive change.

Managerial/Social Implications: This study holds both local relevance and global significance. It provides practical insights for managers seeking to integrate sustainability into core strategy, not just as a market differentiator but as a long-term value. It also underscores the need for supportive policy frameworks, greater awareness programs, and improved access to green technologies. Socially, it calls attention to the role of consumer education and trust in fostering truly sustainable business ecosystems in developing urban areas like Ranchi.





FROM CLICKS TO CARTS: A STUDY ON HOW NUDGES INFLUENCE ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract

Nowadays, online platforms frequently use behavioural economics techniques to maximize user engagement and conversion, making online buying a key part of consumer behavior. Of all the methods, "nudges"—implicit design elements and cues that influence users without limiting their freedom of choice—may be the most effective. This study looks at how consumers' purchasing habits are affected by several nudge strategies, including social proof, scarcity signals, customisation, and defaults. Utilizing a quantitative approach, the study incorporates controlled experiments and survey responses from 55 users, building on behavioural science theories such as the dual-process model and theory of planned behavior. Additionally beneficial were personalization and defaults, however their efficacy was correlated with consumer traits such as impulsivity and technological trust. The study comes to the conclusion that nudges can be a useful tool for improving user experience and encouraging purchases, but that the ethical ramifications—particularly with regard to manipulation and transparency—must be carefully considered. By offering specific suggestions for platforms looking to develop human-focused and morally sound buying experiences, this study contributes to the expanding corpus of research in behavioural economics and online marketing.





SOCIAL DISPARITY BASED ON INDIGENEITY IN JHARKHAND'S HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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Abstract

Healthcare remains difficult for those living in Jharkhand due to its large tribal population because of deep-rooted, complex social and cultural reasons (Singh & Ram, 2006). The state was formed to help the tribal population, who have often been prevented from benefiting from the use of natural resources (Stuligross, 2008). Even so, people still experience healthcare disparities due to ongoing systemic flaws that require more detailed study and special efforts to address them (Bhattacharyya, 2019). Using qualitative insights, this research aims to study and grasp the full situation of healthcare inequality in Jharkhand among indigenous groups. A sample of 100 downtrodden individuals is considered to analyze the situation using logistic regression. Primary data has been collected using a questionnaire from the respondents by personally interviewing them. Among the causes of healthcare inequality are problems with location, financial difficulty, and cultural backgrounds. It is often the case in remote regions with many tribal people that there isn't sufficient medical infrastructure to provide prompt and high-quality health services. Poverty and malnutrition make people in these areas more likely to suffer infectious diseases, high-rates of mother and child death. It seems that the state is carrying out maternal health programs alike in all sorts of communities, including the tribal ones, making no special mention in the curriculum for working in remote locations (Dehury, 2016). Programs created for maternal health are being used the same way throughout the state, even though tribal areas are culturally unique, as shown by the fact that the curriculum does not give specific guidance for working hard-to-reach locations (Dehury, 2016). Factors related to culture and traditional beliefs can complicate the way people choose health care (Paul, 2005). Reducing indigeneity-based differences in health for Jharkhand people needs the right mix of policy reforms, new health services, and community participation.



UNSUPERVISED ANOMALY DETECTION IN CREDIT CARD TRANSACTIONS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ANOGAN AND TABULAR DIFFUSION MODELS

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Abstract

The increasing scale and complexity of digital financial transactions have heightened the demand for robust, data-driven fraud detection mechanisms. With the rapid growth of online transactions and digital banking services, detecting fraudulent activities has become increasingly challenging. Existing approaches based on Supervised Learning struggle with class imbalance and lack of labelled data which can be eliminated by using generative models like Generative Adversarial Networks (GAN), Autoencoders, Diffusion Models, etc. For the purpose of our research, we investigate and compare the efficacy of two generative models: AnoGAN – an anomaly detection GAN and TabDDPM – Tabular Denoising Diffusion Probabilistic Model to detect fraudulent transactions. AnoGAN, an early GAN-based anomaly detection method, has shown promise in image domains, while TabDDPM is a more recent innovation that leverages diffusion models for structured/tabular data. Our research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of these models in detecting credit card fraud using only normal transactions during training. The goal is to determine whether diffusion models like TabDDPM offer substantial advantages over GAN-based approaches for anomaly detection in real-world, structured datasets such as financial transaction logs.



PERSONALITY, HEDONISM, AND EUDAIMONISM: SHAPING THE EFFECT OF FINANCIAL WELL-BEING ON INTENTION TO DONATE

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Abstract

This study looks at financial well-being and assesses its effect on the inherent intention of an individual to donate to charity. Financial well-being (FWB) is conceptualized through (i) the stress an individual perceives about the present financial situation – current money management stress, and (ii) the perception about the finances looking ahead in time – expected future financial security. The study does not only consider the direct relationship between financial well-being and the intention to donate (ITD) but also incorporates hedonism and eudaimonism as a pair of constructs mediating the relationship. Hedonism captures pleasure or happiness whereas eudaimonism is about actualizing human potential. Hedonism is manifested through two dimensions with divergent orientations viz. experience of pleasure (EP) and avoidance of negative experience (ANE). Personality traits have also been found to be closely associated with contentment and charity. In our study, neuroticism and extraversion are considered to have a moderating role.

The research work was operationalized through a survey comprising 46 Likert scale-based items. Responses (n = 1081) were sought from Indian citizens along various demographic parameters like age, gender, income, educational accomplishments, and profession. The questionnaire captured opinions about financial well-being, hedonism, eudaimonism, extraversion, neuroticism, and intention to donate. The data was subjected to partial least square-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4. The results confirmed that current money management stress and future financial security influence the intention to donate directly and via hedonism and eudaimonism as mediators stressing the importance of all four constructs in the intention to donate. This study has important implications for consumer behavior and financial well-being researchers as it brings in personality traits to understand the interplay between FWB, hedonism/eudaimonism, and ITD.





FROM COMPLIANCE TO COMPETITIVE EDGE: ESG INNOVATIONS IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR

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Abstract

The integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting into the Indian hospitality sector has become increasingly significant in recent years, reflecting both global sustainability trends and evolving domestic regulatory requirements. As the industry moves beyond mere compliance towards a more integrated and strategic approach to sustainability, a clarity on the adoption and alignment of various ESG reporting frameworks becomes paramount. This research paper presents a comparative analysis of the ESG reporting frameworks adopted by leading Indian hotel chains, focusing on the prevalence and integration of global and national standards. These include the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB), TCFD, Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), and the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) framework recently mandated by SEBI (GRI, 2021; SEBI, 2021).

Early sustainability initiatives in the were largely driven by compliance and focused on environmental aspects such as energy and water conservation, waste management, and green procurement (Shanti, 2016). Over time Indian hotel industry have expanded from compliance to encompass broader social and governance issues, with ESG reporting now recognized as a tool for competitive advantage, stakeholder engagement, and brand enhancement (Goldstein & Primlani, 2012; KPMG, 2023). Over time, this focus has broadened to incorporate more holistic social and governance considerations. The increasing influence of international certifications and the significant impact of the BRSR framework are also recognized as pivotal in shaping current disclosure practices (Shanti, 2016; SEBI, 2021).

The research is underpinned by two primary objectives: (1) to investigate which global and national ESG frameworks are most adopted by Indian hotel chains, (2) assesses the degree of alignment between Indian hotel ESG disclosures and the requirements of these frameworks, (3) to propose ESG strategy to attain the competitive advantage within the Indian hospitality sector. The study employs a qualitative content analysis approach, drawing methodological inspiration from the study of sustainability practices among star hotels in Bangalore (Shanti, 2016). ESG disclosures from the top four Indian hotel groups—The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), ITC Hotels, Oberoi Hotels (EIH Ltd.), and The Leela. The proposed model or matrix assesses the extent of alignment with each ESG framework, enabling evaluation of reporting, identification of best practices & areas for improvement.

The analysis considers explicit framework references, thematic coverage across environmental, social, and governance domains, and the integration of sustainability into business strategy and stakeholder communications. The research offers recommendations for enhancing the alignment of Indian hotel ESG disclosures with international standards on sustainable business transformation in emerging markets.





A REVIEW OF THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: KEY DETERMINANTS AND IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

This review article shows how the role of parental expectations plays an important role in students' academic performance in their academic journey at different levels. It synthesizes the findings which gives a foundation for having the positive expectations of parents for their children in achieving their academic goal. This review also indicates how the self-concept, SES, and their culture play a mediating role in this relationship. In contrast, it addresses the potential of adverse results if parents have unrealistic or excessively high expectations, like stress, low self-esteem, and emotional distress. The review also offers a framework for understanding this complex relation among parental expectations, students' performance, and some determining factors, drawing theoretical perspectives from Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital theory, and the Social learning theory. It emphasizes the importance of adopting a student-centered and culturally responsive approach to parental involvement. In conclusion, the review recommends cultivating healthy academic environments where parental expectations can motivate students to achieve their academic goals rather than becoming burdensome.





GREEDFLATION: INVESTIGATING THE SOCIOECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF GREED-DRIVEN INFLATION

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Abstract

While economists have long embraced the elegant simplicity of supply and demand curves, recent inflationary episodes suggest that reality has been reading a different textbook entirely. This paper introduces "greedflation"—a phenomenon where corporate profit maximisation transcends traditional market dynamics to become the primary inflationary catalyst, rendering our cherished Economics 101 explanations somewhat quaint in their innocence.

Our investigation emerged from a rather inconvenient truth: the highest inflation rates in four decades have coincided not with classic demand-supply imbalances, but with unprecedented corporate profit margins. This curious correlation demanded more sophisticated analysis than attributing price increases to "too much money chasing too few goods"—a narrative that, while comforting in its familiarity, fails to account for the strategic behaviour of market-dominant corporations.

Our findings reveal a fundamental shift in economic causality: corporate profits have emerged as the primary driver of contemporary inflation, marking a decisive departure from historical patterns where inflation responded to demand fluctuations rather than boardroom decisions.

The crude oil market serves as our primary case study, not merely for its economic significance, but for its remarkable ability to transform geopolitical tensions into shareholder value with almost artistic precision. Our analysis of industry titans, including Saudi Aramco, ExxonMobil, and Royal Dutch Shell, reveals how market concentration enables these corporations to exploit supply chain disruptions with the efficiency of a Swiss timepiece. We document specific historical episodes—the 1970s oil crisis and the 2008 financial crisis—where corporate actions amplified inflationary pressures far beyond what fundamental economic conditions warranted, suggesting that corporate strategy has become as influential as market forces.

The ramifications extend well beyond mere price adjustments, creating a cascade of socioeconomic consequences that would impress even the most pessimistic economist. Greedflation exacerbates income inequality with mathematical precision, as wealthy elites accumulate disproportionate wealth while middle-class purchasing power erodes like a poorly maintained seawall. Our research documents how speculative bubbles, nurtured by unchecked corporate ambition, generate market distortions that make traditional volatility models appear charmingly naive.





The social implications prove equally compelling, as greedflation systematically erodes public trust in institutions—a development that transforms citizens into sceptics faster than a political scandal. When economic policies appear designed primarily to serve affluent interests, the resulting erosion of faith in government and financial institutions creates fertile ground for social unrest. The concentration of wealth becomes so extreme that social mobility transforms from an aspiration into a statistical anomaly, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage with depressing reliability.

Environmental consequences represent perhaps the most troubling dimension, as profit-driven motives consistently override ecological concerns with the ruthless efficiency of a corporate quarterly report. Industries pursuing short-term gains exploit natural resources without considering long-term sustainability, contributing to environmental degradation that makes climate change models appear optimistic by comparison.

While acknowledging limitations, including data constraints and the inherent challenge of isolating corporate actions from external influences, this research contributes crucial insights for policymakers seeking to understand the complex interplay between corporate power, market concentration, and inflationary pressures in our increasingly sophisticated yet occasionally bewildering economic landscape.





A STUDY ON STRATEGIC DYNAMICS AND IMPACT OF MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS IN THE INDIAN STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

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Abstract

This study examines the evolving nature of mergers and acquisitions (M&A) among startups in India, with a focus on strategic motives, trends, and outcomes. The Indian startup sector has witnessed rapid growth in recent years, creating fertile ground for consolidation through M&A. This research delves into the fundamental forces driving such transactions, including the pursuit of competitive advantage, access to innovative technologies, expansion into new markets, and talent acquisition.

A significant aspect of the study is its exploration of rising foreign interest and strategic collaborations, which have reshaped the structure of many startups. Alongside this, the paper critically evaluates how regulatory policies, ease of doing business, and investment climate influence the frequency and nature of these deals. The role of strategic planning, due diligence, and post-merger integration is also considered essential to understanding success rates in this domain.

To achieve a comprehensive view, a mixed-method research approach has been adopted. Quantitative analysis focuses on sector-specific M&A data transaction volumes, financial outcomes, and industry trends using statistical tools for meaningful insight. This is complemented by qualitative methods, including detailed case studies and interviews with key stakeholders such as startup founders, investors, and M&A consultants. A comparative dimension further enriches the study by positioning India's M&A trends against those of both developed and emerging markets, allowing for contextual understanding of the unique attributes of the Indian startup environment.

The findings reveal that technology-driven sectors such as fintech, healthtech, and e-commerce are at the forefront of M&A activity. The motivations behind these deals extend beyond financial growth, encompassing long-term strategic objectives such as innovation, synergy creation, and market consolidation. However, challenges such as valuation complexities, cultural integration, regulatory hurdles, and execution risks are also highlighted as critical concerns.

In conclusion, this research underscores the transformative potential of M&As in fostering growth, innovation, and competitiveness in Indian startups. The outcomes suggest that while M&A offers strategic opportunities, successful execution depends on meticulous planning, regulatory awareness, and alignment of post-merger goals. By offering both practical insights and theoretical implications, the study contributes meaningfully to the discourse on entrepreneurial strategy and policy formulation in India's dynamic startup ecosystem.







EXPLORING THE FACTORS AFFECTING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF THE EMPLOYEES OF THE EDTECH SECTOR: DRAWING INSIGHTS FROM THE JOB DEMANDS-RESOURCES (JD-R) MODEL

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Abstract

Background: This paper discusses various factors influencing emotional well-being (EWB) of the employees working in the EdTech sector, which are determined by the principles of the JD-R model. The variables specific to the study include exhaustion (EXH), interpersonal relationships (INR), autonomy (AUT), support from top management (SUP), job demands (JD), job resources (JR), stress (SRS), and motivation (MOT).

Objective: This research aims to explore the factors influencing emotional wellbeing among EdTech sector employees, including job demands and job resources, the impact of exhaustion and interpersonal relationships, autonomy and stress, motivation, and top-management support. An authentic basis for this study is the JD-R model that explains the relationship between all these elements as predictors in determining the impact on well-being and the dynamics of the workplace.

Participants and settings: Based on a sample of 377 EdTech industry employees in Bangalore, the current study has surveyed how these factors impact employee well-being.

Methods: The data was analyzed using SPSS and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to study the associations between job demands, job resources, and well-being.

Results: The present study utilizes Structural Equation Modelling to explore interrelations involving job demand, job resources, exhaustion, interpersonal relationship, autonomy, stress, motivation, top management support, and employee well-being. Key findings of the analysis will provide insight into rich dynamics and how factors at the workplace interweave to affect employee motivation, stress, and general well-being at both the individual and organizational levels.

Conclusion: The study contributes to the knowledge base on workplace dynamics and, under the present light, confirms theoretical models-such as the JD-R model-and underlines the duality relative to job demands and resources. It begins with the need to distinguish between challenge and hindrance stressors and analyzes how the highly complex role of interpersonal relationships and autonomy, above all when supported by leadership, contribute to forming job demands, stress, and motivation. The conclusion does have implications for the organizations which are trying to act in a better way to improve emotional well-being in this challenging high-tech workspace.







M&A FLOWS AND MONETARY POLICY CHANGES

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of real interest rate changes on cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&A) using a comprehensive dataset covering outbound and inbound deals across 57 countries from 1998 to 2022. Our analysis reveals that real interest rates significantly influence outbound M&A activity. Specifically, higher real interest rates are associated with a marked decline in both the volume and value of outbound acquisitions. This supports the argument that monetary tightening discourages international expansion by raising financing costs and amplifying investment risks. Firms respond by not only reducing the number of completed deals but also by opting for smaller, less capital-intensive transactions during periods of tight monetary policy.

In contrast, the influence of real interest rates on inbound M&A is comparatively weaker. While no significant effect is observed on the number of inbound deals, deal values decline during periods of monetary tightening. This suggests that inbound M&A is shaped more by host country characteristics—such as market attractiveness, regulatory environment, and macroeconomic stability—than by interest rate dynamics alone. The reduction in deal value may be partly driven by currency appreciation, which makes domestic firms more expensive for foreign acquirers during tightening cycles.

Further analysis reveals that the deterrent effect of contractionary monetary policy on outbound acquisitions is stronger than the stimulative impact of expansionary policy, underscoring firms' cautious behavior in uncertain macroeconomic conditions. Robustness checks—including Poisson regression, alternative model specifications, Oster's test, and dynamic panel estimations using the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM)—validate the consistency of our findings and mitigate concerns regarding endogeneity.

Our cross-sectional analysis uncovers heterogeneity in the impact of real interest rates based on country-specific characteristics. The negative effect of rising real interest rates on outbound M&A is more pronounced in low economic policy uncertainty (EPU) environments, common law countries, high-income economies, and emerging markets. This highlights how legal, institutional, and macroeconomic contexts mediate firms' sensitivity to monetary conditions.

We also explore temporal variations and find that the adverse effect of real interest rates on outbound M&A was stronger before the global financial crisis (GFC) and persisted during and after the European debt crisis, indicating the lasting constraints of monetary tightening. Additionally, quantile regression results show that the negative impact is concentrated in countries with lower levels of outbound M&A





activity, suggesting that firms with limited cross-border experience are more vulnerable to increases in borrowing costs.

Finally, bilateral country-pair analysis indicates that outbound acquisitions decline when the acquirer's real interest rate is lower than the target country's, suggesting that relative interest rate differentials are a crucial determinant of cross-border deal activity.

Overall, this study offers a comprehensive understanding of how real interest rates influence global M&A decisions. By establishing a direct link between monetary policy and international deal-making, the findings contribute meaningfully to both the M&A and monetary policy literature, with important implications for corporate strategy and policy formulation in an increasingly interconnected financial environment.





EXCELLENCISTS AND PERFECTIONISTS UNDER PRESSURE: LATENT PROFILES OF HIGH-STANDARD STRIVING AND BURNOUT AMONG MALAWIAN TEACHERS

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Abstract

Purpose: Burnout, experienced as exhaustion, cynicism, and a loss of efficacy, weakens teaching-learning quality and triggers turnover across employees working in myriad industries and domains (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Earlier studies link '*perfectionism*' to job-burnout. However, these studies treated all high personal standards as perfectionism, overlooking '*excellencism*'. Excellencism characterizes pursuance of high yet realistic goals (Gaudreau et al., 2022). Integrating the two in the same model gives robust insights into who is really at risk. This study used a person-centred lens to identify how Malawian teachers group on excellencism and perfectionism and how each group experiences the three faces of burnout.

Methods: Using LinkedIn filters and a web-based survey, 268 full-time Malawian teachers (58 % women; $M_{Age} = 34.7$) completed the 24-item Model of Excellencism and Perfectionism (MEP) Scale and the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Two manifest indicators i.e. Excellencism and Perfectionism were explored using a latent-profile analysis (JAMOVI) comparing one to six class models. Burnout dimensions were compared across profiles with the Bolck-Croon-Hagenaars (BCH) method, controlling for tenure and weekly teaching hours (Morin, Bujacz, & Gagné, 2018).

Key Findings: A four-profile solution gave the best fit. The profiles were Excellencists (27 %), Low-Striving / Indifferent (23 %), Mixed Strivers (21 %), and Maladaptive Perfectionists (30 %). Burnout followed a clear gradient. Excellencists showed the lowest emotional exhaustion and cynicism and the highest professional efficacy. Maladaptive Perfectionists occupied the opposite pole, with exhaustion almost two standard deviations higher than Excellencists ($d = 1.87, p < .001$). Mixed Strivers matched perfectionists on exhaustion but kept a moderate sense of efficacy, while Indifferent teachers recorded modest exhaustion yet the highest cynicism, hinting at disengagement.

Implications: Results show that one/common organizational wellness interventions might not suit everyone. Excellencists thrive on clear goals and growth opportunities. Maladaptive Perfectionists need coaching that tempers harsh self-talk and fear of mistakes. Mixed Strivers may benefit from training that balances high aims with flexible standards, whereas Indifferent teachers could regain purpose through mentoring and career-planning support. The short MEP screen can be added to routine staff surveys to flag each group early, letting school leaders direct help where it is most needed while resources remain tight.





Originality: To the best knowledge of authors, this is among the first studies to map MEP-based profiles in African education and link them to all three facets of job-burnout. By separating healthy excellence from harmful perfection, the work explains why some high-standard teachers stay energized while others exhaust. Finding that nearly one-third of teachers fall into the high-risk maladaptive perfectionist group offers leaders clear, targeted actions that would be hidden in a simple average-score approach.





NAME, NUMBER, AND NURTURE: A NUMEROLOGY-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR PREDICTING RETENTION MARKETING SUCCESS

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Abstract

In an increasingly data-driven digital economy, marketers are continually seeking for new methods to segment customers to keep them longer. An uncommon psychographic instrument, Chaldean numerology, improves retention marketing in this study. It examines how a customer's first letter, which is linked to a Chaldean vibration number (1 to 8), impacts their behavior, emotions, and openness to targeted marketing. Chaldean numerology uses esoteric knowledge. It claims that each letter's vibrational frequency fits personality characteristics. Using vibrational profiles, marketers may better match their communications to what users want without them knowing. This should boost campaign effectiveness.

The study included 7,000 users: 5,000 were divided into test groups by initial letter and 2,000 received conventional, non-personalized retention marketing. Each vibrational group received individualized emails and push notifications for 8 weeks based on their personality traits, such as being emotionally sensitive, needing authority, or being creative. Open Rate, CTR, RPR, CLV, and Unsubscribe Rate were tracked. The segmentation worked because all vibration groups outperformed the control group.

The most significant results revealed that vibration 6 (U, V, W) and vibration 5 (E, H, N, X) increased customer lifetime value by 28.0% and 27.8%, respectively. Vibration 2 (B, K, R) had the lowest unsubscribe rate (–25.3%) and emotionally engaged users, especially 35–50-year-old women. Vibration 7 (O, Z) was more reclusive online, preferring modest, exclusive messages than big offers. Slow but steady CLV growth. Adding demographic data showed age, gender, and geography-based preferences, improving outcomes. Younger people (ages 18 to 34) in vibrations 3 and 5 preferred gamified and visually appealing content, whereas older users in vibrations 2 and 6 preferred emotionally grounded and family-focused advertising.

Generic retention messaging decreased engagement across all performance indicators in the control group. This shows that symbolic segmentation, even based on metaphysical systems like Chaldean numerology, may help marketers in real life. A increasing corpus of research recommends symbolic intelligence in data-driven projects. It shows that vibrational or energy-level personalization can have a greater impact than demographic grouping.

The study reveals that name-based numerology can offer a small but strong layer of emotional and behavioral archetype-based customization to client retention strategies. By designing campaigns to fit user behavior, marketers may boost engagement, loyalty, and long-term value. This allows traditional symbolic systems to be combined with modern marketing automation, creating archetypal, easy-to-understand brand communication.





UNCOVERING THE CAUSAL ARCHITECTURE OF FOOD LOSS AND WASTE IN AGRICULTURAL PERISHABLE SUPPLY CHAINS: A B2B PERSPECTIVE FROM RURAL INDIA USING PLS-SEM, NCA, AND FSQCA

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Abstract

Purpose: Food loss and waste (FLW) in Agricultural Perishable Food Supply Chains (APFSCs) poses a significant challenge to food security, sustainability, and rural economic development especially in emerging economies like India. This study seeks to identify the key causal factors both necessary and sufficient that drive FLW in APFSCs from a business-to-business (B2B) perspective, particularly in rural contexts. Addressing this issue is essential for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 and building resilient food systems.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This research employs a novel, integrated multi-method approach that combines Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), Necessary Condition Analysis (NCA), and Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA). A total of 333 valid responses were collected from Indian APFSC actors, including farmers, wholesalers, cold storage operators, and processors. The study operationalizes constructs grounded in the Contingent Resource-Based View (CRBV), capturing technological, logistical, behavioral, and relational dimensions of FLW. Employing PLS-SEM allows for the construction of latent constructs with enhanced reliability and validity by minimizing measurement errors through latent score analysis. These latent variable scores serve as standardized inputs for NCA and are normalized for fsQCA, NCA identifies essential threshold conditions, and fsQCA uncovers complex causal combinations that result in high FLW.

Findings: This study employs an integrated multi-method approach - PLS-SEM, NCA, and fsQCA - to examine the complex, asymmetrical causal factors of food loss and waste (FLW) in India's agricultural perishable food supply chains (APFSCs) within a B2B context. Findings reveal that FLW is driven by interconnected factors such as inadequate infrastructure, poor ICT knowledge, and weak stakeholder collaboration. Rather than a single cause, high FLW results from multiple interacting constraints logistical, behavioral, and technological. Cold chain logistics, ICT integration, education, and stakeholder coordination are crucial to FLW mitigation. Tailored digital tools, localized training, and institutional partnerships can enhance supply chain resilience. The study offers actionable insights for sustainable agri-business practices, bridging theoretical gaps through methodological triangulation and context-specific analysis.





Originality/Value: This study is among the first to apply a tri-method approach - PLS-SEM, NCA, and fsQCA in a single framework to holistically analyze FLW in B2B APFSCs. It advances the theoretical application of CRBV by contextualizing how internal resources and external contingencies interplay to exacerbate or mitigate FLW. By explicitly identifying necessity and sufficiency conditions, the research contributes methodologically and empirically to supply chain, sustainability, and agri-food scholarship.

Practical Implications: The findings have immediate utility for supply chain managers, policymakers, and rural agri-business practitioners. Identifying key bottlenecks allows for targeted interventions such as investments in ICT infrastructure, cold chain logistics, and stakeholder training. Strengthening inter-organizational trust and promoting multi-stakeholder collaborations can also significantly reduce inefficiencies. Policymakers can leverage these insights to design context-sensitive regulatory frameworks, improve rural infrastructure, and incentivize ICT adoption, thereby accelerating the transition from informal agriculture to a formal agri-business ecosystem.





ENHANCEMENT OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND RESHAPING OF HR PRACTICES USING AI-BASED TOOLS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand the benefits and drawbacks of using AI in HR, as well as how it improves employee productivity in the current digital world. AI has become an essential tool for HRM function, helping organisations and employees engage, make better decisions, and establish more equitable work environments. As stated in the previous studies, if AI is used only to make employee more productive to get increased output from them for the growth of the organisation, it will have a negative impact on them, and hobble their work-life integration.

From the existing literature, 1233 articles were extracted using AI, Gen AI, Transformative AI, and chatbot as guiding keywords from the Scopus database. 145 articles issued in ABDC A* and A journals were chosen to study the systematic literature review (SLR) based on the data that was retrieved. A filtering procedure was used to give priority to papers published after 2020, resulting in 77 articles, as the review study is centred on the post-COVID era.

Research shows that new generations of robots will create more jobs. However, since AI agents will handle performance management, productivity, and other tasks, we will need fewer people managers. Chatbots and other AI tools will help improve employee engagement worldwide, particularly for younger workers and those with diverse experience. HR tasks could be completed much faster and more easily with AI tools. This will lead to workers being more satisfied and more productive. Concerns about fairness and privacy remain, so AI should be used carefully to ensure that everyone benefits and no one is left out. The research should expand to enhance equity, accessibility, and support for all workers with AI.

Implementation of AI technologies while prioritizing their employee well-being. As an AI agent is used in HRM, it still needs human attention. The implementation of AI technologies in Human Resource Management (HRM) must be approached with a strong emphasis on employee well-being.





REDEFINING LEADERSHIP INTEGRATING BHAGAVAD GITA'S TIMELESS WISDOM INTO MODERN MANAGEMENT PARADIGMS

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Abstract

Contemporary management and leadership paradigms, primarily rooted in Western philosophies, have driven remarkable advancements in operational efficiency, innovation, and profitability. However, the growing complexities of 21st-century challenges—such as ethical crises, unsustainable practices, employee burnout, and leadership failures—reveal critical gaps in these frameworks. Overemphasis on material success and short-term goals often undermines the integration of ethical governance, holistic decision-making, qualitative impact and sustainability. These limitations highlight the need for evolving and adaptive leadership models that address the dynamic and multifaceted challenges of contemporary management.

In contrast, ancient Indian scriptures, particularly the Bhagavad Gita, offers a comprehensive, value-oriented framework for leadership and organizational excellence. Grounded in principles such as *Karma Yoga*, the Gita advocates for self-regulation and a balanced lifestyle through disciplines like *Ahara Niyamam*. It further emphasizes leadership grounded in *Dharma* (righteousness), keen discernment, and understanding individual dispositions through the lens of *daivic* (divine) and *asuric* (demonic) tendencies. The verse, “*Uddhared atmanātmānam na ātmānam avasādayet*” (“One must elevate oneself by one’s own mind and not degrade oneself” – BG 6.5), encapsulates the transformative essence of self-leadership, empowering individuals to unlock their inner potential for personal and organizational growth.

Moreover, The Bhagavad Gita’s leadership philosophy transcends human behavioral tendencies categorized by *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (activity), and *tamas* (inertia), offering a paradigm that nurtures humility, resilience, and a growth-oriented mindset. While Jim Collins’ level 5 leadership model resonates with these principles to some extent, the Gita’s enduring wisdom provides actionable insights into sustainable ethically grounded leadership practices.

This paper advocates for the institutionalization of Bhagavad Gita-inspired leadership principles into Indian management education. Ingraining these timeless principles into curricula and organizational practices addresses critical deficiencies in ethical governance, employee well-being, and sustainable growth. The relevance of Indian Knowledge Systems in bridging such existential gaps promises a transformative, value-centric leadership ethos, imbued with humility, foresight and a commitment to societal welfare, thereby redefining the landscape of management and leadership paradigms for a complex, interconnected world. “*Lokasamgraham evapi sampashyan kartum arhasi*” (“Act always with the welfare of the world in mind” – BG 3.20)





DIGITAL FINANCE AS A KEY ENABLER FOR WOMEN MICROENTREPRENEURS

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Abstract

In today's digital era, financial technology is rapidly reshaping how small businesses operate—especially for women micro-entrepreneurs who often face barriers in accessing traditional financial systems. This study explores how digital finance has emerged as a powerful enabler for these women, helping them overcome limitations of mobility, paperwork, and lack of collateral. The core objective of the research was to understand how women adopt and use digital financial services, what challenges they face, and how these tools impact their business outcomes. The study involved a quantitative approach with surveys conducted among 80–100 women micro-entrepreneurs, primarily in rural and semi-urban areas. The majority of respondents were young and educated, with 88.6% reporting active use of digital tools such as mobile banking apps, digital wallets, and payment platforms like PhonePe and Paytm. These tools were found to help manage finances better, reduce dependency on informal credit, and support business expansion. However, the journey is not without its hurdles. Many respondents expressed concerns about high transaction fees, digital fraud, poor internet connectivity, and lack of confidence in using financial apps—especially without formal training. Social restrictions and limited access to smartphones further widen the digital gap for women in remote areas. Despite these barriers, the data—supported by ANOVA analysis—clearly indicates a statistically significant positive impact of digital finance on business growth, inventory management, and financial control. The study concludes that for digital finance to truly empower women entrepreneurs, targeted interventions such as localized training, simplified app interfaces, community-led awareness, and zero-collateral loan options are essential. This research sheds light not only on the current state of digital inclusion among women-led micro-businesses but also on the steps needed to create a more supportive and equitable financial ecosystem.





INCIDENCE AND DETERMINANTS OF DISTRESS FINANCING FOR OUT-OF-POCKET HEALTH CARE EXPENSES IN INDIA

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Abstract

Out-of-pocket healthcare expenses continue to pose a significant financial burden on households in India, often leading to distress financing and economic vulnerability. Catastrophic Health Expenditure (CHE)—defined as healthcare spending that exceeds a substantial portion of household income—is a critical indicator of financial fragility. Despite growing concern, there remains a research gap in systematically identifying and prioritizing the determinants of CHE using structured decision-making tools. This study addresses that gap by applying the Criteria Importance Assessment (CIMAS) method, a novel and underutilized approach in health economics, to evaluate the key drivers of CHE.

The study is based on responses from 250 individuals representing diverse demographic backgrounds. The analysis reveals that Low Health Literacy ($w = 0.0703$), Preference for Private or Traditional Care ($w = 0.0651$), and Health-Seeking Behavior ($w = 0.0644$) are the most significant contributors to elevated out-of-pocket expenses. The consistency ratio for all criteria weights was found to be below 0.1, confirming the reliability of the results.

The benefit of this paper lies in its methodological innovation and policy relevance. By introducing CIMAS into the analysis of healthcare financing, the study provides a replicable framework for identifying priority areas for intervention. The findings offer actionable insights for policymakers to design inclusive, literacy-sensitive, and behaviorally informed healthcare strategies. These strategies can help reduce financial distress, improve health equity, and support India's progress toward achieving sustainable development goals.





EFFICIENCY MATTERS: ASSESSING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN ODISHA AN INDIAN STATE USING DEA

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Abstract

This study examines the technical efficiency of elementary schools in Odisha, India, using an output-oriented approach to assess how effectively schools (as decision-making units) convert multiple inputs into desirable educational outcomes. Recognizing the complexity of educational production, the analysis incorporates multiple inputs and outputs across four progressively structured models ranging from simpler to more comprehensive configurations to test the robustness of results. A total of 88 elementary schools were purposively selected from two socio-economically distinct districts: Kalahandi (representing a KBK district) and Angul (a non-KBK district). The dataset spans five academic years (2016-17 to 2020-21), with 51 schools from Kalahandi and 37 from Angul. To evaluate school-level efficiency, the study employs the Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) technique under the assumption of Constant Returns to Scale (CRS). Nine input variables reflecting school resources such as teaching infrastructure, physical and ancillary facilities, teacher characteristics, and student demographics were synthesized using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The outputs considered include the percentage of students scoring 60 percent and above in Grades V and VIII, and the percentage of female enrolment. This study is designed to address three interrelated objectives. First, it seeks to understand primary education as a multifaceted domain that extends beyond conventional outcome measures such as enrolment, emphasizing the broader dynamics influencing educational performance. Second, the study evaluates the efficiency of primary schools by incorporating multiple inputs and outputs, using the Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) framework to capture the complex interplay between resources and educational outcomes. Finally, the research aims to generate school-specific planning insights that can guide policymakers and administrators in implementing targeted strategies to enhance the operational efficiency and overall effectiveness of primary education. The empirical findings reveal that schools in Angul district consistently outperform those in Kalahandi across all model specifications. This observed efficiency gap may reflect differences in governance, infrastructure quality, or other enabling contextual factors. The study offers important insights for policymakers by identifying underperforming schools and highlighting district-level disparities.





INDIA'S DEFENCE PRODUCTION REVOLUTION: POLICY REFORMS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

India's defence landscape is undergoing major changes under the challenges and opportunities of corporatization, public-private integration, and global strategic imperatives. This paper provides an analysis of the changing approach and new direction in Indian defence production by critically examining the interplay between policy changes and key reforms: the corporatization of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), the 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives, increased participation of private entities in defence manufacturing, and the evolving policy framework around Technology Transfer (ToT) and foreign collaborations. The objective is to map how these reforms collectively contribute to enhancing defence production efficiency, shaping national security policy, and influencing India's international position, particularly in terms of exports, diplomacy, and diplomatic influence.

The corporatization of the OFB into seven Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) in 2021 marked a historic milestone in India's defence production framework. Drawing on institutional theory and public sector reform literature, this paper analyses whether corporatization is leading to improved accountability, competitiveness, and innovation. This is compared and contrasted with earlier criticism of inefficiency, delay, and lack of transparency in OFB's functioning (CAG, 2020; Ministry of Defence, 2019).

Simultaneously, the 'Make in India' program and Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020 have provided policy incentives for indigenous production, R&D collaboration, and offset obligations. Using case studies of HAL-Tejas, BrahMos, and K9 Vajra-T guns, the paper explores how domestic innovation and co-production initiatives are altering India's dependency on imports (SIPRI, 2023). The emergence of private players such as Larsen & Toubro, Tata Advanced Systems, and Bharat Forge is assessed through the lens of market liberalization, public-private synergies, and regulatory adaptations.

Technology Transfer (ToT) remains a contested yet crucial vector. The paper examines India's shift from buyer-seller defence relationships to joint development frameworks and Design & Development (D&D) partnerships, as seen in the Indo-Israeli UAV projects and Indo-Russian BrahMos collaboration. It further engages with literature on ability to learn and use new technology and the "technology trap" i.e. over dependence on foreign technology to critique the efficacy of ToT mechanisms in indigenizing advanced military technologies (Kapoor, 2021).

Finally, the research explores the implications of these internal transformations on India's external image as a defence exporter and strategic partner. While India became the 23rd largest global arms exporter as of 2022, questions remain on scalability, quality assurance, and strategic intent (SIPRI, 2023). Drawing from soft power theory and strategic autonomy literature, the paper argues that India's defence reforms





are not merely industrial or bureaucratic exercises but are integral to reimagining its global identity as a responsible regional power.

This study contributes to interdisciplinary research by linking defence policy, industrial transformation, international relations, and management strategy. It avoids primary data and instead builds on existing theoretical constructs, policy evaluations, and qualitative case studies to draw holistic conclusions.





DETERMINANT OF EFFECTIVE WORKING CAPITAL MANAGEMENT AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON SME GROWTH.

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Abstract

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are essential for innovation, job creation, and economic growth it is a widely recognized fact. The effective management of working capital, which directly impacts their liquidity, operational effectiveness, and capacity for overall growth, is one of their most pressing issues. In contrast to large organizations. SMEs frequently have restricted access to outside funding and rely mostly on internal resources to maintain daily operations. The study aims to evaluate the determinants of effective working capital management and their influence on SME growth. The technique used in the current study is the Structural Equation Model. The study's findings indicated a significant impact of Account Payable Management, Account Receivable Management, Cash Management, Financial Decisions, and Inventory Management on SME Growth.





MAKING SENSE OF THE SENSEMAKING PERSPECTIVE IN MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

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Abstract

Purpose: In an era characterized by rapid technological evolution, the ability of organizations to effectively interpret, adapt to, and integrate technological changes remains a critical challenge. This study systematically examines the intersection between Sensemaking theory and Information Systems (IS) through an extensive review of literature from the AIS Senior Scholars' Basket. The primary aim is to uncover how Sensemaking processes influence and are influenced by IS practices across organizational contexts. The Study found major themes, theoretical contributions, practical implications, and a future research agenda.

Design/methodology/approach: This study adopts a rigorous systematic literature review (SLR) approach. The study utilized PRISMA methodology to analyze 44 peer-reviewed articles published between 1996 and 2024 in the IS senior basket journals. The study followed thematic categorization and synthesis using a Webster & Watson concept-centric approach. Nine thematic dimensions were constructed. These are: Design, Development, Impact, User Behavior, Implementation, Adoption, Innovation, Information Security and Privacy, and Organizational Impact and Change Management.

Findings: The reciprocal relationship between MIS and Sensemaking, emphasizing the role of information systems design and development in facilitating organizational interpretation and proactive decision-making. The study has given importance to human-centric considerations such as user acceptance, cultural alignment, and collective mindfulness in determining system effectiveness. In addition, the study found that there is less attention with Information Security and Privacy, which is a crucial area for further research.

Research limitations/implications: The work provides comprehensive coverage from high-impact MIS journals; it is limited to literature within the AIS Senior Scholars' Basket. A promising avenue for future inquiry should incorporate interdisciplinary perspectives and extend beyond these journals to capture broader applications of Sensemaking theory. The potential empirical research may validate theoretical frameworks derived from the Sensemaking literature in diverse organizational settings.

Practical implications: The potential for actionable insights for managers and practitioners to leverage Sensemaking principles in designing, implementing, and adopting information systems significant contribution of this work. It enhanced understanding of Sensemaking dynamics can guide the development of adaptive and user-aligned systems, which can improve organizational resilience and decision-making capabilities to anticipate and strategically respond to technological disruptions.





Social implications: This integration can improve organizational efficiency and responsiveness, subsequently promoting sustainable innovation, responsible technology adoption, and socially informed system implementations, ultimately benefiting stakeholders within and beyond organizational boundaries.

Originality/value: The added value, unlike prior literature reviews, this work systematically maps out conceptual interconnections, Information Security and Privacy. Work provides a valuable roadmap for both theoretical advancement and practical application of Sensemaking in the evolving MIS landscape.



EXPLORING THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN TRANSFORMING TAX COMPLIANCES

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Abstract

This paper explores the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in transforming tax compliances in the present technology driven landscape. It evaluates how agile technology tools are being used by both taxpayers and tax authorities to chase each other. While taxpayers develop novel ways to evade taxes, tax authorities are increasingly moving to regulatory technology tools such as AI, blockchain and predictive analytics to track the tax evaders and build trust with honest taxpayers. This paper uses the bibliometric analysis review technique with PRISMA methodology, with publication pattern derived from Scopus database. It examines the historical, current, and emerging trends in the field through citation analysis, highlighting the contributions of key publishers. The thematic clusters identified depict tax evasion, compliance, automation, AI and machine learning (ML) as key principles. Co-citation analysis further plots the most influential and trending research in the field. The study promulgates the need for further transformation in the field of AI and tax administration to further strengthen tax transparency, building taxpayer's confidence and trust towards tax audits and data confidentiality. Such advancements result in minimizing tax leakages, enhancing tax compliance behaviour among citizens and supporting social welfare initiatives. However, certain challenges such as data privacy concerns cybersecurity risks, and ethical considerations in AI-based decision-making persist. The paper highlights these challenges and acknowledges the valuable contribution of academic researchers in shaping regulatory policies, while emphasizing the importance of collaboration in leveraging digitization and AI for effective tax governance.



SYNERGIZING GAMIFICATION AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A BEHAVIOURAL SHIFT IN INDIAN STARTUP CULTURE

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Abstract

The dynamic and high- pressure culture of Indian Startups necessitates using new and innovative approaches to cultivate Organization Values and making the employees resilient and emotionally intelligent to foster sustainable growth. The paper explores the synergy of Game- Based techniques and Emotional Intelligence as a catalyst for the Behavioral Transformation in the Indian Startup Culture. The research also talks about the Game- Based Model curated to add game elements to non- game areas that aims at enhancing the emotional agility, empathy, and self- management amongst employees. The study will be a dominant contribution to the literature with a framework for startups that are aiming to embed emotional intelligence with an innovative and novel strategy and for driving to a sustainable evolution in India's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.



IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORAL INTEGRITY ON EMPLOYEE VOICE- A MODERATED MEDIATION MODEL.

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Abstract

The purpose to undertake this study is to address these issues by examining behavioural integrity of organizations with different referents and how they influence employee voice. This study also investigates how psychological safety (PS) acts as a mediator and moderating impact of self-esteem in the relationship between PS and EV. The participants chosen for this study were chosen from IT industry. Around 72 participants holding the management positions themselves completed the survey and at least two of their direct subordinates also completed a survey. The subordinates responded to questions related to organizational behavioural integrity, psychological safety, and self-esteem. The managers responded to questions regarding employee voice. The hypothesis was tested in two linked steps. First a mediating model was examined. Secondly, the moderator was added to the model and moderated mediation hypothesis was empirically tested. This study has highlighted the importance of organizational integrity as a key factor in promoting employee voice. By identifying this factor, we have contributed to the existing literature and provided insights into mechanisms through which organizations can nurture a culture of employee voice.



BEHAVIOURAL DETERMINANTS OF INVESTMENT INTENTION: A PATH ANALYSIS OF PERSONALITY, BIASES, AND RISK TOLERANCE

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the relationships between Big Five personality traits, investor attitude biases, risk tolerance, and investment intention, addressing a critical gap in behavioural finance literature by examining both direct and indirect pathways through which personality influences investment decision-making.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A structural equation modelling approach using partial least squares (SEM-PLS) was employed to test the proposed mediation model. Data were collected from 467 individual investors using validated scales measuring the Big Five personality dimensions, composite attitude biases (representativeness, anchoring, availability, herding, and overconfidence), risk tolerance, and investment intention.

Findings: Four personality traits significantly influenced investor attitude bias: neuroticism, agreeableness, openness, and extraversion, while conscientiousness was non-significant. Attitude bias strongly predicted both risk tolerance and investment intention. Risk tolerance partially mediated the attitude bias-investment intention relationship.

Research Implications: This study contributes to behavioural finance theory by demonstrating that personality traits influence investment behaviour through multiple pathways, with attitude biases serving as a crucial mediating mechanism. The findings suggest that neuroticism and agreeableness are the strongest personality predictors of biased decision-making, while the mediation through risk tolerance reveals the cognitive-emotional pathway linking personality to investment choices.

Practical Implications: Results suggest that personality-based investor profiling can enhance financial advisory services by identifying bias-prone individuals and tailoring risk assessment protocols accordingly.

Originality/Value: This study provides empirical support for a dual mediation model linking personality traits to investment intention, contributing to behavioural finance theory and offering practical insights for personalized investment management.





TRAPPED BY DESIGN? HOW NETWORK EFFECTS AND PLATFORM PERSONALIZATION SHAPE EVERYDAY CONSUMER PRACTICES IN INDIA

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Abstract

The present study explores how Indian customers interact with e-commerce platforms and how they experience and perceive the behavioral impact of network effects that are generated digitally. Even though network effects are crucial to platform economies, where a service's value rises with the number of users (Rockenbauch and Sakdapolrak, 2017), most users are unaware of how they are operationalized in daily digital interactions, and academic discourse has not sufficiently examined them, especially when it comes to the Global South. The subjective user experience and the complex ways in which these processes influence consumer behavior, preferences, and digital agency are frequently overlooked in the majority of the literature that currently exists, which conceptualizes network effects using technical or economic frameworks.

User feedback systems, such as ratings, reviews, algorithmically tailored suggestions, gamified rewards, and dynamic pricing, serve as more than just technical affordances in India's quickly changing digital ecosystem; they are also potent behavioral governance frameworks (Khamaj and Ali, 2024). By integrating these feedback loops into the normative rhythms of consumer life, websites such as Amazon, Myntra, and Flipkart have become essential to everyday consuming behaviors. However, little is known about how users perceive, work with, and internalize these systems. Thus, this study emphasizes the lived experience of network effects in platform-mediated consumption by using a qualitative, primary research approach to investigate how consumers perceive the influence or manipulation of these embedded digital logics.

The study contributes to a usercentered understanding of how network effects are embodied, resisted, or normalized in daily platform use by amplifying user narratives across various demographic, regional, and digital literacy contexts (Fazil et al., 2024). With its foundation in digital behavioral economics and platform governance theories, this study also adds to the current discussions about algorithmic power, user autonomy, and platform design ethics in developing digital economies. By clarifying the intricate, frequently imperceptible relationship between digital infrastructures and consumer subjectivities in India's platform economy, it provides crucial insights for platform designers, practitioners, and academics.



TOWARD A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF QUEEN BEE SYNDROME: CONCEPTUALIZING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the underlying causes and implications of Queen Bee Syndrome, offering a comprehensive theoretical framework to understand its impact on women's professional trajectories. By synthesizing existing literature on gender dynamics, leadership behaviours, and organizational culture, this study identifies key factors that contribute to QBS, including psychological insecurities, competition for limited resources, and internalized gender biases. The paper also delves to examine how QBS affects organizational outcomes, such as employee morale, retention rates, and overall diversity, it provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between individual behaviours and systemic structures that perpetuate gender inequality in the workplace. Finally, the paper proposes strategic interventions and best practices to mitigate the effects of QBS, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for women's career advancement. This theoretical exploration not only enhances our understanding of QBS but also contributes to both scholarly understanding and practical change by offering new directions for leadership development, gender-inclusive organizational policies, and future empirical research.



OPTIMIZING FMCG DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS: UNDERSTANDING RETAILER DECISION-MAKING IN CHANNEL PARTNER SELECTION – INSIGHTS FROM THE INDIAN MARKET

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Abstract

India's FMCG sector depends on vast, layered distribution networks where small and medium retailers serve as the final, yet often overlooked, decision-makers. While prior research has explored distribution strategies from a manufacturer's or logistics lens, there is a significant gap in understanding how retailers themselves evaluate and select their channel partners (Gupta & Singh, 2015). This study addresses that gap by analyzing retailer decision-making behavior in choosing between distributors and wholesalers.

Primary data was collected from 117 FMCG retailers across Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 cities. Five critical factors emerged as decision drivers: credit terms, product availability, delivery reliability, pricing flexibility, and the strength of personal relationships. The study finds that while distributors are preferred for consistent service and trust, wholesalers offer advantages in credit leniency and margin flexibility. Over half of the respondents follow a hybrid procurement model, reflecting the growing demand for adaptability in supply partnerships.

The study also captures a digital adoption divide: app-based ordering is gaining momentum in urban areas, while traditional sourcing methods remain dominant in lower-tier cities. Based on these insights, the paper proposes a Retailer-Centric Distribution Optimization Framework to help FMCG firms realign strategies with frontline retail behavior.

By blending field insights with literature, this study delivers actionable and academically grounded contributions to improving last-mile performance and channel partner alignment in India's evolving FMCG ecosystem.





ROLE OF METAVERSE IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF BUSINESSES: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract

Metaverse is a persistent, immersive, and interconnected virtual environment that represents a paradigm shift in the trajectory of digital transformation across business sectors. In the evolving digital economy, businesses are facing mounting pressure to adapt to disruptive technologies that challenge conventional models of operation and engagement. The rise of the Metaverse presents both a technological leap and a socio-economic shift. However, without a strategic framework and clear implementation roadmap, business organizations risk falling behind in a rapidly transforming market landscape. Therefore, this research critically examines the multifaceted challenges impeding widespread Metaverse adoption like infrastructural limitations, cyber-ethical concerns, data governance complexities, and cultural resistance to immersive digital engagement. The study also presents how businesses can leverage Metaverse platforms for operational agility, decentralized collaboration, immersive experiences, and virtual commerce. The findings underscore the necessity for a robust policy ecosystem, industry-wide interoperability standards, and inclusive design practices to realize the full transformative potential of the Metaverse in the businesses. Ultimately, the research posits that the Metaverse will not merely digitize existing processes but will inspire entirely new models of enterprise and value, contingent on governance, strategic foresight, and adaptive leadership capabilities.





UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON CAB DRIVERS: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY OF PERFORMANCE, SAFETY, AND SUPPORT NEEDS

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Abstract

This study investigates the multifaceted role of technology in shaping cab drivers' performance, safety, and work experience, while critically examining the challenges and resistance faced in its adoption. Using a sequential mixed-methods design (QUAL → QUAN), the research began with 47 semi-structured interviews with Indian cab drivers, uncovering four key themes: technology usage patterns, perceived effectiveness, behavioral and psychological impacts, and drivers' support needs. These qualitative insights informed the design of a structured survey administered to 432 drivers, which quantitatively examined how openness to technology and technological familiarity affect performance expectancy (PE), with technical support acting as a moderating factor.

Anchored in the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), this study extends its application to professional driving contexts, showing how PE, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions predict technology adoption behaviors. Notably, the research advances the conceptualization of facilitating conditions by explicitly identifying technical support as a crucial moderator and integrates accident prevention frameworks to deepen the understanding of safety outcomes.

The findings reveal that while younger and less experienced drivers display higher openness and adaptability toward technology, experienced drivers often resist adoption due to perceived complexity, prior negative experiences, and distrust toward Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS). However, technological familiarity and a positive attitude significantly enhance PE, and the presence of robust, accessible technical support amplifies the benefits, driving better performance and safety outcomes.

Importantly, the study acknowledges its limitations, particularly its focus on male cab drivers, a reflection of the prevailing gender dynamics within the Indian transportation sector. The paper offers actionable insights for designers, fleet operators, and policymakers, emphasizing the need for intuitive, user-centered technology design, comprehensive training programs, and reliable support systems. By addressing both human and technological dimensions, the study contributes to improving driver well-being, reducing





accident rates, and advancing the effective integration of digital innovations in the transportation ecosystem.

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A FUZZY JUMP-DIFFUSION DIRECTIONAL MOVEMENT TRADING STRATEGY

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Abstract

This paper proposes a directional movement stock trading strategy using the Fuzzy Jump-Diffusion (Mandal & Bhattacharya, 2025) model-estimated prices, which takes into account the ambiguity in drift rate, volatility, and current stock price due to uncertainty and variation in the financial markets. According to this trading strategy, instead of having a fixed profit or loss at the end of the forecast period, the interval in which the profit/loss will lie has been determined. Our trading strategy has been tested on 15 stocks listed on the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) and 15 stocks listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TYO). We concluded that our trading strategy is profitable under certain circumstances. This is an extension of the Merton-directional movement (M-DM) stock trading strategy (Mandal & Bhattacharya, 2022).





BRIDGING THE GAP: GENDER PAY, FINANCIAL SECURITY AND LITERACY IN INDIA

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Abstract

India's goal for Viksit Bharat @2047 focuses on financial inclusion as a means to foster economic and social advancement. A primary emphasis is enhancing financial literacy, particularly for women, to address persistent gender inequalities. Despite improvements in job participation and education levels, women in India continually earn lower wages than men in various sectors. This gender pay gap undermines women's financial stability, limiting their ability to save, invest, and plan for retirement. Men in India generally face fewer barriers than women in wealth accumulation, investment, and financial security, largely due to higher earnings and better access to financial resources (PLFS, 2023). According to the National Sample Survey (NSS, 2021), only 23% of rural Indian women have a bank account, compared to 43% of men, highlighting disparities in financial access. Cultural standards, job segregation, and inadequate financial education exacerbate these disparities. This paper explores the impact of the pay gap on women's financial security and views financial literacy as a key solution. Using 500 individuals, the study employs a Difference-in-Differences (DiD) approach which estimates the average effect of a financial literacy program on savings and financial security. Additionally, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) evaluates the lasting effects of salary disparities on economic well-being. It aims to provide policy suggestions to reduce wage disparity and enhance financial inclusion.





IMPROVING HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING IN BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING (BRSR) COMPARED TO OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) REPORTING STANDARDS

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Abstract

India's Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) framework, mandated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in 2021, represents a significant advancement in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting for the top 1,000 listed companies by market capitalization.

A critical component of BRSR is its human rights disclosure requirements under Principle 5 of the National Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBC), which address policies, training, and grievance mechanisms. This study evaluates the effectiveness of BRSR's human rights reporting in comparison to globally recognized ESG frameworks, including the

1. Global Reporting Initiative (GRI),
2. Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB), and
3. Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

Using a mixed-methods approach, the research analyzes 50 BRSR reports from Indian companies for fiscal year 2022–23 alongside 50 ESG reports from global companies adhering to GRI, SASB, and TCFD standards. Qualitative content analysis assesses the depth and quality of human rights disclosures, while quantitative metrics evaluate disclosure completeness using a 0–5 scoring scale. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with ESG consultants and corporate sustainability officers provide insights into implementation challenges.

The findings reveal that BRSR's human rights reporting, while robust in its mandatory scope, lacks the specificity and stakeholder engagement found in GRI and SASB. Only 60% of BRSR reports include quantitative data on human rights training, compared to 85% of GRI reports, and just 30% address supply chain human rights assessments, against 70% for SASB. BRSR reports score an average of 2.8 for disclosure completeness, significantly lower than GRI (4.2) and SASB (3.9).

The absence of mandatory third-party assurance for human rights data further undermines BRSR's credibility. Key challenges include complex supply chains, limited regulatory guidance, and inconsistent





assurance practices. Opportunities for improvement include adopting GRI's detailed human rights indicators, integrating SASB's industry-specific metrics, and leveraging technology for streamlined data collection.

Recommendations propose revising BRSR's Principle 5 to include granular key performance indicators, mandating third-party assurance, and enhancing stakeholder consultation processes to align with global best practices.

This study underscores the need for BRSR to evolve its human rights reporting framework to enhance transparency, comparability, and stakeholder trust, thereby strengthening India's position in global ESG reporting. Future research should explore the impact of these enhancements on corporate accountability and investor confidence in India's sustainability landscape.





VIRTUE WITH CONSEQUENCES: HOW ELITE BELIEFS REINFORCE INEQUALITY THROUGH SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE

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Abstract

Sri Lanka's government abruptly banned synthetic fertilizers in 2021, advocating for a nationwide shift to organic farming. This policy reflected noble environmental ideals championed by educated elites. Yet within months, rice yields dropped, tea exports collapsed, and most importantly, rural farmers, those who could least afford the consequences, faced economic devastation. This disconnect between progressive ideals and lived reality exemplifies a growing phenomenon. Luxury beliefs. Which are 'ideas and opinions that confer status on the upper class at very little cost, while often inflicting costs on the lower classes', as defined by Henderson (2024). Traditional markers of status have now become increasingly accessible to all, so the affluent have shifted from displaying wealth through material goods to signalling it through ideological stances and beliefs that confer them an elevated position, while often proving harmful to the very communities they claim to champion.

This research builds upon Pierre Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence and cultural capital to examine how luxury beliefs function as contemporary tools of social stratification. Drawing from Margaret Samahita's empirical findings that challenge the direct status-signaling function of luxury beliefs, alongside Rob Henderson's foundational work on the concept, this study employs a qualitative analysis of existing literature to explore the mechanisms through which these beliefs operate. The research incorporates Thorstein Veblen's conspicuous consumption theory and Antonio Gramsci's cultural hegemony framework to demonstrate how ideological positions have replaced material goods as markers of distinction. Through a critical examination of the Sri Lankan organic farming crisis as a case study, the analysis reveals how policies rooted in luxury beliefs create what Ulrich Beck terms "unequal risk distribution," where elites remain insulated from consequences while lower classes bear the material costs.

This study argues that luxury beliefs constitute a form of symbolic violence against lower socioeconomic groups, operating through subtle mechanisms that naturalise inequality while appearing progressive. Through thematic analysis of contemporary literature, the research demonstrates that while luxury beliefs may not consistently signal high status as previously theorised, they serve a more insidious function: shifting social and economic risks onto those least equipped to handle them. The study further identifies mechanisms such as pluralistic ignorance, where elites conform to these beliefs for social approval, reinforcing ideological homogeneity in influential institutions.

The research challenges existing assumptions about luxury beliefs as mere status symbols, instead positioning them as mechanisms that maintain class hierarchies through the redistribution of social risk and the normalisation of elite preferences as universal moral imperatives.





This research addresses a critical gap in the traditional discourse surrounding inequality being perpetuated through purely economic means. By highlighting the mechanisms through which ideological means operate as tools of symbolic violence towards increasing class inequality, the study implies that the unchecked dominance of luxury beliefs can lead to misaligned priorities, performative virtue, and deepening class divides, especially in fields of policymaking, education, activism, and corporate culture. The research aims to call for a more nuanced understanding of how social change can be pursued without perpetuating the very inequalities it seeks to address.





CHALLENGES IN AUXILIARY FUEL TRANSITION OF INTEGRATED STEEL SECTOR IN INDIA TO A LOW CARBON PATHWAY: A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

The process of ironmaking by Indian Integrated Steel Plants (ISP), remains the most emissions-intensive process in the iron and steel value chain, contributing to approximately 72% of total CO₂ emissions (Ministry of Steel, 2024). In the Blast Furnace (BF), coke serves both as an energy source and reducing agent. The limited availability of affordable natural gas hinders the expansion of gas-based Direct Reduced Iron (DRI route) amongst ISPs. Despite India's growing dependency on imported high grade coking coal, the Blast Furnace – Basic Oxygen Furnace (BF-BOF) route maintains its position as the most operationally efficient and cost-effective method for producing primary steel at scale. Given the relatively young fleet of operating BFs at Indian ISPs, reliance on the BF-BOF route is expected to persist through 2030–31, both for existing capacity and upcoming expansion projects (OECD, 2025). Alongside economic considerations, the preference is also driven by technical maturity of the process facilitated by decades of operational expertise and a robust raw material supply chain that ensures reliability and continuity. Early stage decarbonization strategy for the sector includes energy efficient interventions such as adoption of renewable energy, best available technologies (BAT) and best operating practices (BOP). Under the latest Gazette notification on mandatory Carbon Capture Trading Scheme (CCTS) obligations, individual Indian ISPs face short term emission intensity reduction targets in the range of 4.4% to 6.3% by FY2026-27 (MoEF&CC, 2025). In this scenario, use of auxiliary fuels by ISPs for both BF and DRI ironmaking presents a promising near-term intervention, having potential for reducing emissions intensity and improving operating efficiency (Ministry of Steel, 2024). However, its sustained adoption depends on ensuring economic viability and establishing reliable supply chains, to avoid disruptions to existing infrastructure and minimize deviation from established operational processes. This study examines the feasibility, challenges, and opportunities of using auxiliary fuels to decarbonize ironmaking in ISPs through 2030–31. It builds on existing technological research documented in literature by integrating qualitative insights from forty (40) key stakeholders across India's integrated iron and steelmaking value chain. These consultations help bridge the gap between theoretical feasibility and practical implementation, uncovering context-specific challenges and operational realities. The auxiliary fuels considered include pulverized coal injection (PCI), biomass, coke oven gas (COG), natural gas, coal bed methane (CBM), compressed biogas (CBG), green hydrogen, and gasified coal or syngas specific to context of Indian ISPs. Although multiple auxiliary fuels can theoretically replace coke in BF or gaseous fuels in DRI ironmaking, their adoption remains limited due to, inter alia, high fuel costs, capital requirements, technical integration challenges, infrastructure reliability, supply constraints, and





competition from other industrial sectors. Based on a comparative multi-criteria assessment across fourteen key material issues tailored to Indian ISPs, PCI emerges as the most viable option through 2030, followed by COG, biomass, natural gas, and CBM. In contrast, syngas, CBG, and green hydrogen rank lowest in terms of near-term feasibility. This study provides actionable insights for policymakers and industry leaders to support auxiliary fuel adoption, enabling a gradual transition toward low-carbon steelmaking.





CLIMATE CHANGE AND BANKING RISK IN INDIA: THE CONTRASTING EFFECTS OF PRIORITY SECTOR LENDING AND DIVERSIFICATION

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Abstract

Introduction: Climate change poses significant threats to financial stability by amplifying credit and liquidity risks in the banking sector. In India, these risks are further intensified by priority sector lending (PSL) mandates, which direct credit to climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture and microenterprises. Public sector banks (PSBs), given their developmental mandates and higher PSL exposure, are particularly vulnerable. Understanding how climate change and PSL interact to affect bank risk, and how diversification strategies can mitigate these risks, is critical in the evolving risk landscape.

Objectives: This study investigates three key questions: (i) how climate change affects credit and liquidity risks in Indian banks; (ii) how PSL obligations amplify these risks; and (iii) whether income and asset diversification can mitigate risks arising from climate change, PSL, and their interaction. The study also examines heterogeneity in risk exposure across public, private, and foreign banks.

Methodology: Using a panel dataset of Indian commercial banks spanning 2005–2020, the study measures credit risk (GNPL, NNPL) and liquidity risk (FGAPR, HQLA) as dependent variables. Climate risk is proxied by weighted temperature and precipitation deviations, while PSL exposure is measured as the share of advances directed to priority sectors. Income and asset diversification are included as moderating variables. The empirical strategy combines fixed-effects regressions, instrumental variable approaches, and system GMM to address endogeneity and capture interactive effects. Bank ownership heterogeneity is assessed through subgroup analyses.

Results: The findings reveal that climate change significantly elevates both credit and liquidity risks, with PSBs facing the greatest vulnerability. PSL obligations exacerbate these risks by exposing banks to sectors with high climate sensitivity and weak repayment capacity, thereby widening the financing gap and depleting HQLAs. The interactive effect of climate change and PSL further compounds risk, particularly in PSBs. Importantly, diversification strategies significantly mitigate these risks: income diversification, through stable non-interest income streams, cushions both credit and liquidity shocks, while asset diversification reduces concentration in high-risk sectors and preserves liquidity buffers. Foreign and private banks, with greater operational flexibility and lower PSL exposure, demonstrate superior risk resilience compared to PSBs.

Implications: The results underscore the urgent need for adaptive risk management in the Indian banking sector, particularly in PSBs. Policymakers should reassess PSL mandates in light of rising climate risks and encourage banks to adopt income and asset diversification strategies as buffers. Enhancing risk assessment frameworks to incorporate climate vulnerabilities and promoting sectoral reallocation toward





resilient, sustainable investments can strengthen systemic stability. The findings offer valuable insights for regulators, bank managers, and researchers on managing the compounded risks of climate change and directed lending in emerging economies.



POLITICAL SKILL AS AN INCLUSION RESOURCE: A TWO-WAVE MIXED-METHOD STUDY ON PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AMID ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS IN HIGH-POWER-DISTANCE WORKPLACES

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Abstract

Organizational politics (OP) often erodes trust and psychological safety, particularly in hierarchical and power-dense workplaces. Building on conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989), this mixed-method study explores whether political skill mediates the negative effects of perceived organizational politics (POP) on psychological safety, and whether inclusive leadership strengthens this resource-based mechanism. Study 1 uses, phenomenological interviews focusing on 16 with mid-level IT/ITeS professionals uncovering lived experiences of navigating workplace politics and leadership behavior. Study 2 employs a two-wave, time-lagged survey (N = 469) for the wave 1 in which the participants completed validated measures of POP (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997), political skill (Ferris et al., 2005), and inclusive leadership (Carmeli et al., 2010). For the wave 2 scheduled four weeks later, the same participants responded to Edmondson's (1999) psychological safety scale. Data were analysed using structural equation modeling, reveals that political skill fully mediates the relationship between POP and psychological safety. The meta inferences of qualitative themes reinforce these findings, illustrating how proactive political skill and inclusive leadership behaviors (such as recognition and support) jointly foster resilience and well-being. These findings underscore how political skill and inclusive leadership together foster social inclusion and psychological safety, which are critical for employee well-being. This study has rich theoretical and practical implications reframing political skill as a dynamic and inclusion-oriented resource in politically charged settings.



HARMONIZING GREEN HUMAN CAPITAL FOR SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS IN INDIA

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Abstract

This study explores the strategic role of green human capital in driving sustainable success among social start-up enterprises in India. Specifically, it investigates how green training, green human resource management (GHRM) practices, and administrative engagement contribute to the development of green human capital and their subsequent influence on green performance outcomes. In an era where sustainability is both a global necessity and a competitive differentiator, understanding how start-ups can integrate environmentally responsible practices into their core human resource strategies is critical. The paper employs a purposive sampling method to select 193 social start-ups operating across different sectors in India. Data collection was conducted using structured questionnaires that were pre-tested and validated for consistency and reliability. To analyze the hypothesized relationships among variables, partial least squares regression (PLS) was utilized, allowing for the evaluation of complex causal pathways between green training, GHRM practices, administrative involvement, green human capital development, and green performance.

The findings reveal that green training initiatives, robust GHRM practices, and active administrative involvement significantly enhance the development of green human capital within start-ups. This enriched green human capital, in turn, has a strong positive impact on various green performance metrics, indicating that environmentally focused human resource strategies are critical drivers of organizational sustainability. Notably, the study emphasizes the indispensable role of administrative and governmental engagement, not only as facilitators of policy and financial support but also as monitors of sustainability performance. This reinforces the idea that sustainable start-up success is not solely reliant on internal capabilities but also heavily influenced by supportive institutional frameworks.

Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of embedding continuous green training and development programs into organizational practices, suggesting that such initiatives help in cultivating a workforce that is environmentally aware, competent, and aligned with broader sustainability goals. Importantly, the study identifies the need for sustained administrative commitment through policy-level backing and systematic performance assessments to ensure that green initiatives are not just symbolic but yield measurable environmental benefits. While the study focus is confined to Indian start-up enterprises, thereby limiting its generalizability across other geographies or business contexts. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce potential biases, which should be considered when interpreting the results. Nonetheless, this research contributes novel perspectives to the green HRM literature by demonstrating the synergistic impact of green training, HRM practices, and administrative involvement in fostering green human capital. The study highlights the imperative for start-ups to





strategically invest in green-oriented human resources and for policymakers to establish mechanisms that support and monitor such transitions towards sustainability.





DRIVING CHANGE WITH INTELLIGENCE: A REVIEW OF AI APPLICATIONS IN SMART VEHICLES FOR SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) for smart vehicles marks an evolutionary shift in sustainable commutation and mobility systems. This paper is a comprehensive review on AI application in smart vehicles, highlighting the emerging interface between AI technologies for smart vehicles. We used a hybrid approach that included bibliometric analysis and a domain-based systematic review to examine 263 peer-reviewed publications from Web of Science, Scopus, and manual search. Our data show an exponential increase in publications between 2019 and 2025, highlighting the growing interest and noteworthy developments in the use of AI in the study of smart vehicles. This review offers a thorough grasp of the prevalent theoretical frameworks, financial scenarios, important variables and their relationships, data sources, and research methodologies used in recent AI and smart vehicles studies by drawing on the Theory-Context-Construct-Method (TCCM) review framework and identifies promising directions for further study. Specifically, four key themes have been identified: (1) AI Algorithms and System Performance (2) User Acceptance and Behavioral Aspects (3) Policy, Industry, and Stakeholder Perspectives (4) Innovation and Emerging Technologies. Lastly, this review examines future study options and points out gaps that have been missed by previous studies. This study is a vital resource for scholars, business professionals, and legislators who want to employ AI in smart vehicle research in a responsible and efficient manner by providing insights on the strategic integration of AI in smart vehicles.





“GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF PRACTICES, OUTCOMES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS”

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Abstract

In recent years, environmental sustainability has become a core strategic objective for organizations worldwide. Among various sustainability-driven organizational initiatives, Green Human Resource Management (Green–HRM) has garnered increasing attention from both academia and industry. Green HRM refers to the integration of environmental management into human resource policies and practices to promote sustainable behaviors and outcomes within organizations. It encompasses green recruitment, training, performance management, employee engagement, and reward systems aimed at encouraging pro-environmental behavior among employees. This paper presents a systematic review of the literature on Green HRM, aiming to consolidate key insights from existing research, identify outcomes associated with its implementation, and highlight future research directions. Drawing upon peer-reviewed articles, conference proceedings, and conceptual papers published, this review analyses how Green HRM practices have evolved and the extent to which they contribute to organizational sustainability. The review is structured around three key dimensions. Firstly, the paper explores the major Green HRM practices adopted across sectors, including green recruitment, green selection, green training and development, environmentally focused performance evaluations, and eco-friendly employee engagement strategies. It also evaluates the role of top management support, organizational culture, and policy frameworks in facilitating these practices. Secondly, the paper categorizes outcomes at individual, organizational, and societal levels. At the employee level, Green HRM has been linked with increased environmental awareness, green behavior, and organizational citizenship behavior for the environment. At the organizational level, firms report improved corporate reputation, innovation in sustainable practices, and enhanced sustainable performance. Lastly, the paper points out a number of gaps in the existing body of knowledge. With little empirical support, the majority of current research is conceptual or exploratory. Future research could benefit from longitudinal studies, cross–industry comparisons, and the development of integrated theoretical frameworks that combine HRM and environmental management perspectives. Furthermore, there is a need to explore the moderating roles of leadership, organizational culture, and technology in strengthening the impact of Green HRM. In addition to highlighting the strategic role that HRM plays in promoting environmental change, this review provides pertinent insights for academics, practitioners, and policymakers. It also gives a roadmap for future research and organizational implementation.





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FROM LITERACY TO INDEPENDENCE: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT FOR WORKING WOMEN

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the interrelationships among key variables that influence financial independence among working women. The purpose is to build a conceptual model that integrates diverse aspects such as financial literacy, financial behaviour, financial attitude, digital financial knowledge and retirement planning. This is a conceptual paper based on extensive literature review drawn from behavioural finance, sociology, personal finance, psychology and financial planning. The model proposes testable hypothesis and suggests using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) for future empirical validation.

The paper proposes that financial independence is influenced by five core constructs viz financial literacy along with the factor's financial behaviour, financial attitude and financial skills (digital financial knowledge) and retirement planning. The study also working to suggest that mediating and moderating variables (financial confidence and the family support) plays a significant role in understanding the phenomenon holistically. As a conceptual model, the paper does not include empirical testing or data collection. The findings are theoretical and subject to validation through quantitative studies in future.

The model is useful for policymakers, financial institutions, employers and many working to improve financial well-being among women. It can guide intervention design and financial literacy programs tailored specifically to working women's needs. The proposed model would provide a solid foundation for empirical studies and in future can operationalize the constructs to validate relationships using quantitative techniques such as SEM.

The study will surely add value through integrating diverse theoretical perspective, focusing specifically on working women in the context of financial independence offering a holistic and testable conceptual framework.





LEVERAGING AGENTIC AI AND LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS FOR PREDICTIVE ESG ACCOUNTING AND QUANTUM-RESILIENT FINANCIAL RISK MODELING IN DEFI ECOSYSTEMS

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Abstract

Decentralized Finance (DeFi) ecosystems, powered by blockchain, have revolutionized financial systems, introducing opportunities and risks, including quantum computing threats to cryptographic security. Concurrently, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) metrics are critical for sustainable business practices. This research proposes a novel framework integrating Agentic AI and Large Language Models (LLMs) to develop predictive ESG accounting and quantum-resilient financial risk models for DeFi platforms. By combining generative AI's natural language processing with agentic AI's autonomous decision-making, this study addresses sustainability, inclusivity, and financial stability in decentralized markets. Traditional accounting and risk models struggle with DeFi's dynamic, transparent, and volatile nature. Existing ESG frameworks lack real-time adaptability for decentralized protocols, and quantum computing poses emerging risks to blockchain security. This research asks: How can Agentic AI and LLMs create predictive ESG accounting and quantum-resilient risk models to enhance sustainability and inclusivity in DeFi ecosystems? The framework employs a hybrid AI approach, where autonomous agents monitor DeFi transactions and ESG data, generative models process unstructured data to extract ESG insights and forecast quantum threats, and a multi-agent system optimizes ESG-compliant, quantum-resilient. Simulated DeFi datasets show a 23% improvement in predictive accuracy for ESG related and quantum-resilient risk modeling compared to traditional models. This framework bridges profitability and purpose by integrating ESG metrics and quantum resilience into DeFi decision-making. It promotes inclusivity through equitable token access and sustainability via low-carbon protocols, empowering organizations to navigate DeFi complexities. By leveraging Agentic AI and LLMs, this research redefines ESG accounting and quantum-resilient risk modeling, offering scalable solutions for systemic change, aligning with the conference's mission to foster collaboration and actionable knowledge for sustainable, inclusive financial systems.





A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND SOLUTION FRAMEWORK FOR INBOUND INVENTORY ROUTING PROBLEMS

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Abstract

Joint decision-making to derive an optimal plan for both inventory management and vehicle routing activities in upstream or inbound logistics is termed the inbound inventory routing problem (I-IRP). An I-IRP typically involves coordinating deliveries from multiple suppliers that provide semi-finished products or components to a manufacturing plant. The classical formulation of the I-IRP aims to develop an integrated mathematical model that minimizes overall inventory holding and transportation costs while subject to various operational constraints within the upstream supply chain. I-IRP models are applicable across a wide range of industries, particularly where a manufacturer centrally manages inbound logistics. For instance, in the automotive sector, an automobile manufacturer often collects components from suppliers and centrally manages inventory and transportation in the supply network. This study is motivated by the real-life application potentials of I-IRPs in the inbound logistics network of manufacturing industries, such as automobiles, electronics, and pharmaceuticals. Despite their practical importance, I-IRPs have received limited scholarly attention compared to the more extensively studied outbound inventory routing problems (O-IRPs). While O-IRPs primarily address uncertainties in customer demand within downstream or outbound logistics, I-IRPs inherently deal with uncertainties on both the demand and supply sides. Additionally, I-IRPs may incorporate supplier-specific constraints such as supply capacity limits as well as various cost components, such as supplier management, ordering, and procurement costs, alongside inventory holding and routing costs. These added complexities often make I-IRPs more challenging to model and solve than their outbound counterparts. This study provides a comprehensive review of I-IRPs to address a significant gap in the literature, synthesizing recent developments, introducing a unified classification scheme, proposing a structured and practical solution framework, presenting representative formulations for both deterministic and stochastic settings, and outlining future research directions. The study reveals that many existing I-IRP models are built on overly restrictive assumptions, limiting their real-world applicability. To overcome this, the proposed framework offers a step-by-step guide to support researchers and practitioners in addressing realistic I-IRP challenges. Moreover, the study critically examines key problem assumptions and their implications in practice, formulation approaches, predominant solution methodologies, the sensitivity of models to potential parameters, and the challenges of implementation across different industries.





ACCREDITATION IS NOT ENOUGH: WHY QUALITY CONTROL & ASSURANCE SYSTEMS MATTER MORE THAN WE THINK

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Abstract

The evolving higher education landscape in India, institutional accreditation and quality control measures have transformed into a vital device for ensuring educational integrity, stakeholder trust and teaching-learning outcomes (Fernandes & Singh, 2021). Regardless, the widespread implementation of accreditation frameworks in Indian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), still there is a significant disparity persists between regulatory compliance and authentic academic transformation (Acevedo-De-Los-Ríos & Rondinel-Oviedo, 2021). This ongoing research examines the interrelationship between higher education accreditation and quality control and assurance systems and their combined impact on the teaching-learning effectiveness, internal governance and HEI credibility. The study integrates both national and international accreditation frameworks. The research study develops a multi-variable model, which consists of accreditation as the independent variable, quality control & assurance as the moderator and teaching-learning effectiveness as the dependent outcome.

Methodologically, the study employs a mixed-methods technique. The quantitative component incorporates perceptual data gathered through structured questionnaires distributed to faculty, administrators and students across various higher education institutions. Along with it, qualitative analysis of HEI's accreditation records, internal quality manuals and reports, which are available in the public domain. The data will be analysed using advanced statistical tools such as Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Partial Least Squares Structural Modelling (PLS-SEM) through R, in order to evaluate the strength and direction of the hypothesised relationships among the variables.

Preliminary patterns of the research suggest that higher education institutions with integrated internal quality control & assurance systems (Sofyani et al., 2023), such as systematic curriculum evaluations, decentralised decision-making systems and transparency in communication with all the stakeholders (Bougherira et al., 2024 and Iqbal et al., 2023), it can help to achieve more effectiveness in achieving the desired outcome of the accreditation (Aburizaizah, 2022; Asiyai, 2020; Attree et al., 2025; Hou et al., 2025; Ito, 2022; Prasad et al., 2018 and Ulker & Bakioglu, 2018). However, these HEIs not only meet external standards but also cultivate the culture of trust, innovation and academic excellence (Romanowski, 2021 and Woodside, 2019). On the other side, if the accreditation is pursued as a symbolic endeavour without working on the internal quality systems, then it adversely affects the teaching and learning outcomes, and it seems unsustainable (Acevedo-De-Los-Ríos & Rondinel-Oviedo, 2021).





The study will contribute to the ongoing discussion on institutional accountability, emphasising that external validation must be aligned with the internal governance to facilitate authentic education transformation.

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MICROAGGRESSION RESEARCH AND UNDERSTANDING ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT THROUGH BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

In a world that claims inclusivity,

I stand on the outskirts, craving unity.

Marginalized, ignored, and unseen.

Our voices silenced, like they have never been.

- "The pain of exclusion" by Dr. Manju Sen, Lecturer, DAV Schools

Purpose: The poem's lines portray the painful paradox of the world where marginalized communities are left out or ignored despite its promises of togetherness. It further echoes the voices and sentiments of many marginalized communities who suffer from exclusion in a world that promises inclusivity but often fails to practice it meaningfully. So, this study aims to examine the development of microaggression literature and emphasize its importance in the Indian context. Microaggression, which is a subtle discriminatory behaviour aimed towards marginalized individuals, can be detrimental to their emotional and physical well-being. Especially when organizations are stressing the importance of inclusive workplaces, microaggressions can harm employees' well-being. In most Indian workplaces, these kinds of subtle discriminations are common occurrences. So, this study will guide future researchers in pursuing further studies in this field.

Methodology: The initial search, conducted on 28th March 2025 at 6:25 AM, yielded 1,304 publications. To refine the results, filters were applied to include only English-language publications, specifically articles, book chapters, and conference papers. The search was further narrowed by optimizing keywords to focus on "microaggression," "diversity," "equity," "inclusion," and "racial microaggression," resulting in a final set of 747 relevant publications. VOS viewer software and R Studio were used to create visualizations and tables.

Findings: Research on microaggression has gradually increased after the publication of seminal work by Sue and colleagues (2007), with a notable surge observed between 2020 and 2023, with the highest





number recorded in 2024. This shows that microaggressions have become a topic of interest for many researchers. However, while the United States leads the list with the maximum number of publications, studies conducted in India account for only 2% of the total studies. This indicates a significant gap and a need for future research.

Theoretical and practical implications: After reviewing the literature on microaggression in the Indian context, this paper creates a diversity dimension table to guide future research. If studies are conducted based on these dimensions, the theoretical contribution to microaggression will be enriched. Further, bridging these studies to a business perspective will help create awareness in the organization and ways to mitigate this behaviour within the workplace.

Conclusion: In India, diversity is widely celebrated, with former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru famously referring to "unity in diversity" in his book *The Discovery of India*. While we take pride in our diversity, there are forces at play that undermine unity or inclusionary practices. While a substantial body of literature addresses various forms of discrimination, it may be time to explore these issues through the lens of microaggressions.





WEALTH EFFECT: THE IMPACT OF CAPITAL GAINS FROM REAL ASSETS (LAND AND GOLD) AND EQUITIES ON CONSUMPTION AND AGGREGATE DEMAND IN INDIA

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of capital gains from real assets, including real estate and gold, and equities, on private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) in India. Unlike advanced economies where wealth effects mainly arise from equities, Indian household wealth is largely concentrated in tangible assets such as property and gold. Understanding the price movements of these assets is therefore essential for analyzing consumption patterns in the Indian context.

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach. A Vector Error Correction Model (VECM) analyses quarterly data from the financial years 2011-12 to 2023-24, exploring the relationships among PFCE, GDP, gold prices, housing prices, and the Nifty 50 equity index. Alongside this, a primary household survey investigates consumer perceptions of wealth changes, spending behavior, and responses to both realized and unrealized capital gains, as well as shifts in interest rates.

The findings confirm significant wealth effects on consumption. A one percent increase in GDP is associated with a rise of ₹17,313 crore in PFCE, making income the strongest driver. Asset price gains also have meaningful effects: a one percent increase in the Nifty 50 index, housing prices, and gold prices leads to increases in PFCE of ₹7,942 crore, ₹6,491 crore, and ₹5,050 crore, respectively. The VECM forecasts PFCE with high accuracy, achieving a forecast error of only -2.86 percent for the first quarter of FY 2025.

Survey results support these quantitative findings, showing that moderate changes in interest rates have limited immediate effects on consumption. However, lower rates encourage households to shift savings towards equities, gold, and real estate. Interestingly, the correlation between realized capital gains and higher spending is weak, suggesting that unrealized wealth changes strongly influence consumption decisions. This highlights the limitations of relying solely on tax data to measure wealth effects.

The study concludes that capital gains, including those not yet realized, play a significant role in shaping household consumption in India. Policymakers should therefore pay close attention to asset price trends, as they can serve as important signals for shifts in aggregate demand. Despite its contributions, the study faces some limitations, such as constraints in data availability. Future research could improve upon this work by using richer micro-level data and investigating sector-specific responses to asset price changes.





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THE RISE OF ESG MEASURING URBAN GREENNESS IN SMART CITIES

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Abstract

As global urbanisation accelerates, the integration of technology in city management presents novel opportunities to enhance environmental sustainability and citizen well-being. Urban greenness plays an important role in enhancing the quality of life for citizens by offering a wide range of ecological, psychological, socio-cultural, and economic benefits. From the literature review, we found that no researcher has focused on finding out the relationship between these ESG factors for Indian Smart Cities. This study investigates the intersection of the main key areas of ESG factors with urban greenness within the context of smart cities, i.e., clean environment, wellbeing of citizens, zero hunger, and equal opportunity, etc. To conduct this study, we used the PLS-SEM technique, where we gathered responses from 148 people all over India. The results of the study indicate the people's perspective on ESG measures, strategic implementation, budget planning, and public awareness. The strategic implication of the study is to shape a better understanding of ESG measures for citizen well-being, urban sustainability, long-term climate resilience, and citizens' living standards. The findings of the study provide valuable insights into citizen priorities, highlighting the potential for ESG implications to foster more transparent, accountable, and impactful urban greenness strategies aligned with broader sustainability goals.





ANALYZING TRAFFIC CONGESTION THROUGH IOT: A STUDY ON PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract

Now a day's traffic congestion becomes severe problem for the metropolitan cities over the world. Developed countries takes many initiatives to overcome this problem, like modification of their traffic policies and the advancement of the signaling technology etc. But metro cities in the developing countries are still severely facing the issue of traffic congestion, traffic congestion is costing people both their precious time and hard-earned income. To take this into consideration, the study focused on the public perception about the advanced technology (i.e. IoT and drones) used by Bangalore traffic police for evaluating real-time observations. Previous literature focused on technical effectiveness—like UAVs, fog computing, and AI—for traffic optimization. However, the literature rarely addressed public perception, ethical concerns, or awareness-acceptance gaps, the work is an attempt to fill this gap. For this research, a mixed-method study was conducted on IoT and drone-based traffic systems in Bengaluru. The research involved interviews with traffic officers, live drone observation, and a public survey of 60 respondents across key traffic zones to understand public perception, awareness, and acceptance. The PLS-SEM model used to get the relationship between the variables. The results showed that system effectiveness and reliability are the strongest predictors of positive public perception. This study will help the policymakers to focuses on the variables like awareness campaigns, pilot demos, and addressing safety/privacy concerns to hike the public trust on advanced technologies. The future scope is to extend the study to other areas in Bengaluru.





TRIADIC SYNERGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY: A COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK LINKING CONSUMERS, ENTERPRISES, AND GOVERNMENTS TO SDGS ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

The escalating global demand driven by population growth and excessive consumerism has led to environmental degradation (Nangia et al., 2023). The impending ecological cataclysm makes SC trends more critical than ever (Saari et al., 2021). SC alludes to practices and policies that enhance environmental and social performance by reshaping consumption patterns over time to achieve long-term ecological equilibrium, while also improving societal well-being, physical health, and overall happiness (Dawkins et al., 2019). SC, thus, is not just a consumer choice but a system shift to sustainability. Further, SC is closely aligned with achieving the 17 SDGs (Lim, 2023; Boluk et al., 2019). SDGs are a set of universal goals that represent a blueprint for a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. Understanding the link between SC and SDGs is critical as global population growth and rapid urbanization are increasing the demand for products and services and placing unprecedented pressure on natural systems (Dhandra, 2019). SC can help break the chain between economic growth and environmental degradation and thus is an essential tool for shifting to a more sustainable and resilient global economy (Dawkins et al., 2019) and ultimately fulfilling the SDGs. This study addresses this critical issue through holistic approach that integrate economic, social, and environmental dimensions. While also emphasizing the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders—consumers, enterprises, and governments—in achieving the SDGs. This multidisciplinary investigation encompasses a variety of contexts and fields to provide a more holistic structure for interpreting and promoting sustainable development. This broad review provides valuable insights into the research landscape emphasizing the role of circular economy, food waste, and recycling practices to mitigate GHG emissions, Integration of sustainability in value chains planning, cognitive and affective drivers influencing SC behaviour and role of policymaking, carbon taxation, and stakeholder collaboration in sustainable development achievement (Guo et al., 2024; Srividya et al., 2024; Chad, 2023). Additionally the study highlight theme based gaps in context to sustainable supply chain management, impact of policy and regulations, technological innovation and consumer behavior and motivation (Koilo, 2025; Qi & Yu, 2025; Van Zanten & Putintseva, 2025; Li et al., 2025). Addressing these research gaps is imperative for advancing the understanding of SC and its vital contribution to fulfilling the SDGs. Further, we provide a Sustainable Consumption and SDGs framework which adopts a system-thinking lens incorporating; Micro-level which centres on Emotional responses, smart-technologies, digital-nudges, Meso-level explores organizational practices such as Technological





innovation, circular supply chains, sustainable business models, sustainability reporting. Lastly, Macro-level emphasizes government interventions, policy design, educational campaigns. Operationalization of this framework enables policymakers, organizations, and consumers to drive systemic changes toward SC, translating into tangible impacts on the global SDGs while bolstering economic resilience, ecological balance, and social well-being. This holistic and action-oriented approach positions the framework as a cornerstone for practical interventions to make sustainability transitions possible, inclusive and impactful. Lastly, the study provides significant theoretical and practical implications to strengthen the scholarly foundation and provide actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners striving for a sustainable future.





MEMORY RETENTION AND BRAND RECALL IN SHORT VS. LONG-FORM VIDEOS: A PILOT STUDY

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Abstract

This study investigates the differing user-memory and recall between short-form videos on Instagram Reels and long-form videos on YouTube. It analyses recall patterns and explores implications for brand engagement and social behaviour. The hypothesis posits that although short-form content captures rapid user attention, it may be less conducive to memory retention and brand recall compared to longer, narrative-driven formats (Chiossi et al., 2023; Varshaa & Shreya, 2024; Shekhar et al., 2017). Brands allocate substantial resources to short-form content to capture consumer attention, which makes this question increasingly important. The shift toward rapid, fragmented content consumption may have broader implications for memory, attention, and consumer decision-making (Digital Attention Economy Research Team, 2024; Călinescu, 2024).

A review of existing literature indicates that short-form video platforms, due to rapid context-switching, impair intention recall and memory compared to long-form or traditional media (Chiossi et al., 2023; Park, 2024; Pranathi, 2025; Song & Chaudhry, 2025). Brand recall is a key driver of brand lift, with authenticity and creativity enhancing engagement and memorability (MITS, 2024; Nielsen Research Team, 2023; Wen et al., 2024). Social media engagement, especially peer interactions and comment activity, influences psychological well-being and memory (Saggar, 2021; Sharifian & Zahodne, 2021), while constant exposure to fragmented content can cause cognitive overload and reduce retention (Călinescu, 2024; Pranathi, 2025). Neurophysiological studies further show that short-form video addiction harms attention and executive control, whereas longer videos foster sustained engagement and behavioural influence (Digital Information World, 2025; Lin et al., 2022; Mahmoudi et al., 2024; Yan et al., 2024).

A survey of 118 college students (aged 16-26) examined how content format influences memory, engagement, and brand interaction, assessing viewing habits, recall rates, genre preferences, social influence, comment activity, brand recall, and content preference. Statistical analysis compared recall and time spent across formats, while qualitative responses highlighted recurring themes.

Findings showed short-form content had significantly lower recall: 41% remembered only 0–20% of reels, 38% recalled 21–40%. In contrast, 42% recalled 61–80% of YouTube videos, 15% remembered over 80%. Mean recall for short-form videos was 30.65% versus 57.75% for long-form videos ($t = -9.5$, $p < 0.001$). Most spent 2–4 hours daily on reels and 0–2 hours on long-form content, with significant difference in time spent ($t = 2.65$, $p = 0.008$). Brand engagement was high, with 51.7% recalling a branded





reel and 68.6% recalling a brand comment. Social influence was notable, as many were likely to interact with content liked by friends. Comedy, educational, and travel genres were most memorable, and brands like Swiggy, Blinkit, and Zomato stood out for authentic, witty engagement. Participants preferred genuine, spontaneous branded content.

Limitations include sample size, demographic focus, self-reported data and a lack of generalizability. While short-form content drives initial engagement, it is less effective (as a standalone) for memory retention and brand recall than long-form content, which supports deeper recall and sustained brand impact. Marketers should balance authentic storytelling in both formats and leverage social and peer-driven elements to maximise engagement and recall.





HEDGING BEHAVIOR AND FINTECH ADOPTION OF INDIAN INVESTORS IN INVESTMENT DECISION- MAKING DURING MARKET CYCLE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE

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Abstract

The Indian investors make investment decisions in complex situations as they are exposed to national and international news market information announcements and policy changes on regular basis Investor behaviour can be defined as how they receive and interpret information in the social media and use of fintech and take investment decisions. The research study on understanding how Indian investors utilized hedging strategies and fintech solution to make informed investment decision. The assumption that investors have access to complete knowledge of the market and the potential Investor behaviour studies have been directed in explaining investment decisions with proper understanding combining the topics of hedging behavior, fintech adoption, market cycle with social media influence investing in financial markets on a macro level and examining the decision process of individuals and groups at a micro level. In this context this study explores the investor behavior would change unpredicted to prediction in financial market. The fear amongs investors are minimize after the study of research from financial market.





DOES INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY MATTER: A STUDY OF IMPACT ON FIRM PERFORMANCE OF INDIAN LISTED COMPANIES

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Abstract

The concept of responsibility in the context of firms, has been traditionally linked with their Corporate Social Responsibility. As part of responsible business conduct, the inclusion of digital processes has led to the genesis of the term Corporate Digital Responsibility or CDR through which a firm creates digital trust. Data privacy and cybersecurity form part of CDR and have social and governance implications. Laying emphasis on a strong IT framework and policy demonstrates a business' concern towards the sanctity of its internal data as well of that of its stakeholders. Instances of data compromises rose from 321 in 2006 to 1108 in 2020 as declared by the US securities market regulator. In recent years, regulatory bodies across developed countries have highlighted the importance of cybersecurity disclosures.(Li et al. (2020) Héroux & Fortin (2020) Radu & Smaili (2022)).

In India, disclosures on IT policy including cybersecurity and data privacy are part of the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) disclosures. Given the growing importance of IT security and negative impacts of breaches, we examine its contribution towards a firm's performance. Based on our analysis of 1091 Indian-listed non-financial firms for the period fiscal year 2018-2023, we use panel regression and find that the absence of IT security policies results in a negative impact on firm performance. Thus, firms should consider implementing IT policies. We also find that the firms that have IT security readiness experience a positive impact on performance. Our findings are controlled for industry and year effects. We further conclude that smaller sized firms stand to gain from being IT security ready as compared to their larger counterparts. While the findings remain sector agnostic, conducting a sectoral analysis reveals that firms in the industrial space which includes capital goods, commercial supplies and transportation particularly and real estate firms, witness a positive effect between IT security policies and firm performance. The results are robust when an alternative method like GMM is employed.

The study contributes to the existing literature on sustainability reporting and corporate digital responsibility in several ways. This is one of the very few studies investigating the role of IT policies on the firm performance of Indian firms. Majority of the studies have alluded towards the economic loss related to breaches however, such literature is focused on sectors which are heavily reliant on data wherein such data and/or IT infrastructure is core to operations or regulation mandates these policies. In addition, the BRSR requirements are evolving with the latest change in guidelines being as recent as December 2024. Existing literature has focused on the popular indicators related to each pillar of ESG and hardly on the IT security policies. Moreover, with projected growth patterns levels of the Indian economy, the need to have stringent governance around the same to protect value is high. The study points towards the





significance of building data privacy and cybersecurity policies based on the Indian context thus demonstrating it as a responsible business practice which secures the firm performance.

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CONTEXTUALIZING ESG RATINGS IN LITERATURE– INTERPRETATIONS FOR CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) Ratings industry performs the role of an information intermediary between the domains of corporate sustainability and ESG investing. The industry seeks to address the challenge of assessing a firm's corporate sustainability performance (CSP) to enable the investors to identify firms which are aligned with their sustainable investment goals. The ESG Ratings industry faces challenges that are primarily linked to the quagmire of imprecise conceptualization, and framework and measurement of sustainability.

ESG Ratings feature prominently in a wide spectrum of academic literature. Given the disparity in interpretations of sustainability, there is a clear imperative to contextualize the ESG Ratings in the academic research to identify the concerns and inconsistencies in their applications. The emergence of responsible investing, to begin with, and sustainable finance, thereafter, brought to the fore the language of risk and returns to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) universe. There has been a shift in perspective - from examining the impact of a firm's actions on its stakeholders, to the risk and return fallouts on a firm on account of E, S and G factors. This led to the evolution of two somewhat conflicting perspectives of corporate sustainability - the 'Impact Perspective', and the 'Risk Perspective'. This poses a significant challenge for the ESG raters. The differences in motivations and interpretations of ESG by the investors, and the ESG Ratings industry, require the academia to correctly gauge how CSP is interpreted by the ESG Ratings.

Against this backdrop, the paper relies on the extant literature to find out the answers to the research questions pertaining to contextualization of ESG ratings in academic literature from stakeholders' perspective, especially in the context of its inference on CSP. The literature has been segmented into two categories: a) the research which relies on the ESG ratings, and b) the research on the ESG ratings itself. Using appropriate keyword strings search and filtration, 128 papers are identified.

The research using ESG ratings contextualises the literature under various themes - drivers of the firm CSP, linkage between CSP and corporate financial performance (CFP), and non-financial impact of CSP. Most commonly, ESG ratings are used as a proxy for CSP, but how they indicate CSP is not clearly explored. Their usage in literature highlights the different nuances of CSP and the challenges of defining CSP tightly. This brings forth the methodological divergences of arriving at ESG ratings and the numerous ways in which they are applied in research. Increasingly, the ratings industry is aligned to the financial





materiality approach. But in case of research, a finer distinction between this and the impact interpretation of CSP is not always clearly embedded in the research design.

The analysis of the extant literature highlights various conceptual gaps and inconsistencies in the application of ESG ratings across research, questions on interpretations of ESG ratings to define CSP, and the different conceptualizations of CSP. Future research directions are highlighted.





CAPABILITY BUILDING INITIATIVES FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN A LARGE ORGANISATION

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Abstract

Introduction: A large manufacturing organisation has undertaken massive expansion and digitisation efforts in line with Government of India's National Steel Policy of achieving 300 MT by 2030. The company is undergoing various changes for creating enablers for a successful transformation.

This abstract discusses about the successful change management of Digital Transformation through various HR/HR-L&D interventions based on ideas of creating change readiness and sustaining the transformation in an organic manner internally by the organisation.

Objectives of these interventions are focussed on creating buzz in the organisation as well as assess the readiness by identifying skill gaps, align with Ministry of Electronics and IT(Meity) and nasscom joint initiatives of FutureSkills Prime for ensuring baseline understanding in the organisation, generate a sense of pride in the company's progress in the domain, further create an environment of continuous learning by leveraging established tools such as Reverse Mentoring, build internal capability through functional, technological and role-based capacity building initiatives.

Methodology: involves collaboration internal Digital Maturity Assessment covering more than 20% employees in the organisation, organisation-wide drive for baseline understanding, creating interest and identifying pool of talents to drive the transformation, establishing Reverse Mentoring in the company for smooth transition, Physical and online workshops, partnering with premier institutes, setting up Labs based on emerging technologies such as extended reality etc.

Result: The Company is expected to smoothly accelerate its digital transformation journey by ensuring that a digitally proficient workforce is in place thus enabling the necessary cultural shift. In the long run, it will create a more resilient and responsible organisation capable of leveraging technology for improved decision-making and operational excellence.





CASE STUDY – GOVERNMENT E-MARKETPLACE (GEM): RESHAPING INDIA'S PUBLIC PROCUREMENT LANDSCAPE

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Abstract

Problem Statement: India's public procurement system was a large-scale operation, accounting for 15-20% of the country's yearly GDP, presents significant opportunities for enhanced efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity, particularly for MSMEs and SC/ST enterprises.

A key area for development was the absence of a unified, comprehensive public procurement platform. This led to a diversity of procedures and rules across central and state government entities like DGS&D, Defence, PSUs and Railways, creating a complex ecosystem. Challenges also included the potential for delays in the procurement cycle, particularly in stages like need assessment and budget approvals, and a recognized need for standardizing bid documents to enhance clarity and accountability.

Furthermore, the system sought to overcome issues related to perceived unfair practices, potential for corruption, and anti-competitive elements such as collusive bidding, aiming to elevate the quality of public services and accelerate development. Strengthening the engagement of domestic MSMEs was another vital objective. These aspects collectively highlighted the immense potential for a strategic digital transformation to foster a more equitable and dynamic public procurement environment in India.

Solution and Implementation: This case explores how the Indian government digitally restructured its public procurement system through the Government e-Marketplace (GeM), launched on August 9, 2016. Conceived as an end-to-end online Government-to-Business (G2B) platform with a vision for a "transparent, efficient and inclusive marketplace", GeM was driven by strong political commitment and aligned with "Digital India" initiative. Its implementation leveraged Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) and drew insights from global successes like South Korea's KONEPS and Singapore's GeBIZ. GeM features a contactless, cashless, and paperless system, notably streamlining vendor registration from 6-8 months to just 20 minutes via eSign, Aadhaar, and PAN, and incorporating advanced e-commerce functionalities.

Impact and Implications: GeM has significantly transformed India's procurement landscape. Through listing of more than 11,115 product categories and providing multiple procurement functionalities, GeM facilitated cumulative transactions exceeding ₹ 1,449,201 crore till July 2025, resulting in average government savings of at least 15-20% (up to 56%), and boosting inclusivity with MSMEs contributing over 45% of sales by value. GeM strives to improve openness, efficiency, and inclusion in public procurement. It assures competitive pricing through open bidding, and makes it easier for SMEs, start-ups, and women entrepreneurs to obtain capital, all of which are consistent with the goals of Digital India, Make in India, and Startup India.





Government is making significant efforts to bring the change which they have aimed through GeM platform, however, despite these concerted efforts, there are several key challenges that hinder the smooth and complete adoption of GeM such as resistance to change, issue of integration with existing procurement systems, ensuring product quality, and timely grievance redressal. Ensuring digital literacy and accessibility across all stakeholders, particularly in remote and rural areas, is an issue. Many small vendors and government authorities may not have the necessary skills or infrastructure to use the platform properly.

“GeM” not only demonstrates the potential of digital transformation in public systems but also serves as a replicable model for other developing economies.





ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF ECO-LABELLING ON CONSUMER CHOICES IN E-COMMERCE LOGISTICS

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Abstract

With increasing e-commerce comes the environmental price tag, which is most clearly seen in warehousing, packaging, shipping, and that final-mile delivery. The carbon footprint of these logistics operations is a significant barrier to sustainability efforts. This requires some outside-the-box solutions to help curb the environmental cost of all this online buying. One of the most promising techniques that's gaining popularity is eco-labelling. Basically, it's a way of sharing information about how a product or service impacts the environment right when consumers are making their choices. While there exists a lot of research on eco-labels for products like organic foods or energy-efficient gadgets, eco-labels for logistics decisions in e-commerce is still new territory.

In the realm of e-commerce logistics, there are several factors that could come into play if eco-labelling is made transparent to consumers. For instance, think about the type of fuel used for transportation—whether it's fossil fuels, hybrids, or electric. Then there's the delivery system: standard, express, or eco-friendly delivery [eco-friendly packaging, optimizing delivery routes, and employing other sustainable practices like Green Delivery Slots, Click and Collect, Carbon offsetting, Consolidated Shipments, Public Transport]. Not to mention the mode of transport like air, road, or rail—and the fuel system that powers the delivery vehicles. If consumers can see this information clearly, it might just give them the power to make more environmentally friendly choices, which could push logistics providers to adopt greener practices. However, how online shoppers respond to eco-labelling in logistics is not known. A lot of online shoppers don't even realize the environmental costs tied to their delivery choices, partly because there's just not enough visibility or a standard way of presenting this info. So, there's a real need for some solid research to figure out if eco-labelling in e-commerce logistics can change consumer behavior in a meaningful way.

This study is set to dive into how eco-labelling impacts consumer preferences regarding logistics in the e-commerce space. The study focuses on key factors like the fuel used for shipments, delivery choices, transportation modes, and fuel systems to see if eco-labels really do sway shoppers towards eco-friendly logistics options. Further, this research also examines how differential pricing and eco-label design influence the logistics choices of online customers. The hope is that these findings will be helpful for e-commerce platforms, logistics companies, and policymakers who want to blend business goals with sustainability efforts by engaging consumers. The research will conduct primary study to assess consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchasing behaviors related to eco-labelled e-commerce logistics and uses statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing to analyze survey data.





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IMPACT OF GLOBAL TARIFF WARS ON THE SUPPLY CHAIN OF PHARMACEUTICAL RAW MATERIALS: A STUDY OF API AND FINE CHEMICAL IMPORTS IN INDIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of global tariff wars—particularly the ongoing U.S.-China trade conflict—on India's pharmaceutical supply chain, specifically on importing active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and fine chemicals. As India is the largest global supplier of generic medicines, its heavy dependence on Chinese imports for approximately 70% of its APIs poses significant strategic and economic vulnerabilities. Using a mixed-methods approach combining trade data analysis, policy review, and case studies of leading pharmaceutical firms, this research explores how tariffs, protectionist trade policies, and supply chain disruptions have affected cost structures, production timelines, and export competitiveness.

The findings reveal that tariff-induced input cost inflation, shipment delays, and price volatility have placed increasing pressure on India's cost-sensitive pharmaceutical export model, particularly in generics. The study further highlights how Indian firms adapt by investing in domestic API manufacturing, diversifying export markets beyond the United States, and transitioning toward higher-value product segments like biosimilars. Additionally, the paper underscores the importance of proactive trade diplomacy and international cooperation to build long-term supply chain resilience.

This research contributes to the understanding of how geopolitical trade dynamics reshape industrial ecosystems in emerging economies and provides policy-relevant insights for building a more self-reliant and future-ready Indian pharmaceutical sector.





ESG RATING DISAGREEMENT AND FIRM PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM POLLUTION-INTENSIVE AND NON-INTENSIVE SECTORS IN INDIA

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Abstract

Purpose: The present study examines the influence of discrepancies in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) ratings on firm performance within the Indian market. Given the increasing importance of ESG considerations in corporate valuation and stakeholder engagement, discrepancies in ESG ratings across agencies pose a challenge for both firms and investors. The study further examines how the relationship between ESG rating disagreement and firm performance is moderated by industry-level pollution intensity, reflecting environmental externalities and regulatory exposure.

Design and Methodology: The empirical analysis is based on a balanced panel dataset comprising companies listed on the National Stock Exchange of India 500, covering the period from 2013 to 2023. ESG rating disagreement is calculated using the standard deviation of ESG scores assigned by multiple rating agencies, capturing the extent of inconsistency. The analysis captures firm performance through using return on assets (ROA) and Tobin's Q. Pollution intensity is introduced as a categorical moderator based on Central Pollution Control Board classifications of industries.

To address unobserved, time-invariant firm-specific effects, the study utilizes a fixed-effects panel regression framework. Robust standard errors clustered at the firm level are applied to mitigate intra-group correlation. The model incorporates several control variables, including firm size, leverage, firm age, and the market-to-book value ratio.

Findings: The findings indicate a statistically significant negative relationship between ESG rating divergence and firm performance. This relationship is found to be stronger and more adverse for firms operating in pollution-intensive industries, as indicated by a significant adverse interaction effect. The findings suggest that in environmentally sensitive sectors, inconsistent ESG assessments can lead to increased scrutiny, higher perceived risk, and reduced investor confidence, thereby deteriorating financial outcomes. In contrast, firms in less polluting sectors exhibit weaker sensitivity to ESG rating divergence.

Theoretical Implication: Grounded in Stakeholder Theory and Institutional Theory, this study adds to the emerging literature on ESG measurement inconsistencies by contextualizing their impact through industry-specific environmental risks. The moderating role of pollution intensity emphasizes the importance of sectoral differentiation when evaluating ESG-performance linkages and reinforces the idea that legitimacy and regulatory pressures intensify the materiality of ESG issues.

Practical Implication: The findings hold implications for corporate managers, investors, and policymakers. Firms in high-pollution industries must recognize the heightened financial vulnerability





associated with ESG rating inconsistency and work toward harmonizing their disclosures and sustainability practices. Regulators may also consider developing standardized ESG reporting frameworks to minimize rating divergence, especially in environmentally critical sectors.

Originality: This study is among the first to examine the moderating effect of pollution intensity on the ESG rating disagreement firm performance relationship in the Indian market. By focusing on a novel interaction and an emerging economy, the research contributes to both ESG scholarship and policy debates on sustainable corporate governance.





THE THRESHOLD TRAP: INVESTIGATING THE BEHAVIORAL AND BUSINESS IMPACTS OF MINIMUM ORDER VALUE DISCOUNTS IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This research examines if threshold discounts create sustainable customer value or inadvertently cause over-ordering, post-consumption disappointment, and lower repeat purchase rates. While existing literature explains how such discounts can raise average order value and induce short-run demand, it is not understood if these advantages are boosted into long-run consumer loyalty and high post-consumption satisfaction.

Employing a mixed-methods design, we study longitudinal transactional data across several restaurant stores, covering more than 2,00,000 online food purchases, including information like discount type, order amount, time, and customer identifiers. We differentiate between threshold-based and non-threshold discounts and execute statistical tests and logistic regression models to investigate their effects on repeat purchase behavior and order inflation. To complement this, we perform structured interviews with both restaurant managers and consumers and consumer surveys to determine behavioral drivers and satisfaction post-consumption.

Our analysis shows that although threshold discounts contribute to greater average order values, they correlate with a lower probability of repeat behavior and longer repeat purchase spacing. Further survey and interview evidence also suggests that customers often regret or feel dissatisfied after consumption from over-ordering induced by the discount threshold.

These results provide fresh perspectives on the trade-offs inherent in promotional price strategies. Though threshold discounts increase short-term profit, they can destroy long-run customer loyalty through the encouragement of overconsumption and reduced post-purchase satisfaction. The channel by which this effect occurs is psychological—one where perceived value induces excessive order expansion, out of sync with real need or appetite.





THE IMPACT OF DIVESTITURE ON LIQUIDITY: A FINANCIAL HEALTH LENS FOR ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of corporate divestitures on short-term liquidity and organizational resilience using a mixed-methods approach. The research analyzes whether firms experience statistically significant improvements in liquidity—measured by current and quick ratios—within two years post-divestiture. The quantitative component includes paired sample t-tests and a multivariate regression model applied to 22 publicly listed companies that executed major divestitures between 2012 and 2023.

The results from the t-tests revealed no statistically significant improvement in liquidity following divestitures. The regression analysis, which considered deal size, transaction type, pre-divestiture debt levels, and revenue growth, showed weak explanatory power, with no variables achieving statistical significance. These findings suggest that traditional financial indicators may not reliably predict short-term liquidity outcomes post-divestiture.

Complementing the quantitative analysis, a qualitative review of corporate communications identified recurring strategic motivations for divestiture, such as focusing on core assets, enhancing financial flexibility, and streamlining operations. However, these strategic intentions were not reflected in immediate liquidity improvements.

The findings suggest that while divestitures are often positioned as tools for enhancing financial health and resilience, their short-term impact on liquidity may be limited or delayed. The study emphasizes the need for future research to consider longer time horizons, industry-specific dynamics, and broader indicators of organizational performance beyond financial ratios.



A STUDY ON BETA OF SECTORAL INDICES AND THEIR VALUES AROUND THE COVID PANDEMIC

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Abstract

Beta is a measure of the sensitivity of any stock or index with reference to the market index. The present study attempts to determine the beta of sectoral indices and their impact on investment decisions. The first objective of this study is to determine the relationship between sectoral indices and the market index. The second objective is to compare the beta values of different sectors before and after the COVID pandemic. To fulfill the first objective, the beta values of eleven sectoral indices of BSE are calculated for thirteen years, i.e., from 2012 to 2024. The beta values of each sector are calculated with reference to the BSE Sensex. The result seems interesting as the IT industry has the least beta of 0.21 and the banking industry has the highest beta of 1.25. For the second objective, we considered the beta of the same sectors for three years pre-pandemic (1st January 2016 to 31st December 2019) and three years post-pandemic (1st January 2022 to 31st December 2024). Our results indicate that the realty sector showed the highest deviation during the six years. The metal sector has the highest beta in both the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic periods. However, post-pandemic, the FMCG sector has a negative beta and is the lowest beta compared to all sectors.



STRATEGIC INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL FASHION IN OMNICHANNEL RETAIL: A GAME-THEORETIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

With the rise of digital fashion trends, such as Gucci's Roblox and Nike's Cryptokicks, it is important for organizations to devise their investment decisions in virtual goods production. Motivated by this issue, this article presents a game-theoretic model that shows a fashion apparel company's pricing and technology investment decisions of physical and virtual apparel, along with a return channel selection decision, such as Buy-Online-Return-Online (BORO), Buy-Online-Return-in-Store (BORS), or Exclusive Physical Store (EPS) for the physical products. The model explores how different consumers perceive physical vs. digital clothes, as well as how they respond to return policies and the product maintenance costs. The results reveal that virtual apparel can only be manufactured in the presence of significant demand for digital fashion products or high physical product return costs. On the contrary, in markets where how something feels and how well it fits are crucial to consumers, the benefits of virtual apparel can be low in the absence of strong digital engagement and reasonable technological development costs. Return policies have a big effect on how businesses compete with one another. A BORS strategy makes competition between physical and digital goods even stronger, especially in high-yield situations. When the hassle of returning items in-store is low, offering a BORS alternative can raise consumer satisfaction. The study suggests that the BORO category does not have any effect if virtual apparel and BORS are introduced at the same time.





ALGORITHMIC GOVERNANCE V/S CORPORATE CAPTURE – THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AI IN BUSINESS POLICY FORMULATION

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Abstract

The data is a new weapon which the big corporates are using to predict and influence behaviour for profit. The capitalists now grow upon analysing and manipulating algorithm and twist policies accordingly. Corporate actors displace democratic institutions which then target the minorities and the poor which have the risk of rupturing of the democratic state machineries. The data said to be neutral isn't neutral but a tool for reinforcing racial, class, caste and gender biases in the society. The rise of plutocracy in democracies further jeopardize fairness and element of welfarism is policies relying upon corporate designed structure that erodes State responsibility, power and will to act. Businesses often re-engineer law through intellectual property, trade secrecy, and cross-border data flow regulations that insulate AI systems from scrutiny. As private entities are involved in the making of public policy and the government due to political factors favours such involvement it results in default rules being created by the corporate actors. Governments are encouraging use of AI in the decision-making processes but often lack the required machinery and infrastructure to manage its potential risks. Without proper scrutiny by the state and public oversight AI systems created by private entities can function as a tool for reimplementations of biases, discrimination, propaganda, etc. causing opacity in policies. The innovation of AI systems is heavily relied upon private tech - firms causing a disbalance between innovation and responsibility. The efficient use of AI in Policy framing by the government depends upon the amount of capacity it holds to ensure fairness, transparency and answerability. Private tech companies frequently include policy logics into their programming, so implementing public policy without consulting the general public. Digital Economy reports show Cross-border data flows are dominated by a few multinational tech firms, limiting the ability of states — especially in the Global South — to shape domestic digital policy. Corporate entities might capture digital value while evading taxes and regulatory compliance due to a lack of global coordination in data governance. As a result of this governments start to rely on outside platforms and because of infrastructure connections, national AI policy frequently represent corporate interests making data and AI governance global political economy issues and not just technical ones. AI-powered dynamic pricing software is used by businesses to maximize profits from individual customers. By predicting willingness to pay and algorithmically taking advantage of consumer behaviour, AI enables businesses to establish a "market aristocracy." As an issue of governance, by completely shifting pricing power to elite firms and undermining free market competition, these opaque mechanisms erode consumer protection and regulatory oversight. Owners of AI infrastructure, as opposed to those with industrial or financial capital, are becoming the ruling class in a new kind of "techno-feudalism." AI hastens the consolidation of political and economic power around a small number of corporate entities. Unless AI governance frameworks are democratized, they are under the potential risk of becoming instruments of elite dominance.





B2B AND B2C WAREHOUSE OPTIMIZATION FOR ENHANCED PERFORMANCE IN EXPRESS DISTRIBUTION

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Abstract

The extreme growth of e-commerce and the just-in-time delivery system has reconsidered the role of warehouses, particularly in the systems of express distribution. Business-to-Business (B2B) or Business-to-Consumer (B2C) models require different approaches to the organization of warehouses. B2B sales normally entail large shipments, fixed deliveries, and less numbers of order lines, while B2C business deals with a high level of small, diverse, and frequently urgent orders where last-mile efficiency is necessary. Optimization of warehouse operations is crucial for enhanced performance in express distribution and accommodate the peculiar operational requirements and service level agreements (SLAs). The aim of this research is to compare and contrast the warehouse optimization practices applied in B2B and B2C express distribution and measure the important performance indicators (KPIs). Further it also determines the challenges and the best practices and suggest specific optimization methods depending on patterns of the work process and consumer behaviour. For this study, data are collected from primary and secondary sources. Two express distribution warehouses, one dealing with bulk distribution (B2B) and the other on high-frequency parcel delivery (B2C) were studied to portray their difference in operations. It is studied that the B2B warehouses are geared towards maximizing the use of space where pallets of items are found posing a problem whereas the B2C facilities need more elaborate design where it need fast moving consumer products and parcel sorting. The dynamics of B2C operations require constant rescheduling, real time inventory plus a very high level of SKU correctness which can be supported through AI-based forecasting solutions. There is important to offer the B2C fulfillment that should allow same-day/next-day delivery with the minimum of error rates with voice picking and automated sorters. The volatile demand dynamics require B2C operations must be more flexible and dynamic as per market requirements. B2B places emphasis on partner-based SLAs and pipeline orders whereas B2C demands a uniform and quick-speed strategy to serve mass consumers. There is huge need for automation as robotics, machine learning, artificial intelligence and other technologies can be of great use for B2C and B2B. Since B2C is more discriminating of delivery schedules and require customer satisfaction measures, therefore there is greater need of real-time systems and agile operations. It is recommended that in case of B2B warehouses, companies may introduce automated guided vehicles (AGVs) to lessen the time spent on materials and modernize to predictive analytics of stock-up. Further they can use modular designs, so that the structure does not need a complete redesign, but more likely to offer according to client requirements. In case of B2C warehouses, they may use AI-powered tools of order clustering and optimization of routes and employ robotic picking in seasons of high demands. It is concluded that the quality of distribution model is important in the optimization of warehouses in express distribution. In





B2B optimization, one should concentrate on cost-efficiency, bulk handling, and reliability whereas in B2C optimization, the companies should lean towards to speed, scalability, and precision.





VIRTUAL REALITY-BASED SIMULATION TRAINING ON CLINICAL COMPETENCE AND LEARNING ENGAGEMENT AMONG HEALTHCARE STUDENTS

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Abstract

India Virtual Reality Market is recording a huge growth due to the technology improvement and turned consumer interest in many areas such as games, education and healthcare. Increasing costs and more investment in the development of VR content are also advancing the market as is greater accessibility via affordable hardware. The emergence of so-called Virtual Reality (VR) technology brings a new pedagogical instrument, which provides immersive, flexible, and risk-free learning experiences. VR enables students to practice complex clinical situations over and over again which may prove beneficial to acquire skills and confidence.

This study aims at ascertaining the present position of the virtual reality healthcare market in India and the most significant drivers and barriers of growth. In addition, it researches the effects of VR-based simulation training on clinical competence of healthcare students as opposed to other traditional training practices and to determine how VR can have an effect on the level of involvement, motivation, and participation of students during the training programs. Primary and secondary sources of data are used for this research. The companies dealing with VR solutions to healthcare facilities were approached both in the supply and the demand end to get qualitative and quantitative data about the market. It is noted that VR experiences foster concrete experience, reflection and explorative experimentation hence fostering clinical competence resulting in further skills retention and confidence.

The increase in the investment into the development of advanced VR hardware and software affects the market in a positive way and makes these technologies more efficient and available. It also promotes quality training programs of healthcare personnel enabling them to work with VR tools. Pilot projects and clinical trials are conducted due to increased investment, and the usefulness of VR is being confirmed by them. There may be more active adoption, but a lack of technical skills and training in the field of healthcare decreases the success of VR implementation. It also forms another stumbling block to successful spread of use and application of VR in healthcare facilities. Despite the potential of adoption of VR technologies at masses, the real challenges are to understand the VR related hardware and the specialized software. Other than that, there is lack of training and confidence with the use of such tools which restrict the hands-on training and confidence before the usage of it even further. It is possible to reject or to misuse even the best innovation without appropriate assistance and education. VR cannot be invested in medical institutions unless the latter have plans on how to train their personnel in an assuredly





detailed way. In addition to that, a generational gap in the application of technology might delay the integration further. It is possible to solve this problem through retraining, user-friendly systems and collaboration with technology companies and medical professionals. This challenge shall have to be addressed prior to the actualization of the potentiality witnessed in health care with VR.





OPTIMIZING WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS THROUGH AUTOMATION AND LEAN PRACTICES FOR COST REDUCTION AND EFFICIENCY ENHANCEMENT

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Abstract

Warehousing in the supply chain is very crucial as it acts as a hub where storage goods, fulfilment and further distribution. An increase in competition and the related demands of the customers have put a strain on businesses in an effort to increase the productivity of their warehouses at the minimum cost and increase efficiency. Cost efficiency in warehousing does not merely imply reducing costs, but also increasing productivity, service level and long-term sustainability of the business. The purpose of this study is to find out those factors which increase the cost of the warehouse operations. It also finds out the role of technological advancement to cost cutting and offers recommendations on enhancing the total cost-effectiveness of warehouses. The objectives are met out based on the information obtained from the secondary sources by carrying out a critical analysis of medium to large-scale warehouses that work in a wide range of industries. It is found that warehouse operational efficiency is influenced by several key cost factors. The labor cost consisting of wages, overtime, employee efficiency and the proportion of absenteeism is the only cost that makes up the greatest amount in the majority of warehouses. A major role is taken by the inventory holding costs that comprise capital investment, storage costs, insurance, depreciation and obsolescence risks. Purchase and reconstruction of the equipment including forklifts, conveyors, and automated storage/retrieval systems (AS/RS) are also costly to the operations. Another essential consideration is the use of space with emphasis on the amount of the objects to be stored, efficiency of racking, utilization of the vertical space and overall design of the warehouse. Also, the metrics related to order fulfillment such as the pick and pack rates, order accuracy, cycle time, returns processing are directly related to customer satisfaction and throughput of operations. Most importantly, energy usage, which entails lighting, heating, ventilating and air-conditioning (HVAC), and other energy-intensive activities, contributes both to cost and environmental issues and energy performance is an increasingly important issue in warehouse management. The data analysis allowed understanding the many important facts about warehouse operations. The efficiency and decision-making can be improved with the adoption of technology for example, the energy-saving modifications light can also produce savings of up to 15 percent per year. Simply, cost efficiency in warehouse operation is an ongoing process that seeks constant evaluation and evolutionary plans. The results of this study are indicative that a large amount of savings would be obtained under the combination of the reengineering process, technological integration, and data-driven decision-making. The operational cost of a warehouse can be reduced by automation and incorporation of the Warehouse Management Systems (WMS). Utility costs can also be reduced by regular energy audits and changing over to sustainable technologies. Finally, the reduction of the cost is not the only aim but rather a lean, agile, responsive warehouse leading to the growth of the business and customer satisfaction.





FROM REACTIVE DEFIANCE TO INTERNALLY ANCHORED FLOURISHING: A DUAL-PATH MODEL OF UNDERDOG MOTIVATION

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Abstract

Underdog expectations—where individuals are perceived as unlikely to succeed—have long been believed to trigger externally reactive motivation to prove others wrong (Nurmohamed, 2020). Despite the potential for performance improvement, this kind of effort frequently results in moral disengagement, emotional strain, and unethical behavior under pressure (Loi et al., 2022; Mitchell et al., 2018). This proposition paper introduces a novel construct: Internally Anchored Underdog Motivation (IAUM), defined as a values-driven orientation rooted in self-acceptance, self-compassion, and emotional equanimity. IAUM promotes ethical consistency, sustained effort, and psychological well-being by allowing underdogs to pursue growth without bitterness or comparison.

Drawing from Self-Compassion Theory (NEFF, 2003), Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954), and Positive Organizational Scholarship (Cameron et al., n.d.), the paper presents a dual-path model contrasting externally reactive and internally anchored underdog responses. Twelve propositions link both motivational pathways to individual outcomes such as stress, moral disengagement, emotional balance, and ethical consistency, and organizational outcomes including fragmented culture, low trust, collaborative climate, and psychological safety. The model also identifies organizational moderators—such as compassion training, gratitude rituals, and narrative reframing—that weaken reactive tendencies and strengthen IAUM through supportive leadership, cultural acceptance, and values alignment.

This framework responds to the call for future research outlined by (Steele & Lovelace, 2023), who recommend a deeper conceptualization of emotional fallout, identity distortion, and alternative underdog pathways. By shifting the lens from defiance to inner alignment, this paper contributes to leadership psychology and offers actionable insights for cultivating emotionally intelligent, ethically resilient, and value-consistent workplaces.





EXPLORING AI-DRIVEN HR INNOVATIONS IN STPI NAGPUR'S IT ECOSYSTEM

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a key enabler in transforming human resource (HR) operations, particularly in firms registered under the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) scheme. This study investigates the application and impact of AI-powered HR tools among IT companies operating within the STPI zone of Nagpur. Based on an analysis of 21 firms, the research reveals that only a limited number have adopted AI technologies in their HR processes, suggesting a gradual yet notable shift towards digital transformation. Tools such as Robotic Process Automation (RPA), natural language processing (NLP), predictive analytics, and conversational AI are revolutionizing HR functions like recruitment, onboarding, performance evaluation, and employee engagement. Companies utilizing these solutions reported significant advantages in terms of data accuracy, faster response times, and operational efficiency. Meanwhile, the majority of organizations continue to rely on conventional HR practices, highlighting a digital gap in terms of technological readiness. The study underscores the necessity for increased awareness, strategic investments, and skill development to accelerate AI adoption within the STPI Nagpur ecosystem. As a result, AI integration is positioned not just as a technical advancement but as a strategic necessity for creating agile and future-oriented HR systems.





GLOBAL CURRENCY SYSTEM AND VALUATION OF THE CURRENCIES AGAINST THE DIFFERENT ASSETS.

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Abstract

This study tries to understand behaviour of the selected currencies in comparison with different types of Assets in the long run. How the purchasing power of currencies changes gradually in comparison with different assets in different countries, finding out the reasons of such change. Considering background of international currency system transformation. Change in the position of the currencies in world financial system is expected due to international geopolitical and financial aspects.

This research states the background of world currency system. World-wide trade takes place between different countries but Invoicing currency is United states dollar, it is used in 88% of cross border transactions. So, it is most traded currency world-wide. The same is the global reserve currency too, USD is trading solely on the grounds of trust on United states government and federal reserve by whole world. Previously dollar was backed by Gold but last 50 years around, world is using fiat currencies for the transactions of real products and services. Unlimited printing of dollar increased supply and challenged the real purchasing power of USD in the country. Which lead to inflation, its rappelling effect is supposed to spread world-wide in the form of inflation, hyperinflation, stagflation etc. In opposite of this, Price of USD is increasing as it is trading currency of the world, Concept of price pass through and trade elasticity regression has been used by Geeta Gopinath DMD of IMF in her working paper “Global trade and dollar”

In this transition period there is need to find the alternative for safer investment and cross border transactions with less volatility. Whether in the form of another currency or in the different asset groups for the individual or companies to be in the safer zone while transacting beyond the borders. The proportion between change in values of currencies and goods, services, assets we see today, is not going to be the same in long run. Using time series analysis technique to find durability of purchasing power of the currencies. By considering change in the global financial position of leading and growing economies may give the solution to reach to the more sustainable currencies and asset. Man made assets like technology and different products are devaluating in the long run against each currency but natural assets like gold, land etc are increasing their value in the long run against currencies and they are comparatively safe in global transition period too. Currencies of the countries with Higher level of savings in correct form should be considered even more safe.





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INNOVATION BY DESIGN: THE POWER OF SOCIAL GAMIFICATION AFFORDANCES AND GAMEFUL EXPERIENCE IN THE IT SECTOR

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Abstract

Purpose: Gamification has been constantly shown to be a successful strategy for increasing employee engagement. However, little is known about the mechanism by which social gamification affordances (SGAs) promote innovative work behaviour (IWB) in employees. Drawing on affordance theory and self-determination theory, this study aims to explore how social gamification affordances, including interactivity, cooperation, and competition, can create a positive gameful experience, which results in increased innovative work behaviour (IWB) among employees in the IT sector.

Design/methodology/approach: A research model is developed, positioning SGAs as antecedents of gameful experience, which is a multidimensional psychological state that subsequently drives innovative work behaviour among the employees. An online survey is conducted to examine the research model using structural equation modelling with employees working in the IT sector in India.

Findings: The proposed model is expected to provide insights into how socially embedded gamification features may contribute to fostering a psychologically rich gameful experience and promote innovative work behaviour in employees. The mediating role of gameful experience is anticipated to be central in understanding how SGAs promote positive behavioural outcomes in the workplace.

Originality/Value: This study contributes to gamification research, specifically in the IT sector, by providing new insights into the effects of social gamification affordances among employees in the IT sector. This study investigates the effects of interactivity, cooperation and competition on innovative work behaviour through the psychological pathway of gameful experience.





CROWDFUNDING AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL STARTUPS IN PUNE

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Abstract

India's startup ecosystem has witnessed remarkable growth, particularly in sectors like Fintech, Edtech, Health-tech, and E-commerce. These startups have not only addressed local challenges but have also earned global recognition. The infusion of funding from government and non-government financial institutions, angel investors, venture capitalists, and private investors has played a pivotal role in nurturing innovation and enabling these ventures to thrive.

This research study explores the role of crowdfunding in supporting startups in Pune, focusing on how it helps transform innovative ideas into successful businesses. Crowdfunding is examined as a catalyst that not only provides financial backing but also fosters social entrepreneurship by encouraging ventures to give back to society.

A mixed-method approach is employed, combining primary data collected through structured questionnaires from Pune-based startups with secondary data from peer-reviewed journals, industry reports, start-up cases, company website and government publications.

The study evaluates startups such as Bamboo India (Startup in Manufacturing), PadCare (Startup in Health sector), Easebuzz (Startup in Fintech sector), analyzing their commitment to social practices, the challenges they face in accessing crowdfunding, and their strategies for survival and impact.

The findings offer actionable insights into strengthening crowdfunding platforms, streamlining funding processes, and enhancing support for socially driven startups—ultimately contributing to societal and national development.





A FRAMEWORK FOR CULTIVATING HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORK CULTURE THROUGH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: AN ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE MANUFACTURING PRINCIPLES AND GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

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Abstract

This paper presents an enhanced scientific framework for developing superior organizational work culture by systematically integrating the principles of Emotional Intelligence (EI) with foundational Japanese manufacturing philosophies and contemporary global best practices. Through a qualitative analysis of didactic texts from the Japan-India Institute for Manufacturing (JIIM), this research extracts core principles of conduct and production. It then maps these principles to the five domains of EI, enriching this analysis with real-world examples from global industry leaders like Google, Toyota, Spotify, and Apple, and concepts from influential thought leaders. The result is a more robust four-pillar model, "The Monodzukuri Mindset," which offers a detailed, evidence-based methodology for organizations to build a culture of discipline, psychological safety, agile collaboration, and deep, purpose-driven work. This integrated framework provides a powerful tool for leaders aiming to boost productivity, innovation, and employee engagement in the competitive 21st-century landscape.





THE UNWARRANTED INTIMACY PARADOX: WHEN EMOTIONALLY INTIMATE BRAND MESSAGES BUILD OR BREAK CONSUMER RELATIONSHIPS.

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Abstract

In an era of hyper-personalized communication, brands increasingly adopt emotionally expressive messaging to simulate closeness offering warmth, humor, and familiarity akin to interactions with friends or partners. This trend reflects a growing effort to humanize brand-consumer relationships. However, while emotionally intimate messaging can foster engagement in casual settings, it often backfires in high-stakes contexts, triggering discomfort, distrust, or accusations of manipulation. This paradox raises a critical question: When does emotional intimacy in brand messaging enhance engagement and when does it feel unwarranted?

This research introduces the Unwarranted Intimacy Paradox, tension wherein emotionally intimate brand communication either strengthens or undermines consumer trust and engagement based on context, message source, and individual psychology. We define emotional intimacy in branding as the use of cues that mimic the affective dynamics of close interpersonal relationships such as reassurance, care, and personal warmth. These cues are increasingly present across industries, yet their psychological consequences remain under-theorized.

Through a multi-study experimental design, we test when, why, and for whom intimacy messaging works or fails. Four studies investigate how message effectiveness is moderated by (1) product type (casual vs. consequential), (2) consumer relational orientation (transactional vs. relational), (3) message source (brand voice vs. AI avatar), and (4) consumer attachment style (secure, anxious, avoidant).

Study 1 posits that emotionally intimate messages enhance trust and engagement in casual brand contexts (e.g., food delivery) but reduce them in consequential contexts (e.g., banking). This is mediated by the valence of expectancy violations.

Study 2 posits consumer relational orientation as a moderator. Transactional consumers prefer efficiency and resist intimacy in consequential contexts but accept it in casual ones. In contrast, relational consumers welcome emotional cues in serious settings but may find them excessive in low-stakes ones.

Study 3 investigates source attribution. In consequential contexts, intimacy from the brand voice feels more credible and reassuring, while intimacy from AI avatars may appear trivial or inappropriate. The reverse holds true in casual contexts, where playful avatars like Duolingo's Lily can boost engagement, but formal brand voices can feel stiff or promotional.





Study 4 introduces attachment style as a psychological moderator. Secure consumers respond positively across contexts. Anxious consumers are receptive in casual settings but vigilant in consequential ones, fearing betrayal or insincerity. Avoidant consumers show consistent resistance, especially when messages imply closeness without consent.

Across all studies, mitigation strategies are proposed from using self-aware humor in casual brand contexts to providing emotional validation or purpose-driven framing in high-stakes settings. They aim to help brands align emotional tone with consumer expectations and psychological comfort.

Theoretical Contribution: This research advances understanding of consumer-brand intimacy by highlighting that emotional warmth is not universally welcome, rather relationally interpreted and contextually contingent. Taking insights from relationship theory, reframing of intimacy as a strategic communication may have asymmetric effects.

Managerial Implication: Firms should not assume that mimicking human emotionality leads to stronger connections. Instead, emotionally intimate messaging must be context-calibrated, audience-sensitive, and source-aware.





MAPPING THE KNOWLEDGE LANDSCAPE OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN MARGINALIZED ECONOMIES: A DECADE OF BIBLIOMETRIC INSIGHTS

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Abstract

Financial inclusion has emerged as a key facilitator of poverty alleviation, social empowerment, and sustainable growth, especially in countries that are marginalized, as a result of the increased emphasis on equitable economic development on a worldwide scale. A thorough grasp of the intellectual environment, thematic development, and research trends pertaining to financial inclusion and financial services in underprivileged areas is still lacking, despite growing scholarly interest in the area. With an emphasis on financial inclusion in low-income, rural, and developing nations, this study does a bibliometric analysis of academic papers published between 2015 and 2025.

The study used tools like Bibliometric analysis, PRISMA and VOS viewer to study research patterns by looking at how often papers are cited, which authors work together, and which keywords appear most often. The data was collected from research databases like Scopus. The study found five main areas where most research is focused: digital financial services, microfinance, women's access to finance, mobile banking, and government policies that support inclusion. Adoption of FinTech, financial literacy, and effect measurement among underserved populations are emerging themes. The study highlights well-known researchers, top journals like World Development and Journal of Financial Services Research. Even though there has been a lot of progress in this field, some important gaps still remain. These include the need to measure the real impact of financial inclusion in specific local settings, the lack of attention to traditional or community-based knowledge, and not enough collaboration between different fields of study. This paper helps by giving a clear overview of the existing research, showing areas that need more attention, and guiding future work to make financial systems fairer and more effective for everyone.





MUTUAL FUNDS FOR A BETTER FUTURE: SYNTHESIZING ESG AND SRI INVESTMENT TRENDS FOR SDG 2030

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Abstract

The evolving global financial ecosystem has witnessed a surge in sustainable investment, particularly through mutual funds aligned with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) principles. To address global challenges such as inequality, climate change, and financial system sustainability, policymakers and regulators are promoting responsible investing. Ignoring ESG concerns can damage a company's supply chain, reputation, and stock performance, while ESG-aligned investments are seen as safe havens and hedges. Through bibliometric analysis, the study explores the changing role of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) and ESG funds in sustainable finance (n = 301). Following PRISMA guidelines, a narrative synthesis (n = 15) also carried out using studies from January 2014 to December 2024 that were sourced from EBSCO, Web of Science, and Scopus. The analysis reveals the growing investor awareness, policy interest, and fund performance are associated with ethical and impact-oriented investing. Emerging economies like India show gradual adoption of sustainable funds, constrained by low financial literacy and limited ESG disclosure frameworks. The research underscores the need for standardization, improved investor education, and regulatory alignment to bridge the intention-action gap among retail and institutional investors. The synthesis highlights the role of mutual funds in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as investor behavior, fund performance, and regulatory influence. Findings suggest that government efforts toward achieving the SDGs by 2030 have amplified the importance of responsible investing. By capturing intellectual, thematic, and performance-related dynamics, this study offers academic and policy insights into how ESG and SRI mutual funds are evolving as strategic instruments for responsible finance and sustainable development.





THE IMPACT OF USE OF ROBOTICS AND AI COLLABORATION ON INDIAN PG GEN Z STUDENTS

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence and Robotics in the World of Education In the digital transformation age Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics are shaping global educational arena. This study investigates the effect of use of AI and Robotics integration on two key Academic Outcomes i.e., Academic Performance and Computational Thinking of Postgraduate (PG) Generation Z (Gen Z) students in India. Being digital natives, Gen Z students are particularly receptive to personalized learning driven by AI, robotics in teaching, and machine learning applications in education, though there is limited empirical literature around how these forms of technology impact learning outcomes, especially within higher education (MBS Students) in India.

This gap will be addressed in this research and the influence of four primary predictors (RI = Robotics Integration, APL = AI-Enabled Personalized Learning, MLE = Machine Learning in Education and SE = Student Engagement) on our dependent variables of: AP= Academic Performance (AP) and CT (Computer Thinking) will be examined. the present study used structured quantitative approach, and survey was conducted on 150 Indian PG students in AI and Robotics mediated learning. Data were analysed with SPSS and techniques such as reliability tests, correlation and multiple regression analysis were used.

The findings show that Student Engagement had a significant, positive effect on Academic Performance ($r = 0.167$, $p = 0.041$) and the remaining predictors such as Robotics Integration, AI-enabled learning, and Machine Learning did not have significant direct effects. Unexpectedly, Robotics Integration had a borderline negative effect on Academic Performance ($\beta = -0.191$, $p = 0.060$); this trend might reflect issues in implementation. Personalized Learning through AI and AI and ML in Education were not significantly associated with any of the dependent variables, but in case of Machine learning they had very small positive beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.218$) for Computational Thinking which is also not statistically significant.

The regression models accounted for 5.4% variance for Academic Performance and 3.2% for Computational Thinking, this is to say that other pedagogical, psychological, or contextual factors have an influence in this. This highlights the need of well-designed curriculum, involvement of faculty and the





need of blended mode of learning where the AI technologies can be used as a support mechanism and not as a replacement.

The findings provide practical implications for academia and curriculum developers. Institutions are recommended to increase student involvement through gamification, real-life simulations, and interactive materials. Robotic-based learning always needs hands-on training and mentorship for easier adaptation. For personalized learning to work, AI systems need to jive with students' learning preferences and struggles. Furthermore, the acquisition of CT skills additionally does not seem to be stimulated by AI exposure only but by explicit programming experience and problem-solving activities.

It adds to the emerging literature on AI and Robotics in Indian higher education, and it can be seen as the first step in a new line of studies in the aspects of Gen Z's education. Although AI and Robotics have transformational potential, their effects on student success depend on well-thought out blending into pedagogy.





NAVIGATING TRUST IN THE AGE OF AI: CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE OF AI, HUMAN, AND HYBRID-DESIGNED FINANCIAL PRODUCTS

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Abstract

The financial industry increasingly adopts AI-driven products (e.g., robo-advisors, algorithmic lending), yet consumers remain skeptical due to trust deficits, transparency concerns, and perceived risks. High-profile failures like Apple's biased credit scoring algorithms exacerbate distrust, while human-designed products retain preference for their perceived empathy and accountability, creating critical adoption barrier. Cognitive categorisation of financial products (as "human" or "AI-designed") may shape trust, buying intent, and word-of-mouth (WOM). We address this gap using Self-categorisation Theory (SCT), positing that consumers dynamically associate stereotypes (e.g., "human = trustworthy," "AI = opaque") with products, influencing behavior. Further, we examine how risk aversion moderates trust and whether hybrid (human-AI) designs mitigate skepticism.

We employ experimental surveys to test hypotheses grounded in SCT. Participants evaluate three financial product designs (human-only, AI-only, hybrid) across scenarios (e.g., investment advice, loans). Key variables include:

1. Independent variables: Product design (human/AI/hybrid),
2. Moderators: risk aversion (measured via established scales).
3. Mediators: Perceived trust (multi-item scale).
4. Dependent variables: Buying intention, WOM promotion.

Moderated mediation analysis (PROCESS) would examine:

1. Trust's mediating role between design and outcomes, and
2. Risk aversion's moderating effect.
3. Robustness checks control for demographics and AI familiarity.

This study expects to reveal:

1. Trust Asymmetry: Consumers will likely exhibit higher buying intention and WOM for human-designed financial products versus AI-only alternatives, mediated by stronger perceived trust.





2. **Risk Aversion's Role:** Risk-averse consumers may show significantly lower trust in AI-designed products, while risk-tolerant segments could display parity. However, WOM promotion is anticipated to be similar across both designs, driven by social signalling.
3. **Hybrid Superiority:** Hybrid (human-AI) designs are projected to outperform pure counterparts, achieving the highest trust and adoption. Consumers are expected to recategorize hybrids as "human-augmented," leveraging AI's efficiency while retaining trust via human oversight, mitigating the "black box" effect.
4. **SCT in Action:** Fluid self-categorization will likely explain behavioral shifts (e.g., risk-averse consumers embracing hybrids as "prudent adopters").

Implications for Research: This study advances SCT by demonstrating fluid categorization in technology adoption: Consumers dynamically reassign products to cognitive categories (e.g., "human-augmented") based on design cues, altering trust perceptions. It resolves tensions in human-AI literature by showing context-dependent superiority (hybrids > human-only > AI-only) versus a binary "human vs AI" debate. The risk aversion moderation reveals that individual differences shape categorization—e.g., risk-averse consumers rigidly associate AI with "out-group" risks. By framing trust as a mediator of behavioral outcomes (not an endpoint), we offer a nuanced decision-making model applicable to high-risk digital services beyond finance.

Implications for Practice: Financial institutions must adopt hybrid product designs to overcome AI distrust:

1. **Design:** Integrate human oversight (e.g., AI-generated loan approvals reviewed by staff) to mitigate "black box" concerns.
2. **Segmentation:** Target risk-tolerant consumers with pure AI tools (e.g., robo-advisors); use hybrids for risk-averse segments (e.g., retirement planning).
3. **Communication:** Frame AI as "augmented intelligence" (e.g., "Our experts use AI for precision") to trigger positive categorization.

WOM Strategy: Encourage advocacy by highlighting AI's objectivity for tech-savvy consumers and human empathy for traditionalists.



AVATARS AND STAKEHOLDER DYNAMICS: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON DIGITAL INTERACTIONS

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Abstract

The growing prominence of avatars has garnered significant attention in recent years, with companies such as Meta, Nvidia, and Prada actively exploring their strategic roles in metaverse environments and social media marketing (Chakraborty & Biswal, 2024; Chen & Nelson, 2024). With the increased interest of global companies, academic research has started examining the avatars' role and applicability across diverse domains such as e-commerce, marketing, healthcare, gaming, and human resource management (Sinha et al., 2025; Sun & Tang, 2024). However, current literature lacks a holistic understanding of various stakeholders involved in avatar marketing, how they influence the domain, and the current understanding of avatar marketing through the lens of stakeholders. The present study reviews the existing literature on avatar marketing using bibliometric and thematic analyses to address this gap. The study explored peer-reviewed articles published in the Scopus database between 2005 and 2024. The study used Biblioshiny in R Studio to analyse and visualize citation networks, keyword co-occurrence, and thematic clusters. The study offers a holistic understanding of the key themes and the thematic evolution within avatar marketing. Furthermore, the study examines the literature through the lens of the six-market stakeholder model, which includes six distinct market domains: consumer, referral, supplier, influencer, employee, and internal markets, each representing core interactions with traditional stakeholder groups (Christopher et al., 1991). Through this analytical approach, the study identifies future research directions, highlights the most influential stakeholder groups in avatar marketing (consumer markets), and encourages researchers to explore underrepresented domains such as employee markets to broaden the scope and impact of avatar marketing research. For practitioners, this study provides insights into aligning avatar strategies with stakeholder-specific engagement goals, particularly in consumer-facing digital environments.



STIMULATING FACTORS OF REVENGE SPENDING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A STUDY ON YOUNG CORPORATE PROFESSIONALS

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Abstract

Revenge Spending has become a trendy topic around the globe during the Covid 19 lockdowns (Hashmi, 2021) has come into existence in China in 1960, as an outcome of cultural revolution. According to Gupta, 2022 The term revenge spending first appeared in business literature in the year 1980s and was used to explain a sudden rush of purchases (Nguyen, 2021) in response to the flooding of western products into Chinese markets, which were inaccessible to Chinese citizens. The concept has again become a buzzword soon after COVID 19 as an outcome of accompanying restrictions, isolation, and control which have triggered a series of abnormal consumer behaviours (Lieu, 2023). Revenge spending can be defined as a sudden surge of shopping after an extended period during which people were denied the opportunity to buy (Naviaux, 2023). While numerous studies have been conducted on revenge spending by considering it as an outcome of post pandemic isolation and negative emotion (Kang, 2024), a few have focussed on factors instigate revenge spending and their impact on retail industry. Due to the novelty of the concept of revenge spending in the literature of management & consumer behaviour, the present bunch of studies may not be sufficient to justify the existence and sustainability of this concept years after post-pandemic period and the major motivation behind such behaviour as well as overall impact on economy. The author considered it as a half-explored area to concentrate further and highlight the antecedent and consequences of this trend. In addition, the researchers consider the young corporate professional because, experts say, these young people not only have the money, they're also willing to spend it, even amid a period of high financial anxiety (Noenickx, 2023). These people are not only having high disposable income but also brand consciousness, status orientation, digitally inclined, value driven and health and sustainability conscious which altogether form a typical consumer behaviour worth studying further. To address the gap in existing research the objective the present research is to gain a deeper understanding of underlying factors driving the concept of revenge spending / revenge buying behaviour among young corporate professionals and its impact on the Sustainable Development Goals 8 and 12.

To address the objectives of the study a quantitative method was used to examine the stimulating factors of revenge spending. A structured questionnaire was designed based on the variables derived from the six principles of “Psychology of Persuasion” developed by Robert Cialdini his book “*Influence*” published in the year 1984. He has identified six core principles that affect these decision-making particularly in relation to purchasing and consumption decisions (Cialdini, 1993). The data were collected from the 411 young corporate professionals through survey method. An exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modelling is applied to analyse the research data. The findings of in-depth study on “revenge spending” & “revenge buying behaviour” enrich the theoretical research on this concept and provide





managerial implications for retailers, marketers, policy makers and other stakeholders for future course of actions.





OH, IT'S FAKE! WHEN DOES THE USE OF AI IN THE AD GENERATION OF CONSUMER PRODUCTS BACKFIRE?

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Abstract

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into advertising has introduced new dimensions to how consumer products are marketed, particularly through the use of synthetic advertisements. While AI enables cost-effective and innovative ad creation through tools like Generative Adversarial Networks and deepfakes, it also raises significant concerns regarding authenticity and consumer trust. This research investigates the potential for AI-generated advertisements to backfire, specifically when consumers become aware of ad falsity or perceive AI-generated content as manipulative or inauthentic.

Traditionally, advertising has always involved elements of manipulation—whether through preproduction styling, postproduction editing, or strategic presentation. However, AI has dramatically expanded the scope of these practices. Today's synthetic ads can create hyperrealistic images of models and scenarios that may never have existed, raising psychological questions about consumer persuasion. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Diffusion of Innovation Theory, this research develops a comprehensive framework to understand how consumers respond to AI-generated advertisements. The study specifically focuses on two moderating variables: consumer innovativeness and awareness of ad falsity. These factors influence the link between ad agent type (human-created or AI-generated), consumer attitude towards the ad, and subsequent purchase intentions. One of the central findings proposed in the framework is that ad appeal type—whether emotional (hedonic) or rational (utilitarian)—significantly affects consumer reactions. Consumers are generally more skeptical of AI-generated ads when the product being advertised has hedonic values that require emotional connection. This skepticism is based on the perception that AI, while cognitively advanced, lacks genuine emotional capacity. As a result, consumers tend to form negative attitudes toward emotionally driven synthetic ads, which in turn reduces purchase intentions. In contrast, AI-generated ads that emphasize utilitarian product attributes with rational appeals tend to generate more favorable responses. The research also highlights the critical role of consumer awareness of ad falsity. When consumers realize that an advertisement is synthetically manipulated—especially in cases where hyperrealism is involved—they may perceive the ad as deceptive, which leads to unfavorable attitudes and diminished trust. This is particularly true for hedonic products, where emotional authenticity is crucial. The study proposes that for hedonic advertisements, the awareness of falsity will lead to significantly lower purchase intentions, mediated by a negative ad attitude. Conversely, consumer innovativeness acts as a buffer against the negative effects of synthetic ads. Innovators and early adopters are generally more open to technological advancements and are more likely to perceive AI-generated advertisements as creative and engaging, even when these ads are emotionally charged. Therefore, individuals with high levels of technological innovativeness are less likely to exhibit the backfire effect associated with AI-generated advertisements for hedonic products. The theoretical





implications of this research are twofold. First, it extends existing models of consumer behavior by integrating emerging concerns about AI-driven marketing manipulation. Second, it provides actionable insights for industry practitioners on when and how to deploy AI-generated content effectively. Advertisers should carefully consider the nature of the product and the target audience's technological openness before using AI in ad creation.





DOES ROLLOVER RISK DRIVES DEBT DIVERSIFICATION? EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN FIRMS

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Abstract

The rollover risk plays a prominent role in the default probability (Vuolteenaho, 2002). In the case of Indian firms, reliance on bank debt over public debt exposed them to the rollover risk since banks mostly prefer short- or medium-term lending (Sur et al., 2021).

This study proposes two channels to explain the aforementioned relation. The first is the coordination risk channel; If the shareholders spend the amount on preventing bankruptcy, the debt holders will get the full amount, and the shareholders will end up with a loss. This agency conflict leads to higher default probability (Houston & James, 1996). Suppose the firm has a higher default probability; it is better to keep concentrated debt, which reduces the coordination problem and helps with financial restructuring to prevent bankruptcy (Gilson et al., 1990). The second one is the maturity channel; one characteristic of different debts is their maturity period. For instance, the maturity of an intercorporate loan is not very long-term (Gopalan et al., 2007). A firm takes banks and nonbank private lenders at shorter average maturities than public debt (Carey et al., 1993). Commercial paper substitutes money (Calomiris & Ramirez, 1996). Choi et al. (2021) coined the term "granularity of corporate debt", which means dispersing maturity across different points of time, reducing the burden of the refinancing risk in the future. So this channel defines a positive relation between diversification and rollover risk.

Additionally, the study considers the impact of exogenous shocks. Liu et al. (2021) highlight that A decline in operating cash flows during the COVID-19 crisis creates challenges for firms refinancing. If the firm has higher rollover, the cash flow liquidity will make the additional burden (Harford et al., 2014). As per liquidity channel the additional default probability will create a need of a more diversified portfolio after the COVID-19. but in case of the coordination risk channel the rollover losses will be high because the increased funding cost of the firm (Leland & Toft, 1996), so the cost of keeping the firm alive will increase, and the default probability as a part of the explanation of agency theory (He & Xiong, 2012), so the consideration of coordination risk will motivate firm to keep more concentrated debt.

We found that the firm with higher rollover risk keeps more diversified debt sources since the maturity dispersion of debt reduces the burden of refinancing in the future, leading to a lower default probability. However, COVID-19 intensifies rollover risk exposure. Interestingly, firms generally maintain a non-diversified debt profile after COVID-19. Because diversification's benefit was reduced after COVID-19, the increased default probability after COVID-19 motivated firms to keep non-diversified debt since it gave easy financial restructuring and a higher liquidation value. However, firms with rollover risk exposure diversify their debt even after COVID-19. Since the threat of default by refinancing was higher,





the benefit is greater than the cost of diversification. This study used fixed panel data regression with firm and fixed effects and the difference in difference regression model.

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NAVIGATING THE INNOVATION JOURNEY OF YOUNG MINDS: EXAMINING THE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FOR ATAL TINKERING LABS IN DAKSHINA KANNADA AND UDUPI DISTRICTS, KARNATAKA

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the implementation challenges of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi Districts, Karnataka, India, focusing on barriers to sustainability and effectiveness. By analyzing infrastructural, curriculum, and operational hurdles, the research aims to inform policymakers, educators, and stakeholders for evidence-based interventions. The study also compares rural/semi-urban ATLs with corporate-adopted Atal Tinkering labs in Bengaluru to identify systemic gaps. Its goal is to foster equitable innovation ecosystems, enhance student learning outcomes, and align ATLs with national educational objectives, ultimately contributing to inclusive STEM education and entrepreneurial skill development in underserved regions.

Method: A mixed-methods design was employed, integrating surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. The sampling strategy targeted all 89 operational ATLs across government, private, and aided schools in the two districts, encompassing coordinators ($n \geq 50$), educators ($n \geq 500$), and students ($n \approx 1800$). For comparative analysis, 11 ISRO-adopted ATLs in Bengaluru were included. Quantitative data from student questionnaires were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative responses from educators and coordinators were examined through thematic coding. Triangulation ensured robustness. The multi-stakeholder approach captured diverse perspectives on resource allocation, training needs, and curriculum integration challenges.

Findings: Key challenges included inadequate infrastructure support (e.g., lack of tools/space, location disadvantage), insufficient teacher training, and poor curriculum alignment. Gender disparities and limited industry collaboration further hindered ATL effectiveness. Rural/semi-urban labs faced greater resource constraints compared to Bengaluru's ISRO-adopted ATLs, which benefited from structured mentorship and funding. Stakeholder engagement gaps, weak monitoring mechanisms, and low student participation in advanced projects were also noted. However, ATLs demonstrated potential in encouraging creativity where basic resources were available, underscoring the need for contextual solutions to bridge equity gaps in innovation education.

Implications: The study advocates for policy reforms prioritizing infrastructure development, targeted teacher training, and public-private partnerships to strengthen ATLs. Recommendations include: (1) create a resources mapping model for resource-sharing among rural schools, (2) gender-inclusive





programming, (3) industry-aligned curricula, and (4) track the accurate performance of the ATLs by identifying the key parameters. By addressing these gaps, ATLs can better nurture 21st-century skills and grassroots innovation. Findings also highlight the role of corporate/scientific adoption in mitigating challenges, suggesting replication in rural contexts. These measures can transform ATLs into equitable hubs for STEM learning, aligning with India's broader educational and economic goals.

Novelty: This research combines region-specific data from tier II cities with a comparative analysis of corporate-adopted ATLs in Tier I city, offering actionable insights for scaling innovation education. It identifies rural-urban disparities in ATL implementation—a gap less explored in existing literature. The mixed-methods approach and multi-stakeholder perspective enhance the validity of findings, while practical recommendations cater to policymakers and grassroots practitioners. By linking challenges to scalable solutions (e.g., ISRO's adoption model), the study contributes a framework for contextualizing ATLs across diverse socio-geographic settings, advancing discourse on equitable STEM education in emerging economies.





EFFICIENCY IN THE FACE OF UNCERTAINTY: IS FINANCIAL FLEXIBILITY THE ANSWER?

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Abstract

This study investigates the intricate relationship between financial flexibility and firm efficiency, with special attention to the influence of varying levels of uncertainty. Financial flexibility, typically defined as a firm's ability to access and reallocate financial resources effectively, is essential for enhancing firm performance, especially in volatile environments. This research employs an extensive panel dataset comprising publicly listed companies from five emerging and five developed economies, analysed over a ten-year period using rigorous econometric specifications. The analysis is conducted through panel regression models, including fixed effects and interaction terms, to assess the direct and conditional effects of financial flexibility on firm efficiency under different states of uncertainty. The findings reveal a positive and statistically significant relationship between financial flexibility and firm efficiency. Notably, this positive effect is more pronounced during periods of high uncertainty and is stronger in emerging markets, where external financial constraints and macroeconomic volatilities are typically greater. The research has significant implications for managers and policymakers, emphasising the strategic importance of maintaining financial flexibility as a tool to support organisational stability and efficiency during global economic uncertainties.





FINTECH FOR GOOD: UNPACKING INDIA'S POTENTIAL IN TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN IMPACT INVESTING

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Abstract

Over the last few years, India has seen tremendous development in both the fintech and impact investing universe. While fintech has increased the speed and scale of financial services, impact investing has emerged as a model for investing in social and environmental goals. But until now these two spheres have developed for the most part in a vacuum. This study suggests an investigation of the yet untapped combination of fintech and impact investing, “Fintech for Good”, as a new age strategy for inclusive and sustainable growth in India.

Utilizing technology advances such as digital lending, blockchain, crowdfunding, and AI-driven analytics, fintech can potentially eliminate conventional obstacles in impact investing, including costliness of transactions, opacity, and exclusion of small investors and under-resources businesses. This research aims to examine how fintech can support scaling the impact investing ecosystem, align capital with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and enable a broader group of stakeholders to support India's sustainable future.

Problem Statement and Research Gap: India's impact investing and fintech sectors are expanding but are not strongly interconnected with each other. Fintech increases efficiency and financial inclusion but fails to leverage its full potential for social outcomes. Poor investor access, excessive charges, and measurement issues limit impact investing. Existing literature has approached these industries in isolation, with a minimal focus on their interactions in India. Little is known about how fintech platforms may be employed to facilitate scalable impact investments. Stakeholder sentiments, regulation, and certain models are similarly unexplored.

This study analyses the adoption of fintech for impact investment in India, best practices, challenges, and the need for a sustainable “Fintech for Good” ecosystem within the framework of inclusive development.

Research Objectives: This research addresses the following key questions:

1. To identify emerging models and trends of fintech-driven impact investing in India.
2. To examine the contribution of fintech to enhancing efficiency, access, and measurement of impact in investment activities.
3. To ascertain the systemic obstacles and limitations that hinder the incorporation of financial technology and impact investing.





Methodology: This research employs the mixed methods to examine fintech impact investing in India. The research begins with a sweep of secondary literature, such as academic journals, industry report, and case studies. This provides a conceptual framework and identifies fintech models of impact investing. Primary evidence will be collected through semi-structured interviews with various stakeholders such as fintech founders, impact investors, and social enterprise leaders to examine challenges and success drivers. Different Indian fintech platforms with social or environmental impact orientation will be studied for their business model and impact measurement.

Expected Contributions and Implications: This research contributes to the sparse fintech and social impact investing literature in India. The result will inform the entrepreneurs, investors and policymakers about the utilization of technology for sustainable capital investments in India's financial inclusion strategy.





POSITIVE WORKPLACE GOSSIP: A SOCIAL LEVER FOR EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT AND GROWTH

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Abstract

Workplace gossip is often stigmatized as unproductive or harmful, yet emerging perspectives suggest that Positive Workplace Gossip (PWG), informal, affirming talk about peers' strengths and accomplishments, can serve as a powerful vehicle for individual and collective upliftment. Rooted in Social Exchange Theory, this study repositions PWG as a socially constructive behavior with the potential to drive employee empowerment and growth, thereby contributing to broader organizational well-being. Employing a mixed-method design, the research began with a qualitative phase using Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method, wherein in-depth interviews with 21 mid- to senior-level employees in India's IT sector uncovered the lived experiences and perceived value of PWG. These insights informed the quantitative phase, where a survey of 303 professionals across Indian IT organizations examined the relationships among PWG, psychological empowerment, and employee growth (self-development and skill enhancement). The role of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) was also assessed as a moderator in this dynamic. Results reveal that PWG significantly enhances psychological empowerment, which in turn facilitates employee growth. Notably, high levels of perceived organizational support further strengthen this positive relationship. These findings underscore PWG as a low-cost, socially enriching strategy that promotes inclusion, psychological safety, and developmental outcomes, key pillars for driving social impact in organizations. This study contributes to management research by highlighting the transformative power of affirming informal communication in building socially supportive and growth-oriented workplace cultures. Practical implications are offered for HR leaders seeking to leverage social dynamics for meaningful, inclusive organizational impact.





IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE FMCG SECTOR

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of the digital transformation of human resource management practices on employee productivity. It analyzes the essence of the human resource management (HRM) digital transformation, such as automation and efficiency, collaboration and communication, and data-driven decision-making. Leveraging new technologies to enhance employee productivity is important for HR professionals, managers, and leaders. Digital employee productivity has become crucial for increasing employee productivity due to the rapid improvements in the era of digital transformation.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A self-administered survey questionnaire based on the random sample method (RSM) was used in this study to gather data from 247 workers who worked for different FMCG companies. SPSS and AMOS 20's Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were used for the analysis.

Findings: The results demonstrate a significant and positive effect between automation and efficiency and employee productivity, collaboration and communication and employee productivity, and data-driven decision-making management and employee productivity. From this study, it can be concluded that the digital transformation significantly enhances employee performances and productivity by driving digital transformation, which serves as a changing mechanism in the industrial revolution and transformation. This study provides substantial theoretical and practical contributions by exploring the impact of human resource management digital transformation on employee productivity within the organization and its critical role in facilitating automation and efficiency, collaboration and communication, and data-driven decision-making.

Conclusions: Fostering employee engagement and happiness requires striking a balance between technology, empathy, and human connection. By increasing worker productivity, facilitating better decision-making, and fostering a more stimulating and encouraging work environment, AI-enabled human resource management (HRM) holds the potential to completely transform workforce management. The future of human resource management will rely on its capacity to include innovation while maintaining essential human relationships and guaranteeing employee well-being as technological breakthroughs continue to change the world.





Practical Implications: This study advances the theoretical and practical understanding of the digital transformation of HRM practices and its crucial role in promoting digital transformation, improving employee performance, and fortifying corporate commitment. A thorough analysis of the hypotheses put forward shows how important digital transformation is to improving employee performance and enabling staff members to accept technological change. Our research expands the roles in promoting a culture of creativity, flexibility, advancement, and lifelong learning.





THE BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF MINERAL RESOURCE RENTS USING R STUDIO

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Abstract

In today's world, no one can deny that mineral resource rent (natural resource rent) is vital for economic growth in the developing world. The world is endowed with rich natural resources, but it comes with a cost of resource extraction, a phenomenon that has become a plague, which we refer to as the resource curse hypothesis. However, this curse can also be a blessing for many countries, provided certain specific factors are taken into consideration, such as transparency, accountability, governance, and institutions. Although resource extraction is associated with mining-affected regions, and these regions might be improved through community development programs, such as the District Mineral Foundation Fund or others, through addressing the specific needs of the community that has been most impacted. Hence, our study aims to incorporate bibliometric analysis to examine the annual production and trends in mineral resource rent areas, as well as to determine the institutions and top authors involved in the study of natural resource rents. Additionally, our reviews employ thematic and co-citation analysis to gain insight into relevant areas and topics and to identify the top articles being cited in this field. For this purpose, we employed PRISMA analysis to reconstruct and filter the required data collected from multiple databases, as suitable for our needs. Identifying these key outcomes will help us to understand the specific areas of future scope in the field and provide guidance for future directions.





SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS IMPACT: IS SOCIAL COMPARISON HARMING SOCIAL MEDIA CONSUMERS?

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Abstract

Social media contributors with increasing number of engaged followers develop into social media influencers (SMIs). Ouvrein et al. (2021, p. 8) define social media influencers as, ‘Social influencers/content creators are “average” people who inspire and influence others, consciously or unconsciously, through online creations that are perceived as authentic by a close audience’. The growth of social media has expanded the reach of word-of-mouth and recommendations of SMIs reaching to multiple people (Knoll, 2016; Boyd and Ellison, 2007; Lyons and Henderson, 2005). The social impact of SMIs emerges from the dynamic interaction between their personal goals and motivations and the audience’s perceptions and interpretations (Ouvrein et al., 2024).

The SMIs primary activity revolves around self-expression producing social media content centred around their love for the topic and their activity. They are intrinsically motivated to post content they place more value for themselves, market offering they enjoy rather than the market-oriented offerings (Audrezet et al., 2020; Audrezet et al., 2017). The consumers being influenced by SMIs, they relate, identify and compare themselves with the SMIs through the perceived similarity and self-association (Schouten et al., 2020). The reason for SMI’s influence on audience engagement rests on close social ties with their network audience. These contents are perceived as authentic, enhanced perceived similarity, perception of SMI’s warmth, and attending the audience’s curiosity (Chung et al., 2023). SMIs communication influences people's behaviours, attitudes, and choices.

Social media users’ behaviour is likely to shaped by the social context to which they belong and the persons who have strong influence following social media use (Dolan et al., 2016; Seidman, 2013). This appears more in teenagers in following a group and are highly susceptible to negative psychology and behavioural outcomes from social media (Charoensukmongkol, 2018; Koutamins et al., 2015). As a result, these social media users engage themselves in social comparison and experience envy, which negatively impact their overall wellbeing (Meier and Jhonson, 2022; Latif et al., 2021; Charoensukmongkol, 2018). Social media consumers tend to compare themselves with SMIs analyzing their social standing and abilities arousing discontent and displeasure (Pellegrino, 2024; Deng and Jiang, 2023). This has an impact on the self-perception of individuals, lowering their self-esteem and experiencing anxiety (Jiang and Ngien, 2020; Swallow and Kuiper, 1988). People with low self-esteem and higher anxiety embrace more risk-averse choices showing a greater threat to self in decision making about themselves (Wray and Stone, 2005). Clearly, higher levels of anxiety have an influence on the individual’s self-esteem. To cope with this, low self-esteemed people take actions to match social influences and try to emulate them. They buy





the products which are being advertised by the SMIs following herd behavior. With low self-esteem the cognitive decision-making capacity is lowered, and the decisions are dominated by emotionality.





REFINANCE AND CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURE: ROLE OF STATE CO-OPERATIVE BANKS IN FINANCING GREEN TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract

The increasing vulnerability of Indian agriculture to climate change has amplified the need for climate-resilient technologies such as solar pumps, drip irrigation, and organic farming. Financing such technologies is often a challenge for small and marginal farmers. In this context, NABARD's refinance mechanisms, routed through State Co-operative Banks (SCBs) and District Central Co-operative Banks (DCCBs), play a critical role in facilitating affordable rural credit for green agricultural practices.

Objective: To assess the scale and pattern of refinance allocation from NABARD to SCBs for green technology adoption and to identify institutional and operational barriers in the flow of refinance-based green finance through SCBs.

Methodology: This study examines the mixed methodology, and the study aims to focus the Virudhunagar district PACS's. In quantitative used the NABARD refinance data 2022-2023 and collected data from the 250 farmers. The analysis made upon the PLS and SPSS software.

Findings: SCBs that actively accessed NABARD refinance demonstrated higher credit disbursement for climate-resilient technologies by compared to others. Farmers with refinance-backed loans adopted solar irrigation systems and drip irrigation more frequently and reported improved water-use efficiency and crop stability.





SOCIAL COMMERCE AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN EMERGING MARKET MSMEs: THE ROLES OF COGNITIVE FRAMES, GENDER, AND DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

The convergence of social media and commerce has redefined competition for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in emerging markets where digital adoption is accelerating. In India, where MSMEs play a critical role in employment and economic development, social commerce platforms have become essential for market access and sustainability. However, limited research has examined the complex interplay of cognitive, organisational, and contextual factors shaping their adoption and use. This study addresses these gaps by investigating how entrepreneurs' perceptions and organisational conditions influence social commerce integration and competitive advantage.

Drawing on Technological Frames Theory (Orlikowski and Gash, 1994), which emphasises user perceptions, and the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991), which links unique resources to competitive advantage, this research explores how cognitive frames—including attitudes, perceived application value, and leadership—interact with gender and regional factors to shape adoption. Survey data from 240 MSMEs across Maharashtra and Rajasthan reveal that entrepreneurs' cognitive frames, especially positive attitudes towards technology and leadership support, strongly predict social commerce use. Engagement with platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook is associated with expanded market reach, stronger customer relationships, and revenue growth, positioning social commerce as a core strategic resource rather than a supplementary marketing tool.

Gender differences were evident. Male entrepreneurs displayed higher technological confidence and usage, while female entrepreneurs, despite barriers such as limited digital literacy, adopted more relational and creative approaches. These findings highlight the importance of inclusive digital strategies to ensure equitable participation.

Overall, this research advances understanding of technology adoption and competitive advantage in MSMEs. By integrating cognitive, organisational, gendered, and regional perspectives, it offers important insights into how social commerce can enable small businesses in emerging economies to achieve sustainable growth.





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FACTORS PROMOTING GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN POWER SECTOR: A STUDY ON SELECTED POWER PLANTS OF WEST BENGAL

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Abstract

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) involves the implementation of targeted policies and practices that align with sustainability goals. The foundation of organizational sustainability lies in achieving a balance across environmental, social, and economic dimensions. Therefore, companies must prioritize environmentally responsible practices and actively work toward environmental improvement.

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a critical role in managing an organization's most valuable asset—its people. Today, HRM is increasingly being recognized through the lens of sustainability. GHRM, in particular, is considered a key element in advancing sustainability initiatives. It emphasizes the responsible and efficient use of limited resources with a long-term perspective.

GHRM refers to the integration of environmental management into HRM functions. It leverages HR policies to encourage sustainable resource use within businesses while promoting environmental consciousness. This approach not only supports environmental goals but also enhances employee morale and job satisfaction.

As a driver of environmental sustainability, HR functions must focus on preserving and conserving natural resources by applying both technical and managerial skills. Organizations are encouraged to align HR practices with environmental objectives to effectively implement and support green initiatives.

GHRM policies encompass various strategies such as waste reduction, recycling, carbon footprint minimization, and the development and use of eco-friendly products. The growing environmental awareness among employees has led to greater organizational commitment and increased job satisfaction. Since GHRM practices are multifaceted, their impact on HR functions must be regularly evaluated to ensure effectiveness.

This study explores the various factors that foster the adoption of green human resource management practices within the power sector of West Bengal.

In this study, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity are used to assess the factorability of the data. Determinant score is calculated to examine the multicollinearity among the variables. To determine the number of factors to be extracted, Kaiser's Criterion and Scree test





are examined. Varimax orthogonal factor rotation method is applied to minimize the number of variables that have high loadings on each factor. The internal consistency is confirmed by calculating Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability to test the instrument accuracy. The convergent validity is established when average variance extracted is greater than or equal to 0.5. The results have revealed that the factor analysis not only allows detecting irrelevant items but will also allow extracting the valuable factors from the data set of a questionnaire survey. This application of factor analysis for questionnaire evaluation provides very valuable inputs to the decision makers to focus on few important factors rather than a large number of parameters.





INCIVILITY IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract

This study presents an integrative review of workplace incivility literature within the context of the knowledge economy, where intellectual labor and virtual collaboration are central. Drawing on 208 peer-reviewed articles, the review follows PRISMA guidelines and employs the TCCM framework to identify key antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes of incivility. Findings reveal that incivility is shaped by a range of factors, including individual traits (e.g., Dark Triad, perceived overqualification), leadership styles, digital communication behaviors, and organizational culture. The review also highlights significant psychological, behavioral, and performance-related consequences, along with spillover effects into non-work domains such as family life. Moreover, it identifies underexplored areas such as power dynamics, identity-based differences, and virtual workplace norms that warrant future investigation. By focusing on knowledge-intensive industries, this paper offers a nuanced, context-specific understanding of workplace incivility and provides a conceptual foundation for future research and interventions aimed at fostering civility in modern organizational environments.





EVALUATING VOLATILITY ASYMMETRY UNDER BLACK SWAN EVENTS: EVIDENCE FROM FTSE 100

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of black swan events namely Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Russia–Ukraine war on the volatility behaviour of the UK equity market, using the FTSE 100 index as a benchmark. By employing the EGARCH (1,1) model on both daily and weekly return series from September 2014 to March 2025, the paper captures the asymmetric and persistent nature of volatility in response to extreme shocks. The results reveal significant autoregressive and moving average effects in returns, along with strong volatility clustering. Importantly, the study finds that Brexit and the Russia–Ukraine war are associated with statistically significant reductions in volatility, suggesting market adjustments or gradual unfolding of information. In contrast, the COVID-19 period shows a slight but statistically insignificant increase in volatility, possibly due to the normalization of pandemic-related risks. The findings highlight that the magnitude and direction of volatility shifts vary by crisis type, underlining the importance of modelling volatility asymmetry in financial markets. This paper adds to the literature by examining multiple crises together and provides insights for policymakers and market participants in developing robust risk management strategies under extreme uncertainty.





THE INFLUENCE OF VOLUNTEER INTENSITY ON SERVICE RECIPIENT EXPERIENCES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Volunteerism is widely recognized as an essential human resource strategy in many service organizations, yet its impact on the experiences of service recipients has received limited attention in Organizational Behaviour (OB) and Human Resource Management (HRM) research. Much of the existing literature emphasizes either on the well-being of the volunteers (Black & Living, 2004; Omoto & Snyder, 2002; Wilson, 2012) or the economic rationale for engaging volunteers (e.g., Brudney & Duncombe, 1992; Mook et al., 2005). Any relational and psychological value that volunteers can provide to beneficiaries are overlooked .

This study addresses this gap by examining how volunteer engagement influences emotional engagement among service recipients in an educational context. Specifically, it investigates whether volunteer involvement reduces emotions such as frustration, anger, and cynicism critical aspects of disengagement that OB scholars link to burnout, withdrawal, and reduced well-being. Many service settings that rely on volunteers such as schools, hospitals, and NGOs serve vulnerable populations including children, patients, or marginalized communities. These recipients are particularly sensitive to the quality of interpersonal interactions, making trust and perceived volunteer attributions crucial factors

Empirical data were collected from over 1,000 students in 90 government schools in Central India as part of a large-scale volunteer teaching program (Vidyadaan). Using validated measurement scales, regression analyses confirmed that higher levels of volunteer engagement are significantly associated with lower negative emotional engagement among recipients. Furthermore, this relationship is strengthened when recipients report higher trust in volunteers and perceive them as intrinsically motivated.

These findings have important implications for volunteer management within HRM. They highlight that volunteers are not merely substitutes for paid staff but bring unique relational capabilities that can enhance service outcomes. Thus, there is a need for a better understanding of how to use volunteers so that their impact can be most effective. Scholars have argued that this is one of the most urgent volunteer management challenges faced in organizations (Connors, 2012).

For practitioners and policymakers, these insights suggest that effective volunteer management should go beyond recruitment and deployment. Investing in volunteer training to build trust, communicate intrinsic motivations, and develop relational competencies can amplify their impact. This approach aligns with broader HRM goals of fostering meaningful work relationships, supporting engagement, and driving positive organizational outcomes.





By quantifying these effects in a developing country context, this study contributes to OB & HRM scholarship by expanding understanding of how relational dynamics and motivational attributions shape service delivery outcomes. It underscores the potential of volunteerism as a strategic HRM tool for enhancing beneficiary experiences and delivering broader social impact.





ACCESS TO CREDIT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND ITS SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS IN INDIA

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Abstract

India's Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) represent the backbone of the country's economy, playing a pivotal role in employment generation, innovation, and inclusive economic growth. Despite their economic significance, MSMEs continue to face substantial challenges in accessing formal credit, creating a persistent financing gap that constrains their growth potential and overall contribution to India's economic development.

The primary objective of this paper is to comprehensively explore the dynamics of credit access within the MSME segment in India, elucidating both demand-side requirements and the supply-side financing landscape. This research aims to identify the key barriers that MSMEs face in credit acquisition and evaluate the effectiveness of existing policy measures designed to alleviate these constraints. Methodologically, the study adopts a mixed analytical approach, synthesizing empirical data, policy frameworks, and case studies to offer a nuanced understanding of MSME credit ecosystems.

The study collects firm-wise panel data for 400 cross-sections from 2015 to 2023. The unavailability of MSMEs' accounting information for some years in the CAPITALINE database led to unbalanced panel data having 3330 observations. we adopt panel data models for the analysis. The final model to interpret is random time-effect model. The major findings of the study are, the size of MSME, net working capital, history of loans & advances and macro-economic situation matters for credit access in India.

The paper unfolds through systematic sections beginning with an overview of credit requirements, followed by an examination of credit suppliers, discussion of barriers to access, and evaluation of government interventions. Subsequent sections delve into the role of banking institutions and fintech innovations, repayment behaviour, comparative global perspectives, and culminate in well-founded policy recommendations. This structured approach ensures a holistic assessment of MSME credit access, contextualized within India's unique financial and regulatory milieu.





THE INTEGRATION OF AI AND ITS IMPACT ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EVOLVING STRATEGIES

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Abstract

Internet of Things has strategically reconfigured the business processes. Different strategies have successfully defined the Entrepreneurial landscape, aligning with Industrial Revolution 4.0. including Artificial Intelligence, which has played a huge role in changing business dynamics, and adequately researched by different scholars. However, IoT, CRM and AI integration, their strategic implication remain unexplored. The present study focuses on the convergence of these intelligent, smart, autonomous and assistive technologies. As industries are shifting towards new paradigms, often speculated in Industrial Revolution 6.0, concentrated around robotics, automation, societal and policy level changes, intelligent manufacturing, and medicinal or bionic advancements. With the advent of AI technologies reaching over 800 million dollars by 2030, it becomes evident to discuss the relevance of these intelligent systems. Entrepreneurs, knowing the ramifications of AI, its utility and challenges, have achieved substantial profits and returns in their businesses, but at present, businesses are focusing more on AI adaptations, AI as a Service (AIaaS), as it can provide a competitive advantage to them along with an increase in customer engagement. The following study will provide strategic insights on how an entrepreneur can leverage smart technologies to create value, drive innovation and achieve growth.





STEREOTYPES TO EMPOWERMENT: CHANGE IN INDIAN WOMEN ROLE REPRESENTATION IN ADVERTISEMENTS FOR PERIOD 2014 TO 2024

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Abstract

Advertisements have been one of the most persuasive promotional tools in today's world. In addition to this, advertisements also serve to communicate social meanings for increasing sales of goods and services. Many feminist academicians, activists, and researchers have expressed serious concerns about the portrayal of Indian women in advertisements as objects of desire, sex symbols, and possessing submissive behaviors. Thus this paper's goal is to examine how Indian women's roles in advertisements have changed over the past decade in both traditional and digital media advertisements. The representation of gender roles in various traditional and digital media advertisements is examined in this study. For the span of a decade few samples of advertisements were gathered and analysed. Using a coding scheme derived from the previous literature, a content analysis was conducted. Character gender, gender roles (parental, housekeeping, and professional expert), and sexual objectification were among the coded content categories. It was much prevalent in most of the advertisements old gender preconceptions were reflected in the disparities between how men and women were portrayed in advertisements. Gender role depictions in Indian advertisements has not only significantly altered over the years but they have shown some major impact in the society as well. Thus a longitudinal study was conducted to examine role portrayal changes over the time period 2014 to 2024 within and between genders using various advertisements in traditional and digital media both. Thus the study depict gender stereotypes in advertising appear to endure throughout time, despite of social and legal shifts but there is a positive portrayal of women over the past few years in digital media.





INFLATION AND INEQUALITY IN THE SHORT TERM: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY OF U.S. INCOME DISTRIBUTION (2024–2025)

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Abstract

This study examines the short-term economic effects of inflation on income distribution in the United States from January 2024 to February 2025, while also contributing methodologically to the design of short-duration mixed-methods research. Recent scholarship has underscored the value of short-term studies during periods of rapid economic change. Knicker et al. (2024) highlight the importance of short-term volatility modeling in capturing immediate consequences of disruptions like COVID-19, while Harding et al. (2023) emphasize the need for adaptive, time-sensitive approaches to guide policy. Aspachs et al. (2021) and Furceri et al. (2021) further show that socioeconomic shocks unfold quickly and unevenly, warranting real-time, granular analysis over long-term generalizations.

Yet, short-term research often struggles with limited data, requiring alternative methodological strategies to maintain rigor. This study adopts a mixed-methods framework, combining multiple and quantile regressions with institutional discourse analysis and structured surveys. It also includes an experiment using large language models (LLMs) to test whether the sequence of presenting quantitative versus qualitative data influences the depth and coherence of synthesized interpretations.

Our empirical focus is inflation's impact on income distribution in the post-pandemic, pre-election U.S.—a period shaped by global shocks, supply chain disruptions, and domestic policy shifts such as Trump-era tariffs. The U.S. was chosen for its accessible high-frequency data and global economic relevance. Although links between inflation and inequality are well-documented, we argue for renewed localized focus. A meta-analysis by Sintos (2023), reviewing 124 studies, confirms a consistent positive correlation between inflation and income disparity. The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas (Jayashankar & Murphy, 2023) similarly notes that inflation disproportionately impacts low-income households.

Our findings indicate nominal incomes rose modestly across most quintiles, but real incomes stagnated or declined, especially among lower-income groups. This cohort relied more heavily on credit and experienced heightened financial stress. Survey responses described coping strategies such as side gigs, delayed consumption, and cutting essentials like healthcare. Institutional discourse analysis revealed growing concerns around inequality and declining policy trust.

Results from the LLM-based experiment suggest that starting with quantitative data leads to more cohesive, analytically layered interpretations than beginning with qualitative data—underscoring the significance of sequencing in mixed-methods research.





In sum, this study not only sheds light on inflation's short-term distributive effects but also proposes a practical blueprint for conducting rigorous research in fast-changing contexts. By highlighting the value of mixed methods and thoughtful design, we aim to support future inquiry into high-impact economic phenomena.





EXPERIENCING OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE: ROLE OF AFFECT, TEMPORALITY, FLOW AND TASK PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The phenomenon of optimal performance is universally experienced but seldom comprehensively understood. We systematically study this peak performance phenomena by first exploring how it feels when one is performing optimally at work (i.e the flow experience) and whether this experience actually results in optimal performance (measured through subjective task performance). For this, the present study builds on existing flow research and affect-performance literature to examine the workday-level and workweek-level affect-driven fluctuations in one's flow experience and the interceding moderating impact of temporality in this affect-flow relationship. Hereafter, we study whether this flow experience actually results in subjective task performance. Investigating a novel time-based angle to the flow experience, the study utilized a synthesized 'Recovery of Resources' perspective (drawing upon Meijman & Mulder's (1998) Effort Recovery Model and Hobfoll's (1989, Hobfoll et al. 2018) Conservation of Resources Theory) which argues that to experience optimal performance one needs a replenished reservoir of resources to draw upon, which in turn is accomplished through recovery periods (such as at the end of the workday and on the weekend). Adopting a within-person framework, we used the Experiential Sampling Methodology to collect data, twice-a-day and twice-a-week for a period of one week, from two different samples: students pursuing their masters in business administration (Study 1) and organizational employees (Study 2). In Study 1, we first tested the temporal moderation of the affect-flow relationship and after finding affirmative results in sync with proposed hypotheses we further investigated the flow-subjective task performance relationship in Study 2. The results of Study 1 revealed that the flow experience was highest at the start of the workday (i.e in the Morning) and the beginning of the workweek (i.e on Monday) than towards the end of it. Affect (positive and negative) impacted the flow experience with temporality moderating this relationship such that on Monday evenings positive affect lead to an enhanced flow experience and negative affect produced the opposite effect. Interestingly, Negative affect had a persisting impact, being present even on Friday Morning. Study 2 too produced some interesting findings which confirmed the flow-subjective task performance relationship. Important implications for popular stereotype ('Monday Blues') literature, theory, research and practice are discussed.





ROLE OF PUBLIC POLICY IN DRIVING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY: A CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS OF STARTUP ECOSYSTEMS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a key driver of economic growth, innovation, and resilience. Startups contribute to job creation, technological progress, and economic diversification, especially during times of uncertainty. As a result, many governments have adopted policies to promote entrepreneurship. However, the actual impact of public policy on startup activity remains uneven and not fully understood. Existing research highlights the role of institutional factors (North, 1990), the importance of policy support in shaping entrepreneurial ecosystems (Autio et al., 2014), and the need for data-driven policy design (Stenholm et al., 2013). Still, more cross-country, detailed analysis is needed to understand which policy areas matter most and how they influence startup formation.

This study investigates the role of public policy in driving startup activity across countries. It focuses on three key aspects of government support: (1) the extent to which entrepreneurship is prioritized in national strategies (“Support and Relevance”), (2) the level of regulatory and tax-related obstacles faced by entrepreneurs (“Taxes and Bureaucracy”), and (3) the accessibility and effectiveness of government-funded programs for entrepreneurs (“Government Entrepreneurial Programmes”). These three dimensions are combined to create a composite Public Policy Index, used to assess how policy conditions relate to entrepreneurial outcomes. Startup activity is measured as the number of startups founded between 2015 and 2024 per million population, using data from Crunchbase.

The analysis includes 40 countries, accounting for over 90% of global GDP and 70% of the world’s population. Control variables include each country’s nominal GDP, unemployment rate, and population in 2024, drawn from the World Bank and national statistics. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression is used, with all continuous variables standardized using Z-scores to allow cross-country comparison.

The findings show a clear and statistically significant relationship between the Public Policy Index and startup density ($\beta = 0.2541$, $p = .012$), confirming the hypothesis that supportive public policies are linked to higher levels of entrepreneurial activity. Adding the policy index improved the model’s explanatory power considerably (R^2 increased from around 0.15 to 0.3).

These results underline the importance of targeted government interventions. In particular, reducing bureaucratic complexity and strengthening support programs are shown to be effective ways to encourage entrepreneurship. In India’s case, although it ranks 13th in startup density among the top 40 economies and performs well in terms of support programs, issues around taxes and administrative burden remain. Addressing these challenges could further enhance India’s startup landscape.





Overall, this paper contributes to global research on entrepreneurship by offering a practical, data-driven framework for evaluating the role of public policy. It shows that strong, coherent policies can significantly shape entrepreneurial outcomes and provides useful insights for both policymakers and researchers.





PASTORALISM AND THE ANCESTRAL DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

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Abstract

This paper explores the impact of deep historical roots on present-day norms on gender. Specifically, I estimate how ancestral reliance on a form of animal husbandry i.e. pastoralism affects the incidence of violence faced by women and women's acceptance of intimate partner violence in current times. I use the Demographic Health Surveys from 47 countries and link them to the Ethnographic Atlas to estimate the relationship between pastoralism and intimate partner violence. I find that women from historically pastoral societies face more emotional violence. They also tend to justify violence for going out without informing, refusing sex, and burning the food more than women whose ancestors did not depend on pastoralism. I find that these results are driven by pastoralism and not animal husbandry in general.





DOES ANTHROPOMORPHISM AFFECT BRANDCOOLNESS PERCEPTIONS?

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Abstract

Brand coolness represents a significant force in contemporary marketing, significantly driving consumer preference, premium pricing potential, and sustainable competitive advantage (Warren et al., 2019). While research has extensively documented its impact on brand value and consumer responses, understanding how to strategically cultivate brand coolness remains a critical yet understudied challenge for both academics and practitioners (Tiwari et al., 2025). This study addresses this gap by investigating brand anthropomorphism as an antecedent to brand coolness. Data collected through an online survey targeting Indian millennial consumers was analyzed using structural equation modeling to test the proposed relationships. Brand anthropomorphism significantly enhances brand coolness through its multifaceted dimensions, including autonomy Cool, cohesion Cool, elegance Cool, and functional Cool. The results demonstrate that brands can systematically build coolness perceptions by strategically incorporating human-like characteristics, emotions, and social behaviors. This study's contribution is twofold: it addresses the crucial gap in understanding how brands can proactively cultivate coolness, moving beyond the well-documented consequences, and introduces anthropomorphism as a strategic tool for enhancing brand coolness. This advances both theoretical understanding and practical application of brand coolness management. For practitioners, the findings provide specific strategies to impart brand coolness through anthropomorphic features, offering a roadmap for brand managers to enhance brand positioning and consumer connections. For academics, it establishes a theoretical framework linking anthropomorphism to coolness creation, opening new research directions in strategic brand management.



A META-HEURISTIC MODEL FOR PORTFOLIO SELECTION USING ANT COLONY OPTIMIZATION AND DYNAMIC PROGRAMMING IN FUZZY ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

In financial decision making it becomes cumbersome to select right portfolio under uncertainty. This paper proposes a hybrid model for portfolio selection using Ant Colony Optimization (ACO) and Dynamic Programming (DP) in fuzzy environment. The concept of fuzzy sets and fuzzy numbers has been used to address the imprecise nature of asset returns and risks. The model has been compared with a model with ACO and DP in precise environment for portfolio selection. ACO has been used to construct the portfolio while DP has been used for refinement of allocation of funds under desired budget constraints. The model has been well compared with numerical example. The proposed work clearly demonstrates improved portfolio performance with fuzzy nature over traditional ACO and DP.



DECISION SIMULATION FOR GREEN LOAN SANCTIONING USING ABAC POLICIES AND OPA

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Abstract

Introduction: Green loans are poised to play a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable financial future. With rising demand for environmentally responsible financing, banks must ensure that green loans are equitably distributed, transparent, compliant with regulations, and effective in delivering environmental impact. Traditional ways of making decisions may not suit the compliance aspects of green loans, since these loans need to take both financial and environmental factors into account. This study is an attempt to adopt new technologies, like Attribute-Based Access Control (ABAC) and the Open Policy Agent (OPA), which can facilitate smooth decision-making in green loan approval.

Research Problem and Objectives: The study addresses the challenge faced by Indian banks in making green loan decisions more consistent, scalable, and rule-based by automating approvals using programmable policies aligned with evolving regulatory standards. The goal is to show that this model can help banks follow rules consistently, build credibility, work efficiently, and respond faster to green loan requests.

Methodology: The study uses a five-step simulation method. First, it gathers all important factors—like financial, environmental, and institutional aspects—that are important when assessing green loans. Next, it creates access control rules using Rego, a simple and easy-to-read policy language that works well with digital systems. Compared to older XML-based tools, Rego allows for quicker changes and better tracking of updates. Then, the method improves these rules by removing unnecessary parts and testing them in many different situations. The main part of the simulation uses OPA, a cloud-based tool that applies rules instantly. To mimic real banking setups, OPA runs inside Docker containers, and the time it takes to respond is carefully measured to check how well it works. Finally, the simulation is expanded by adding these rules to a made-up banking process to see how well they handle new rules and changes in loan approval standards.

Key Findings: Simulations showed that OPA can handle policy checks in less than a millisecond, which makes it good for making loan decisions quickly, even when there's a lot of activity. Even more importantly, the system lets banks create very detailed and clear rules that look at things like income, creditworthiness, environmental risk scores, and more without changing the main code of the application. This means banks can update their loan approval rules without altering their systems. This kind of flexibility is especially important in green finance, where the rules and standards are still being developed.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications: This study contributes to the increasing body of academic work on how policies influence financial decisions. It takes the ABAC framework and applies it to sustainable





finance, showing that it can be useful in areas beyond just managing access. The simulated model proves to be a framework that can be tested by institutions in making loan approval decisions using an automated system. In conclusion, the study demonstrates how financial institutions can leverage OPA and ABAC to strengthen the efficiency and adaptability of green loan programs, ensuring ESG compliance with greater speed, clarity, and reliability.





ACCELERATING THE ELECTRIC VEHICLES SHIFT: A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL ADOPTION PARTNERS

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Abstract

The global shift toward sustainable mobility has intensified, with light-duty electric vehicles (LDEVs), comprising battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), playing a central role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel dependence (International Transport Forum, 2023). While EV adoption is accelerating worldwide, substantial cross-country disparities persist. Advanced economies such as Norway, the Netherlands, and Germany report high EV penetration (Pandey et al., 2025; Rietmann & Lieven, 2019), whereas countries like India continue to lag (Gupta et al., 2024). This variation raises a critical empirical question: what structural factors drive global EV adoption?

Existing literature explores behavioral, policy, and infrastructural drivers of EV uptake; however, many studies neglect institutional quality or fail to address the endogeneity of macroeconomic predictors such as GDP per capita. This paper fills these gaps by examining EV adoption across 53 countries in 2023 using an integrated econometric framework. The dependent variable is the log of LDEVs per 1,000 people. Key explanatory variables include the log of charging infrastructure per 100 km of road network, log of GDP per capita, institutional quality (measured via the Corruption Perception Index), and a policy dummy indicating whether a country's net-zero target extends beyond 2050. Recognizing the likely endogeneity of GDP per capita, the analysis applies both OLS and Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS), using urbanization rate, inflation, and the ND-GAIN Vulnerability Index as instruments. Instrument strength and validity are assessed using the first-stage F-statistic, Hansen's J-test, and the Durbin-Wu-Hausman test (Bound et al., 1995; White, 1980; Wooldridge, 2010). The OLS results show that the coefficients of the log of charging infrastructure ($= 0.310$, < 0.01), log of GDP per capita ($= 0.86$, < 0.01), institutional quality ($= 0.024$, $= 0.001$), and the policy dummy (0.604 , $= 0.04$) are significantly associated with EV adoption. The adjusted R^2 is 0.8420, indicating a strong model fit. However, the post-estimation test of the 2SLS-IV approach, the Durbin-Wu-Hausman test, suggests moderate endogeneity ($= 0.1060$) for GDP per capita, warranting IV estimation. In the 2SLS results, charging infrastructure continues to exhibit a strong positive effect ($= 0.356$, < 0.001), GDP per capita remains positively significant ($= 0.573$, $= 0.006$), though the magnitude decreases, indicating downward bias correction, and the Institutional quality remains significant ($= 0.032$, $= 0.001$). The policy dummy becomes statistically insignificant. These results highlight three critical insights. First, income facilitates EV adoption, but its effect is partially overstated in models that ignore endogeneity. Second, infrastructure availability, particularly charging station density, is a key enabler. Third, institutional quality strongly conditions successful adoption, possibly through better policy execution and reduced corruption in public procurement. The insignificance of the policy dummy suggests that merely setting climate targets is insufficient; countries must invest in institutional and infrastructural readiness to actualize these goals.





The IV-2SLS approach strengthens causal inference and addresses a key limitation of prior cross-country analyses. Policymakers should therefore complement net-zero pledges with institutional reforms and infrastructure investments.





THE TRUST DIVIDEND : DECONSTRUCTING THE ROLE OF TRUST IN SUSTAINING AND DISSOLVING BOTH PERSONAL INTERDEPENDENCIES AND CONSUMER-BRAND ALLIANCES.

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Abstract

The goal of marketing is to generate an intense bond between the consumer and the brand, and the main ingredient of this bond is trust. The construction of consumer-brand bonds includes such aspects as commitment, intimacy, love/passion, interdependence, self-connection, and brand partner quality. The brand-person associations of a more personal nature are common now. Trust is a word that holds a different meaning for every individual. In Psychology, Trust can be conceptualised as...

1. A behavioral intention (Meyer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995; McKnight, Cummings & Chervany, 1998)
2. An internal action, similar to choosing, judging and preferring (e.g. Lewis & Weigart, 1985; Riker, 1971)
3. Some view trust as synonymous with trustworthiness, discussing trust in the context of personal characteristics that inspire positive expectations on the part of other individuals (e.g. Butler & Cantrell, 1984; McKnight *et al*, 1998)

Others view trust as a facet of personality that develops early in life and remains relatively stable through adulthood (Rotter, 1967; Webb & Worchel, 1986). In this research, An attempt is made to study the role of trust in a consumer's personal life and how that person perceives trust in the choices of the brand he/she makes. Ultimately, does his/her perception of trust in real life with people affect his/her choice of brands that he/she buys? This study emphasizes the importance of understanding the brand and consumer relationship. This is a qualitative research and an in-depth interview is conducted to have a greater purview into the participant's thoughts. The sample size of 10 was taken into consideration from amongst college going students where 5 were males and 5 were females. Free associations and mental mapping were also used. The research findings showed the effect of trust in personal relationships and how that is effective in brand choice. The research also found brand trust in a way does lead to brand loyalty. It is a phenomenon which is gathered over a period of time.





A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION AND PREDICTION OF THE POTENTIAL STRATEGIES BY THE LARGE ECONOMIES ACROSS THE WORLD TO COUNTER THE TRUMP-TARIFFS LEVERAGING GAME THEORY : A BOUNDED RATIONAL APPROACH TOWARDS BRINKMANSHIP STRATEGY UNDER PLANNED HAMILTONIAN CHAOS

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Abstract

Since President Trump has assumed the Oval Office for the second tenure in Jan 2025; buzzes were brewing exponentially across the global economy and trade circuits apprehending even more strict tariff regime & ruthless trade-war between the US & large global economies, the world has ever seen.

The declaration of extensive tariffs by President Trump on 2nd April 2025 proved the apprehensions correct and gave birth of a hypothetically bipolar economic tension where USA and rest of the world are facing each other (surprisingly this time the tariff venture not just have targeted the old rivals like China but also the counted historical allies like European Union as well).

By looking inside this point of view of USA President, it seems clear that a significantly high degree of planned chaos has been induced to the world economy by imposing steep duties of billions of dollars in imports, and by virtue of which, the United States has hinted that it is prepared to endure short-term pain to yield long-term leverage.

This clearly indicates towards a brinkmanship strategy opted by President Trump where a situation has been pushed to the edge of all-out conflict to cash the highest possible yield. Here, Trump's deliberate push towards the risk of creating an economic crisis and consequent fallout not only for the rivals but for USA as well, is to strengthen USA's negotiation stakes in any upcoming bipartite trade deals.

If this given scenario is tested under the principles of Game Theory, it can be seen that, although in a classical game, the players are expected to be rational in order to reach the Nash Equilibrium (where neither player can maximize his/her gain by modifying his/her individual strategies), in the given scenario (like any other real-life case) the participants will be boundedly rational and will eventually fail to reach the Nash Equilibrium - hence there will be room for learning the strategies by both the players under the real-time system chaos.





Like a typical rock-paper-scissors game, here also a Nash Equilibrium has been tried to conserve in a zero-sum game where one player's (say USA) win necessarily need another player's (say Country X) defeat – with three predominant choices i.e. cooperate-trade deal-counter tariff.

In the current study, the goal is to replicate the global economic scenario under Trump-tariff as a Hamiltonian System where planned chaos has been injected deliberately by Brinkmanship strategy and hence, analyzing the Stackelberg Game played by Trump-led USA (since USA has been the first mover in this intensive game) and eventually calculate and predict the potential moves to be taken by the large economies like European Union, Japan, India & China by leveraging backward induction technique.





BRIDGING THE GAP: HOW SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL FACTORS SHAPE DIGITAL HEALTH LITERACY AMONG INDIA'S VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

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Abstract

Digital health has the potential to transform healthcare delivery in India. It provides solutions to enhance access, efficiency, and patient outcomes. However, the successful use of digital health technologies depends heavily on individuals' digital health literacy (DHL) and their willingness to embrace these innovations. Digital health literacy includes the skills needed to access, understand, and use health information from electronic sources to solve health issues. It covers basic skills, such as operating devices and navigating platforms, as well as interactive and critical skills to evaluate and engage with digital health information. Due to its diverse population, India faces a complex landscape for adopting digital health. While digital technologies can help bridge gaps in healthcare access, significant disparities exist in DHL and adoption among various demographic groups. Factors like age, education, income, location (urban versus rural), and socioeconomic status are key in shaping individuals' ability and willingness to engage with digital health. It's observed that younger, better-educated, and higher-income individuals are more likely to adopt digital health solutions. These groups often have higher digital literacy, better access to technology, and more confidence in using digital tools for health-related purposes. Conversely, older adults, those with lower educational levels, and lower-income populations may have limited digital literacy. They also face barriers such as a lack of access to devices and the internet, concerns about privacy and security, and financial constraints. Moreover, cultural factors also influence digital health adoption in India. Cultural beliefs, practices, and language diversity can affect how people perceive and interact with digital health technologies. Therefore, it's important to consider the cultural context and adapt digital health solutions to meet the specific needs and preferences of different communities.

Promoting equitable digital health adoption in India requires recognizing and addressing issues related to digital health literacy. In this regard, there are multiple solutions to develop and support digital literacy skills for all segments of the population, particularly vulnerable populations. Education and training programs can help individuals develop the skills needed to access digital health platforms. Additionally, efforts should focus on evaluating online health information and utilizing digital tools for self-management and communication with healthcare providers. In addition, building capacity around technology and infrastructure is necessary especially in the rural and underserved areas. This can include increasing access to internet capabilities, providing affordable devices, and building community-based digital health hubs. It is also important to ensure that digital health solutions are affordable, accessible, and usable for the varied needs and wishes of the population, given the breadth of diversity that exists in the country. To conclude, and to realize the full potential of digital health and its ability to improve health care in India, it is very important to facilitate and promote digital health literacy and adoption. By





addressing barriers and inequalities in access through purposeful initiatives, we can begin to build a digital health ecosystem that is inclusive and equitable for everyone lacking disparities regardless of their demographics.





CTA: WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOES NOT WORK?

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Abstract

Call-to-Action (CTA) has been an important part of any persuasive communication, more so in marketing communication. In recent years, in the digital marketing world, the CTA elements play a very critical role in influencing consumer behavior and conversion rates. Despite the well-known use and need for crafting effective CTAs, not all CTAs are designed to be effective. This paper examines what makes a CTA work or does not work through the lens of behavioral psychology, persuasion theories, user experience (UX) design principles, and marketing frameworks.

Through qualitative analysis and empirical testing of over 100 CTA examples across landing pages, mobile apps, and email campaigns, this paper aims to identify patterns in wording, color, size, placement, and timing. It is observed that the clear, specific and benefit-oriented messaging performs better as a CTA. For example, the CTA ‘Start Your Free Trial’ leads to more clicks/actions and better engagement than generic alternatives such as ‘Click Here.’

On the other hand, the paper also aims to analyze why some CTAs underperform. Using the Cognitive Load Theory and Hick’s Law, the idea is to demonstrate how too many CTA options or poor visual hierarchy can lead to decision fatigue and inaction.

Finally, the paper aims to provide an applied and practical CTA Effectiveness Framework based on five dimensions: Context Fit, Cognitive Simplicity, Visual Salience, Value Clarity, and Behavioral Trigger Strength. This framework can serve as a diagnostic tool for marketers and UX designers seeking to evaluate and optimize CTA performance in diverse digital environments.

By blending theory with real-world application, this study provides actionable insights for digital marketers, designers, and conversion rate optimization (CRO) specialists. It highlights that effective CTAs are beyond just the design elements or copywriting in isolation. Effective CTAs are the result of aligning psychological triggers, user intent, and the context.

The study interweaves theoretical foundations by synthesizing insights from Cialdini’s Principles of Persuasion to explain how perceived urgency and trust influence CTA performance. The Fogg Behavior Model (FBM) will be used as a foundational framework to explore how an effective CTA must align with a user’s motivational state while minimizing friction and cognitive overload. Finally, the paper evaluates the Marketing Funnel/AIDA Model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) to look at CTAs within the wider context of the customer journey.





A NONPARAMETRIC BAYESIAN APPROACH TO YIELD MODELING AND PREMIUM ESTIMATION IN CLIMATE-RESPONSIVE CROP INSURANCE

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Abstract

Purpose: Agricultural insurance safeguards farmers against climate-induced yield losses. However, its adoption remains limited due to persistent challenges in accurately quantifying yield risk and determining actuarially fair premium rates. Conventional methods often rely on restrictive assumptions and overlook the temporal structure of weather-yield relationships. The objective of this study is to develop a probabilistic framework that explicitly models the conditional distribution of crop yields as a function of climate variables during key crop growth stages, thereby improving the estimation of yield risk and enabling more precise and climate-sensitive premium pricing.

Methodology: The study employs a nonparametric Bayesian framework to estimate the predictive density of crop yields, integrating meteorological and remote sensing data with historical yield records. For this study, we use data from 2000 to 2019 for all variables to model climate-yield relationships across 67 major rice-growing districts. District-level rice yield sourced from the Directorate of Economic and Statistics, meteorological variables from the Copernicus Climate Change Service, and remote sensing data NDVI processed through Google Earth Engine. The modeling process is structured around three phenological crop phases: sowing, growing, and harvesting, to account for temporal heterogeneity in climate impacts. For each phase, relevant climate variables (Temperature, rainfall, Solar Radiation, soil Moisture, and Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) are used to derive conditional yield distributions. A copula-based conditional likelihood approach is used to model the joint distribution between yield and climate variables, capturing complex, non-linear dependencies and tail behavior. The resulting conditional likelihoods for each variable combination are incorporated into a Bayesian framework, which infers posterior weights that quantify the relative importance of each climate variable in explaining yield variability. These weights are used to aggregate the conditional yield distributions across variables, resulting in a unified predictive yield distribution for the district.

Findings: The proposed approach improves the accuracy and robustness of yield forecasts compared to naïve Kernel density and normal distribution, evaluated by a cross-validation test. The Bayesian phase-weighting exhibits that the growing phase generally contributes the most to yield variability. The resulting predictive densities exhibit better calibration, leading to more stable premium estimates with lower variability. The model performs consistently across districts with differing climatic profiles, demonstrating its scalability and adaptability.

Practical Implications: This framework offers practical advantages for insurers and policymakers aiming to expand agricultural insurance coverage. The remote sensing data also facilitates timely updates and broad geographic application, enabling better responsiveness to evolving climate conditions. By linking





climate indicators to yield outcomes through a data-driven probabilistic model, Insurers can use the refined risk estimates to reduce basis risk and improve the financial viability of insurance products.

Originality/Value: This study contributes a novel methodological approach to agricultural insurance by integrating a copula-based conditional likelihood structure within a nonparametric Bayesian framework, using weather variables. Unlike conventional actuarial models, the proposed method accounts for non-linearity and phase-specific sensitivities, making it highly relevant for climate-resilient insurance design in vulnerable agricultural regions.





THE PERFORMANCE CONUNDRUM: A STUDY ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AMID POLITICISED WORKPLACE

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Abstract

In the rapidly evolving organizational landscape of India, early-career professionals face increasing challenges navigating informal workplace dynamics. People are more likely to associate their workplace with unfairness and unpredictability in the presence of OP (organizational politics) practices. (Ahmad Albloush et al., 2025). It is also researched that workplace politics foster environments where talent is side-lined, marginalized, or even dismissed based on interpersonal alliances rather than merit. (Suresh C Joshi, 2024)

This study investigates the impact of perceived workplace politics on employee performance, job satisfaction, motivation, and retention among professionals with 0–2 years of experience across industries in the Delhi NCR region. While some political behaviour can serve strategic functions (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992), excessive or unethical conduct—such as favouritism and lack of transparency—often leads to decreased morale, disengagement, and organizational distrust (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007; Chughtai et al., 2020).

Utilizing a structured quantitative approach, primary data was collected via a Likert-scale survey and analysed through correlation and regression techniques (Landells & Albrecht, 2019). Results indicate a significant negative association between perceived organizational politics and employee recognition, satisfaction, and productivity. Comfort in expressing opinions and transparency in promotions emerged as critical predictors of positive workplace perception (Khan et al., 2022).

This study emphasizes the importance of ethical leadership, participative culture, and clear HR policies in mitigating the adverse effects of workplace politics (Gupta et al., 2021). The findings offer practical recommendations to foster fairness, inclusivity, and psychological safety—particularly for new workforce entrants—highlighting a path toward more human-centric organizational environments.





A REVIEW OF GLOBAL LITERATURE ON END-OF-LIFE VEHICLE (ELV) MANAGEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

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Abstract

This paper presents a systematic review of academic literature on end-of-life vehicle (ELV) management with an analysis of close to 170 peer-reviewed publications spread across nine regions for the period 2010-2024. The fulcrum of this review paper is based on systematically extracting and analysing frequently occurring keywords across the Scopus and Google Scholar database of peer-reviewed journal publications for the time period 2010-24. This paper addresses the existing gap in literature by comparatively analyzing ELV management systems in developed and developing nations, a perspective that has been largely overlooked. The paper is divided into three broad areas. The first part intends to study the regional patterns and key findings on ELV management ecosystem pertaining to nine major regions namely Africa, Australia, China, European Union, India, Japan, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and the United States of America. The second part of the paper presents the key methodological approaches adopted by the researchers across select identified dominant thematic areas viz. (i) consumer perception and attitude towards ELV disposal (ii) regulatory landscape (iii) economics of ELVs, and (iv) ELV recycling practices. The third part of the paper presents four prominent research topics across regions and/or countries that have emerged from the review that include (i) Factors driving the market structure of ELV management (ii) Diversity in market structure of ELV management across regions/countries (iii) Regulatory landscape and its impact on formalisation of ELV management ecosystem (iv) Influence of consumer perception on persistence of informality of ELV ecosystem in developing countries. The findings present a wide diversity in focus areas and methodologies across developed and developing nations. The paper finds that literature pertaining to developed nations revolve around policies and practices around the adoption of circular economy principles and regulatory framework like the EPRs. On the other hand, those literatures from the developing nations largely focus on informal recycling practices, inadequacy of recycling infrastructure and lack of consumer awareness. The comparative analysis also present that the advanced economies including European Union, United States and Japan displayed more mature and advanced ELV management ecosystem characterised by higher recovery rates mandated under the supportive legal and policy systems and active public participation. On the other hand, developing regions including South East Asia, India, Africa and China are characterized by voids in public policies, poor enforcements, and inadequate consumer awareness.





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THE AVATAR WITHIN: HOW THE METAVERSE REWRITES WHO WE ARE

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Abstract

Changing technological landscape is making metaverse a new normal, where users immerse in the virtual world projecting themselves through their own customised avatars. These avatars redefine the identity of a user, leading to compliment or conflict in the user's real social identity. This paper explores the psychological and social implications of metaverse usage on the identity of a user. Grounded in Social Identity Theory, this work explores various cross-disciplinary literatures of identity and psychology, along with metaverse, its usage and implications to propose a conceptual framework to explain the dynamic relationship existing between 'metaverse identity' and 'social identity'. We propose an integration-fragmentation-adaption identity model. Our work will enrich the existing identity literature and will pave a new direction of research for changing technological landscape.





FROM CHANNEL INTEGRATION TO CONSUMER EMPOWERMENT: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED VALUE AND WELL-BEING IN OMNICHANNEL RETAILING

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Abstract

Purpose- Drawing on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework, this study examines how channel integration in omnichannel retailing influences consumers' hedonic and utilitarian value perceptions. These perceived values are proposed to affect consumer well-being, which subsequently drives consumer empowerment. The study aims to uncover the psychological mechanisms through which integrated channel experience shapes empowered consumer behavior in an omnichannel context.

Design/methodology/approach- The study will employ a quantitative, cross-sectional design using an online survey to collect data from Indian consumers via purposive sampling. The hypothesized relationship will be tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM).

Findings- Channel integration is expected to influence both hedonic and utilitarian value, which in turn are anticipated to influence consumer well-being. Subsequently, consumer well-being is expected to affect consumer empowerment.

Practical implications- The study is expected to offer meaningful insights for both academia and practitioners. Theoretically, it extends the application of the SOR framework to the domain of consumer empowerment in omnichannel retailing. From a managerial perspective, the findings may help retailers design more integrated and engaging omnichannel strategies that foster empowered, loyal, and satisfied consumers.

Originality/value- While limited studies have explored the concept of consumer empowerment in omnichannel retailing, very few have delved into decoding the complete mechanism through which it unfolds. This study addresses this gap by investigating how channel integration leads to consumer empowerment by offering a holistic understanding of empowerment in the omnichannel context.





PERCEIVED UTILITY OF PRADHAN MANTRI BHARTIYA JANAUSHADHI PARIYOJANA (PMBJP) AND AWARENESS OF GENERIC DRUGS- A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY IN ODISHA.

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Abstract

Background: Being the leading exporter of generic medicines to the other part of world, India faces accessible and affordable medicines are beyond the reach of its diseased individuals. According to NSSO data, the total purchase of medicine accounted for around 72% of total expenditure on non-hospitalised treatment in rural areas and 68% in urban areas, which pushes the common man towards poverty by increasing Out of pocket expenditure (OOPE). To reduce the OOPE on drugs and medical consumables, the Government of India Launched the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) in November, 2008. Under the scheme, dedicated pharmacy outlets known as Janaushadhi Kendras are setup to provide quality generic medicines at affordable prices. Till now more than 16000 Janaushadhi Kendras are functional across the country, which provides 2047 drugs and 300 surgical products with a nominal price.

Objective: This study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude, and perceptions of patients about Jan Aushadhi Kendras and generic medicines at different hospitals in Odisha.

Materials and methods: It was a descriptive cross-sectional study. A prevalidated questionnaire was distributed among 400 patients and attendants visiting OPD of several clinical departments in different hospitals like Community health centres, District head quarter hospitals and medical colleges in Odisha, during January to April 2024. The participants' knowledge, attitude, and perception regarding Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana and generic medicines were evaluated. The collected data was analysed by using descriptive statistical measures like mean and percentages.

Results: The study resulted that most of the participants were not fully aware about Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana or the Janaushadhi scheme and also about generic medicines. Only 48% were aware about the name of the scheme but unknown about the medicines and utilities available. Most of the participants (79%) perceived that generic medicines were not similar in quality and efficacy like the branded ones. Some are (52%) still not aware of the Janaushadhi establishments or stores near to them.

Conclusion: The study reveals that the patients had a very poor knowledge and understanding about the Janaushadhi Scheme and generic medicines, despite it was launched more than 16 years ago. Majority are





ignorant and not having proper information about the operational aspect of the scheme. To reduce the gap, policy level interference and health care providers awareness programme is highly needed. The authorities should disseminate the scheme-related facts and encourage to utilise the generic drugs whereby reducing the health expenditure and affordable to common man.

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SHADES OF CHOICE: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON COLOR TONAL RANGE CUSTOMIZATION IN EMOTION, PERSONALITY, AND ONLINE APPAREL PURCHASE INTENT

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of colour tonal range customization (light, medium, dark) on consumers' emotional responses, personality alignment, and purchase intention in the context of online apparel shopping. While prior research highlights the role of colour in shaping consumer perceptions, few studies have examined how variations in a single colour's tonal range impact emotional and behavioral outcomes, particularly within digital customization environments. Grounded in the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), this research explores how visual customization affects consumer psychology and purchase behavior.

An experimental design was employed with 180 participants aged 18-35, randomly assigned to interact with mock e-commerce platforms presenting apparel options across five colours (Red, Yellow, Blue, Green, Orange), each available in light, medium, and dark tonal ranges. Participants evaluated their assigned stimuli and completed a structured questionnaire measuring emotional response (using the Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance scale), personality alignment (using adapted Big Five Inventory items), and purchase intention (via Likert scale).

The ANOVA results indicated a significant effect of tonal range on emotional responses ($p < .001$), with light tones evoking calmness, medium tones heightening arousal, and dark tones eliciting feelings of security and seriousness. Additionally, tonal range significantly influenced purchase intention, with medium tonal ranges consistently driving higher purchase intent, particularly within the blue colour condition. Mediation analysis (PROCESS Model 4) confirmed that emotional responses and personality alignment significantly mediated the relationship between tonal range and purchase intention.

The findings support the hypotheses that tonal range customization affects both emotional engagement and consumer behavior, reinforcing the theoretical relevance of the S-O-R framework in digital sensory marketing. This research extends existing literature by demonstrating that subtle visual elements, such as tonal range, contribute to consumer personalization experiences and decision-making processes.





From a practical perspective, the results suggest that online apparel brands can enhance consumer engagement and conversion by offering customizable tonal ranges, with medium tones showing the strongest commercial appeal. Additionally, recognizing the alignment between personality traits and tonal preferences can inform personalized marketing strategies, improve satisfaction, and foster brand loyalty.

In conclusion, this study provides empirical evidence that tonal range customization serves not merely as an aesthetic choice but as a strategic tool for influencing consumer emotions and purchase behavior in online apparel retail.

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BRAND PREFERENCES OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS TWO-WHEELERS : A COMPARATIVE STUDY ACROSS THE RURAL AND URBAN MARKETS OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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Abstract

Purpose: India's two-wheeler industry dominates the automobile sector, accounting for approximately 77% of total vehicle sales and contributing over 15 million units annually (SIAM, 2023). In Andhra Pradesh, two-wheelers are not only a daily necessity but also reflect consumers' identity, mobility aspirations, and economic considerations. With rising competition and market diversification, understanding what drives brand preference has become essential for marketers, especially in differentiating rural and urban consumer behavior.

Consumer brand preference has been extensively linked to perceptions of brand equity, value, and symbolic alignment (Keller, 2001; Aaker, 1996). Sweeney and Soutar (2001) emphasized that both emotional and functional value significantly influence consumer evaluations, while recent studies note the growing role of sustainability perception and service quality in shaping long-term loyalty (Joshi & Rahman, 2019; Parasuraman et al., 1988). This study investigates the multidimensional factors influencing brand preference in the two-wheeler market across Andhra Pradesh. The core objectives include:

1. Identifying and validating brand-related constructs.
2. Examining the impact of demographic factors.
3. Analyzing the mediating role of brand loyalty.
4. Testing the moderating role of consumer location (urban vs rural) in decision-making.

Methodology: A quantitative design was used. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 428 respondents (urban = 214, rural = 214) selected via stratified random sampling.





Instrument reliability was confirmed via Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.842$). EFA and CFA confirmed construct validity. Due to non-normal distribution (Kolmogorov–Smirnov, Shapiro–Wilk), non-parametric tests (Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal-Wallis H) were applied. SEM was used for model validation and path analysis.

Constructs: The five independent variables were:

1. Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) – Brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand associations (Keller, 2001; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).
2. Value-Based Brand Preference (VBBP) – Functional utility, emotional appeal, price-value perception (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).
3. Unified Brand Preference (UBP) – Symbolic meaning, emotional connection, lifestyle alignment (Escalas & Bettman, 2003).
4. Sustainability Perception – Environmental responsibility and green innovation (Joshi & Rahman, 2019).
5. After-Sales Service Quality – Technical support, reliability, accessibility (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Brand loyalty was tested as a mediator, and location (urban/rural) as a moderator.

Findings: Significant location-based differences were found ($U = 19850.00$, $p < 0.001$); income levels also influenced preferences ($H = 19.62$, $p < 0.001$). The SEM model showed good fit ($\chi^2/df = 1.89$, CFI = 0.97, GFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.041). All constructs significantly influenced brand preference:

Conclusion and Implications: Brand preference results from both rational factors (value, quality, service) and emotional-symbolic elements (image, sustainability, loyalty). Rural consumers prioritize affordability and service, while urban consumers value innovation and brand identity. Customized marketing strategies are essential to build long-term brand engagement.





ALIGNING ESG IN ACADEMIA WITH THE SDGS: THE “ONE CHILD, ONE CAMPUS” FRAMEWORK FOR INSTITUTIONAL SOCIAL IMPACT

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Abstract

While ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) frameworks have become central to organizational accountability, the “S” dimension often remains broad and under-structured, especially within academic institutions. Social initiatives are typically limited to symbolic acts, short-term donations, or surface-level outreach programs. Though the ESG agenda includes education and community welfare, vulnerable children, particularly those without stable access to education or psychological support, rarely receive focused attention in institutional ESG policies (Bansal & Song, 2017; GRI, 2023).

This study introduces a structured, theory-driven framework titled “One Child, One Campus”, which proposes embedding child welfare, specifically, educational sponsorship and psychological support, into institutional ESG strategy. It encourages premier academic institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) to commit to sponsoring the education and holistic development of at least one underprivileged child each year. The model is designed to be low-cost, high-impact, and ethically grounded, offering a replicable approach to meaningful social engagement. Unlike conventional CSR practices that are often corporate-led or donor-driven, this framework repositions institutions themselves as active agents of grassroots change. It integrates sponsorship into core institutional activities, such as student-led CSR clubs, alumni networks, and coursework in leadership, ethics, and sustainability. This approach aligns with growing scholarly calls to expand the social mission of higher education beyond teaching and research, toward active participation in societal transformation (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002).

The framework is conceptually grounded in Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001; Werner, 1993), which highlights the critical role of consistent educational and emotional support in helping children overcome adversity. It also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), and SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions) (United Nations, 2015).

Based on existing research, this is one of the first academic contributions to formally propose a child-centered ESG model within the context of Indian management institutions. Most ESG literature focuses on corporate applications; this paper shifts the lens toward educational institutions, not just as observers or policy educators, but as responsible social actors. The model offers a tangible mechanism to redefine how management institutions measure their broader societal value and engage in direct, sustained impact. At a time when management research is being called upon to move beyond theoretical insights toward real-world relevance, this framework presents a timely, grounded, and compassionate solution. Perhaps





true institutional greatness is not only measured by the futures shaped through degrees, but by the lives quietly transformed along the way, one forgotten childhood at a time.





THE FUTURE OF BANKING: HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS TRANSFORMING FINANCIAL SERVICES

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Abstract

The banking sector is experiencing a profound reorganization fueled by the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. This paper discusses how AI is transforming financial services, increasing operating efficiency, streamlining customer experiences, and spurring innovation. Some of the most significant areas of impact are algorithmic trading, risk management, fraud prevention, personalized banking, and automation of customer care via chatbots and virtual assistants. Through analysis of emerging trends and case studies, we outline how banks use AI to automate functions, minimize expenditure, and provide customized financial solutions. Secondly, we discuss the ethical implications and regulatory issues around the use of AI by banks, including data protection, bias in algorithms, and abiding by guidelines such as GDPR. With the industry on a path of constant innovation, the need for financial institutions to keep pace with these changes to stay ahead and satisfy digitally aware consumers becomes obvious. Additionally, we see AI's potential for democratizing access to financial services and making them more inclusive and customer-friendly globally.





THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY CHOICES ON REPUTATION OUTCOMES IN INDIAN ROAD FREIGHT TRANSPORT

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Abstract

Reputation is vital in the trucking sector, where issues like delays, accidents, theft, and trust gaps between owners and drivers persist. This study, based on data from India, uses a multi-stage approach combining an optimization model with qualitative interviews. The model identifies optimal technology combinations aligned with specific reputation goals and prioritizes reputation dimensions based on expectation levels. Sensitivity analysis shows that higher reputation targets require a narrower focus—for example, a 140% increase should prioritize logistics efficiency, while a 20% improvement involves multiple areas like service quality, safety, compliance, and environmental responsibility. Interviews with trucking firm owners and tech providers highlight both alignment and gaps with model outcomes. Overall, the study offers practical guidance for firms and technology providers in aligning tech adoption with reputation strategies.





UNPACKING THE FACTORS OF D2C REVOLUTIONIZATION IN INDIA USING PLS-SEM APPROACH

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Abstract

Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) startups are driving a major transformation in India's retail industry. By interacting directly with customers via online channels and utilising innovations like influence-driven marketing, AI-powered personalisation, and real-time customer feedback, these digital-first brands are revolutionising the traditional retail ecosystem. (Gunz, 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in its integrated exploration of constructs like awareness and readiness, AI-personalization experience, and brand discovery and preference affect consumer satisfaction, which in turn affects loyalty and engagement with D2C brands (Sharma & Dutta, 2023). The moderating impact of demographic factors such as age, income, location, and digital access on the strength of these associations is also investigated by the model. There is a lack of empirical data that reflects D2C consumer perspectives, and the majority of current research is conceptual, platform-centric, or broadly e-commerce focused. By providing unique insights derived from consumer-level data, this study fills that knowledge gap. The study uses Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to test a conceptual path model based on behavioural theory in order to organise this investigation.

Problem Statement and Objectives: What are the behavioral and experiential factors influencing consumer adoption, satisfaction, and loyalty in India's D2C market, and how can AI-driven personalization and digital strategies be leveraged to drive sustained engagement across demographic segments? The objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the impact of brand discovery and preference, AI-driven personalization and Awareness & Readiness on consumer satisfaction with respect to D2C platforms.
2. To analyze the role of customer satisfaction in shaping loyalty and post-purchase engagement.
3. To assess the moderating effect of demographic factors (e.g., location, income, digital access) on the relationship between key drivers and consumer satisfaction.

Methodology: This is a quantitative primary research study. A structured questionnaire will be administered across different age groups, geographic locations in India, who have recently interacted with D2C brands. The instrument will collect data on brand discovery, motivation to purchase, satisfaction with personalization, challenges faced and repurchase intent. PLS-SEM will be used to uncover key behavioral drivers and quantify the influence of AI-enabled features and demographic moderators on consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Further, moderation examines interaction effects, while mediation





reveals indirect influence paths. The Bootstrapping procedure tests the significance of relationships and blindfolding assesses predictive relevance of the conceptual model.

Business Implications: This research provides practical, data-backed insights to D2C founders, marketers, investors, and digital strategists. It helps businesses in enhancing personalization strategies using real consumer feedback to drive engagement and satisfaction and guiding AI adoption for customized experiences, product discovery, and post-purchase engagement.





PERFORMING THROUGH PAIN: EXPLORING SICKNESS PRESENTEEISM AMONG PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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Abstract

Sickness presenteeism (SP), the act of working while unwell, is an emerging concern in organizational research, with significant costs for productivity, employee well-being, and organizational sustainability. While SP has been widely documented in healthcare, education, and corporate sectors, the experiences of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) remain underexplored. PwDs face unique health-related challenges, heightened stigma, and infrastructural barriers at the workplace, potentially shaping distinct motivations and pressures around SP. This study investigates the phenomenon of sickness presenteeism among PwDs in India, focusing on the factors that influence their decisions to work while sick, the challenges they encounter, and the ways they navigate organizational, social, and personal tensions.

Drawing on dialectical theory, which views workplace behaviors as negotiated responses to contradictory tensions (e.g., duty vs. self-care; presenteeism vs. employability), the study employed a qualitative exploratory design. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 salaried PwDs across sectors such as IT, education, finance, and the social sector. Participants, with disabilities ranging from locomotor and visual impairments to chronic conditions like epilepsy and diabetes, were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling. Interviews, lasting 20–45 minutes, explored themes of motivation, stigma, organizational support, and accommodation practices. Data were transcribed and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), combining open and axial coding with abductive reasoning guided by dialectical theory.

Five key themes emerged. First, the “able-bodied performance imperative” revealed participants’ internalized pressure to prove ‘normal’ productivity, fearing absence would reinforce negative stereotypes. Second, “stigma-infused policy gaps” pointed to how uniform leave policies were experienced unequally by PwDs, often accompanied by microaggressions. Third, “resource dilution through bureaucratic rigidity” highlighted how complex medical documentation and approval chains depleted personal resources, making SP a pragmatic choice. Fourth, “managerial micro-support” showed that small but consistent managerial actions such as check-ins or flexible deadlines, buffered the likelihood of SP. Finally, the theme of “dialectical reframing: sick-but-able identity negotiation” captured how PwDs actively balanced professional identity and self-care, using strategies ranging from sacrifice and strategic presence to self-advocacy.





The study contributes theoretically by extending the understanding of SP through a disability-focused, dialectical lens, revealing that SP is not merely an individual choice but a dynamic negotiation shaped by organizational culture, policy design, and inclusive leadership. Practically, it highlights that even low-cost interventions, such as proactive managerial engagement and disability-competent Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), can reduce SP and improve well-being.

Limitations include the urban, white-collar sample; future research should expand to gig and informal labour, and employ longitudinal and quantitative designs to test proposed relationships over time. In conclusion, this study amplifies the voices of PwDs to uncover the resource tensions and identity negotiations embedded in sickness presenteeism. It calls for organizations to move from a “performing through pain” culture to one of “thriving through support,” fostering truly inclusive and sustainable workplaces.





CONSTRUCTING MULTIDIMENSIONAL INDICES TO ESTIMATE COMMON OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT CONTROL IN THE PRIVATE CORPORATE SECTOR OF INDIA.

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Abstract

Research Objectives: This paper attempts to estimate (i) the proportion of private sector companies in India that are under the influence of common ownership and management control, and (ii) the intensity of control by the common owners and managers over these companies. The analysis covers both the aggregate private corporate sector and individual 2-digit industries[1], using an unbalanced panel of 4,219 firms for the period 2000–2018.

Methodology: To quantify control, we construct three indices using data from the CMIE prowest database:

1. Common ownership control: arithmetic mean of the two sub-indices
 - Proportion of common equity owners: the ratio of the number of at least 5% equity owners in company A who also own at least 5% in other companies to the total number of at least 5% equity owners in company A.
 - Effective equity owned by common owners: the ratio of total equity owned by at least 5% equity owners in a company A who also own at least 5% equity in other companies to total equity owned by at least 5% equity owners in company A.
2. Common management control: the ratio of the number of board members, CEO, CFO and COO of company A who are also board members, CEO, CFO and COO in other companies to the total number of board members, CEO, CFO and COO in company A.
3. Common ownership or management control: the ratio of the number of at least 5% equity owners, board members, CEO, CFO and COO of company A who are also either at least 5% equity owners, board members, CEO, CFO or COO in other companies to the total number of at least 5% equity owners, board members, CEO, CFO and COO in company A.

Each index ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater overlap. Data is sourced from the CMIE Prowess database.

Results: Around 38, 66, and 72 per cent of sample companies are under common ownership, management, and common ownership or management control, respectively. For companies under common ownership control, the average value of indices is around 0.55 for the common ownership, 0.38 for common





management, and 0.34 for common ownership or management control[2]. The minimum and maximum observed values of all three indices are 0 and 1.

Contribution: The Present study is likely the first attempt to quantify the prevalence of common ownership and management control in the private corporate sector of India after liberalisation. The substantial presence and persistence of common ownership and management control suggest that this phenomenon is a deeply embedded structural characteristic of the Indian corporate ecosystem, and corporate autonomy may be overstated in existing analyses that treat firms as stand-alone units.

[1] Estimation results for 2-digit industries are currently being rechecked for possible errors and thus not reported in the abstract.

[2] If independent companies are included, these values are 0.2, 0.25, and 0.24 for common ownership, common management and common ownership or management control, respectively.





VANITY, IDENTITY AND THE LUXE LIFE: WHAT DRIVES GEN Z TO CONSUME LUXURY BRANDS?

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Abstract

Introduction: Luxury brand consumption has evolved into a dynamic form of self-expression, especially among Generation Z, who view such purchases as reflections of identity, lifestyle, and social alignment. As the Indian luxury market rapidly expands, understanding the psychological factors shaping luxury brand consumption is increasingly critical. This study focuses on the role of Physical Vanity and Social Self-Congruence in influencing Gen Z's luxury purchase behavior, with gender considered as a moderating variable.

Purpose: The research aims to (1) examine the influence of physical vanity and social self-congruence on luxury brand consumption among Gen Z consumers; (2) evaluate the moderating role of gender in these relationships; and (3) generate actionable insights for targeted marketing and branding strategies in emerging markets.

Research Methodology: Using purposive sampling, data were collected from 505 Gen Z luxury consumers in Vadodara through a structured questionnaire. Statistical analyses including Spearman correlation, regression, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were conducted using SPSS 27 and SmartPLS 4. Constructs were measured using validated scales, and all reliability and validity thresholds were met.

Results: The study reported strong internal reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.879), confirming consistency across the 32 questionnaire items. Normality tests (Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk) showed significant p-values ($p < 0.001$), indicating non-normal data distribution, justifying the use of non-parametric statistics. Spearman's correlation revealed significant positive relationships between luxury brand consumption and both social self-congruence ($r = 0.414$, $p < 0.001$) and vanity ($r = 0.379$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the central hypotheses. Regression analysis showed the model was significant ($R^2 = 0.302$, $F = 54.034$, $p < 0.001$), with self-congruence ($\beta = 0.343$), vanity ($\beta = 0.254$), and gender ($\beta = 0.110$) as significant predictors, while education was non-significant. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) demonstrated good construct validity, with all loadings > 0.60 , Composite Reliability > 0.70 , and AVE > 0.50 . The Structural Equation Model (SEM) further confirmed these relationships, showing that vanity (path coefficient = 0.81) had a stronger impact on luxury consumption than self-congruence (0.55). Gender moderated both relationships, with females showing stronger sensitivity to both factors. Overall, the model explained 31.5% of the variance in luxury brand consumption ($R^2 = 0.315$), confirming that identity alignment and appearance motives significantly shape Gen Z's luxury brand behavior. The





findings demonstrate that both social self-congruence and physical vanity significantly and positively predict luxury brand consumption among Gen Z. Gender was found to moderate these relationships, with stronger effects observed among females.

Implications: Gen Z prefers luxury brands that mirror their identity and enhance appearance, using them to express self-worth, style, and belonging.

Originality/Value: This study fills a crucial research gap by exploring how internal (vanity) and external (social congruence) identity constructs influence luxury behavior in a Tier-2 Indian city context—an area seldom explored in prior literature. It also provides new evidence of gender's nuanced moderating role in luxury brand engagement among Gen Z, offering fresh perspectives for global luxury marketers and scholars.





DIS/SIMILARITY-BASED MATCHING IN DIVERSE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS—INITIAL TRENDS

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Abstract

"Inequality is a grand challenge of our times" (Bapuji et al., 2023). Established management scholars (Amis et al., 2020) have repeatedly highlighted the desperate need to address inequality through management research. There are several ways through which inequality in the workplace could be tackled. One such way is mentoring individuals who are less privileged to equip them with resources that can help reduce barriers for them at the workplace. The benefits of mentoring to individuals and organizations need no special mention (Heisman, 2023; Tu & Li, 2021). Warhurst and Black (2019) signal that mentoring has become mainstream in the workplace owing to growing work fluidity (Petriglieri, 2011) and boundaryless careers (Fullick-Jagiela et al., 2015). Several non-profit mentoring organizations have come up in recent times in India with the mission of uplifting marginalized sections of society. They recruit participants and mentor/ connect them to mentors to reduce entry (and advancement) barriers for them in organizations and academia. Their model is unique—formally decided program structure, sessions, evaluation, duration, providing coaching, help in job procurements, career advancement, etc, while informally providing the mentees with psychological capital, providing them with developmental networks, often letting mentees choose the mentors and vice-versa, and giving all kinds of support required for their career advancement. The functioning of these organizations is mainly in the virtual space, thus addressing the problem of scalability and access, which is crucial for population scenarios like India. These organizations make for the research context of the intended study.

This study is a deductive quantitative study that identifies the role of similarity (surface-level and/or deep-level) between the mentoring partners in predicting successful mentoring relationships. Theories of self-expansion and social cognition are used to understand how similarity as an antecedent, along with the motivations of the mentoring partners and the role one plays in another's life, derive outcomes for both. For mentors, dis/similarity with the mentees leads to positive social impact by the means of generativity. Dis/similarity also gives a mentor opportunities for learning. However, for mentees, dis/similarity facilitates the gain of psychological capital through various functions provided by the mentors. In order to reduce the possibility of Common Method Bias pertaining to variables measured simultaneously (Podsakoff et al., 2003), we measure surface-level and deep-level similarity at T0 (at the beginning of a mentoring program) and perceived similarity and all other variables at T1 (at the end of a mentoring program). Menges (2016) advocates matching based on actual and perceived similarity when matching for mentoring relationships. The former is done prior to the establishment of the relationship. The study's results shall help establish a "fit" between the mentoring partners before the relationship's commencement. This would help predict the success/failure of mentoring relationships before resource allocations are made, thereby optimizing the matching process for successful outcomes.





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PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF GREEN CONSUMERISM: THE ROLES OF MINDFULNESS, MORAL OBLIGATION, AND SELF-IDENTITY IN ORGANIC FOOD CHOICE

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Abstract

The growing environmental challenges have made it necessarily important to explore the cognitive and affective processes forming the pro-environmental consumer intentions. Thus, the present study aims to examine the role of dispositional mindfulness in shaping sustainable purchase intention for organic food products (OFPs), with a specific focus on the mediating roles of moral obligation and self-identity. Grounded in moral psychology and self-determinism theory, the study proposes that mindfulness positively influences purchase intention for OFPs by strengthening individuals' internalised sense of ethical responsibility and environmental self-concept.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of 360 young adult consumers in the National Capital Region, India, and analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The findings indicate that mindfulness significantly and positively influences purchase intention toward OFPs. In addition, the study finds evidence of partial mediation through both moral obligation and self-identity. Specifically, the indirect effect of mindfulness on purchase intention through moral obligation was statistically significant and stronger than the indirect effect through self-identity. The direct effect of mindfulness on purchase intention remained significant, indicating partial mediation in both cases.

This study advances the literature on sustainable consumer behaviour by elucidating the dual psychological mechanisms, moral and identity-based, through which mindfulness informs green purchase intentions towards OFPs. Practically, the findings suggest the value of mindfulness-based interventions and campaigns that strengthen individuals' moral commitment and ecological self-conception. These insights offer theoretical and managerial implications for marketers, policymakers, and sustainability advocates striving to encourage ethical and eco-conscious consumption.





SUSTAINABLE DIGITAL FINANCE: A REVIEW OF GREEN CRYPTOCURRENCY RESEARCH AND ITS SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

As digital finance expands globally, the environmental sustainability of cryptocurrency has become a pressing social and managerial concern. High energy consumption and carbon emissions from Proof-of-Work-based cryptocurrencies challenge the broader goals of sustainable development. This study presents a systematic literature review (SLR) combined with bibliometric analysis to examine the emerging research landscape on green cryptocurrencies—those utilizing energy-efficient consensus mechanisms like Proof-of-Stake. Based on 141 peer-reviewed articles indexed in Scopus, the review follows the PRISMA protocol and uses tools such as VOSviewer and Microsoft Excel for analysis.

Key insights reveal two dominant research streams: one addressing green cryptocurrencies as viable, sustainable investment instruments; the other exploring their environmental and ethical implications. The findings underscore a shift in academic and managerial attention toward low-impact digital assets, signalling the potential for green cryptocurrencies to support climate-conscious investment strategies, responsible innovation, and inclusive financial systems.

By synthesizing current knowledge and identifying future research pathways, this study contributes to management discourse on aligning fintech with global sustainability goals—ultimately driving social impact through informed decision-making and policy development in the digital finance sector.





THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE: A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW OF POST-PANDEMIC TRENDS

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Abstract

The concept of Work Life Balance (WLB) found its origin in the 1970s when, in the United States of America (USA), the working women faced distress juggling work and life. The importance of WLB became more widely acknowledged as social norms changed, leading to various initiatives to foster a harmonious balance between professional and personal responsibilities. This shift has not only benefitted employees but also has enhanced the organisational productivity as a whole. In the year 2020, the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the work dynamics globally, causing traditional work-life balance (WLB) paradigms to be reshaped by remote work, hybrid models, flexible work arrangements, and digital transformation. The present study focuses on providing an insight into the evolution of work-life balance research trends in the post-pandemic period from 2020 to 2025. For this, the bibliometric analysis method has been deployed to critically examine the academic documentary evidence available in the Scopus database by identifying key themes, influential authors, journals, and emerging research directions.

A total of 13,035 documents have been identified by using keywords such as “work-life balance” or “WLB.” Further, the identified dataset of published documents has been refined by using filters limited to the year range as “2020 to 2025,” subject area as “Social Sciences” and “Business, Management and Accounting” document type as “Article” language as “English” source type as “Journal” publication as “Final”. Upon data filtration, a total of 1,123 published articles have been found suitable for further analysis.

The results shows that there are 788 articles (37%) available in the subject area “Social Sciences” and 487 (22.9%) in the area of “Business, Management, and Accounting.” The United States of America (USA), India, and the United Kingdom (UK) are the top three countries with the most numbers of Scopus Indexed Articles. Notable growth has been observed in the number of publications from 2020 with a high of 238 articles in the year 2023. The most prolific author in this period is Palumbo, R., with 5 publications. With 11 publications, INTI International University (Malaysia) is the most affiliated institution. Further for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks like co-authorship networks, co-citation networks, co-occurrence networks and bibliographic coupling we used VOS Viewer. Seven clusters of author keywords are identified using the co-occurrence network analysis, each of which is identified by a distinct colour code. "Work-life balance" appears more frequently than any other keyword. From bibliographic coupling of countries, “United States” stands out with a significant number of publications. The findings of the study reveal a scope of future research in the domain of work-life balance on the theoretical framework





of boundary theory. For policymakers and corporate leaders, the study provides a crucial insight to address the work-life balance effectively.

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SEEING IS BELIEVING? THE ROLE OF DISCLOSURE TYPE AND CONTENT FORMAT IN INFLUENCER MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates how influencer disclosure style (explicit vs. implicit) and content format (video vs. image) affect consumers' intentions. It explores perceived authenticity as a mediator and consumer skepticism as a moderator. Given the growing concern about influencer transparency, this research addresses a novel gap by experimentally testing how content presentation and ad disclosure interplay with cognitive and emotional responses on social media platforms.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A 2x2 between-subjects experiment will be conducted, manipulating disclosure type (explicit vs. implicit) and content format (image vs. video). Participants will be randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions and exposed to a mock Instagram post by a lifestyle influencer. The independent variables are disclosure type and content format. The dependent variable is purchase intention. Perceived authenticity is a mediator, and consumer skepticism is a moderator. Control variables include participant gender, age, and previous influencer exposure frequency.

Theoretical Framework: The study is grounded in the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) (Friestad & Wright, 1994), which posits that consumers activate their persuasion knowledge when they recognize marketing intent. Additionally, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) supports the idea that the route to persuasion (central or peripheral) is influenced by how content is framed and disclosed. These theories explain how disclosure and content format influence processing depth, perceived authenticity, and trust, which are critical to influencing behavior.

Anticipated Findings: Explicit disclosures are hypothesized to lower purchase intention in high-skepticism individuals unless authenticity is perceived as high. Video formats are expected to be more persuasive, especially under implicit disclosure. Perceived authenticity is predicted to mediate the impact of both independent variables on purchase intention, with consumer skepticism attenuating this relationship.

Research Limitations/Implications: This study's mental design enhances internal validity but may limit generalizability. Results may differ by platform (e.g., Instagram vs. TikTok) or influencer type. Future work should replicate this design across platforms and explore long-term effects using longitudinal designs.





Practical Implications: Brands and influencers should be cautious about how they disclose sponsorships. While transparency is ethically sound, combining subtle disclosures with authentic, engaging video content may reduce adverse effects on trust and purchase behavior, particularly for skeptical audiences.

Originality/Value: This study introduces a novel intersection of disclosure type, content format, and psychological processing using an experimental method grounded in persuasion theory. Unlike previous correlational studies relying solely on engagement metrics, this work uses causal testing to inform ethical and effective influencer marketing better





“UNDERSTANDING ESG INVESTMENT BEHAVIOR THROUGH A GENDER LENS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS”

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Abstract

This study examines the main elements affecting gender disparities in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investment behavior, with a focus on how demographic and behavioral factors influence sustainable investment choices. As sustainability emerges as a fundamental component of contemporary financial markets, encouraging ethical and inclusive investment practices requires an awareness of the subtleties of investor behavior. Among male and female investors in Telangana, India, the study looks at behavioral characteristics such as risk aversion, overconfidence, and herd mentality in addition to ESG awareness, perceived risk, and projected returns.

The research identifies gender-based disparities in investment attitudes and preferences through comparative statistical analysis. Research shows that women investors are more likely to be risk-averse, more conscious of environmental, social, and governance issues, and more likely to favor sustainable and ethical investing options. On the other hand, male investors are more likely to be overconfident in their decision-making and to concentrate more on possible rewards. The demand for ESG-related financial products in emerging markets like India is influenced by these behavioral biases, which also have an impact on individual investing decisions.

The findings underscore the importance of incorporating behavioral finance principles into sustainable finance frameworks to effectively address gender-specific investment behavior. To close the gap in ESG participation and confidence between male and female investors, the study recommends that financial institutions and policymakers think about creating gender-sensitive ESG investment strategies, such as customized financial products, awareness campaigns, and educational initiatives. This study adds to the larger body of research on sustainable finance by incorporating behavioral biases and gender factors into ESG investment analysis. It also offers useful recommendations for regulators, advisors, and asset managers. In the end, the report urges a more inclusive strategy for sustainable investing that acknowledges the many demands of investors and facilitates the shift to a more environmentally friendly and socially conscious economy.





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BEYOND ADOPTION: AI LITERACY, TRUST, AND ROLE CLARITY AS DYNAMIC CAPABILITIES FOR AI-ENABLED ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes more deeply embedded in organisational life, the real challenge is no longer just adopting new technologies but also to learn how to reshape the human systems around them. While much of the conversation still focuses on technical infrastructure and implementation, this paper looks beyond surface-level adoption. It explores the deeper, human-centred capabilities organisations need to truly transform in an AI-enabled world. We propose a conceptual framework that brings together three essential elements: AI literacy, trust in AI, and role clarity.

AI literacy today goes far beyond knowing how algorithms work. In rapidly evolving workplaces, employees who are AI-literate can make better decisions, spot bias, and align AI use with the broader goals of the organisation. But even the most technically literate teams won't succeed if there's no trust. Trust is what connects understanding to actual usage. It's not automatic but builds slowly, shaped by how transparent, reliable, and aligned with human values AI systems appear to be. Trust needs to be calibrated; for example, if it's too little, then people avoid AI entirely, and when it is too much, they rely on it blindly. The sweet spot, then, is a healthy scepticism paired with enough confidence to engage meaningfully. And this trust, in turn, influences how employees step into their evolving roles. Role clarity is knowing what you're responsible for and how your job fits into a world where humans and machines work side by side. As AI shifts job boundaries and decision-making dynamics, confusion about responsibilities can creep in. When employees aren't sure where human judgment ends and machine logic begins, hesitation, inefficiency, and resistance often follow. Clear roles help people bring their AI literacy and trust into practice, making it easier to collaborate with AI and each other.

What makes the proposed model unique is how it repositions these three elements, i.e., AI literacy, trust, and role clarity, as key structural components of dynamic capabilities. In other words, they are not static qualities but organisational muscles that firms can strengthen over time. AI literacy helps companies sense emerging opportunities and understand how technology can serve their strategic goals. Trust enables them to seize those opportunities by encouraging adoption and commitment. And role clarity allows them to reconfigure internal processes so that AI can be woven seamlessly into the way people work. These capabilities are reinforced through everyday routines and, when embedded into organisational life, they don't just support AI use; they make transformation scalable, strategic, and sustainable. Rather than treating AI literacy, trust, and role clarity as one-off interventions or support functions, this paper positions them as core enablers of long-term transformation.





By blending socio-technical thinking with dynamic capability theory, this paper offers a fresh perspective on how to build organisational readiness for AI, not just by installing systems, but by empowering people. The model sets the stage for future research and practical tools that help leaders diagnose, develop, and scale the human capabilities needed for AI to truly deliver on its promise.





RIDING THE WAVES OF UNCERTAINTY: UNVEILING THE INTERACTION AMONG GLOBAL UNCERTAINTIES AND SUSTAINABLE STOCKS IN INDIA THROUGH WAVELET COHERENCE AND TVP-VAR

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Abstract

Purpose: This research looks to unravel the evolving relationship between uncertainties and sustainable stock investment with in the Indian context. In particular, we examine the return co-movement and risk spillover among economic uncertainty, oil price shocks, climate policy shifts, and green stock indices in the Indian stock market.

Design/Methodology/Approach: We utilises wavelet coherence and time-varying parameter vector autoregression methods to analyse return co-movement and risk transmission among uncertainty indices (economic policy uncertainty, oil price uncertainty, and climate policy uncertainty) and green investments (BSE CARBONEX and BSE GREENEX). For comparison purposes, we added the BSE Sensex, BSE 100, and BSE Oil and Gas index as well.

Findings: We find a weak co-movement between uncertainty and the return of green and conventional stocks. However, the TVP VAR analysis shows a moderate connectedness, with CPU, OPU, and EPU functioning as the net transmitters of risk. This highlights the significant impact of policy uncertainties and oil price fluctuations—particularly climate policy uncertainty—on the India's green stock volatility, indicating their responsiveness to changes in the regulatory and energy environment.

Practical implications: Investors should be aware of the effects of fluctuations in climate and economic policy, as well as oil price fluctuations, on the volatility of green stocks. Policymakers should establish clearer policy frameworks to mitigate uncertainty and enhance the resilience of green investment in India.

Originality/value: Given that India is among the rapidly expanding economies with a rising focus on sustainable finance, comprehending the impact of uncertainty for green investments in this framework is very significant.





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THE ROLE OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN RESTRUCTURING GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS: AN ANALYSIS OF RESHORING, NEARSHORING, AND FRIENDSHORING

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Abstract

Global trade and production systems are not what they used to be. Over the past two decades, the way goods and services are made, moved, and consumed has changed dramatically. This shift is driven by three major forces: the globalization of production, fast-paced technological change, and rising geopolitical tensions (Gereffi, 2018; Baldwin, 2016). Together, these forces have led to the emergence of new Global Value Chains (GVCs), international networks where production is fragmented and spread across multiple countries. GVCs are the backbone of today's international production. GVC includes all the steps needed to design, produce, market, and deliver a product or service with different stages happening in different countries (Gereffi & Fernandez-Stark, 2011). Instead of producing entire goods in one country, firms break up tasks and place them where costs are lowest or capabilities are strongest. Within this evolving landscape, governments are once again turning to industrial policy. Industrial policy is about how states try to shape their economies. It includes actions taken to support certain industries, technologies, or sectors. These can be direct, like subsidies or tax breaks, or indirect, such as research and development or trade protections (Rodrik, 2004; Warwick, 2013). The aim of these policies is not just to grow their economies, but to secure critical supply chains, reduce dependency on foreign inputs, and respond to strategic challenges (Aiginger & Rodrik, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical risks, U.S.–China trade war, and the current tariffs war led by the United States has exposed the global value chains vulnerabilities. Therefore, there is now growing interest in using state-led strategies to ensure national resilience (Ju et al., 2024). New policies aim to boost local capabilities of the domestic firms and job creation in the country. As part of this effort, terms like reshoring (bringing production home), nearshoring (transferring production to nearby countries), and friendshoring (shifting production to geopolitical allies) have moved to the center of policy and business discussions.

This study explores how industrial policy influences these reconfiguration strategies, what factors drive such policy choices, and what consequences they entail for firms, states, and the global economy. It focuses on how countries and firms are responding through different location strategies. This research offers impactful insights into the evolving relationship between industrial policy and global value chains restructuring. This study captures the nuanced ways in which policymakers and firms negotiate competing priorities of cost, risk, and geopolitics. The study's outcomes will inform policy frameworks aimed at enhancing supply chain resilience and sustainable industrial development, contributing to more adaptive and strategic economic governance.





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ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION AMONG FARMERS: ITS IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Innovation, productivity, and economic growth are all fueled by entrepreneurship in a variety of sectors, including agriculture. The ability of a farmer to take risks, be innovative, and actively look for ways to increase agricultural productivity is known as Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) (Dias et al., 2021). EO is a key factor in determining success and rural development as agriculture transitions from old methods to contemporary agribusiness models (Covin & Slevin, n.d.; Hardin et al., 2024; Wales et al., 2020). Increased farm production, better economic results, and sustainable rural growth are facilitated by farmers who demonstrate high levels of innovation, risk-taking, and initiative (Grande et al., 2011). This study aims to investigate the relationship between EO and agricultural success by analyzing how entrepreneurial mindset influences farming decisions, resource utilization, and market growth. The sample size calculated scientifically is (n=150), taken from the different districts of Odisha. The survey includes validated scales of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO), Performance related to their success and development. The study will explore the primary determinants of EO among farmers, including market accessibility, financial management, and technology adoption. It also evaluates the contribution of government initiatives and policies to developing entrepreneurial skills in the agriculture industry. Through surveys and case studies, we seek to identify challenges farmers face in adopting an entrepreneurial approach (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011; Covin & Wales, 2019; Engelen et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2024). Examining the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and agricultural performance will yield insights for policymakers, agricultural institutions, and farmers to formulate strategies that promote innovation and rural entrepreneurship. Findings suggests that promoting sustainable rural development can be achieved by strengthening EO in farming communities, which has the potential to boost the income levels, generate jobs, and transform agriculture into a dynamic, market-driven enterprise, thereby promoting sustainable rural development. Future research can study other industries and explore the effects of Artificial Intelligence interventions in agricultural settings.





WHEN DOES ESG PAY OFF? THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS IN SHAPING FINANCIAL RETURNS: EVIDENCE FROM CULTURAL VALUES, STATE GOVERNANCE, AND OWNERSHIP STRUCTURES

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Abstract

The growing integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into corporate strategies has reignited debates on whether sustainability translates into improved financial performance. However, empirical results remain mixed across geographies (Friede et al., 2015; Margolis et al., 2009). This research addresses a critical and underexplored question: When does ESG pay off? Specifically, we examine how institutional contexts—comprising cultural values, governance quality, and ownership structures—influence the relationship between Corporate Social Performance (CSP) and Corporate Financial Performance (CFP). Drawing on institutional theory (Aguilera & Jackson, 2003; Kostova et al., 2008), we propose that ESG efforts are not uniformly rewarded. Instead, their financial impact is contingent upon the alignment between firms' sustainability strategies and the surrounding institutional environment. First, we operationalize cultural values using country-level data from the World Values Survey and European Values Survey (2005–2022), focusing on the distinction between traditional and rational-secular value orientations (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). These cultural dimensions serve as informal institutions shaping societal expectations and corporate legitimacy (Licht et al., 2005). Second, we assess state governance using World Bank indicators such as rule of law, regulatory quality, and governance effectiveness (Kaufmann et al., 2011). Third, we differentiate ownership structures by examining the financial and social performance of state-owned versus non-state-owned enterprises in the public services sector (Bruton et al., 2015; Musacchio & Lazzarini, 2014).

Our empirical study analyzes a cross-sectional sample of 157 large publicly listed firms from 43 countries across five continents. ESG performance is measured through Bloomberg's environmental (E), social (S), and governance (G) scores—both composite and individual—while financial performance is captured via Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Equity (ROE), and Tobin's Q (Ioannou & Serafeim, 2012). Firms with incomplete ESG or financial data, especially those operating in regions with restricted ESG disclosures (e.g., India), are excluded from the analysis. Findings reveal that ESG efforts are more likely to result in positive financial returns in environments characterized by rational-secular cultural values, non-intrusive but effective governance, and non-state ownership. In contrast, in contexts dominated by traditional values, heavy state control, or state ownership, the financial benefits of ESG are often muted or negative. These results underscore the importance of institutional alignment: firms are more likely to achieve financial payoffs from ESG initiatives when operating within supportive informal and formal institutional contexts (Xu & Shenkar, 2002; Kostova & Zaheer, 1999).





This study introduces a three-dimensional institutional framework—State’s Cultural Values, Ownership, and Governance (S-COG)—to explain variation in ESG–CFP linkages. The findings advocate for a more “hands-off” institutional approach, where firms can autonomously navigate sustainability practices. The paper offers practical implications for multinational enterprises (MNEs) managing ESG strategies across diverse institutional environments, particularly in regions like South Korea, Japan, and the Netherlands (rational-secular) versus UAE, Oman, and Colombia (traditional).





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BRIDGING THE CLIMATE FINANCE GAP FOR INDIA'S NDCS: BARRIERS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THE ROLE OF PRIVATE CAPITAL

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Abstract

India's commitment to its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement necessitates a transformative scale of investment in sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy, and climate resilience. However, a significant climate finance gap continues to hinder progress toward these goals.

This paper examines the key barriers to mobilizing adequate climate finance in India, including policy and regulatory uncertainties, underdeveloped financial markets for green investments, limited project bankability, and insufficient risk mitigation mechanisms. It also identifies emerging opportunities such as green bonds, blended finance instruments, and public-private partnerships that can be leveraged to unlock new capital streams. Central to the discussion is the role of private capital—domestic and international—as a vital component in bridging this financing gap.

The paper explores innovative financial tools, enabling policy environments, and institutional frameworks that can catalyze greater private sector participation. By analyzing case studies and current policy initiatives, the paper offers actionable recommendations for enhancing financial flows towards India's NDC targets while ensuring economic and environmental sustainability.





HARNESSING INNOVATIVE BANKING TECHNOLOGIES FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC GROWTH: A TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

In today's rapidly evolving global economy, advanced financial technologies have emerged as significant catalysts for economic expansion. This research investigates the transformative impact of innovative banking technologies across various sectors, emphasizing their potential to enhance financial inclusion, improve operational efficiency, and stimulate entrepreneurial activity. Through a comprehensive literature review and the examination of relevant case studies, this study analyzes how technologies such as blockchain, artificial intelligence (AI), and digital payment systems are reshaping traditional banking models—facilitating seamless transactions and broadening access to financial services worldwide. The development of impact investing and sustainable finance is being propelled by contemporary banking technologies, which incorporate ESG considerations into investment choices for longterm sustainability and economic resilience. Modern banking technologies play a crucial role in promoting economic growth as we navigate a world economy that is becoming more technologically advanced and interconnected. Banks can spark revolutionary change and bring about a more prosperous and just future for everybody by embracing innovation, encouraging inclusivity, and placing a high priority on sustainability. The digital divide may be closed by modern banking technologies, but socioeconomic status, educational attainment, and infrastructure constraints may make the gap between those with and without access to the internet worse. Peer-to-peer lending and DeFi applications are two examples of fintech breakthroughs that provide systemic risks to the financial system. Without proper risk management, these innovations could disturb markets and endanger economic stability. For the sake of society and the maintenance of justice, accountability, and transparency, ethical issues in financial technologies—such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and AI use—are fundamental. It also looks at how new technologies affect cyber security, regulatory frameworks, and risk management, highlighting the necessity of flexible regulations to maximize their promise while reducing related dangers. This study advances a better understanding of the importance of contemporary banking technologies in influencing the direction of global finance and promoting sustainable economic growth by offering insights into their changing terrain. In order to collect and present data in accordance with research objectives, this paper uses empirical data and a study methodology that makes use of secondary sources. This calls for work and discussion. The primary goals of this research article are to conduct a macroeconomic theoretical analysis of the transformative impact and the role of modern and innovative banking technologies in promoting global economic growth, even though the current situation is important and relevant to the economy and society.





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IMPLEMENTING AI FOR AGILE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT- OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES & ETHICAL CONSEQUENCES

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Abstract

The incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into Human Resource Management (HRM) has carried out transformative variations into the strategic development and management of human resources in organizations. The proposed work sightsees the multidimensional significance of AI in Agile HRM with providing insights on three different aspects: Opportunity, Challenges & Ethical Considerations. This research is being conducted to examine how AI helps to improve planning, decision-making, and streamlining the HR processes for management of human resources into an organization. Together, the research recognizes the challenges experienced by the organizations such as quality of hires, technical failure, overdependencies, high costing etc. The Ethical impressions associated with transparency, accountability and data privacy are critically scrutinized. For conducting this research, the primary data were collected from HR professionals from diverse places and analyzed accordingly for understanding the benefits, problems and ethical issues which can be help HR professionals and Organizations for finetuning their process with different perspectives. Data analysis was achieved by using Microsoft Excel and Python Programming & Google Colab. The survey questionnaires are structured with three focused areas to identify opportunity of implementing AI in HRM, encountering challenges and investigating ethical impact on organization and employee. The findings highlight the potentials of AI-powered HRM through optimizing HR functions and strategic development which leads to successful organization. Integration of AI in HRM can be accomplished through balancing technological proficiency along with ethical responsibility.





NAVIGATING THE FINANCIAL LITERACY PUZZLE: INSIGHTS INTO DETERMINANTS, CONSTRAINTS, AND CONCEPTUAL DIRECTIONS

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Abstract

Financial literacy has a huge impact on individual and societal economic wellbeing but barriers persist in its development and application across populations. This study identifies the key determinants of financial literacy and barriers to its acquisition through a systematic review and theoretical analysis. A systematic review of 52 peer reviewed articles was conducted and supplemented by content analysis of additional relevant papers. Established theoretical frameworks were used to develop a multi-theoretical approach to understanding the facilitating factors and resistance mechanisms. Financial literacy is influenced by demographic, socioeconomic, educational, cultural, behavioral, psychological and motivational factors. Barriers manifest through functional and psychological resistance mechanisms that prevent literacy acquisition and application. The findings contribute to a comprehensive conceptual framework that can inform evidence-based interventions and policy initiatives to improve financial literacy across different populations. This multi-theoretical approach provides new insights into the complex interplay between the facilitating and inhibiting factors of financial literacy development and practical guidance for researchers, policymakers and practitioners developing targeted financial literacy programs and interventions.





IMPACT OF INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERINGS ON MARKET PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN LISTED SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

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Abstract

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a vital role in the global economy, generating 70% of the workforce, as reported by the International Labour Organization in 2024. In the context of India, SMEs contribute 40% of the country's exports and 45% of industrial production, which underscores their critical role in the national economy. Despite these contributions, Indian SMEs encounter considerable financial challenges due to limited access to finance, elevated interest rates, and difficulties in providing adequate collateral. To tackle these issues, many SMEs consider Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) as a strategy to raise capital and enhance their visibility in the market. This transformative phase in the lifecycle of SMEs improves financial access through a significant influx of funds, which may subsequently influence their market performance over the years. Therefore, this study aims to assess the long-term performance of Indian listed SMEs post-IPO. The study collected the monthly data of SMEs listed under the BSE SME stock exchange, during the years 2017-2020, for a minimum duration of four years. Ordinary least squares regression with a fixed effect model is used to analyse the determinants influencing the long-term performance of these SMEs. The findings of the study yield important implications for investors, facilitating enhanced stock valuation and improved investment decisions. Furthermore, it generates substantial value for listed SMEs and policymakers engaged in reforming the Indian stock market, to foster a more equitable and efficient financing environment for SMEs.





ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS AND WORK- LIFE CONFLICT OF INDIAN WOMEN EMPLOYEES: THE ROLE OF JOB STRESS AND PERSONALITY

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Abstract

Purpose : Each and every employee contributes to the organization's endeavours to achieve certain goals. To attain personal goals, employees might end up involving in organisational politics. Here, organisational politics refers to activities taken by group of employees to influence others in order to forward their objectives. Therefore, this study explores organizational politics as a double-edged sword, highlighting both its positive and negative consequences. With the growing number of women entering the Indian workforce, managing work and family life has become increasingly challenging due to workplace politics. Therefore, this research examines the relationship between organizational politics and work-life conflict. Additionally, it assesses the mediating role of job stress and the moderating effect of personality traits in this relationship.

Research methodology: Data was collected from 326 women employees of Indian manufacturing sector through online questionnaires. Smart PLS 4 has been used to analysis the data.

Findings : The results indicated a direct negative association between organizational politics and work-life conflict, with job stress partially mediating this relationship. Moreover, personality traits such as openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness moderated this relationship, whereas neuroticism did not.

Implications : Organizations should focus on mutual interest and provide stress management training. Soft skills training can help employees communicate confidently and build effective social relationships, reducing the effect of POP on work-life balance and employee satisfaction. The study suggests that employee personality can either buffer or boost the negative effect of POP on WLC. Organizations should use psychometric tests during recruitment to identify candidates with the required personality traits. Training employees according to their personality type can help reduce work-life conflict and stress levels.

Originality/value: The study highlights the importance of reducing or mitigating the negative effects of politics within organizations and the role of personality traits in facilitating or inhibiting work-life balance.





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IMPACT OF INCLUSION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON STUDENTS' SENSE OF BELONGING: A MULTI-GROUP ANALYSIS ACROSS SOCIAL CATEGORIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

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Abstract

Despite the achievements in creating access to diverse student groups, ensuring that the diverse groups are effectively included within the campus environment remains challenging. Inclusion goes beyond mere representation; it involves developing an environment where every student feels respected, valued, connected, and included in the social and academic framework of the institution. This study examines the differential impact of inclusion management strategies, such as building collaborative communities (BCC) and creating inclusive values (CIV), on students' sense of belonging to higher education across three social categories: General, OBC, and SC/ST. PLS-SEM and multi-group analysis were used. A survey of 423 students studying in higher education institutions revealed that both inclusion management strategies significantly foster a sense of belonging to the institution across all social categories. However, multigroup analysis shows that the effect of BCC on students' sense of belonging is significantly stronger for general category students than for SC/ST students, and CIV positively impacts all social categories. The results highlight the importance of effective inclusion management and key challenges for higher education administrators. The study highlights the implications of inclusion management strategies to foster belongingness in socially disadvantaged students so that students feel included and achieve success.





NURTURING EDUCATORS' INSIGHTS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Leadership is a complex skill that encompasses cognitive functions, behaviours, and an understanding of social dynamics. Leadership education and development are needed at all levels of society, from youth to business executives. To understand how leadership develops in students, it is essential to consider the various factors that shape and influence their growth inside and outside the classroom. Universities are increasingly reviewed for their one-size-fits-all approach to leadership development. While many studies emphasize knowledge and skill-building tailored to the developmental needs of managers, there is insufficient attention paid to purposeful student leadership development and the underlying cognitive components that drive it. Most existing studies evaluate leadership programs within the private sector or large university contexts. Only a few studies explore how these programs affect long-term leadership behaviours, especially within Rural government educational institutions. This study employs a qualitative approach aiming to explore the challenges faced by rural college students in developing leadership capabilities, with a focus on the insights and perspectives of rural college faculty. Qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions (FGDs) with faculty members to analyse students' understanding of leadership, its connection to their leadership-structure schema, the challenges, and barriers rural colleges face in fostering leadership development. Drawing on qualitative Focus Group Discussions and thematic analysis, the Study identifies key obstacles, including limited resources, low student engagement, sociocultural constraints, Economic constraints, and institutional priorities. Faculty insights underscore the need for context-sensitive leadership models, enhanced institutional support, and targeted programs that reflect the unique realities of rural students. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how leadership development can be reimaged and strengthened within rural educational landscapes.





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EXPLORING THE DRIVERS OF E-WASTE RECYCLING BEHAVIOR IN INDIA: INTEGRATING THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR AND NORM ACTIVATION THEORY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

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Abstract

With the increasing volume of electronic waste (e-waste) in India, effective recycling practices have become crucial for environmental sustainability. However, the successful management and recycling of e-waste depend on several factors, including the awareness, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals. The study integrates the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Norm Activation Theory (NAT) to investigate the factors influencing recycling behavior (RB) in India. This research develops a comprehensive theoretical model that incorporates attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, awareness of consequences, and personal norms. Environmental awareness (EA) is hypothesized to moderate the relationships between attitudes (AT), subjective norms (SN), perceived behavioral control (PBC), personal norms (PN), and behavioral intention (BI). A survey-based study was conducted, collecting primary data from individuals across India. The study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the relationships and hypotheses within the proposed model. The findings contribute to understanding the complex dynamics of recycling behavior and offer practical implications for policymakers and environmental organizations in their efforts to promote sustainability.





ROLE OF CONNECTED HEALTH IN HEALTH INSURANCE INDUSTRY: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

The outbreak of COVID-19 has made individuals more aware of life's unpredictability and uncertainties and their lack of preparations in the occurrence of a medical emergency. As a result, over the past few years, the health insurance industry in India has undergone a significant shift. Customers' attitudes have changed considerably, as has their need for health insurance. The IoT Insurance Market size is estimated at USD 53.95 billion in 2025, and is expected to reach USD 83.81 billion by 2030, at a CAGR of 9.21% during the forecast period (2025-2030). The insurance industry in India is expected to introduce new trends including product innovation, multi-distribution, better claims management, and regulatory developments in the Indian market as a result of rising incomes, exponential expansion in purchasing power, and household savings. The Internet of Things (IoT) is revolutionizing industries worldwide, and the health insurance sector is no exception. Connected health, with its devices can able to collect and share real-time health information of policyholders is transforming health insurance firms by enabling personalized policies, improving risk assessment, and enhancing the overall customer experience. This evolution is not merely a technological advancement but a fundamental shift in how insurers approach healthcare, focusing on prevention, efficiency, and value-based care. Insurance companies are leveraging IoT data personalized insurance products. Industry analysis indicates that IoT-enabled devices can help decrease premium costs by up to 25 percent while reducing claims processing costs by approximately 30 percent. IoT plays crucial role in achieving under writing profits and reduces fraudulent claims by supplying real-time and customized data. IoT allows insurers to price policies more accurately based on real-time health data, rather than using static factors like age and gender. This study focusses on role of IoT on the performance of health insurance companies and emphasizes how IoT-driven data supports personalized health insurance plans and risk mitigation strategies. This paper also addresses challenges by adoption of IoT such as privacy, data theft etc. Methodology is used to conduct the study is mixed models both qualitative and quantitate. The findings of the study reveal that IoT playing a key role in health insurance industry in India. By collecting the customizing data and tracking health history of patients leading to increasing its profits and helps in mitigating claims frauds. Policyholders may be hesitant to adopt IoT-based health insurance due to concerns about privacy, data misuse, or the perceived complexity of using connected devices. By adopting IoT insurance companies are efficiently mitigating their risks moving from reactive methods /approaches to proactive and preventive methods leading to reduction in its operational costs there by improving its financial performance. Hence IoT is become an important tool for insurance companies.





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SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND INCLUSIVITY THROUGH JAL JEEVAN MISSION SCHEME: A QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

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Abstract

Access to safe drinking water is a fundamental human right. The UN's Sustainable Development Goal dedicates SDG 6 (Clean water and Sanitation) to achieving universal access to safe drinking water by 2030. The Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi, announced the commencement of the Jal Jeevan Mission, which aspires to provide drinking water on a regular and long-term basis at affordable service delivery charges, improving the living standard of rural communities. As of 26th August 2024, Jal Jeevan Mission has provided tap connections to 78.12% rural households (15.09 crore), boosted tap coverage nine-fold in 112 lagging districts, ensured 189 fully covered districts, and set up 2160 labs (JJM, 2024). Yet, gaps remain, especially in regions of Rajasthan state, such as Barmer, due to water scarcity, poor cost recovery, and weak community participation.

With JJM's deadline of 2024 having passed, Rajasthan's Barmer district still lags—85.51% of the households await tap connections, and none of the work has started in 2,446 villages. There is uneven implementation, with some blocks getting more than 70–95% coverage while others reaching only 2–8% (JJM, 2024). The facts suggest that a gap exists in identifying the drivers and barriers in the adoption of the JJM scheme among takers and non-takers of the scheme. There is a need to explore the role of the JJM scheme in bringing social transformation and inclusivity (Hughes, 2013).

To address these issues, we adopted a quantitative research method using a standardized survey and collected data from 500 respondents, including takers (200) and non-takers (300) of the scheme. Some positive insights about the success of this scheme have emerged, like most of the beneficiaries are getting regular water supply, which impacted their child's education by improving time, attendance, and focus, 70% takers reported being free from waterborne diseases and less dependence on other water sources like wells, tankers, etc. It is impacting their Quality of Life and Standard of Living. On the other hand, some findings also highlighted needs for improvements such as majority of non-takers remaining socially excluded due to non-awareness of the scheme, 49% of the beneficiaries not getting regular water supply, 19% beneficiaries reporting waterborne disease point to critical gaps in awareness, service delivery, and accessibility, which undermine the objectives of the scheme.

For policymakers, this highlights the need to step up awareness campaigns, improve delivery services, maintain water quality and supply, and build inclusive community outreach to cover the socially excluded. For public policy and social science academicians, it underscores the need to create targeted, culturally





attuned communication that instils confidence and interest, ultimately nurturing the scheme's contribution to quality of life and overall development.

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FINTECH ADOPTION AMONG INDIAN YOUTH: EXPLORING LEGAL AWARENESS, TRUST, AND INVESTMENT BEHAVIOUR IN NCR

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Abstract

The use of technology in finance, especially FinTech, has transformed traditional banking through innovations like mobile payments, online portfolio management, and international transfers. Fintech's rapid growth has stimulated global development and innovation. In response, the RBI established a FinTech department in 2022 to focus on research and innovation. This study investigates the adoption and perception of FinTech among young individuals in the National Capital Region (NCR), focusing on online investment behaviour, perceived legal protection, and the adequacy of the Indian legal framework. A primary survey was conducted with 100 respondents aged between 17 and 42 years. The data collected was analysed using the Chi-square test of independence and Fisher's Exact Test to evaluate associations between variables such as legal awareness, trust, brand image, and investment decisions. The findings provide valuable insights into youth attitudes toward digital financial platforms, highlighting the need for improved financial literacy, regulatory transparency, and trust-building initiatives. These results have implications for policymakers, financial institutions, and fintech startups seeking to strengthen digital financial inclusion across India's youth demographic.





SEGMENTING GREEN CONSUMERS THROUGH THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE LENS: A STUDY ON RESPONSIBLE BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN URBAN INDIA

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Abstract

As more people and businesses start caring about the environment, it is important to understand how different types of consumers in India think about green or eco-friendly behaviour. This study looks at how urban Indian consumers can be grouped based on the Triple Bottom Line approach, which includes three ideas: care for the environment (Planet), care for people and society (People), and focus on saving money or making profit (Profit). A survey was done with 400 people to know their habits and thoughts related to recycling (like newspapers), buying eco-friendly products, and supporting fair business practices. Using K- means cluster analysis, the study found four groups: (1) Holistic Green Champions, who care about all three areas—planet, people, and profit; (2) Self-Focused Indifferents, who are mostly concerned with their own needs and show little interest in the environment or society; (3) Socially Minded Pragmatists, who care about social fairness but also think about value for money; and (4) Value-Conscious Opportunists, who support green actions only when it benefits them financially. These groups show that not all green consumers think the same way. The optimum number of clusters was found using elbow curve method. The findings can help companies and the government design better eco-friendly products, campaigns, and policies that match what each group believes and wants, making green behaviour more popular and practical for everyone.





"ASSESSING PUBLIC AWARENESS IN INDORE ON SOLAR ENERGY AND ITS ROLE IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS"

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Abstract

The paradigm shift of world is turning towards renewable energy sources for reliable solutions, emphasize solar power's significant part in promoting economic and environmental development while aiding in achieving the United Nations SDGs. It has also been realized that Public participation plays a major role in taking this forward in society and contribute towards achieving long-term sustainable development goals. Awareness about solar energy & SDG is the first & most important step to support the SDG. This research examines the awareness of citizens of Indore, India on relationship between solar energy utilization and key SDGs. The study uses a formal questionnaire to capture information on public awareness about the relationship between solar energy adoption and the SDGs declared by the UN. The findings may highlight the gaps in awareness, the barriers to adoption, and the potential impact of targeted educational campaigns and policy interventions. By addressing these challenges, the study offers actionable insights to enhance public participation in transitioning towards a sustainable energy future, thereby fostering holistic development in line with global sustainability objectives. Indore local governance initiated many programmes/campaigns with support of central govt., state government & other NGOs for awareness on solar, cleanliness, solid waste management.





BEYOND THE BLACK-AND-WHITE DICHOTOMY: A CONTINUUM PERSPECTIVE ON COMPASSION

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Abstract

Background: Helping professionals like nurses, psychologists, and social workers endure intense emotional demands, especially in resource-constrained environments like India, where workforce shortages are acute with only 0.3 psychiatrists, 0.07 psychologists, and 0.07 social workers per 100,000 people (Bera, 2024). The pandemic saw a 302% rise in online mental health consultations, underscoring the need for support (Das, 2021). Under such pressure, professionals experience a spectrum of emotional states, from Compassion Satisfaction (CS) - the fulfillment from helping others to Compassion Fatigue (CF) - the diminished capacity for empathy due to prolonged exposure to suffering. CF reduces care quality, causes patient dissatisfaction and higher dropout rates, fueling job dissatisfaction and staff turnover, which further strains healthcare systems. Despite growing awareness of CS and CF, little research explores the emotional states that exist between them. This paper conceptualises the Compassion Continuum, identifies underlying states and transition factors, and contributes valuable insights at individual, organisation and policy levels.

Literature Review: Kendrick's model (2022) illustrates the dynamic pathway between CS and CF. Occupational hazards such as trauma work, crisis work, and burnout reduce chance of high CS. When compounded by toxic workplaces, lack of training, or occupational heartbreak (managerial interference), gives rise to Compassion Stress (CStress). If CStress becomes high in intensity, severity, and frequency, it culminates in CF. CF comprises of Burnout (BO)- hopelessness and difficulty managing stress and Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)- emotional disruption from trauma exposure (Stamm, 2010). Coetzee and Klopper (2010) suggest CF results from prolonged client interaction, use of self (skills), and stress. The process begins with Compassion Discomfort (CDiscomfort); if unaddressed, it progresses to CStress and ultimately to CF. However, the mechanisms driving these transitions remain under-explored – a gap this study addresses.

Research Question: What is the structure of the Compassion Continuum and what factors drive transitions between its different phases?

Methodology: A conceptual approach was employed by critically reviewing and synthesising existing models by Kendrick (2022), Stamm (2010), and Coetzee & Klopper (2010). The gaps in their progression were addressed using literature which resulted in a unified, phase-based Compassion Continuum framework.

Results: Based on the synthesis of our work, we established a compassion continuum with CS on the positive end and CF on the negative end, along with intermediate stages of CDiscomfort and CStress and





the underlying factors that led to their transition. Prolonged, continuous and intense patient contact, use of self and stress combined with inadequate rest can lead to CDiscomfort. Persistent empathetic engagement may then give rise to CStress, while internalising clients' traumatic experiences increases the risk of developing CF (Pehlivan & Güner, 2017). CF, in turn, manifests as BO and STS.

Conclusion: This study presents a nuanced model of the Compassion Continuum, moving beyond a binary CS–CF view. It enables early detection and prevention at the individual level, emotional-capacity-based caseload and recovery planning at the organizational level, and sustainable caregiving policies for resource-limited contexts like India. Longitudinal studies are needed to validate the model, determine phase durations and develop phase-specific interventions that promote compassionate care and professional resilience.





IMPACT OF BOARD CHARACTERISTICS ON ESG SCORE OF INDIAN FIRMS AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF AUDIT QUALITY

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to evaluate the influence of board characteristics on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) scores, both in aggregate and within each individual parameter (environmental, social, and governance) of various Indian non-financial companies. Additionally, it explores the moderating role of audit quality, considering factors such as audits conducted by Big Four firms and audit fees, to assess their potential moderating effects (Mardessi, 2022).

Design/Methodology/Approach: The research examines a sample of firms listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) from 2014 to 2023. After excluding firms from the financial sector and those with incomplete data, the final sample consists of 57 companies, yielding 510 firm-observations. Data were sourced from two databases: Refinitiv Eikon, which provides ESG scores and their three individual parameters, and Prowess, which offers economic and financial data. Political uncertainty index data for India is also collected to control for the political uncertainty of India during the sample period. A system-GMM dynamic panel data regression analysis is performed to investigate the relationship between board characteristics, ESG scores, and the moderating role of audit quality practices (Azahra et al., 2024).

Findings: The study finds that higher audit quality increases ESG scores and their constituents, the CG score, ENV score and CSR score. While a higher percentage of female directors on the board reduces the ESG score and CSR score, it has no impact on the CG and ENV scores separately. The number of directors on the board has a significant positive impact on ENV score but none of the board characteristics has an impact on CG score. Interestingly, the percentage of independent directors reduces the CSR score. The study finds that although audit quality has a positive impact on ESG score and its constituents, its moderating effect on the relationship of board characteristics and ESG score (and constituents) is mostly negative. Political uncertainty is found to significantly reduce the ESG score (and all its constituent scores).

Implication: This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the interactions between board characteristics and their implication on sustainability practices. Additionally, it will examine the critical role that auditors play in shaping these decisions and ensuring accountability. It will influence the company's ESG framework and how governments and regulators may adjust their policies to incentivise





better sustainability-focused outcomes. Done correctly, those policies could enhance the firm's performance and valuations as well. (Kim & Yang; 2025).





WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS AND FIRM RISKS: THE MODERATING ROLE OF GENDER DIVERSITY BOARD

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Abstract

The study investigates the impact of workplace sexual harassment complaints on firm market risks, i.e. Total and Idiosyncratic risks and the moderating role of the gender diversity board between workplace sexual harassment complaints and a firm's market risks. Using hand-collected 5212 firm-year observation data, we find that workplace sexual harassment complaints increase the firm's market risks, both total and idiosyncratic, and the presence of women on the board reduces the adverse impact of workplace sexual harassment complaints on the firm's market risk. Gender-diverse boards may improve corporate governance and promote a more inclusive work environment; female directors are frequently linked to elevated ethical standards and a proactive governance strategy, which can promote a more inclusive workplace and reduce firm risks related to internal workplace challenges. Prioritising female inclusion on boards is a win-win for firms: it helps achieve gender equality and reduces risk. This study has significant empirical implications for corporate governance policies and aims to enhance the inclusive workplace environment and firm risk management.





CULTURAL AGILITY AND PROACTIVE TASK BEHAVIOR: UNVEILING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY IN MULTICULTURAL WORK CONTEXTS"

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Abstract

In increasingly globalized and multicultural work settings, the ability to adapt and thrive across cultural boundaries has become a critical competency for employees and leaders alike. This study explores the relationship between cultural agility and proactive task behavior, proposing a mediating role of self-efficacy, specifically, intercultural or task-related self-efficacy. Drawing upon the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), the current study defines cultural agility as an individual's capacity to enhance their confidence in managing culturally diverse work settings. This encourages proactive behaviors like initiative, problem-solving, and making improvements. Cultural agility refers to a person's ability to comprehend, navigate through, and respond effectively in culturally diverse work settings. It entails cross-cultural interpersonal sensitivity, emotional resilience, and cognitive flexibility. Culturally adaptable people are more likely to work well, have fewer interpersonal misunderstandings, and build strong interpersonal relations in today's organizations, where cross-cultural interactions are common.

A fundamental concept in Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy is the conviction that one can carry out the actions necessary to handle potential circumstances. It is a motivating factor that influences behavior. Domain-specific self-efficacy, such as the ability to lead diverse teams or manage cross-cultural tasks, is more likely to develop in people with high cultural agility. People who have higher levels of self-efficacy have a greater ability to take initiative, solve problems, improve processes, and accept responsibility on their own initiative. Consequently, the model proposes that self-efficacy acts as a mediator in the link between proactive task behavior and cultural agility, facilitating the translation of cultural agility into action. There are important theoretical and practical implications to this suggested mediation model. Theoretically, by recognizing self-efficacy as a psychological link between ability and behavior, it broadens our knowledge of how individual variations in intercultural competency reflect into employee outcomes. By providing an integrative framework based on motivational theory, it adds to the literature on proactivity and cultural agility. From a practical standpoint, the model recommends that companies that want to improve proactive behavior in multicultural teams concentrate on boosting employees' self-efficacy in addition to cultivating cultural agility through exposure and training. This could entail providing psychologically safe spaces where people can practice and improve their intercultural abilities, as well as mentoring and role modeling. Reference:





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RESPONSIBLE PERSONALIZATION IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: EXAMINING THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF AI-DRIVEN MARKETING ON CONSUMER TRUST AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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Abstract

Background: In today's data-driven economy, the use of artificial intelligence and big data in personalized marketing is transforming how businesses communicate with consumers. While these advancements enhance organizational efficiency and consumer engagement, they also raise vital questions about ethics, transparency, and societal impact. This study explores how personalized marketing messages delivered through AI-enabled platforms, influence online shoppers' trust and purchase intentions in India. It situates personalization not just as a commercial tool, but as a practice with broader social implications for digital responsibility, consumer autonomy, and privacy governance. The research adopts the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model to examine both the psychological mechanisms and ethical boundaries of AI-powered personalization in a rapidly digitizing economy.

Objectives of the Study: The study is designed around three core objectives:

- (1) To assess the influence of personalized marketing messages (stimulus) on perceived personalization and consumer trust (organism),
- (2) To evaluate how these internal psychological states shape consumer purchase intentions (response), and,
- (3) To analyze how privacy concerns act as a moderating force that could either enable or inhibit ethical personalization especially in sensitive consumer segments.

These objectives reflect an effort to align personalization practices with broader goals of consumer empowerment, fairness, and socially responsible marketing.

Methodology: The study follows a quantitative, explanatory design using primary survey data collected from 278 Indian online consumers with prior exposure to personalized marketing. A purposive sampling method was used to target consumers across platforms such as email, apps, and social media. The questionnaire included validated constructs related to trust, personalization, privacy concerns, and behavioral intention, rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test direct, mediating, and moderating relationships.

Key Findings and Social Contribution: Results indicate that personalized marketing messages significantly increase perceived personalization and consumer trust, which in turn positively affect





purchase intentions. However, privacy concerns significantly moderate these relationships dampening the positive impact among privacy-sensitive individuals. This supports the personalization–privacy paradox, where the benefits of personalization may be undermined by concerns over data misuse. The study contributes to socially impactful management research by offering a framework for responsible personalization—one that balances commercial goals with ethical practices and consumer well-being. It also supports policy-level discourse on digital privacy regulation, such as India’s Digital Personal Data Protection Act (2023). By connecting consumer psychology, responsible data usage, and policy implications, this research reflects how marketing strategies can align with the larger goals of inclusive, transparent, and ethical business practices—advancing the vision of management as a tool for social good.





THE PHENOMENON OF ENTERPRISE CREATION AMONG PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: A LONGITUDINAL MIXED-METHODS EXPERIMENT

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Abstract

This research investigates the effectiveness of capacity-building training programs (CBTP) and mentoring and handholding (M&H) in fostering entrepreneurial intention, behaviour, and enterprise creation among Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Most PwDs within the working age group are unemployed, resulting in most PwDs intending to create an enterprise (Holub, 2012). Governments and international institutions have taken the initiative through workshops and training programmes for PwDs, but these programmes are unable to provide the required entrepreneurial skills. Research highlights experiential and action-based pedagogy as a more effective approach to entrepreneurship training (Fayolle & Liñán, 2014). Consequently, this research aims to understand how experiential action-based pedagogy affects enterprise creation among PwDs. Additionally, the research examined the relationship between entrepreneurship readiness, entrepreneurial skills, intention, behaviour and enterprise creation, along with the factors that facilitate (or impede) the enterprise creation process to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

Method: The research seeks to investigate differences in outcomes when the intervention is altered, specifically through an experiential action-based training programme instead of a traditional training programme. To achieve a thorough causal description of the phenomenon, particularly factors that enable or hinder the process, qualitative method was also employed, as suggested by Shadish et al. (2002). A longitudinal experimental study was conducted with a concurrent nested mixed-method design.

Pre- and post-measurements were taken for entrepreneurial intention (Liñán & Chen, 2009), entrepreneurial skills (Liñán, 2006), entrepreneurial behaviour (Panel Study of Entrepreneurial Dynamics, 2005), and enterprise creation (Katz & Gartner, 1988). A total of 126 participants registered for the CBTP, which were randomly assigned to four groups. After accounting for control variables and attrition rate, the final sample size was 70 (control = 36 and treatment = 34). Quantitative data was analysed with the help of SPSS and SEM. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data.

Results: There was a significant increase in entrepreneurial skills, intention, behaviour, and enterprise creation after the CBTP. The change was notably higher among the experiential action-based CBTP than for traditional CBTP. The post-entrepreneurial skills among groups did not differ. The primary difference in outcomes was in entrepreneurial behaviour. Cluster analysis reported that PwDs in the treatment group could perform various entrepreneurial actions, while PwDs in the control group struggled with similar actions. The traditional CBTP could not provide sufficient skills to transform their intentions into





entrepreneurial behaviour. In contrast, the skills acquired during experiential action-based CBTP equipped the PwDs to perform the necessary entrepreneurial actions. Furthermore, M&H significantly impacted the process of enterprise creation.

According to the results, enterprise creation is the outcome of entrepreneurial behaviour, which is influenced by entrepreneurial skills and intention; however, the primary driver of behaviour is skills. The major hindrance in process was a lack of finance, particularly personal capital. Other hindering factors included a lack of assets, access to information, institutional and government support, a non-conducive support system, and information asymmetry. Although disability and stigmatization posed challenges, they were not the primary obstacles. Personal funds for investment emerged as a major enabler, followed by operational support.





MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE OF HUMAN RESOURCE ANALYTICS (HRA) POST-COVID-19: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Pandemic in 2019 led to massive workforce disruptions, compelling the organizations to rely on Human Resource Analytics (HRA) to enhance resilience, agility, and efficiency in HR functions. HRA has emerged as a crucial tool in modern human resource management due to its ability of HRA to leverage raw employee data and produce data-driven insights, predictive analytics, big data, and artificial intelligence (AI), making it a strategic necessity to ensure to improve the talent acquisition, workforce planning, and employee engagement. The post-COVID-19 era has led to the widespread adoption of HRA, understanding the need of the hour for agile workforce management, digital transformation, and making evidence-based HR decisions. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis to assess the research trajectory of HRA using research articles extracted from the Web of Science (WoS) database. A comprehensive search through the WoS database using targeted keywords that are selected based on the previous research work on HRA, yielded a total of 2,533 articles. Further filtration based on document type, research area, and preferred language, reduced the number of documents to a total of 363 relevant publications dated from 2020 to 2025. The analysis identifies key publications, journals, authors, countries, institutions, and keyword co-occurrence networks, providing a structured overview of the field. The performance analysis highlights a sharp increase in publications over the years, till 2024, as 2025 is still continuing. This finding highlights that over the years, the research scholars has developed an increased interest in this field. India and China are the leading contributors to HRA research, while journals such as 'Technological Forecasting and Social Change' and 'Personnel Review' were the key publication outlets. 'Mathematical Programming' and the 'European Journal of Information Systems' being the highly cited sources reflect the strong quantitative and technological orientation of current HRA research. Using VOSviewer, the study applies visualize keyword co-occurrences, author collaborations, and thematic clusters analysis to map emerging research themes, which include artificial intelligence, big data, data-driven decision-making, and people analytics highlighting the evolving landscape of HRA and the interdisciplinary nature of HRA and its increasing alignment with the initiatives of digital transformation to improve the workforce efficiency and organizational performance. Theoretically, this study contributes by mapping the intellectual structure of HRA and highlighting the underexplored areas for future research, such as ethical use of AI and employee data privacy. Practically, it highlights the need for the HR professionals to shift from intuition-based practices and practice data-informed strategies for talent management and performance optimization. Decision accuracy and strategic alignment can be enhanced by integrating AI and predictive analytics in HR operations. Though this study provides a clear picture of the evolution of HRA research in the post-Covid era from 2020 to 2025, it is limited by its dependence on a single database (WoS). Future studies can focus on conducting a comprehensive





bibliometric analysis using Scopus or other databases in addition to Web of Science, in order to gain deeper insights and clarity on this evolution.

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BEYOND THE LOGO - A HOLISTIC CONCEPTUALIZATION OF REBRANDING BASED ON IDENTITY-IMAGE DYNAMICS

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Abstract

Rebranding is a widely used branding strategy to maintain brand relevance. It is commonly conceptualised as change in visual brand identity and brand positioning. Given the significant role of brands in modern organization, we argue that this conceptualization of rebranding produces a fragmented understanding of the concept, leading to suboptimal outcomes. In this study we propose and evaluate a holistic model of rebranding process. By characterising brand identity as a multi-dimensional construct our model provides a more nuanced view of how brand identity, as a gestalt, gets effected by rebranding. This helps us establish a) visual identity is one the dimension of brand identity construct, hence selectively focusing on visual brand identity during rebranding, produces a distorted understanding of the entire process b) Changing identity elements in isolation will not be fruitful unless these changes are accompanied by changes of other interrelated elements of brand identity construct. Identity – Image dynamics supplies the underlying theoretical framework to our study. Our study proposed rebranding as change in existing brand identity which is triggered by a felt brand image discrepancy. Identity -image dynamics has allowed us to establish brand image as an important trigger of rebranding and identify important enablers and moderators of the rebranding process, at the same time.

The proposed rebranding model is tested using case survey methodology. This mixed method entails surveying the relevant teaching and research cases, to reveal a common pattern present across these cases. This way this method quantifies the qualitative information present in the case and then the quantified data is used to do the statistical analysis. We did PLS-SEM analysis of our structural model. The result of statistical analysis establishes felt brand image discrepancy as an important trigger of rebranding process. In addition, the results affirms that rebranding involves comprehensive change of brand identity meaning, both core and extended brand identity will change because of construed brand image discrepancy. The analysis also reveals that only comprehensive change of brand identity (i.e., when extended brand identity elements are supported by changes of core brand identity) is effective in achieving the desired brand alignment. An important emerging implication of this is that the proposed conceptualization helps in differentiate rebranding from other conflated strategies like repositioning, reinventing and other image management strategies. By the virtue of case research methodology, we were able to generate findings that are free from any temporal and context specific effects. Hence the revised rebranding model is the





most generalized representation of rebranding which would apply in most contexts at most times. To the best of our knowledge, this kind of generalized rebranding model is not present in literature.

Our study encourages pro-active managerial participation in rebranding process. At the same time, it cautions against treating rebranding as mere visual change. Effective rebranding requires aligning visual, core, and extended brand identity elements to reflect true brand meaning, not just creating the illusion of change.





DEFINING HOMESTAY TOURISM: - AN EMERGING TREND FOR PROMOTING THE RURAL DESTINATIONS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA.

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Abstract

Introduction: Homestay tourism has recently emerged around the world as a solution to the challenges of mass tourism, such as environmental degradation and cultural homogenization (Bose.*et.al.* 2021 & Chauhan, 2025). As the hospitality industry continuously evolves, sustainability has become a key force shaping its future. In sustainable hospitality, one of its most revolutionary paradigms is the emergence of eco-friendly homestays that encompass local culture, community involvement and environmental protection in the package offered to tourists (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2014). Homestays, a type of local accommodation, offer travellers the chance to experience more of the local culture, while the communities where they take place also benefit both economically and socially Andrew, (2024). States like Uttarakhand, Kerala, and Himachal Pradesh have embraced the homestay mechanism in India, since the home-stay industries have various advantages in promoting tourism from a sustainability angle (Chauhan & Khan, 2024). In the homestay industry, sustainability comes in the form of eco-design, waste management programs, water sustainability, and responsible tourism policies Andrew (2024). Several research work and projects in the past have been done on the various tourism components of Himachal Pradesh but very few or no work has been done on the home stay and its contribution for the rural development in Himachal Pradesh. Additionally there is a need of research work in understanding the scope, potential and overall development pattern of home stays in the rural parts of Himachal Pradesh. The present research will strive to fill the gap which exists in the literature and would present a comprehensive analysis and findings about home stay tourism in the Himachal Pradesh.

Research Question: How the development of Homestays in the rural parts of Himachal is transforming the local community and offering a unique experience to the tourists?

Objectives of the Study: The research paper will therefore seek to explore and investigate the following objectives.

1. To highlight the concept of home stay and its overall growth pattern in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To discuss the significance & contribution of Homestay for the rural development in Himachal Pradesh.





3. To suggest measures to improve the service quality and overall experience of Homestay in Himachal Pradesh.

Research Methodology: A Qualitative research method will be used for the current study by taking help of the Case study of any two Home stays located in Himachal Pradesh. Detailed Interview schedules and telephonic discussions with the prior appointments of the owners of the home stay, employees, local community members and the government officials of Himachal will be administered to get an insight about the actual scenario in Himachal Pradesh.

Directed Conclusion: Home stay tourism is highly essential for the sustainable rural development and supporting the local community of Himachal Pradesh.





KNOWLEDGE LANDSCAPES IN PROCRASTINATION RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF PUBLICATION TRENDS, RESEARCH THEMES, AND EMERGING DIRECTIONS"

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Abstract

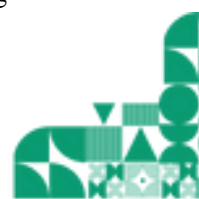
Background: Procrastination, defined as the voluntary delay of intended tasks despite anticipated negative consequences, has emerged as a significant behavioral phenomenon affecting various aspects of life and psychological well-being across diverse populations. With the exponential growth of research publications in this domain, a comprehensive bibliometric analysis is essential to map the evolving landscape of procrastination studies and identify emerging research trajectories.

Objective: This study aims to conduct a systematic bibliometric analysis of procrastination research to examine publication trends, identify key research themes, analyze collaboration patterns, and explore the evolution of theoretical frameworks from 2000 to 2025.

Methods: A comprehensive search was conducted using Web of Science Core Collection and Scopus databases to retrieve peer-reviewed articles on procrastination published between 2010 and 2024. Bibliometric analysis was performed using R-based bibliometrix package and VOSviewer software. The analysis included publication output trends, citation patterns, keyword co-occurrence networks, author collaboration analysis, institutional affiliations, geographical distribution, and thematic evolution mapping. Additionally, burst detection analysis was employed to identify emerging research hotspots and structural variation analysis to examine paradigm shifts in the field.

Results: The analysis revealed a steady increase in procrastination research publications, with academic procrastination dominating the literature (approximately 60% of studies). Key research clusters identified include: (1) academic procrastination and student populations, (2) psychological mechanisms and individual differences, (3) intervention strategies and behavioral change, (4) technology-mediated procrastination, and (5) cross-cultural perspectives. The United States, China, Germany and so on emerged as leading contributors, with significant international collaboration networks. Emerging themes include digital procrastination, predictive modeling using machine learning approaches, and the intersection of procrastination with mental health outcomes.

Conclusions: This bibliometric analysis demonstrates the maturation of procrastination research from a niche psychological phenomenon to a multidisciplinary field encompassing educational psychology, behavioral economics, and digital wellness. The findings reveal persistent research gaps in longitudinal studies, intervention efficacy across diverse populations, and the need for standardized measurement tools. Future research directions should prioritize evidence-based intervention development, exploration of procrastination in organizational contexts, and investigation of cultural factors influencing





procrastination behaviors. The comprehensive mapping provided by this analysis serves as a valuable resource for researchers, educators, and policymakers seeking to understand and address procrastination-related challenges in contemporary society.





WHEN LEAST EXPECTED COLLEAGUES VIOLATE EXPECTATIONS: THEORIZING AND EXAMINING EXPECTANCY VIOLATION FRAMEWORK FOR WORKPLACE INCIVILITY

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Abstract

Scholars have uncovered the nuances within workplace incivility by examining both the receiver's and the instigator's perspectives (Schilpzand et al., 2016). However, most of the research on workplace incivility treats instigators in general. Our study proposes that targets of incivility employ a relational perspective while inferring uncivil instigators. Targets expect certain colleagues to be more civil to them than others. These differing expectations may influence the coping mechanisms incivility targets employ to address workplace incivility. Therefore, the objectives of the current study are (1) to develop a framework (expectancy violation framework of the least expected uncivil colleague), differentiating the least expected uncivil colleagues from the rest of the uncivil instigators, and (2) to identify if the coping mechanisms differ based on the type of uncivil instigator involved.

Colleagues working at a similar level/position trust each other and expect civil behavior. Trust can originate at two levels: emotion and cognition. Emotional trust may emanate from the quality of interpersonal relations they share. Likewise, cognitive trust may emanate from the belief that the colleagues (even when not well connected) are expected to behave professionally and that treating colleagues uncivilly violates professional norms (Mayer et al., 1995). Our proposed framework categorizes uncivil instigators on two levels (high and low) of relational closeness and perceived professionalism. This framework identifies four profiles of uncivil instigators – close professionals (high on closeness and professionalism), distant professionals (low on closeness but high on professionalism), close unprofessionals (high on closeness but low on professionalism), and distant unprofessionals (low on closeness and professionalism).

Based on the framework, we hypothesize, (1) close professionals are the least expected instigators of incivility, (2) involvement of the different types of instigators (among the four) will influence the choice of coping mechanisms (emotion-focused and problem-focused coping) of the incivility targets, and (3) incivility instigated from the least expected uncivil colleagues will lead to emotion-focused coping.

We employed a scenario-based experimental design[1], wherein we manipulated the four profiles of instigators with an uncivil event and measured coping mechanisms. This study contributes in the following three ways: (1) expands workplace incivility literature by proposing an expectancy violation framework that profiles uncivil instigators and provides a powerful lens to understand differential responses to workplace incivility; (2) examines how specific profiles of instigators influence the choice of coping mechanisms, thereby throwing insight into the choice of coping mechanisms from the





instigators' perspective, unlike previous literature that argues for targets' dispositional characteristics in the choice of coping mechanisms; (3) responds to recent calls to examine the nuanced interplay between relational contexts and coping (Yang & Kim, 2023; Gupta & Singh, 2023); and (4) offers insight that will help managers and HR practitioners to focus on the source of incivility when redesigning training interventions to mitigate incivility at their workplaces.

[1] The study is underway, and we expect to present the full results of the study in the conference presentation.





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AI-POWERED INSIGHTS AND MARKET-DRIVEN STRATEGIES: A PATHWAY TO BRAND AND PERFORMANCE GROWTH IN B2B

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Abstract

This study explores how B2B firms in India can benefit from advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and big data. Despite the growing importance of digital technologies in B2B marketing, there is limited empirical evidence showing how these tools actually impact business outcomes. To address this gap, the study examines the relationships between AI-powered big data, customer knowledge creation, market-driven actions, brand development, and overall market performance. Using survey responses from 397 Indian B2B firms, the researchers tested a model with ten hypotheses through structural equation modeling. The findings show that AI-enabled big data significantly enhances both customer knowledge and market-oriented activities. In turn, customer knowledge creation supports stronger brand development and more effective market strategies. These market-driven activities also positively impact brand building and market performance. The study highlights that even in B2B contexts, brand development is a key driver of success in competitive markets. For practical application, it suggests that B2B firms should invest in AI technologies and train employees to better use customer insights. Firms should also leverage social media to increase brand awareness and involve customers in creating value. Addressing internal challenges and aligning branding strategies with customer needs are essential to gaining better market results. This research is one of the first to empirically demonstrate how digital tools like AI and big data can work together to improve branding and market performance in an emerging economy context like India.





UNLOCKING AI DRIVEN SUSTAINABLE CAREER PATHS: STRUCTURING KEY ENABLERS WITH ISM AND FUZZY ISM APPROACH

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Abstract

The contemporary transition from industrial to technological innovation has re-designed the fundamental mechanism of organizations operations, necessitating individuals to cultivate for long-term career sustainability competencies and to secure prolonged career resilience. The upgradation of technology such as AI, has transformed the conventional understanding of term “career”, by influencing the way we do work; thereby accelerating the shift in career and employment landscape by necessitating the need for more systematic and a dynamic career development framework among the employees. The purpose of this study is to determine the contributory role of AI enablers that facilitates individuals to achieve career sustainability goals in the long run. For evaluating the relationship among the identified enablers; responses have been collected from seven experts working in diverse sectors. For understanding the inter-relationship among the factors; interpretive structural modelling (ISM) and fuzzy interpretive structural modelling (fuzzy-ISM) was employed; followed by *matrice d’impacts croisés multiplication appliquée à un classment* (MICMAC) analysis to validate the results. The proposed approach found that career guidance (E1) is a significant AI enabler that inhibits career sustainability to employees in the long run. As the analytical findings substantiated by the knowledge and extensive experience of seven experts, results are susceptible biased. This study covers five AI driven sustainable career enablers; future researchers may expand the current study through evaluating other significant AI driven enablers and validate results by using total interpretive structural modeling, fuzzy TISM, fuzzy TOPSIS and fuzzy DEMATEL to analyze the robustness among the factors. This research delineates five AI driven career sustainability enablers; offering significant insightful and strategic career planning at both individual employees and the organizational entities.





CULTIVATING GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURIAL EXCELLENCE: UNPACKING THE MINDSET OF SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS

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Abstract

This study investigates the entrepreneurial mindset of successful global entrepreneurs, exploring its components, development and relationship with business performance. Integrating insights from psychology, entrepreneurship and international business, this research employs a mixed methods approach to examine the interplay between personal characteristics, environmental factors and entrepreneurial mindset that fosters global business success. Findings highlight the critical role of self-efficacy, resilience, adaptability and cultural intelligence in shaping the entrepreneurial mindset. This study contributes to the understanding of global entrepreneurship, providing implications for entrepreneurs, educators and policy makers seeking to cultivate entrepreneurial excellence.





SHARING TO BELONG, POSTING TO MATTER: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CURRENCY AND GENERATIVITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION OF GEN Z USERS THROUGH PERCEIVED VALUE

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to identify and analyse the key drivers of content sharing behaviour among Gen Z users in digital environments. Drawing upon theories of social capital, user and gratification theory, and prosocial engagement, the study investigates how social currency, generativity, content originality, and perceived value lead to Social Media addiction in Gen Z Users.

Design/methodology/approach: A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine linear relationships and Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) to uncover non-linear and configurational pathways to Content sharing behaviour. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire from active social media users of Gen Z (n = 400), with measurement scales covering constructs such as social currency (utility, identity, affiliation, conversation, advocacy, information), generativity, content originality, perceived value (emotional, functional, social), and sharing intention.

Findings: A reflective covariance-based measurement model revealed that advocacy, affiliation, and identity emerging as the most influential dimensions of Social Currency for Gen Z Users. Generativity—the user's willingness to reinterpret, remix, or co-create content—positively influences both content originality and perceived value, confirming its central role in participatory digital culture (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Perceived value, in turn, mediates the relationship between Social Currency and Social Media Addiction, emphasizing the importance of emotional and social resonance in viral diffusion (Berger & Milkman, 2012).

Complementing these findings, fsQCA results identify multiple equifinal pathways to high content sharing intention. For example, one dominant configuration combines high emotional value, content originality, and identity expression, while another relies on high advocacy and generativity despite moderate content value—illustrating that diverse motivational routes exist for content virality (Ragin, 2008; Woodside, 2013). This underscores the non-compensatory and configurational nature of content-sharing decisions in social media ecosystems.

Practical implications: Digital marketers, content creators, and content strategists can enhance content virality among Gen Z Users by optimally utilizing Social Currency determinants such as emphasizing user identity alignment, emotional relevance, and co-creation potential. Marketers should design





campaigns to reflect diverse motivational triggers and audience archetypes, as no single factor guarantees sharing. Platforms may consider algorithms that prioritize content with high generativity potential or social value indicators.

Social implications: Understanding the psychological and social underpinnings of content sharing among Gen Z Users can support healthier digital discourse and foster more intentional online engagement. Insights can inform media literacy programs, digital activism strategies, and content moderation policies aimed at shaping responsible content diffusion.

Originality/Value: This research is among the first to integrate social currency theory, generativity, and perceived value frameworks within the context of Social Media Addiction. By leveraging both SEM and fsQCA, the study offers a nuanced understanding of linear effects and complex causal recipes, contributing to the growing literature on digital content behaviour, online identity expression, and virality dynamics (Phelps et al., 2004; Zhang & Vos, 2014).





ADVANCING HR ANALYTICS: A BIBLIOMETRIC INSIGHT INTO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING TRENDS

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Abstract

The field of Human Resources (HR) analytics is constantly increasing and its implications for predictive decision-making within organizations. The goal of this study is to provide an overview of the emerging trends in HR analytics by analyzing existing research and offering insights for academics, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. The study uses a bibliometric approach to analyze articles from the Scopus database, covering publications from 2005 to September 2024. Tools like RStudio, Biblioshiny, and VOSviewer were used to collect and analyze the data. The four main issues discovered by the examination are "employee engagement as well as organizational overall performance, burnout or worker engagement, employee engagement or procedure characteristics, and worker engagement or an organizational dedication. According to the evaluation, the terms "work engagement" and "employee engagement" are most often used, underscoring their significance in HR analytics research. Over time, the range of substantial papers has always multiplied, indicating the growing hobby inside the area. According to key consequences, groups may also boost productivity, reduce attrition, and sell long-term booms utilizing focusing on group workers' engagement, work satisfaction, and schooling and improvement. The observer does, however, also keep in mind the need for destiny study on the applicability of those consequences in other fields and situations. All matters taken into consideration, this analysis presents a conceptual knowledge of the improvement of HR analytics, highlighting its essential characteristic in improving organizational overall performance through information-pushed insights.





UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARD ONLINE SHOPPING

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Abstract

At the moment, India is the world's second-largest internet market, with mobile internet users dominating the landscape of the country. The Internet has become an important and popular means for transmitting different data and information, due to which investments in the information system did not work until the adoption of 'E' form of business i.e., E-business. Online shopping specifies the value of online marketing and the technology used by different retail organizations. Online shopping is a key aspect of client appeal and satisfaction. In today's competitive environment, most businesses have adapted and begun to use online shopping to attract and satisfy more consumers.

Customers are an important element for any business. The company must try to gain the loyalty of customers towards a particular brand by fulfilling the needs and requirements of the customers. The process of shopping has been changed with the emergence of e-commerce. The consumers can purchase the varied range of products available online by visiting the company's website from some basic range of devices such as smart phones, computers, laptops, tablets etc. The consumers can get any kind of products within a short time compared with the traditional consumers. The findings reveal that while consumers appreciate the ease and accessibility of online shopping, concerns about product quality, delivery issues, and data security persist. Additionally, demographic factors such as age, income, and digital literacy influence overall perception and satisfaction levels. The study highlights the need for e-commerce platforms to enhance transparency, customer service, and personalized experiences to build trust and encourage repeat purchases. These insights can help online retailers align their strategies with consumer expectations and strengthen their market position in the digital retail space.





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TRANSFORMING PRODUCER COMPANIES INTO SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL ENTERPRISES: A MANAGEMENT INNOVATION PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines how producer companies—collectives formed by farmers, artisans, and small producers—can be re-engineered into sustainable social enterprises to address pressing social, environmental, and economic challenges. By leveraging management innovation, the research explores pathways to align profitability with community development and ecological responsibility.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Grounded in the Triple Bottom Line framework, the research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative insights from case studies and stakeholder interviews with quantitative analysis of operational data. It investigates key areas including process re-engineering, adoption of sustainable practices, social enterprise transformation, stakeholder engagement, and market adaptation.

Findings: The study reveals that redesigning core operations enhances efficiency, flexibility, and innovation, enabling producer companies to respond effectively to market dynamics. Integrating environmentally responsible and socially equitable practices across supply chains reduces ecological impact and promotes fair outcomes. Transitioning towards a social enterprise model balances profit with community development, while inclusive stakeholder engagement fosters participatory governance and shared decision-making. Strategic market adaptation strengthens competitiveness without compromising sustainability principles.

The research offers actionable strategies for industry leaders, cooperative managers, and policymakers to support the transformation of producer companies. This includes process innovation, capacity building, policy support, and investments in sustainable supply chains and technology.

By transforming producer companies into sustainable social enterprises, this research highlights their potential as drivers of inclusive growth, environmental stewardship, and resilient local economies. It contributes to broader efforts to empower communities and address social inequalities through responsible business models.

Originality/Value: This study advances the discourse on management innovation for sustainability by providing a replicable roadmap for re-engineering cooperative enterprises. It demonstrates how producer companies can serve as effective vehicles for aligning profitability with social and environmental impact, offering insights relevant to practitioners, researchers, and policymakers alike.





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USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING TO SUSTAIN COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE THROUGH CUSTOMIZATION; DYNAMIC CAPABILITIES VIEW

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial Marketing (EM) represents a dynamic and opportunity-driven approach that blends the innovative mindset of entrepreneurship with the strategic, customer-centric principles of modern marketing. It emphasizes agility, value co-creation, and proactive market shaping, positioning entrepreneurs and customers as active participants in crafting the marketing landscape.

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has further transformed the EM paradigm. AI-enabled tools, ranging from predictive analytics to natural language processing, reshape how firms engage with customers, build trust, and tailor experiences.

This study investigates how entrepreneurial firms leverage AI within their marketing strategies to enable deeper levels of customization. Anchored in Dynamic Capabilities (DC) Theory, this study explores how firms sense AI-driven opportunities, seize the right tools, and transform internal processes to align marketing efforts with personalization demands.

By addressing this underexplored intersection of AI and EM, the present study will contribute to theoretical and practical conversations on how emerging technologies reshape the capabilities required for entrepreneurial success in digital marketplaces.

Recent studies have highlighted AI's potential to enhance EM capabilities by enabling real-time customization and improving customer interaction (Dwivedi et al., 2021). However, there remains a theoretical and empirical gap in understanding how entrepreneurial firms strategically adapt to AI and integrate it to achieve customer-centric innovation.

To address this, the study adopts the Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece, 2007; Teece et al., 1997), emphasizing a firm's ability to sense, seize, and transform in rapidly changing environments.

Given the exploratory nature of the research and the process-oriented focus of DC, qualitative in-depth interviews are deemed appropriate to uncover the nuanced and contextual mechanisms underpinning AI adoption and strategic transformation in EM settings.





There will be 15-20 in-depth virtual interviews, each lasting between 35 and 50 minutes. Participants will be selected using purposive sampling based on their active engagement in EM practices, regardless of the extent of AI usage. Data will be analyzed using an interpretative realism approach, which allows for uncovering meaning while acknowledging the socially constructed nature of entrepreneurial decision-making.

This study will contribute to the literature at the intersection of EM, AI, and DC by unpacking the micro-foundations of strategic adaptability in early-stage firms. While prior research has explored AI applications in conventional marketing contexts (Davenport et al., 2020), By applying DC, this study advances theoretical understanding of how entrepreneurial firms sense AI-related opportunities, seize relevant tools, and transform their marketing processes accordingly. In doing so, the study provides a contextualized view of DC as enacted in fluid, digitally mediated market environments, particularly among smaller, more agile firms where formalized routines are often missing.

Entrepreneurs are encouraged to invest in team-level learning, foster cross-functional digital fluency, and adopt agile feedback loops to iteratively refine marketing strategies. The present study provides a roadmap for firms looking to sustain competitiveness through strategic, customer-centric AI adoption in entrepreneurial contexts.





FROM EXPERIENCE TO EXPRESSION: THE ROLE OF BRAND LOVE AND BRAND HAPPINESS

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Abstract

Masstige stands for aspirational but attainable brands (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003), that fall between mass and premium markets. Despite increasing interest in masstige marketing, consumer behavior within the service market is still an under researched area (Kumar et al., 2020). Luxury brands' penetration into the masstige market has expanded hospitality services to a broad customer base, particularly middle-class consumers (Thomsen et al., 2020). Despite this expansion, little research has been done, thus the food service industry being a major field for analyzing masstige café brands and consumer behavior (Iloranta, 2021). As opposed to tangible products, services depend on experiential touch points and people interaction, and customer experience has emerged as a significant competitive advantage, specifically masstige brands (Brun & Castelli, 2013). Additionally, social media enables public sharing of experiential consumption as a status symbol, influencing eWOM (Siepmann et al., 2021). This study explores the influence of experiential value on eWOM via brand love and happiness, supported by Bagozzi's (1992) cognitive- affective- behavioral theory.

The criterion suggested by Paul (2015) is followed to calculate Masstige Mean Score Scale (MMSS) of masstige café brands followed by testing relationships using PLS-SEM.

By analyzing consumer behavior in the growing masstige luxury market in India, particularly in the service sector, the proposed model enriches the masstige, luxury services and experience literature, where research is very limited. This study fills the void in masstige literature by exploring the consumption behavior in underexplored area: food service market (Kumar et al., 2020). A new model derived from experience economy supported by cognitive affective and behavior theory, is introduced to examine the determinants of post purchasing behavior of masstige cafe brands. The marketers can formulate strategies and build a relationship by providing the experience which is unique to masstige brands.





A STUDY ON INVESTOR BEHAVIOUR AND RISK PERCEPTION IN CRYPTOCURRENCY AND DERIVATIVE MARKETS

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Abstract

This study investigates the interplay between investor behaviour, risk perception, and cognitive biases in cryptocurrency and derivative markets, which are characterised by high volatility and unique structural properties. It seeks to bridge gaps in the current literature by examining how behavioural finance principles manifest in these asset classes, especially under the influence of demographic variables and regulatory asymmetries. To achieve this, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining Grounded Theory for rich qualitative insights, Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) to uncover thematic patterns, and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test and validate the proposed theoretical model. Quantitative data were obtained through surveys with over 500 investors, while semi-structured interviews provided a deeper understanding of individual perspectives. Analysis was conducted using AMOS and SmartPLS. Results indicate that behavioural biases, particularly overconfidence ($\beta = 0.47$) and loss aversion, significantly shape risk perception, which in turn mediates their influence on investment decisions. Financial literacy emerged as a suppressor of these biases ($\beta = -0.28$). Moreover, market environment factors such as volatility and regulatory clarity accounted for 31% of the variance in risk perception. Structural equation modelling further revealed that risk perception fully mediates (68%) the effect of biases on investment behaviour ($\beta = -0.52$). Experience attenuates the influence of biases (-0.19), while regulatory clarity lowers environmental uncertainty (-0.15). The study concludes that subjective risk perception, shaped jointly by psychological traits and market context, drives cryptocurrency investment strategy, challenging the assumptions of traditional rationalist models. Practically, these findings suggest that fintech platforms should integrate behavioural nudges and promote financial literacy tools. Regulators, too, must develop policies tailored to crypto-specific vulnerabilities, including those exacerbated by social media amplification. Future research is encouraged to extend this triangulated framework to diverse cryptocurrencies and cross-cultural investor populations. This research is the first to validate an all-encompassing model linking behavioural biases, market structure, and risk perception in cryptocurrency markets using SEM.





EFFICACY OF ENVIRONMENTAL TAX, R&D AND ECONOMY ON TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION IN CROSS-COUNTRY: BRICS

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Abstract

This paper explores the compounded connection of environmental taxes, research & development and GDP factors on environmental technology innovation. The research unveils the symmetric long-run interconnection stringent to sustainability. It focuses on the cross-country analysis of BRICS, consisting of the period from 1999 to 2020, to understand the positive and negative relations among the variables. This study examined the determinants of environmental technology innovation (ETI) across Brazil, China, India, and South Africa using PMG and CS-ARDL estimators. By implementing policies driven by innovation, these economies may quicken their green transitions and take the lead in the development of environmental technologies worldwide. Thereafter government should adopt policy bundling using carbon pricing revenues to fund green R&D, offer innovation tax credits, and ensure regulatory stability. This paper also focuses on SDGs 7,9,13,17 as the interplay components significantly promoting to integrate strategies on economic instruments and innovation for long-term sustainability and low carbon future.





CULTURAL FASHION APPARELS OF INDIA: MULTIPLE CASES OF HANDLOOM GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION FROM SOUTH INDIA

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Abstract

Geographical Indication (GI) is an essential mark of product quality and characterises its place of origin as a reputable identification (World Intellectual Property Organisation, 2022). Collective Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) help producers obtain exclusive rights to use origin as a differentiator from those imitating the reputable, unique product in the market. Globally, the Fashion industry is one of the key industries contributing to economic growth. Textiles and fashion apparel contribute significantly to India's economy, accounting for about 2.3% of India's GDP. India holds a 4% share in the global textiles and apparel trade. Slow sustainable fashion is characterised by high-quality, durable apparel that follows a pollution-free production process (no hazardous chemicals).

The handloom industry has a unique weaving heritage in India. Handloom is a declining industry mainly due to competition from the power loom. Challenges include decreasing productivity, changing fashion trends, lack of marketing efforts and inadequate capital, where weavers suffer from low income. Weavers earning their livelihood through handloom weaving cannot make marketing decisions, which leaves them vulnerable to the decisions made by the cooperative societies they are a member of. The right marketing strategies help enhance the profitability of the handloom clusters, thereby improving the welfare of weavers. Awareness of GI Certifications and widespread knowledge of local handloom clusters dampen growth in this industry. Studies on the approach of GI rules towards fashion and design products closely knit with the cultural history of the community are studied, but the importance given to these GI fashion apparel from the point of view of their promotion and market development remains to be understood.

Focusing on handloom weaving, weavers' cooperatives are commonly at the centre of manufacturing clusters; retailers buy from these cooperatives and sell apparel in the market at a premium. Handloom fabrics such as Udupi Sarees, Illkal Sarees, Kasargod Sarees and Mysore Silk are reputable. Multiple case studies of major handloom clusters successfully leveraging GI certification, particularly in the textile industry, have been conducted through in-depth interviews of GI Certificate holders or authorised users. Cases such as Udupi Sarees, Illkal Sarees, Kasargod Sarees and Mysore Silk are taken as four cases coming from Karnataka and Kerala and having similar humble beginnings. In India, handloom is a significant sector that employs and provides livelihood for weaker sections of society. The challenge here has been that most handloom weavers are aged and lack new blood to innovate in the sector. Urbanisation and high-paying jobs in cities attract the new generation of family members of the weavers. A focus on preserving the traditions, culture and heritage can only be ensured by paying higher wages for the rise in per-capita income. The study contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 12, Sustainable Production and Consumption.





SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A FACILITATOR OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE: EVIDENCE FROM INFORMAL WOMEN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN BHUBANESWAR

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Abstract

Work-life balance (WLB) is progressively acknowledged as essential for individual well-being and enduring productivity. Nevertheless, the notion is predominantly examined within formal employment environments, wherein institutional support frameworks such as human resource policies, compensated leave, and organizational childcare provisions are prevalent. In stark contrast, women participating in the informal economy—particularly within the construction sector—function devoid of formal contracts, social security benefits, or workplace entitlements. These individuals contend with protracted working hours, hazardous conditions, and unpaid domestic obligations, often maneuvering dual roles as wage earners and principal caregivers. In this regard, the equilibrium between work and life transcends mere access to policy; it entails the exercise of agency amidst constraints. In the Indian context, the construction sector serves as a principal source of informal urban employment, with women commonly engaged in physically arduous and poorly remunerated positions such as head-loaders or mason assistants. These women frequently depend on informal networks, localized knowledge, and interpersonal negotiation strategies to address competing obligations. Within such precarious circumstances, social intelligence (SI)—defined as the capacity to perceive, comprehend, and navigate interpersonal interactions—emerges as a critical psychological asset. SI may empower women to negotiate employer expectations, solicit assistance from neighbors, coordinate domestic responsibilities, and resolve workplace conflicts, thereby indirectly fostering WLB. This investigation seeks to elucidate how SI facilitates work-life balance among women construction workers operating in Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha. Utilizing Goleman's (2006) social intelligence framework in conjunction with Clark's (2000) work–family border theory, the study conceptualizes SI as a functional coping mechanism that aids women in managing the social intricacies across diverse domains. A qualitative-dominant exploratory methodology is employed. In the initial phase, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with 15–20 female workers utilizing purposive sampling to encompass a range of ages, marital statuses, and migration backgrounds. Two focus group discussions will further investigate collective strategies and group-level dynamics. Data will be analyzed through Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework to discern patterns that connect SI to WLB. In the subsequent phase, a pilot survey involving 40–50 respondents will evaluate the feasibility of two adapted measurement scales: the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (Silvera et al., 2001) and selected items from Udai Pareek's WLB scale. These instruments have been selected for their relevance within Indian and cross-cultural contexts, as well as their emphasis on behavioral and perceptual dimensions. Surveys will be administered orally in Odia. Descriptive statistics, Spearman's rank





correlation, and Cronbach's alpha will be utilized to assess internal consistency and investigate associations. By centering the experiences of women construction workers in Bhubaneswar, this study expands the discourse surrounding WLB and positions social intelligence as a crucial, adaptable resource in informal work environments. The findings aspire to inform context-sensitive interventions by non-governmental organizations and urban labor welfare stakeholders.





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GREEN COMPUTING IN THE AGE OF AI: SUSTAINABLE IT PRACTICES FOR A DIGITAL FUTURE

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Abstract

Green computing refers to the design, development, and utilization of technology in an environmentally sustainable manner without compromising system performance. As technological advancements continue to transform industries and daily life, concerns regarding energy consumption and carbon emissions have become increasingly significant. This research investigates the role of sustainable IT practices, including green computing and the integration of big data technologies, in promoting environmental stewardship. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and quantitative analysis, the study demonstrates that green computing strategies not only reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption but also enhance system efficiency and extend the operational lifespan of IT infrastructure. Despite challenges such as initial capital investment and the requirement for specialized expertise, the findings highlight substantial long-term benefits, including cost savings, improved operational performance, and contributions to global environmental sustainability initiatives. Integrating green computing practices within organizational technology frameworks represents a critical step toward achieving corporate social responsibility goals and fostering a more sustainable future





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INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT IN MID-CAP RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR: EXAMINING THE INTERPLAY OF PROMOTER OWNERSHIP, GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS, AND REGULATORY CHANGE

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Abstract

Institutional investors play an important role in India's economy by deepening market liquidity, improving corporate governance, and steering long-term capital into vital areas like infrastructure and renewable energy. Their expanding presence helps strengthen financial stability, support economic growth, and align investments with sustainability goals. This paper examines how promoter ownership, board governance, and regulatory changes together shape institutional investment in India's mid-cap renewable energy space. As India advances its clean energy agenda, mid-sized renewable firms have emerged as key contributors, blending rapid expansion with closer scrutiny from investors who expect strong governance and transparent ESG practices. Despite this, little research has looked at how promoter control and board independence interact with evolving green policies to influence institutional confidence. Using panel data for selected mid-cap renewable firms, this study applies Granger causality tests, impulse response analysis, and variance decomposition to map how these factors affect institutional shareholding over time. The findings show that balanced promoter stakes, effective boards, and clear policies can attract and retain institutional capital, offering practical lessons for promoters, investors, and regulators alike.





DOES OWNERSHIP CONCENTRATION DRIVE RESIGNATION OF INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS? ROLE OF FIRM LIFE CYCLE

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Abstract

In emerging markets characterized by underdeveloped legal systems and weak investor protection, the role of independent directors is crucial in corporate governance. Independent directors safeguard the interest of minority shareholders and facilitate the monitoring of insiders. Furthermore, Independent directors are required to provide independent judgment without being influenced by extraneous considerations, and reduce agency costs. The presence of significant controlling shareholding makes India different from western economies. Despite their critical role, there has been a noticeable increase in the voluntary resignations of independent directors in India over time. This points out concerns regarding the factors driving such decisions by independent directors. Hence, there is a need for examining the rationale behind the growing trend of resignations by independent directors, particularly in the context of promoter-dominated firms in emerging markets. Unlike other economies where control rights and cash flow rights are often separated via pyramidal structures and cross-holdings, Indian firms typically demonstrate high levels of direct founder ownership, averaging 55%. This study examines the resignation of independent directors in Indian firms with respect to levels of promoter ownership with respect to levels of promoter ownership, focusing on impact firm life cycle on this relationship. . Using panel data of all NSE-listed non-financial firms over a period of 19 years (2005–2023), we unveil a significant U-shaped relationship between promoter ownership and resignation by independent directors. Specifically, promoter ownership below 50% has negative association with Independent Directors' resignation beyond 50% promoter ownership beyond 50% is positively associated with Independent Directors' resignation, as at higher levels of promoter ownership experiences agency conflicts resulting from promoters' control over firm decisions. The result from panel regression is consistent with the *alignment effect* under agency theory, below a level of absolute control (less than 50%) by promoters holding exhibit negative association with independent director's turnover. Once the promoter attains control over firm (greater than 50%), they began to expose *entrenchment effect*. Specifically, promoter ownership beyond 50% is positively associated with independent directors' resignation, as higher ownership concentration strengthens promoters' control over firm decisions. Owing to the fact that managerial discretion, information asymmetry, and external monitoring intensity vary across different firm life cycles, promoter's impact on board dynamics and how this impact acted upon by independent directors may vary. We find that relationship between promoter holding and Independent Director's turnover remains significant during introduction stage and maturity stage while account for firm life cycle. This provides that agency conflicts may differ according to the stage firm passes through. Propensity score matching and additional robustness analyses support the robustness of our findings. The study adopts multi-method econometric strategy to investigate the relationship between promoter ownership and independent Directors' resignation. To ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, we





performed robustness checks using Logit Regression Model, Probit Regression Model, Linear Probability Model, GMM Model and PSM. Our findings provide empirical evidence on some motives driving ID resignation in emerging market scenario.





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SYNERGIZING CAUSAL AND EFFECTUAL LOGIC IN SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE STORY OF SUNBIRD STRAWS

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Abstract

Environmental destruction and social disparities have led to increased attention towards a combined effort for entrepreneurs to recognize opportunities using socio-environmental metrics. Entrepreneurship commences with the recognition of opportunities, but how do entrepreneurs find and seize the opportunities which is a synergy of socio-environmental factors? This gave rise to sustainable entrepreneurship, it combines planned alliances (causal) with iterative community-based recycling prototypes (effectual), thereby discovering value in the ecosystem. Existing frameworks treat causal and effectual logics as separate. This paper explores how an early-stage sustainable entrepreneur, Prof. Saji Verghese of Bangalore-based Indian startup Sunbird Straws, integrates causal and effectual decision-making logics during the opportunity recognition phase using the framework of Baron (2006).

The aim is to bridge the theoretical gap in understanding how sustainability-driven ventures identify opportunities that address economic, social, and environmental goals using causal-effectual logics. A qualitative, single-case research design was employed with in-depth interviews with the founders and secondary data analysis. Thematic analysis grounded in Baron's (2006) pattern recognition framework was used to identify how active search, alertness, and prior knowledge interact with causal and effectual logics in opportunity recognition.

Findings reveal that the founder blended goal-driven (causal) and means-driven (effectual) strategies. Structured environmental scanning, serendipitous material discovery, pre-social need awareness, and iterative experimentation coalesced to innovate a biodegradable straw from coconut waste. The opportunity emerged through deliberate problem framing, and heuristic sensitivity to environmental cues, grounded in prior social exposure.

This study contributes to decision-making logics, and their combination for inclusive and scalable sustainability-driven innovations in resource-constrained settings.





FOSTERING DIGITAL TRUST AND CONSUMER WELL-BEING: A CUSTOMER LOYALTY FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL IMPACT IN ONLINE SHOPPING

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of e-commerce has significantly transformed the global retail landscape, offering exceptional convenience and variety. However, this digital transformation also introduces significant societal challenges, including concerns about consumer trust, data security, equitable access, and the potential for unmet expectations to erode public confidence in digital platforms. These issues can disproportionately affect vulnerable consumers, exacerbate digital divides, and hinder the growth of an inclusive and trustworthy digital economy. Addressing these problems through rigorous management research is vital for fostering positive social change. This study aims to develop a comprehensive customer loyalty framework for online shopping that extends beyond traditional business metrics, explicitly examining its impact on consumer well-being and digital trust, to contribute to the creation of a fairer and more sustainable digital marketplace.

This study builds on an integrated theoretical base, combining Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), SERVQUAL, and Perceived Value Theory (PVT) to thoroughly evaluate the factors influencing consumer behavior in online settings. A quantitative approach was employed, using a structured questionnaire to collect primary data from 338 online shoppers in India. Although the sample consisted of 77.5% males and 94.4% aged 20-39, it provided meaningful insights. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, reliability checks (Cronbach's Alpha between 0.90 and 0.94; composite reliability from 0.89 to 0.95), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with good model-fit indices (e.g., CFI=0.981, RMSEA=0.076), and structural equation modeling (SEM) to test hypotheses and explore the links among service quality, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived value, customer satisfaction, and loyalty.

The empirical results highlight several key relationships vital for encouraging social impact. Service quality ($\beta = 0.288$, $p < 0.01$), perceived ease of use ($\beta = 0.636$, $p < 0.001$), and perceived value ($\beta = 0.093$, $p < 0.01$) all significantly positively influence customer satisfaction in online shopping. Among these, perceived ease of use stands out as the strongest predictor, underscoring the societal importance of intuitive and accessible digital interfaces that minimize barriers for diverse users, including those with varying levels of digital literacy. Although perceived usefulness did not show a direct, statistically significant effect on satisfaction ($\beta = -0.01$, $p = 0.883$), its indirect effects through other factors warrant further exploration. The study confirms that customer satisfaction has a substantial impact on customer loyalty ($\beta = 0.921$, $p < 0.001$). From a social impact perspective, fostering loyalty through high-quality





service, ease of use, and perceived value boosts consumer confidence, reduces digital anxiety, and promotes a trustworthy online environment. This, in turn, strengthens the resilience of the digital economy by encouraging sustained engagement and decreasing risks associated with dissatisfaction and customer churn.

This framework provides valuable insights for both policymakers and e-commerce firms to enhance social impact. It highlights the need for user-friendly, secure, and transparent digital standards to create an inclusive online environment. For businesses, it emphasizes strategies that foster trust and perceived value, helping to reduce digital exclusion and promote sustained consumer engagement.





PATHWAYS OF STAKEHOLDERS' ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FOR SHAPING PROACTIVE CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES IN EMERGING MARKETS

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Abstract

Background: The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Risks Report 2025, based on the opinions of 1,500 top leaders highlighted that five out of the top ten global risks affecting businesses and society over the next decade are linked to environmental issues. Thus, the growing environmental grand challenges have necessitated the proactive environmental engagement by the firms of all sizes, sectors and geographies.

Purpose: The main objective of the present study is to explicate the underlying processes and mechanisms in shaping the firm's adoption of proactive environmental strategies (PES) in the context of the emerging markets. The overarching motivation for this research is to gain deeper insight into the factors influencing the proactive corporate environmental behaviour.

Methodology: A qualitative exploratory study was carried out using in-depth semi-structured interviews from senior executives of 28 firms in India. In order to explore the phenomenon, India was chosen as a context as it represents one of the fastest growing economies of the world, with an ambitious target of becoming net zero by the year 2070.

Findings: Our findings offer a novel conceptual framework on "pathways of stakeholders environmental influences". It proposes that the firm's degree of environmental proactiveness depends upon both the external (stakeholders environmental influences) and internal (top managerial environmental characteristics and green dynamic capabilities) factors. We also identified the key influencing mechanisms including penalizing ('stick'), incentivizing ('carrot') and facilitating ('nudge') mechanisms that are effective in shaping the firm's adoption of PES.

Contributions: We integrate perspectives from the literature on stakeholder theory and institutional theory to propose that the firm's degree of environmental proactiveness depends not only upon the sources (i.e. 'who' is exerting the influence) but also upon the types (i.e. 'what' kind of an influence is being exerted) and mechanisms (i.e. 'how' is the influence being perceived) of stakeholder's environmental influence. We also contribute to the upper echelon theory by arguing that the relationship between the stakeholders' environmental demands and the firm's adoption of PES is contingent upon the top managerial environmental characteristics.

Implications: The perspectives on PES developed in this research would help the managers in formulating effective strategies for managing the adverse environmental impacts of firm. Furthermore, it provides





novel insights to policymakers in accelerating the mainstreaming of environmental sustainability in the emerging economies context. The paper thus advances the current state of knowledge on the sustainable development goals such as the SDG 12 (Responsible Production & Consumption) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Originality/value: This study advances the theoretical conversation in the strategy area at the interface of organisations and the natural environment domain. It offers a novel conceptual framework on “pathways of stakeholders’ influences” that delineates the effective combinations of various sources, types and mechanisms of stakeholders' influences in shaping a firm’s proactive environmental behaviour.





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THE ROLE OF DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE FINTECH INDUSTRY IN INDIA

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Abstract

There is a digital revolution, and with the widespread use of digital technology applications, India's financial infrastructure has been transformed through innovations in payment systems (Panagariya, 2022). The businesses or startups that use cutting-edge technologies to offer innovative financial services are called financial technology (Fintech) (InsurWiz Blog, 2024). Financial technology has reshaped the financial system and financial services delivery and enhanced firms' growth (Zhou & Li, 2024). Fintech innovations happen through the interplay between Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), institutional arrangements, and policy initiatives (Das, 2023). DPI consists of digital identities, digital payments and data exchange and is required for all nations to participate in society and markets in the modernised digital world (50-in-5, 2024). As a global leader in digital payments, India has been rapidly adopting digital transactions across different sectors of financial ecosystems. Nevertheless, this Rapid growth in digital payments also gave rise to digital financial frauds of Rupees 4,245 crores within April 2024 up to January 2025, which was Rupees 2,534 crores for the 2022-2023 fiscal year (Reuters, 2025). As the Financial Services sector advances technological innovations, financial fraud in India is also rising, with scammers employing deceptive tactics to obtain sensitive information and money from individuals (Ministry of Finance, 2024).

This research aims to study the role of 'digital public infrastructure' in India's 'fintech industry' to find out how "India Stack" contributes to the growth of fintech and banks by considering the opportunities and challenges of digital public infrastructure and to understand financial fraud because of the integration of DPI with the fintech industry. Data about the variables required for data analysis can be collected using Reports on the trend and progress of Banking in India, as well as Reports on Digital Lending and Investments from the RBI database and UPI product statistics of NPCI. Multiple linear regression can be utilised to determine the results. With the utilisation of digital public infrastructure platforms and their integration into fintech and banks, India plans to have full digital inclusion, effective transaction systems and integration of health, education, tourism, e-commerce, etc., in one platform. Regulatory bodies and financial institutions should adopt digital financial fraud management mechanisms.





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UNPACKING THE CHALLENGES AND CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS IN CIRCULAR SOCIAL INNOVATION: A STAGE-BASED QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

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Abstract

Purpose: Circular social innovation (CSI), which combines the circular economy and social value creation, has attracted considerable attention because of its ability to address intricate sustainability challenges. However, existing literature offers poor insight into the distinct challenges and critical success factors (CSFs) social enterprises embarking on CSI experience at different phases of their diffusion process. This study attempts to explore stage-specific challenges and CSFs experienced by CSI projects at the initiation, implementation, and scaling phases.

Design/methodology/approach: The study adopts a qualitative approach based on semi-structured interviews of co-founders of social enterprises engaged in pursuing circular economy objectives. The data were interpreted on a thematic level in the identification of patterns of enablers and barriers in the three innovation stages. From the analysis, the framework proposed methodically charts the most prominent issues and CSFs for the CSI process stage by stage.

Findings: The research reveals that CSI enterprises are faced with a unique set of challenges in every stage of their development. In the initiation stage, most common challenges experienced are the lack of ecosystem support, limited seed funding access, and failure to align circular goals with local social imperatives. The implementation stage is characterized by operational complexity, technological limitations, and resistance from stakeholders. In the scaling stage, companies are confronted with regulatory hurdles, upholding mission integrity, and access to growth capital. Corresponding CSFs are strong founder vision, cross-sectoral collaboration, adaptive capacities, and community engagement strategies. The resultant framework depicts the dynamic interaction of these factors and presents a structured lens for the understanding of the development of CSI initiatives.

Originality/Value: The research contributes to circular innovation research by suggesting a multifaceted, step-by-step explanation of the way CSI projects are influenced by certain contextual and strategic determinants. It suggests an empirically informed approach to guiding practitioners and policymakers toward the design of targeted support interventions aimed at improving the effectiveness and scalability of circular social innovation. Through the mapping of stage-specific challenges and enablers, the research develops a practical and theoretical understanding of the CSI process.





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FROM SUPPORT TO STRESS: THE DUAL ROLE OF AI IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence which is popularly referred as AI has witnessed a rapid growth in the number of users globally across industries; especially during and after the Covid-19 pandemic (statistics report). Subsequently, AI and AI powered tools are becoming an integral part of the teaching pedagogy in higher education, due to its features of personalized learning, faster solution to problems, and minimized workload for academics in terms of conducting various assessments (Chiu et al., 2021; Dai, Lai, Lim, & Liu, 2023). However, despite the merits of AI driven tools and their potential to enhance learning experiences, integrating them into the higher education system poses enormous challenges before the higher education professionals and university management (Kohnke & Ulla, 2024; Dai, Lai, Lim & Liu, 2024). Researchers have given insights from various studies that adoption of AI tools as a new mandatory practice by universities and including them in the teaching pedagogy is likely to build “technostress” amongst educators (Lai & Tu, 2024; Chiu, 2024; Kohnke, Zou, & Moorhouse, 2024). Despite a few studies examining technostress amongst educators, hardly any study has attempted to explore the AI induced technostress among higher education professionals. This study will open avenues to delve deeper into understanding the aspects that lead to developing technostress among higher education professionals.





"ACCELERATING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: EMPIRICAL INSIGHTS FROM DELHI BANKS"

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Abstract

In today's dynamic and competitive environment, managing organizational change effectively is critical for sustaining growth and achieving operational excellence. The banking sector, often seen as the backbone of economic stability, has faced transformative pressures driven by technological advances, evolving regulations, and rising customer expectations. This study explores the critical determinants of successful change management in Indian banks, with a focus on institutions in Delhi.

Grounded in theoretical foundations such as Lewin's change model and Kotter's eight-step framework, this research examines the roles of leadership, management support, internal communication, employee involvement, and training & development as key drivers of effective change. Resistance to change—rooted in fear of the unknown, lack of trust, and inadequate communication—emerges as a major barrier. Addressing these challenges requires proactive leadership, transparent communication, and strategic engagement of employees to build readiness and trust.

Adopting a descriptive-cum-analytical research design, the study used a quantitative approach to collect primary data from 412 respondents (branch managers and assistant branch managers in Delhi) through a structured 35-item questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. A respondent-driven sampling method, integrating snowball and stratified sampling techniques, ensured diverse representation.

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SMART PLS 4.0 enabled robust analysis of relationships among constructs. Findings confirm that leadership significantly impacts employee involvement and training & development, which in turn act as mediators enhancing the success of organizational change. Additionally, management support and internal communication were found to positively influence these mediators, underscoring the importance of a cohesive approach.

Empirical results reveal that leadership, management support, and internal communication explain approximately 53.4% of the variance in effective organizational change outcomes. Hypotheses testing further validates the strong, positive relationships among these variables, emphasizing their central role in facilitating successful change.

The study contributes valuable insights for academics and practitioners by presenting an empirically validated *model* specifically tailored for the banking sector's evolving challenges, especially in the post-COVID-19 context marked by rapid digitalization and operational shifts. By highlighting training & development as a critical mediating factor, the research emphasizes continuous learning and capacity building as essential strategies for smooth transitions.





In conclusion, managing change is not merely a strategic requirement but a comprehensive process demanding active leadership, clear and consistent communication, and inclusive employee engagement. By fostering a culture of openness, trust, and continuous upskilling, banks can effectively navigate transformation and ensure long-term resilience.





ENHANCING THE CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIOR THROUGH AUGMENTED REALITY: A S-O-R MODEL WITH SOCIAL PRESENCE AS A MODERATOR

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine how technology-enhanced social atmospherics (TESAs) offered by augmented reality (AR) affect customer engagement behavior (CEB) in the retail environment. The study examines how emotional responses, and virtual influencers modulate the relationship between TESAs and engagement, with a foundation in the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework. The study also focuses on the moderating effect of social presence, or how much users experience a human connection when interacting with AR systems. The study offers socially significant perspective on how immersive technology can promote more profound and inclusive consumer experiences.

Design/methodology/approach: The study has adopted quantitative research design. Data has been collected through survey using a structured questionnaire from 450 consumers who have interacted with AR-based features in offline or online mode and hypothesis were developed. To measure the constructs, scales that were previously validated and modified for the AR context. Further, to analyze the relationships among the variables—TESAs, emotional responses, virtual influencers, and customer engagement behavior, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used, and the impact of social presence was examined using moderation analysis.

Findings: The findings of the study shows that technology-enhanced social atmospherics (TESAs) have a significant and positive impact on emotional responses and perceptions of virtual influencers. Both emotional responses and virtual influencers are found to be strong predictors of customer engagement behavior. Furthermore, the moderating effect of social presence is confirmed when perceived social presence is high, the influence of emotional responses and virtual influencers on customer engagement becomes significantly stronger. These findings highlight the value of social connectivity and human-like cues in augmenting technology-driven experiences, and they also support the use of the S-O-R framework in immersive retail settings.

Originality: With a special emphasis on the social and emotional aspects of the consumer experience, this study adds to the expanding corpus of research on immersive technology in retail. The model is the first to incorporate technology into various social atmospherics and employs social presence as a new moderator. Although the practical advantages of AR have been highlighted in earlier research, this study turns the focus to social impact and emphasizes how consumer behavior is influenced by emotional engagement and experienced interpersonal presence. The classic S-O-R paradigm is made more innovative by the addition of social presence and virtual influencers as crucial elements. Additionally, the study has significant implications for retailers, marketers, and technology designers who want to develop





emotionally intelligent and socially conscious brand experiences by taking into account AR technologies as facilitators of engaging and socially inclusive environments.





SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN EMERGING MARKETS: TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

While emerging markets are increasingly focusing on sustainable entrepreneurship, not much is known about the trends, challenges, and policies in place that impact entrepreneurial activity in these areas. The combined application of sustainability with entrepreneurship is faced with numerous barriers, including limited availability of resources, regulatory hurdles, and infrastructural voids. The objective of this paper is to bridge this gap by conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on the identifiable trends in sustainable entrepreneurship, analyzing the challenges encountered in these markets, and evaluating the sustainable entrepreneurship policies in force. Following PRISMA guidelines, this study conducted a thematic literature analysis from 2021-2025. This research is based on articles obtained from Scopus and Web of Science using a targeted search strategy based on key terms including digital transformation, circular economy, and policy frameworks. Four major finding trends emerged: the integration of digital and Industry 4.0 technologies and their sustenance, the adoption of circular economy, supporting institutional frameworks to sustainable entrepreneurship, and the development of green and social innovations in developing countries.

Moreover, the research describes a lack of inclusivity and support for women, digital entrepreneurship, and inadequate governance as critical resource access barriers in rural areas. There is also an absence of low-income longitudinal studies which this research seeks to address. This study proposes multi-level policy changes focused on green financing and multi-stakeholder collaboration as a way to enable sustainable entrepreneurial ventures. It further suggests the integration of Dynamic Capabilities and the TOE (Technology-Organization-Environment) Framework as an advance towards improving the gaps identified, thereby providing critical insight and practical proposals to the entrepreneurial, academic, and policy-making communities aiming to bridge sustainable development and entrepreneurial undertakings.





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DOES INVESTOR ENGAGEMENT MATTER FOR FOLLOW-ON SEED FUNDING? EVIDENCE FROM EARLY-STAGE INDIAN TECH STARTUPS

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Abstract

In recent years, India has witnessed a significant surge in tech-based startups. With the introduction of the Digital India programme (2014) and Startup India Scheme (2016), the ecosystem has become more vibrant for entrepreneurs. Tech startups not only are the backbone of a country's innovation landscape but also serve as a powerful engine of economic growth. However, beneath this glittering surface lies a harsh reality: a significant number of Indian startups die during the early stage due to a lack of funding. Considering the early seed stage in the lifecycle of tech startups, we analyse a sample of 75 startups that are just one year old, utilising OLS regression, to understand whether the higher investors' engagement ratio influences startups' seed funding. We find out that investors' engagement has a positive impact on the total seed amount received during the early seed stage (P value= 0.01, Coefficient= 0.534). In addition, startups located in startup hubs (Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune) (P value= 0.02, Coefficient= 0.733) and startups that receive support from incubation or acceleration (P value= 0.05, Coefficient= -1.52) significantly influence the seed funding. The present study contributes to the understanding of early capital structure formation by focusing on the importance of investors' engagement.





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THE ECONOMICS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT: EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF DDU-GKY ON RURAL EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS IN JHARKHAND

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Abstract

India's demographic dividend presents both a challenge and an opportunity, particularly in rural states like Jharkhand, where unemployment and skill mismatches hinder economic development. The Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) is a flagship initiative under the Ministry of Rural Development aimed at skilling rural youth and providing them with wage-employment opportunities. This research paper examines the economic impact of DDU-GKY on rural employment and livelihoods in Jharkhand, based on a comprehensive analysis of secondary data from official sources including MoRD, JSLPS, NIRDPR, and the DDU-GKY MIS portal. The study explores trends in training enrollment, placement outcomes, and sectoral distribution of employment in Jharkhand over recent years, while comparing its performance with national benchmarks. It further investigates the program's alignment with local labor market needs and identifies persistent challenges such as skill-job mismatches, low retention rates, and regional disparities in access. The expected outcome of the study is to provide an evidence-based evaluation of whether DDU-GKY has led to sustainable livelihood enhancement in the state and to offer policy recommendations for strengthening the link between skill development and rural economic resilience.

This paper contributes to the broader discourse on inclusive growth, youth employability, and the efficacy of government interventions in skill-building through a state-focused economic lens.





ECO-TOURISM GOVERNANCE IN INDIA: INSIGHTS FOR POLICY STRENGTHENING AND SUSTAINABILITY- A SCOPING REVIEW

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Abstract

As mass tourism contributes to increased environmental degradation and the effects of climate change, eco-tourism is socially recognized as a key strategy for promoting sustainability and safeguarding the natural ecosystems. This research is important for enabling visitor management strategies structured to sustain ecological diversity, cultural heritage, multilingual traditions, and their communities. State governments have developed eco-tourism policies, each designed to reflect regional sustainability goals in line with the Sustainable Development Agenda of 2030. However, the effectiveness of these eco-tourism policies depends on the policies, guidelines, regulatory frameworks, and mechanisms established by the government. The review conducted across Indian states acknowledges the significance of eco-tourism policy for long-term ecological and socio-economic growth. Despite this, only a select few have successfully implemented a formal, standalone eco-tourism policy. As of 2025, out of 28 states and 8 Union Territories, only 18 states have their own formal, standalone eco-tourism policies.

To provide evidence-based recommendations, the study employed a scoping review methodology to examine eco-tourism policies across Indian States. This methodological framework was proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and further refined by 6 key steps by Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI). Guided by the C-I-M-O framework, this approach identifies the relevant research question and systematically structures the research problem. Academic databases like SCOPUS, Web of Science, PUB Med, and ProQuest were searched using keywords combined with the Boolean operators "AND" and "OR". As most tourism policies from different Indian states are available on government websites, we utilized Google to make sure we included all of them in our review. Rayyan Software, an AI-based tool used for the reviewing process, where all the articles related to eco-tourism policies were imported to Rayyan Software for duplication removal and blinded screening of titles and abstracts based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Conflicts of opinion were resolved through discussion in the presence of the team, and the full screening was carried out. Post-screening data were extracted using a standardized charting form, and a descriptive synthesis was conducted. As we notice, there is a paucity in such research that creates an urgency to strengthen and redefine eco-tourism policies contributing to the Sustainable Goals to protect from over tourism and design visitor management strategies to protect the environment. Such research will provide deep insights into the practical challenges and opportunities within ecotourism governance, allowing policymakers to make informed decisions that balance environmental conservation, community development, and eco-tourism growth.





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BEYOND SPEED: UNDERSTANDING SEGMENT-SPECIFIC SERVICE EXPECTATIONS IN INDIA'S Q-COMMERCE ECOSYSTEM

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of quick commerce (Q-commerce), particularly in food and grocery delivery, is reshaping last-mile consumer expectations across urban India. With its promise of ultra-fast fulfilment, Q-commerce platforms are racing to meet rising consumer demands for convenience, reliability, and responsiveness. However, this accelerated pace often comes at the cost of service consistency, exposing gaps that are not uniformly experienced or valued by all consumers. Despite increased investments in digital infrastructure and operations, persistent dissatisfaction signals a need to examine the heterogeneity in service expectations and the asymmetric impact of service lapses across consumer segments.

This study is positioned at the intersection of three critical realities: not all service gaps affect all consumers equally, distinct consumer segments prioritize different service elements, and strategic alignment between service design and segment needs is crucial for long-term competitiveness. Accordingly, the aim of our study is to establish a consumer- strategy fit framework for quick commerce firms.

To answer this, we adopt a three-stage mixed-methods research design combining inductive and deductive approaches. The first stage involves a thematic analysis of over 500 user-generated reviews across two leading Q-commerce apps in India. These reviews, drawn from both food and grocery delivery contexts, are coded to uncover service-related themes—both pain points and satisfaction drivers. By mapping these themes to established service quality dimensions while allowing room for emergent categories, we build an inductive understanding of perceived service gaps.

In the second stage, we conduct semi-structured interviews with active Q-commerce users in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities. These interviews aim to explore how consumer expectations, tolerance thresholds, and value perceptions differ across usage contexts and demographic profiles. Together, the qualitative phases surface a typology of service gaps and offer preliminary cues about which gaps matter more to whom.

The third stage operationalizes these insights through a quantitative survey-based study, enabling empirical validation. Using structural equation modelling and necessary condition analysis (NCA), we test the relationship between identified service gaps, consumer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions across distinct consumer segments. This allows us to establish necessary and sufficient conditions under which specific service improvements drive outcomes within each segment.

The managerial contribution of this research is a strategy-fit framework for Q-commerce firms to allocate resources more efficiently by aligning service interventions with segment-specific expectations. Rather





than pursuing blanket service excellence, firms can adopt targeted service strategies—improving consumer satisfaction, reducing inefficiencies, and enhancing competitiveness in a saturated, time-sensitive market.





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VALUE OF CORPORATE CASH HOLDINGS AND OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

The corporate cash holding around the world is drawing the attention of media, researchers and policymakers as high corporate cash holding is becoming a global matter of concern. The high corporate cash holding is explained in the literature by precautionary motive, transaction motive, tax motive and agency motive. However, apart from these motives, there are three theories that explain the reasons of high corporate cash holdings. These theories are trade-off theory, pecking order theory or financing hierarchy theory and agency theory.

The literature on cash holdings suggests that the contribution of cash holdings towards firm value depends on the cost and benefit analysis of cash holdings. The value assigned to cash holdings by investors reflects the perceived value of cash management of the firm (Pinkowitz and Williamson, 2007). The value of cash holdings also depends on the organizational structure of a firm. For example, if the firm is affiliated to a business group and has excess cash then investors assign a positive value to the cash holdings as group affiliated firms have benefits of internal capital market and group guarantee. However, there is also a risk of expropriation of excess cash if agency problem prevails in the group. In such case, there will be negative value created from cash holdings. Similarly, if the controlling shareholdings and family ownership reflect agency problem then also there will be negative value created from cash holdings. On the other hand, they show alignment of their interests with minority shareholders and create wealth for all the shareholders and therefore there will be a positive value of cash holdings.

Using all the Indian listed firms from 2000 to 2024, we examine the value of cash holdings and find that there is the negative value of cash holdings. we examine the value of cash holdings in the fourth objective and find that there is the negative value of cash holdings. It shows that excess cash reduces the firm value and thus we can say that there is negative value of cash holdings. Interestingly, we find that business group affiliated firms and institutional holdings with excess cash add value to firm as there is positive and significant relationship between interaction effect of excess cash with business group dummy and institutional ownership. It outlines one important finding of our study that even though business groups and institutional ownership is involved in tunneling, the excess cash is valued positively. It shows that excess cash reduces the firm value and thus we can say that there is negative value of cash holdings. Interestingly, we find that business group affiliated firms and institutional holdings with excess cash add value to firm as there is positive and significant relationship between interaction effect of excess cash with business group dummy and institutional ownership. It outlines one important finding of our study that even though business groups and institutional ownership is involved in tunneling, the excess cash is valued positively.





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ELECTRIC MOBILITY AND STRATEGIC DIVERGENCE: INSIGHTS FROM INDIAN TWO-WHEELER EV MANUFACTURERS

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Abstract

The electric vehicle (EV) sector in India is a dynamic sector that gained prominence with the support of government policies (Abdul-Manan et al., 2022). The deliberate policy push enabled not only traditional automobile manufacturers but also startups to enter the EV sector. In the early 2000, the onus of critical infrastructure development was upon veteran industry leaders or the multinational corporations (MNCs) (Saxenian, 2002). But post 2015, due to policy push and development of an entrepreneurship ecosystem, the startups started taking up an active role in technology development (Mitra et al., 2022). This shift has been possible because of collaborative partnerships for technology development and innovation (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorf, 2000; Lundvall, 1992). The EV sector is also a technology-centric domain that has seen participation from both traditional automakers and startups, leveraging ecosystem collaborations. This paper is a comparative study between traditional automobile manufacturers who have entered the EV sector and newly established EV startups. Traditional manufacturers who enter the EV space have a competitive advantage by virtue of their prior presence in the automobile sector, whereas for a startup, it is a completely new process of establishment. Given the difference, the comparison in this paper is done based on (i) the locus of supply chain and (ii) the ownership of the charging infrastructure. The methodology is a case-based secondary research analysis of 2-wheeler EVs in India between the traditional automakers and the startups. The data is collected from secondary sources, including government reports, newspaper articles, company websites, and press releases. To ensure reliability and validity, the data was also triangulated across multiple data sources including primary interviews. The objective is to find out the differences in operational strategies related to (i) supply chain and (ii) ownership of charging infrastructure between the traditional manufacturers and startups in the EV sector. The findings of the paper reveal the differences in the operational strategies between the two entities. In terms of supply chain, the traditional automobile manufacturers rely on international supply chains for making their EVs technologically competitive, whereas the startups go for localization and a cluster-based development. In terms of EV enablers like the charging infrastructure, the traditional automakers establish their own charging infrastructure, whereas the startups leverage the charging support service through partnerships with other startups or service providers. These agile strategies adopted by the EV startups enable them to remain in business in a capital-intensive sector. The merit of the paper lies in the aspect of collaborative approach to technology development and innovation by startups as well as traditional automakers, which is a departure from an earlier trend of MNC-dependent technology development.





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THE EFFECT OF JOB STRESS ON EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND JOB PERFORMANCE: A STUDY AMONG AIRPORT EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

In the fast-paced and high-pressure environment of airport operations, employees are frequently exposed to significant job-related stress. This study explores the relationship between job stress, employee satisfaction, and job performance among airport employees, recognizing that the aviation sector. This paper investigates the impact of job-related stress on Job Satisfaction and job performance of employees working in Airports and, subsequently, how both stress and satisfaction affect job performance. This study employs a quantitative research methodology using a structured questionnaire distributed among a sample of airport employees from various departments at selected airports in India. The questionnaire measures variables such as workload, time pressure, role ambiguity, work-life balance, organizational support, and their relationship with employee satisfaction and job performance. Data analysis is conducted using statistical tools including correlation analysis and structural equation modelling (SEM) to test the strength and direction of the relationships among variables. Drawing on a sample of 371 airport employees in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, we examined the degree to which stressors such as conflict, workload, interpersonal relationships, career development, information access and feedback influence job satisfaction aspects such as physical environment, career opportunities, management style, job enrichment, rewards and job security.

The findings of the study reveal that job stress has a significant negative impact on both employee satisfaction and job performance. High levels of work-related stress - stemming from extended shifts, irregular work hours, role conflict, and passenger-related challenges - contribute to emotional exhaustion, decreased morale, and reduced engagement at work. Conversely, employees who report higher job satisfaction exhibit better performance, greater motivation, and stronger commitment to their roles. Moreover, the study identifies employee satisfaction as a partial mediator in the relationship between job stress and job performance, indicating that reducing stress can indirectly improve performance by enhancing satisfaction. The implications of the study are significant for airport management and human resource professionals. Reducing job stress through proactive strategies not only fosters a healthier work environment but also boosts employee satisfaction and enhances overall job performance, which is vital for customer service quality and safety in aviation. The study recommends implementing stress management workshops, promoting work-life balance, providing regular feedback, and recognizing employee achievements to foster a supportive work culture. Thus, this study suggests the organization to perform a proper stress management as a solution to work stress by implementing flexible working hours and holding discussion forums and meetings between employees. Therefore, employees will be more motivated to improve work productivity.





DOES FINANCIAL STRENGTH DRIVE SUSTAINABILITY IN EMERGING MARKETS?

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Abstract

Introduction: Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria have become integral to contemporary corporate strategy, as firms increasingly strive to balance growth objectives with sustainability commitments. While prior research has extensively examined the impact of ESG orientation on firm performance, an emerging body of literature highlights the potential for reverse causality, suggesting that a firm's financial health may influence ESG adoption. This study explores the relationship between financial performance and ESG orientation in Brazil, China, and South Africa (BRICS members, excluding India and Russia) during 2021–2023. The findings emphasize the critical role of financial resources to firms' contributions toward sustainable development.

Literature Review: Building on Dunning's (1979) Investment Development Path, this study frames ESG investment as reflective of a firm's stage within economic and institutional development. Literature on the ESG–performance relationship remains contested—some studies highlight value creation and stakeholder gains, while others emphasize compliance costs and agency risks, especially in weaker regulatory environments (Khanra et al., 2022). Emerging research suggests a bidirectional link, where financial health both influences and is influenced by ESG engagement (Ahmad et al., 2024; Gaweda, 2025; Yang et al., 2024; Giuliani et al., 2023), reinforcing the importance of contextual and firm-specific factors in shaping sustainability strategies.

Research Design: The study focuses on those BRICS nations where consistent, comparable ESG and financial data are available. Panel data were extracted from Bloomberg for firms listed on Brazil's Ibovespa, China's FTSE A50, and South Africa's FTSE/JSE Top40 indices from fiscal years 2021–2023. Securities and Exchange Board of India limited the availability of ESG scores, while reliable data are unavailable from Russia following geopolitical disruptions. ESG orientation is represented by Bloomberg's ESG scores, and firm performance was captured financial indicators include Revenue, Return on Equity, Net Operating Profit After Taxes, and Total Assets. The analysis employs Ordinary Least Squares regression and ANOVA, controlling for country and temporal effects.

Data Analysis: Revenue growth is found positively associated with higher ESG scores, indicating firms with stronger financial performance tend to invest more in sustainability. In contrast, greater total assets are linked to lower ESG scores, revealing the implementation challenges that large, complex firms face. ANOVA shows that while year-to-year changes in ESG are statistically significant, cross-country differences are less pronounced—pointing to the salience of temporal shocks (e.g., COVID-19) for ESG





dynamics. Diagnostics confirm minimal multicollinearity among variables, though some residual non-normality persists.

Contribution: The results emphasize the mutual reinforcement of corporate financial health and ESG orientation in emerging markets. For policymakers and executives, findings advocate for incentives and regulatory mechanisms tailored by firm size and market context, fostering sustainable growth without overburdening large operations.





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DIGITAL ACCOUNTS AND HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL BEHAVIOR: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA'S JAM TRINITY

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Abstract

This paper investigates the impact of digital account ownership under India's JAM Trinity initiative—Jan Dhan Yojana (bank accounts), Aadhaar (digital identity), and mobile connectivity—on household financial behavior. Using publicly available secondary sources and a review of recent empirical literature from 2020–2025, this study evaluates how JAM-related digital inclusion effects saving habits, borrowing patterns, and formal financial access in India. Rather than relying on proprietary datasets, we synthesize findings across peer-reviewed research, policy evaluations, and nationally available data from sources such as Global Findex and NPCI reports etc. The review highlights consistent associations between JAM-enabled access and improvements in formal financial activity, especially among rural and low-income households. We identify critical research gaps, including the role of digital literacy and mobile phone mediation, and outline a future empirical research agenda. The study contributes to the discourse by organizing fragmented literature into a coherent narrative and suggesting testable hypotheses and models for future field-level research.





CORPORATE FINANCE, CAPITAL STRUCTURE, AND DIVIDEND POLICY: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF INTERRELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR IMPACT ON FIRMS' PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Corporate financial decisions such as capital structure and dividend policy have a direct impact on firms' performance and investors perception. Though several works have been carried out in developed markets, Indian firms operate under the influence of family ownership, market volatility, and evolving regulatory norms. The researcher took this as an opportunity to carry out the comprehensive empirical study and examine the impact of capital structure on firm performance, analyze how dividend policy influences shareholder value, explore the interdependence between capital structure and dividend policy, and provide a framework for empirical analysis of Indian firms using recent data. The study employs a quantitative, panel data-based approach, focusing on 300 non-financial NSE/BSE-listed firms over the period 2015–2025. This research employs econometric techniques, including fixed/random effects regression and robustness, and analyzes a few financial indicators, such as debt-equity ratios, dividend payout, ROA, and Tobin's Q.

This research is based on theories such as the trade-off, pecking order, and signaling theory. It studies implications of Dividend Distribution Tax (DDT) Reform in India for dividend strategies applied by the firms. This work analyzes the joint influence of capital structure and payout decisions in shaping the corporate outcomes in India and offers recommendations for corporate managers, investors, and policymakers. This research contributes to more informed financial strategy in an emerging Indian market by integrating theory, context, and methodology.





BEYOND THE BINARY: A HYBRID FRAMEWORK FOR STRATEGIC FIT IN EVOLVING SUPPLY CHAINS

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Abstract

In today's rapidly evolving markets, organizations are increasingly navigating a hybrid space where rigid strategic binaries-such as efficient versus responsive supply chains-no longer suffice. Classic frameworks like Fisher's (1997) strategic fit model categorize supply based on product type and responsiveness for innovative ones. While foundational, this dichotomy fails to reflect the hybrid operational realities by companies like Zara, IKEA, and Dell, which combine speed, modularity, and cost-effectiveness in dynamic ways.

To address this gap, this paper proposes a new theoretical contribution: the Sample-Catalogue Model. It reconceptualizes the supply chain fit spectrum by introducing a hybrid operational design. The model enables firms to maintain cost-efficiency through pre-manufactured standard 'samples', while simultaneously offering modular 'catalogue' components that allow for mass customization and postponement and downstream adaptability-bridging the traditional efficiency-responsiveness divide.

Rooted in the principles of postponement (Christopher & Towill, 2001), agile supply chains (Lee, 2002), modularity, this model responds to rising consumer expectations for personalization without inflating operational costs. Unlike existing hybrid strategies which often lean toward end of the spectrum, the Sample-Catalogue Model introduces a configurable midpoint-an actionable framework for firms aiming to balance lean operations with flexible delivery.

The academic contribution of this theory tries to take the existing supply chain strategy scholarship one step by one step further through studying and specifying hybrid strategies for design, testing, and scaling. In concurrence, it calls upon scholars to reexamine strategic fit considering current demands such as sustainability, hyper-personalization, and digital integration.

From a practical perspective, this model may be implemented in those companies operating in high-variety, semi-predictable industries-fashion, furniture, lifestyle electronics-where postponement and modular design can give greater accuracy to forecasts, lower inventory holding, and increase customer satisfaction. It also presents research opportunities in predictive supply chain modeling, digitally enabled customization interfaces, and cross-functional alignment between marketing, operations, and IT.

As with any other theoretical model, it does have its limitations, such as an increased level of complexity in modular design and supplier coordination; however, it provides a valuable avenue for strategic fit research. In that regard, this study is offered for empirical testing and further collaborative refinement and initiates a discussion concerning how 21st-century supply chains can be designed to prosper within





market complexity rather than merely respond to it.

IIII

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COFFEE TOURISM: GLOBAL EVIDENCE-BASED SCOPING REVIEW

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Abstract

Coffee tourism is increasingly recognized as an initiator for sustainable rural development, offering diverse opportunities to empower communities, diversify local economies, and promote responsible land use in coffee producing regions worldwide. An evidence-based study using the scoping review methodology was conducted to systematically map the literature and understand how coffee tourism plays its role in community development, to synthesize global research and practical experiences, and examine how coffee tourism initiatives intersect with community development across varying socio-economic and environmental contexts. This review highlights how community development through coffee tourism directly supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. By generating rural income, creating employment opportunities, and empowering local communities, coffee tourism helps promote sustainable livelihoods and inclusive economic growth in coffee-producing regions. Notable regions such as Latin America, Africa, and Asia, with their countries like Colombia, Ethiopia, and Vietnam, have developed innovative agro-tourism models that enhance entrepreneurship, cultural exchange, and environmental Management. However, the review also points out several challenges, such as a lack of skills and limited involvement of local residents in the planning and decision-making process. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) statement was used as a formal systematic review guideline for data collection. A systematic search was conducted using databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, and Lens.org, with inclusion of English-language filters to identify relevant literature published between 2000 and 2025. The review draws on peer-reviewed articles, case studies, and reports, and employs the Context, Interventions, Mechanisms, and Outcomes (CIMO) framework to structure and analyse its findings. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how coffee tourism interventions operate in various frameworks, the mechanisms driving outcomes, and the resulting impacts on community development. Rayyan software is used for the screening of the data extracted from the database. In the final review, 36 documents were included. The findings highlighted key gaps, effective practices, and strategic directions for leveraging coffee tourism as a tool for inclusive and sustainable community development. This study provided actionable recommendations for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to enhance community participation, equitable benefit-sharing, and environmental sustainability in coffee tourism, ultimately contributing to more resilient and growing rural communities globally.





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EMBEDDING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION INTO THE HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULA

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Abstract

Environmental education (EE) is increasingly recognized as essential for equipping students to address the escalating crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental injustice. In India, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 mandates the integrative inclusion of EE across grades VI–XII, signaling a transformative policy shift. Yet, implementation at the school level remains patchy and often superficial, hindered by persistent gaps between policy prescriptions and actual classroom practice. This study explores how Indian public and private high schools navigate the complexities of embedding EE within formal curricula, focusing on governance structures, strategic capacity-building, and pedagogical innovation.

The research investigates three core questions: (1) How do schools implement environmental-education policy reforms, and what organizational structures and processes facilitate or impede this agenda? (2) In what ways do schools build capacity—including human, material, and relational resources—for enacting EE? (3) How do variations in school capacity shape the selection and execution of pedagogical approaches for sustainability learning? By restricting the scope to Indian schools, the study aims for depth and practical significance while acknowledging the heterogeneity of the national education system.

These questions gain urgency in light of critical bottlenecks. Despite NEP 2020's mandates, the literature and global monitoring indicate that teacher confidence, resource availability, and robust accountability mechanisms are frequently lacking. Only a minority of teachers report feeling equipped to handle environmental content and facilitate experiential sustainability education. Infrastructure deficits and inconsistent access to teaching materials further frustrate implementation efforts, especially in less-advantaged settings. Meanwhile, international benchmarks like SDG 4.7 reveal persistent gaps in curriculum frameworks and tracking mechanisms.

The research draws from the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991) to analyze how schools' tangible and intangible assets—such as laboratories, teacher expertise, and dedicated committees—contribute to effective EE. Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997) is applied to understand how schools sense opportunities, mobilize internal and external resources, and adapt routines in response to evolving educational demands. Through these intertwined lenses, the study highlights how strategic governance and capacity-building translate broad environmental policy objectives into actionable school-level initiatives.

A mixed-methods approach anchors the methodology. The Delphi technique engages education experts in iterative rounds to elicit and prioritize actionable reforms, capacity-building practices, and pedagogical





strategies. Concurrently, a fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis is to be deployed mapping schools onto a 2x2 matrix, classifying them by resource profiles and enabling tailored recommendations. This study assumes importance in management literature as it fosters future generation with a sustainability mindset by exploring how environmental education in schools builds strategic, systems-thinking, and adaptive capacities for sustainable decision-making. This interdisciplinary investigation promises theoretical and practical insights for policymakers, educators, and researchers seeking to mainstream transformative EE amid pressing ecological imperatives.





THE FINTECH PARADOX IN INDIA: NAVIGATING HIGH ADOPTION IN A LOW FINANCIAL LITERACY LANDSCAPE

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Abstract

India is leading a global fintech revolution, with an adoption rate of 87% among its digitally active population. This sharply contrasts with the global average of 64% (EY, 2019; PwC India, 2023). This remarkable growth is fueled by the "India Stack," which includes key government-led digital initiatives: the universal identity system (Aadhaar), the Jan Dhan Yojana for financial inclusion, and the Unified Payments Interface (UPI). These initiatives have transformed real-time payments. The combination of the most affordable mobile data and quick smartphone adoption has made financial services accessible to many (Reserve Bank of India [RBI], 2024).

However, this technological progress highlights a serious issue: financial literacy (FL) rates in India remain very low. Recent studies show that only 27% to 35% of Indian adults understand basic financial concepts. The situation is even worse among women, youth, and people in rural areas (S&P Global, 2016; OECD, 2022). This gap creates a challenging environment where users may be skilled at digital transactions but lack the knowledge to make good financial choices. There are significant concerns about consumer protection in India's fast-paced growth in digital finance ; users may fall victim to digital fraud, engage with unregulated predatory lending apps, and struggle to identify genuine investment opportunities versus risky schemes (Chakrabarty, 2023). The fundamental challenge is that while technology offers access, it doesn't provide the understanding needed to navigate the complexities of digital finance.

To explore the connection between financial literacy and fintech adoption, this research proposes a thorough cross-sectional survey. The study will include a diverse sample of 400 Indian adults, chosen based on geographic location (urban/rural), age, and gender, to ensure a representative group. A structured questionnaire will use validated tools from previous key studies (Chen & Volpe, 1998; OECD/INFE, 2018) to assess three important areas of financial literacy: financial knowledge (understanding inflation, interest, and risk), financial attitudes, and financial behaviors. Fintech adoption will be measured by the range and depth of service usage, from basic payments to more complex activities like investing and insurance.

Data analysis will be carried out in two stages. First, descriptive statistics and correlation analyses will outline the current levels of financial literacy and fintech usage. Second, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will test the main hypothesis: that higher financial literacy predicts safer and more effective fintech adoption. This method will allow for examining the causal links between literacy and behavior while controlling for important demographic factors.





The findings should offer useful insights for multiple stakeholders. For policymakers and regulators like the RBI, the research highlights the urgent need to include financial education in the national strategy. For fintech providers, it emphasizes the ethical and business need to incorporate user education and clear design into their platforms. Ultimately, this study aims to advocate for a new approach where technological innovation and financial education progress together, ensuring that India's fintech revolution leads to genuine financial empowerment and inclusive growth for all its citizens.





1116

BUILDING GLOBAL WELLNESS DESTINATIONS THROUGH AYURVEDA: A SCOPING REVIEW

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Abstract

Ayur wellness tourism is an emerging and specialized segment within the global wellness tourism industry, integrating the ancient principles of Ayurveda into contemporary travel and health experiences. Rooted in India's traditional medicine system, Ayurveda promotes holistic well-being through the balance of body, mind, and spirit. It offers natural therapies, Panchakarma, detoxification, herbal treatments, personalized diets, yoga, and meditation. Unlike conventional medical tourism, Ayur wellness tourism focuses on both curative and preventive healthcare, along with lifestyle management. This therapeutic and cultural combination attracts health-conscious tourists globally, positioning Ayurveda in the global wellness economy.

The global wellness tourism sector is witnessing significant growth, driven by rising health consciousness, the pursuit of preventive healthcare, and the growing demand for authentic cultural and healing experiences. According to the Global Wellness Institute (GWI), wellness tourism is defined as travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one's personal well-being. In its 2023 report, GWI valued the global wellness tourism market at USD 651 billion in 2022, with projections to surpass USD 1.4 trillion by 2027, highlighting its position as one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism economy.

Despite Ayurveda's global recognition, there remains a significant gap in the development of strategic frameworks that position Ayurvedic wellness tourism as a mainstream global offering. Key challenges include the absence of standardized service protocols, inconsistent infrastructure development across wellness destinations, and limited international marketing strategies that highlight Ayurveda's holistic health benefits. Furthermore, there is a lack of structured, academic research focusing on the integration of traditional healing systems like Ayurveda into destination development models, which restricts the sector's potential for global expansion and sustainable tourism growth.

This study addresses these gaps by conducting a scoping review of global best practices in Ayur wellness tourism, using Rayyan software for systematic literature screening and article selection. The methodology follows the PCC (Population–Concept–Context) framework recommended by the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) for scoping reviews. Databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, and Lens were used to identify relevant academic and grey literature. The study further applies qualitative thematic analysis to extract strategic insights from the selected literature.





The novelty of this research lies in its holistic approach to developing a strategic framework for Ayur wellness tourism that bridges traditional healing wisdom with modern tourism management practices. Unlike existing studies that often address Ayurvedic healthcare or wellness tourism trends in isolation, this research presents an integrated and interdisciplinary model. It proposes a sustainable, scalable, and globally replicable framework that aligns Ayurvedic wellness offerings with destination development, marketing strategies, and community engagement. The outcomes of this study are expected to guide policymakers, tourism boards, and wellness industry stakeholders in formulating inclusive strategies that enhance tourist experiences, support local economies, and safeguard intangible cultural heritage associated with Ayurveda.





HEUTAGOGY IN LEARNING, DESIGN, AND TECHNOLOGY: DECODING SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER BEHAVIORS IN THE MOOCVERSE

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Abstract

The post-pandemic shift in education has catalysed a convergence of learning, design, and technology (LDT), giving rise to a more learner-centered and heutagogical paradigm. Heutagogy, or self-determined learning, promotes learner agency, reflection, and autonomy, attributes that are increasingly central to digital learning environments. While the conceptual foundations of heutagogical learning have gained momentum, empirical investigations into the learner psyche and post-adoption behaviors of self-directed learners, particularly at the human–technology interface remain underexplored. Anchored in an integrated theoretical framework combining the Expectation Confirmation Model (ECM) and the Information Systems Success Model (ISSM), this study explores how learners’ perceptions of platform quality, specifically, information quality (IQ), system quality (SysQ), and service quality (SerQ), influence continuance intention (CI) and actual usage (AU) in asynchronous digital learning environments such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The study further investigates the mediating roles of confirmation and satisfaction in these relationships. Data were collected from 323 postgraduate students across Indian universities who had voluntarily re-enrolled in MOOCs beyond formal academic requirements, reflecting key traits of self-directed and heutagogical learning. Findings revealed that IQ emerged as the strongest predictor of expectation confirmation, followed by SerQ and SysQ. Both confirmation and satisfaction were found to partially mediate the relationship between platform quality and learners’ post-adoption behaviors. From a social impact perspective, this study sheds light on the evolving learner landscape, where individuals increasingly pursue flexible, personalized, and autonomous pathways for learning. The findings underscore the role of asynchronous platforms in democratizing access to education and advancing global upskilling, particularly among lifelong learners and underserved communities. From a practical standpoint, the study emphasizes the importance of designing e-learning platforms that promote learner autonomy and sustained engagement. Educational technologists and EdTech providers should prioritize platform attributes that enhance usability, system reliability, relevant content delivery, and responsive learner support, dimensions that significantly affect learners’ satisfaction and continued use. By empirically applying heutagogical principles and extending the ECM and ISSM frameworks, this study contributes to the growing discourse on learner-centered design in digital education. The study offers actionable insights for institutions, platform designers, and policymakers seeking to build intelligent, scalable, and inclusive e-learning ecosystems that respond to both learner autonomy and labor market demands.





1119

LOVING ONE'S JOB: REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA OF JOB LOVE

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Abstract

Frequently, the affection one harbours for their job is often seen as a key factor in determining and forecasting career triumph. To achieve success, it's often recommended that individuals either find (Cassidy, 2000) or reignite (Boyatzis et al., 2002) their sense of passion. The saying "Discover a profession you're passionate about, and work becomes a joy," often credited to Confucius, encapsulates the notion that finding fulfillment in one's occupation is a valuable guiding principle for those navigating their careers. Employees who love their jobs are often more motivated, display greater perseverance in the face of challenges, and are more likely to contribute positively to their organizations. In this context, the study offers a review, integration and extension of the literature relevant to job love. The articles were screened on the basis of their abstract, and analyzed using the antecedents-decisions-outcomes (ADO) and theories-context-methodology (TCM) framework of SLR. The article aims to guide future researchers in studying job love, highlighting its impact and future research directions.





EXPLORING THE NEXUS BETWEEN DIGITAL FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE CASH RESERVES: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

In the modernized era of digital finance, financial sustainability has captured prominent attention due to the rise of circular economy in recent years. The quick adoption of digital financial technology has changed the corporate landscape across the globe. In recent time, corporations are increasingly aligning with sustainability goals, integrating their financial decisions with the emerging digital infrastructure to have a sustainable future. Amidst these transformations, corporate cash holding decision is crucial in the overall growth of a company and have witnessed a steady rise in scholarly attention recently. Firms are adopting new cash management strategies, amongst rising financial uncertainty, following the recent pandemic. However the overall understanding of this pattern is debatable and requires a fresh view in growing digital landscape of financial services. Digital financial inclusion enhances corporate access to a broad range of financial products-such as digital payments, sustainable loans, and green deposits, which enables firms to manage liquidity more efficiently and transparently particularly in emerging economies. The present paper examines the impact of the digital finance on cash holdings as a sustainable strategy to ensure long-term resilience and responsible growth. The paper adopts a panel data model to study a balanced panel of 237 Indian firms from the manufacturing sector, which are listed on the National Stock Exchange for the period 2021 to 2024. The results indicate that with the developing digital financial infrastructure and large-scale penetration of digital financial services among corporates, firms' dependence on excess cash reserves has seen a decline in the present day scenario. The relationship is more attributed to easy access to credit, reduced information asymmetries, and lower transaction costs. The findings enhance the understanding of how emerging technology and innovation in financial services act as the driving force behind sustainable cash holding practices among Indian firms. The study's findings also have substantial implications for corporates in other developing economies that hoard large cash reserves from a precautionary motive to evade financial constraints. On a broader scale, digital finance supports both the economic and social inclusion of emerging economies like India. By improving access to digital financial services and embedding sustainability into cash management, corporates can achieve greater financial stability, and support the broader goals of financial inclusiveness and sustainable development.





DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY FOR HARNESSING INDIA'S DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND AND GLOBAL PEACEFUL PROSPERITY LEADERSHIP

Balarama Varanasi

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Abstract

India's demographic dividend—over 650 million citizens aged 20–35—offers a historic opportunity for economic ascent. While the Government of India's Vision 2047 outlines long-term goals, this paper highlights the critical gap between vision and reality, with per capita debt rising and per capita income rankings stagnating. In response, the paper proposes a bold strategy to position India as the world's second-largest economy and simultaneously elevate it into the global top ten in per capita income before 2030.

This strategy extends the foundations laid by Digital India, Skill India, SWAYAM, Startup India, Institution's Innovation Councils (IICs), Innovation Hubs, and the National Innovation and Startup Policy (NISP). It proposes their evolution through Digital Transformation of policy transparency, citizen empowerment, graduate and women advancement, and proportional support for marginalized communities, with special emphasis on backward and scheduled castes. A "nation-as-enterprise" model leverages India's digital infrastructure and underutilized built-up office space in Hyderabad for inclusive growth.

The paper proposes Digital Transformation Strategy as the key differentiator between India and Bharath, and introduces the Peaceful Prosperity Triads model as a global collaboration framework that operationalizes Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for Vishwa Guruthwam and extends it into a peace-oriented framework termed Vishwa Shanthi Guruthwam. Drawing from contemporary component architecture expertise, it interprets how ancient Bharath flourished through integrated knowledge systems prior to colonization, and how colonial-era "divide and rule" policies disrupted these systems. The proposed Digital Transformation Strategy Framework uses interface characterization to dissolve rigid caste hierarchies and enable dynamic, agile, and contemporary professional practice support ecosystems that facilitate data collection at the individual citizen level, rather than the traditional family level. This positions India as a global leader in data analytics-driven, AI-assisted, state-of-the-art designing and design thinking partnerships to deliver universal excellence in Industry–Institute and Industry–Society partnerships before 2030.





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EXPLORING TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY IN CIRCULAR WASTE MANAGEMENT: A PUSH-PULL-MOORING FRAMEWORK.

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Abstract

This study explores the factors influencing waste generators' intention to switch from improper waste disposal practices to sustainable methods that support recycling, thereby enhancing social sustainability within the waste supply chain. Grounded in the Push-Pull-Mooring (PPM) theoretical framework, the research employs a mixed-methods approach. In the first phase, a qualitative investigation identifies key push, pull, and mooring factors shaping the intention to adopt mobile applications for waste disposal. In the second phase, these insights are used to construct a conceptual model, which is empirically tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings, as illustrated in the conceptual framework, identify push factors such as perceived inefficiency, lack of transparency, unfair compensation for waste workers, and health and safety concerns; pull factors including convenience of digital waste collection apps, incentives and reward systems, enhanced waste tracking and transparency, and regulatory support and policy initiatives; and mooring factors like infrastructure support, cultural and behavioural habits, digital literacy, and community/social influence. These factors collectively impact technology adoption, ultimately contributing to supply chain social sustainability. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital technology adoption for sustainable waste management and circular economy practices. It offers practical implications for policymakers and stakeholders in developing countries seeking to enhance recycling efforts and promote socially sustainable waste supply chains.





THE PURSUIT OF AUTHENTICITY IN CONSUMER CULTURE: EXPLORING THE CONVERSATIONS, IDENTITY AND CONSUMPTION IN A TECHNO-DRIVEN WORLD

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Abstract

The pursuit of authenticity is increasingly becoming a firm expectation as well as an aggravating challenge in the contemporary consumer culture. Today, artificial intelligence mediates our interactions with brands, services, and with each other to a great extent. Consequently, as the gap between what seems genuine and what is produced synthetically with the help of algorithms becomes thinner, revisiting authenticity from the lens of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) has never been more relevant than it is now. This study addresses this issue by investigating how the conversational design of the AI-based conversational interface influences consumers' perceptions of the authenticity of the conversations and services rendered. The research findings and outcomes of the study will thereby extend the implications for consumer-AI interactions, consumer-brand relationships, consumer choices influencing consumer identities, as well as meaningful consumption experiences. This study is, therefore, rooted in consumer culture theory, consumption, language studies, and the societal aspects of technology.

Drawing from existential-phenomenology, the study will employ a mixed-methods approach. The human-AI interactions include how AI is involved in different types of talk, including small talk. Drawing on interactional sociolinguistics, conversational analysis will be used to identify the conversational and linguistic properties in the conversational design of AI and how they reflect or do not reflect authenticity.

The qualitative research method of in-depth interviews will be employed. Participants will be selected based on their regular use of conversational AI. The number of participants will be decided until data saturation. The interviews will consist of questions relating to consumers' experiences of conversations with AI in the consumer-brand context. It will also include their opinions and reflections on perceived authenticity, consumption, meaning-making and identity from these experiences. Lastly, the survey method will be employed to examine the impact of authenticity on brand trust, loyalty, consumption choices, and identity.

This study, thus, contributes to the literature on authenticity, meaning-making and identity in technology-mediated consumption. CCT's framework and rigorous language-based analysis strengthen the study to illuminate how authenticity and identity are co-created in technology-mediated contexts, extending CCT scholarship into AI-driven contexts. It also offers a novel angle by investigating the relation between AI's conversational language and consumers' authenticity perceptions for analysing consumers' quest for meaningful consumption, highlighting the role of language in authenticity perception in consumer-brand relationships. The findings can be helpful for marketers and managers to strengthen consumers' trust, loyalty, and experiential value in AI-mediated services. This research will also contribute to the





scholarship on the interdisciplinary study of authenticity vis-à-vis consumer culture, language use, identity and AI-mediated contexts.





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MAPPING THE INTELLECTUAL STRUCTURE OF CSR AND EARNINGS MANAGEMENT RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW

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Abstract

The intersection of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Earnings Management (EM) has garnered increasing academic attention, particularly in the context of corporate transparency, ethical conduct, and stakeholder accountability. While CSR is often positioned as a strategic tool for sustainable value creation, concerns persist over its potential misuse as a façade to obscure earnings manipulation practices. This study aims to map the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of scholarly research on CSR and earnings management from 2000 to 2024 using bibliometric methods.

Data were retrieved from the Scopus database, resulting in a curated dataset of peer-reviewed journal articles published in English. Using VOSviewer and the Bibliometrix package in R, we conducted performance analysis, co-authorship networks, keyword co-occurrence mapping, and co-citation analysis to identify key authors, institutions, influential journals, and dominant research themes. The findings reveal a growing scholarly interest in this domain, especially post-2015, with notable contributions from accounting, finance, and business ethics literature. Thematic clusters indicate evolving research fronts focusing on CSR disclosure, greenwashing, earnings quality, and institutional governance mechanisms.

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the intellectual landscape in the CSR–EM interface, highlighting major research streams, collaborative patterns, and future directions. It contributes to the literature by offering a structured synthesis for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers interested in understanding how corporate social responsibility and financial reporting integrity intersect in theory and practice.





DARK PATTERNS OR SMART DESIGNS?

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Abstract

The digitized consumer environment, fuelled with subtle interface cues, disproportionately influences user behaviour. The digital ploys such as urgency prompts, social proofing, default options, and obstructionist flows shape decision-making by exploiting cognitive biases and often without users' full awareness (Brignull, 2011; Mathur et al., 2019; Gray et al, 2018; Luguri & Strahilevitz, 2021). These ploys, known as dark patterns, have been widely critiqued for manipulating consumers and prioritizing firm's interest. However, this study challenges the binary framing of dark patterns by proposing a nuanced, continuum-based framework that contextualizes interface strategies along two axes: goal alignment (firm-centered vs. user-centered) and choice friction (high vs low cognitive or procedural effort to opt out). This approach sheds light on the undermined middle ground, where superficially similar tactics yield user outcomes based on design intent and implementation.

Drawing on nudge theory (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009), cognitive load theory (Sweller, 1988), and postmodern consumer theory (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995). This study reenvisioned certain persuasive interface elements as potentially autonomy-supporting and aiding in better decision-making. For example, sneaking refers to the illicit inclusion of products in shopping carts (Brignull, 2023). For example, when purchasing a laptop, an antivirus may be automatically added to the cart without the customer's knowledge (Luguri & Strahilevitz, 2021). When implemented transparently and aligned with user approval and welfare, it can guide customers toward beneficial decisions by leveraging status quo biases and reducing information overload (Luguri & Strahilevitz, 2021; Bongard et al., 2021; Brignull, 2023). By contrast, deceptive variants like obstructive cancellation, social proofing, and forced action burden cognition and limit user agency (Bosch et al., 2016; Mathur et al., 2019; Narayanan et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2025).

The proposed design continuum categorizes dark patterns into four quadrants: (1) Malicious dark patterns (high friction, user-centered), such as roach-motel cancellations (Brignull, 2023); (2) Protective Friction (high friction, user-centered), such as two-factor authentication safeguards; (3) Profit-oriented persuasion (low friction, firm-centered), such as auto-checked upsells; and (4) Bright patterns (low friction, user-centered), including one-click opt-outs (Singh et al., 2025; Kollmer, 2023).

An additional vulnerability lens emphasizes that patterns merely “annoying” for digital natives may be exploitative for children, seniors, or neurodiverse users (Gray et al., 2018), thus calling for subgroup-specific analysis in research and regulation.

Theoretically, this study contributes to ongoing debates in behavioral design by demonstrating that persuasive interfaces are not inherently manipulative. Integrating nudge theory, postmodern consumer





theory, and cognitive load theory offers a framework for understanding how similar digital tactics can undermine or enhance autonomy depending on context.

The continuum guides designers, managers, and regulators by advocating for low-friction, user-aligned persuasion strategies that respect consumer trust while achieving business goals. Dark patterns, thus, should be seen as context-sensitive tools, not universally unethical techniques, encouraging an ethical design philosophy that balances influence with respect for choice.





BETWEEN OPTICS AND INCLUSION: EXAMINING DE&I WASHING IN MULTIMODAL MESSAGING BY INDIA'S LEADING CORPORATIONS

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Abstract

As diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) gain increasing prominence in global corporate discourse, Indian companies have begun to craft public messaging that aligns with these values. Yet, the performative potential of such messaging raises a critical question: to what extent do corporate communications in India reflect substantive commitments to DE&I, and where might they be instances of “DE&I washing”—the strategic use of inclusive language and imagery without corresponding structural or policy-based change? This study investigates the DE&I narratives presented by the top ten Indian companies, examining the divergence between performative representation and authentic engagement.

The following research questions guide our work:

1. How can “DE&I washing” be operationalized and identified in the multimodal DE&I messaging of India's top ten companies, and what discursive and visual markers distinguish performative inclusion from actionable policy?
2. How are diverse identities—particularly caste, religion, gender, sexuality, and ability—represented, marginalized, or omitted in the textual and visual DE&I narratives presented by leading Indian corporations?
3. In what ways do India's top corporations localize or omit globally dominant DE&I categories (such as race or LGBTQ+ inclusion) in order to align with domestic socio-cultural norms, and how do they navigate the inclusion or exclusion of caste and religion in this process?

Drawing on frameworks such as Institutional Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Critical Race Theory, this research situates corporate DE&I messaging within broader questions of legitimacy, identity recognition, and systemic exclusion. Our preliminary document analysis of DE&I-related content from corporate websites, sustainability reports, and annual disclosures identifies two dominant strands: a “Western-aligned” DE&I discourse among MNCs, focusing on globally normative categories like race, gender, and sexual orientation; and a “CSR-driven” model in Indian conglomerates, where inclusion is communicated through broader social outreach themes such as women's empowerment or environmental justice. Crucially, none of the reviewed corporations address caste as a category of structural exclusion, revealing a disjuncture between India's lived social hierarchies and its corporate inclusion frameworks.

To assess the depth and authenticity of DE&I claims, this study proposes a multimodal content analysis of visual, textual, and discursive elements across company websites, LinkedIn posts, annual reports, and DE&I campaigns. Leveraging tools such as NVivo for qualitative coding and semiotic analysis





frameworks for interpreting corporate imagery and symbolism, the research will examine how inclusion is visually and linguistically constructed. Attention will be paid to the intersectionality (or lack thereof) in representations of gender, ability, sexuality, and notably, caste and religion.

The study also seeks to operationalize “DE&I washing” as a conceptual category, distinguishing between rhetorical inclusion and actionable policy. This involves assessing whether stated commitments are reflected in measurable actions, such as transparent DE&I metrics, internal policies, or stakeholder engagement initiatives, and identifying where inclusivity remains confined to optics. The research aims to contribute to emerging literature on DE&I in the Global South by offering a contextually grounded critique of how Indian corporations negotiate global expectations and local sensitivities.





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BEYOND THE WRITING MACHINE: AI, BLENDED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AS FOSTERING A COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY IN WRITING INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This study explores the integration of generative AI tools in writing instruction within a blended learning environment, guided by the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework developed by Garrison et al. (2000). The research investigates how AI-supported instruction, when combined with teacher presence, can foster teaching, social, and cognitive presence in undergraduate writing classrooms. The study specifically focuses on a Business Communication course taught to 134 undergraduate students, using tools like ChatGPT and Gemini as part of the pedagogy.

The core aim of the study is to evaluate how blended learning, enhanced by real-time AI feedback and in-person guidance, shapes students' learning experiences and satisfaction in writing instruction. The course design included a two-hour session where students engaged in AI-supported writing exercises: beginning with a free-writing activity, followed by peer exchanges, instructor feedback, and a hands-on interaction with AI tools. Students analyzed AI-generated revisions of their drafts, posed meta-questions to the tools about improvements, and refined their prompts to produce increasingly effective outputs. The session culminated in a survey based on the CoI framework, measuring Social, Teaching, and Cognitive Presence across 27 items, including both qualitative and quantitative responses.

The research is driven by five questions, each aimed at understanding the role of AI-enabled learning environments in fostering the CoI presences and enhancing learner satisfaction. Key hypotheses include the positive impact of teaching presence on satisfaction, the mediating role of personalized AI feedback, and the effect of peer collaboration using AI on social presence and group cohesion. A specific focus is also placed on the enhancement of cognitive presence through structured AI-supported reflection and revision.

Preliminary findings based on Cochran's Q test and pairwise McNemar tests indicate that Teaching Presence is the most readily fostered element in AI-supported blended classrooms, with a 92.8% affirmative response rate. This suggests that computer-mediated environments naturally favor structured instructional design. Cognitive Presence followed, while Social Presence was found to be the most difficult to establish, pointing to the need for intentional peer interaction and community-building strategies.

These early results suggest that while AI can effectively support structured instructional practices, achieving deeper engagement and social connectedness requires deliberate pedagogical effort. AI tools are most impactful when integrated with human instruction rather than used in isolation. Students





demonstrated increased cognitive engagement when using AI with clear prompts and reflection, and showed appreciation for AI's ability to enhance clarity, coherence, and audience-awareness in their writing.

Upon completion, the study will propose a revised pedagogical model for AI-supported writing instruction in blended settings, grounded in the CoI framework. This model will offer actionable strategies for educators aiming to enhance writing instruction through a balanced synergy of AI tools and instructor facilitation, ensuring that learners not only meet immediate course objectives but also develop enduring writing competencies through a sense of shared inquiry and collaboration.





THE EFFECT OF BRAND ESCAPISM ON BRAND EVANGELISM AND BRAND EQUITY

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Abstract

In an increasingly experience-driven and emotionally competitive marketplace, brands are exploring new strategies to build meaningful, lasting relationships with consumers. This study investigates the concept of brand escapism, defined as the psychological relief and detachment consumers experience through their engagement with brands, and how it influences brand evangelism, voluntary, enthusiastic advocacy of a brand by consumers. While escapism has been extensively examined in media, entertainment, and tourism domains, its empirical application within branding, particularly in emerging economies like India, remains under-researched. This study aims to bridge that gap by focusing on the Indian B2C consumer landscape, where emotional engagement with brands is growing rapidly due to the rise of digital media and a socially aspirational middle class.

Further this research examines that brand storytelling plays a crucial moderating role in enhancing the effect of escapism on evangelism. Storytelling involves the strategic use of authentic, emotionally resonant, and memorable narratives that frame brand experiences. When brand escapism is embedded within compelling stories, consumers are more likely to emotionally identify with the brand, thereby strengthening their advocacy behavior. The study further examines the downstream impact of brand evangelism on brand equity, encompassing dimensions such as perceived quality, brand trust, customer loyalty, and positive brand associations.

To empirically test these relationships, a quantitative survey will be conducted with a target sample of 300–500 B2C consumers across major metropolitan cities in India. All constructs will be measured using 5-point Likert scales drawn from established sources: Orazi et al. (2023) for brand escapism, Doss and Carstens (2014) for brand evangelism, Bilandzic et al. (2019) for storytelling, and Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) for brand equity. The data will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the strength and significance of the proposed relationships.

The study hypothesizes three core relationships:

1. H1: Brand escapism positively influences brand evangelism.
2. H2: Brand storytelling moderates and strengthens the relationship between escapism and evangelism.
3. H3: Brand evangelism positively contributes to brand equity.

The findings are expected to provide robust empirical evidence for these hypotheses. Theoretically, the study contributes to branding and consumer psychology literature by integrating escapist motivations with





narrative persuasion and advocacy behaviors. It introduces a novel framework that connects immersive brand experiences with long-term consumer-driven value creation. Practically, it offers strategic insights for brand managers in emerging markets to design campaigns that blend emotional escapism with strong storytelling elements, thereby cultivating brand evangelists and enhancing brand equity.





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DRIVERS OF DESTINATION BRAND LOYALTY AND LIFE SATISFACTION WITH A RELIGIOUS TOURISM DESTINATION

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of self-congruity and individual's religious belief on tourists' behaviours such as loyalty towards the destination and life-satisfaction related to a religious tourism destination. The government of India has taken several initiatives to develop and promote the religious tourism destinations in the country to attract more number of tourists to these destinations. Thus, it is important to investigate how these initiatives taken by the government influence tourists' congruity and religious beliefs leading to their trust in a religious destination. Hence, this study also examines the moderating effect initiatives taken by the Government. Findings suggest that self-congruity and religious belief of an individual build trust in a religious tourism destination which further leads to loyalty to the destination and life-satisfaction. Further, perceived government initiatives strengthens the influence of self-congruity and religious belief on destination brand trust.





THREADS OF STRAIN: A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES IN SILK SAREE MANUFACTURING IN TAMIL NADU.

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Abstract

The traditional textile sector in India, particularly silk saree manufacturing in Tamil Nadu, faces persistent challenges amid rising environmental, social, and economic pressures. This study explores key supply chain issues confronting silk saree manufacturers, emphasizing context-specific and current barriers. While past studies (Narimissa et al., 2020) have examined textile supply chains, their findings risk becoming outdated due to technological changes, structural reforms, and shifting consumer demands. Thus, this research aims to identify contemporary supply chain challenges in the culturally and economically significant silk saree sector of Tamil Nadu.

A qualitative approach was employed, using purposive sampling to select five experienced master weavers from different regions of Tamil Nadu. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Atlas TI software, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis.

Five main themes emerged: (1) Reliance on Chemical Dyes, including high costs, dependence on synthetic dyes, and limited organic alternatives; (2) Volatile Raw Material Supply, marked by price fluctuations, seasonal yarn shortages, and lack of quality certifications; (3) Workforce-Related Challenges, such as a declining skilled workforce, low wage attractiveness, and diminished interest among the younger generation; (4) Limited Government Support, reflecting inadequate aid, ineffective subsidy schemes, and policy misuse; and (5) Logistical Inefficiencies, involving poor transport networks, lack of tracking systems, and reliance on fuel-based logistics.

Interview excerpts underscore these concerns. One participant stated, "We use dyes that have chemicals. If we want to produce sarees with organic dyes, it will cost around 100,000 rupees." Another mentioned, "Only a few people are interested in weaving. The number of weavers is decreasing year by year."

Findings partly diverge from (Oelze, 2017), yet align with issues noted by (Kazancoglu et al., 2022) and (Saccani et al., 2023) regarding material and labor-related concerns. Limitations include a narrow focus on weavers' perspectives and potential exclusion of recent policy changes. Overall, the study reveals structural inefficiencies in the supply chain and highlights the need for targeted policy interventions. Future research should adopt a longitudinal and multi-stakeholder approach for a more comprehensive understanding.





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WHOSE ADVICE DO WE TRUST? HUMAN-AI NUDGES IN THE GREEN INVESTMENT MAZE

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Abstract

As expert recommendations have consistently proven effective in nudging individuals toward better financial decisions, the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) in advisory systems raises important questions about the role of trust and transparency in investor financial decision making. Our study explores how the source (human, AI, or hybrid) and transparency (transparent vs. black box) of recommendations influence investor choices, particularly in the context of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI).

We examine six experimental conditions involving different recommendation agents: human-transparent, human-black box, AI-transparent, AI-black box, human-AI (black box), and human-AI (transparent). The conceptual model evaluates how these conditions mediated and moderated by perceived trust, perceived recommendation quality, algorithm adoption, and user lock-in affecting the investor's ESG fund allocation decisions.

This research hypothesizes that transparency and human-AI collaboration may reinforce trust and perceived quality, while black-box recommendations might create reliance or resistance depending on the perceived expertise. By exploring the psychological mechanisms behind how investors respond to expert vs. algorithmic nudges, this study provides insights into the ethical and effective design of AI-driven financial advisory systems. The findings carry implications for behavioural finance, sustainable investing, and the responsible deployment of AI in investor-facing technologies.





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CAN ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT IMPROVE LEARNING? EVIDENCE FROM EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN INDIA.

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Abstract

While existing literature documents a positive link between road infrastructure and school enrollment, little is known about its effects on student achievement. This paper investigates the educational spillover effects of a state-level public transport infrastructure policy in Odisha, India, which was implemented in a staggered, quasi-experimental fashion across districts. Leveraging this phased rollout and employing a difference-in-differences framework, we find that students in early-implementation districts outperform those in later-implementation districts on standardized reading and math assessments. Our analysis uses data from the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), a nationally representative survey of basic literacy and numeracy skills. We also identify heterogeneous impacts: the policy yields larger gains in reading scores for girls and in math scores for boys. These findings suggest that enhanced access to transport can play a meaningful role in improving educational outcomes.





A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF WORKPLACE SOLIDARITY IN DIGITAL AND COMPETITIVE WORLD

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Abstract

In today's digital and highly competitive world, workplace solidarity stands as a quiet yet powerful force that holds teams together and drives meaningful progress, where one feels to work in isolation still, manifest for cooperation, mutual support, practice informal bonds and shared values. Amidst the growing complexities of modern organizational structures and competitiveness, workplace solidarity emerges as a critical social construct—fostering cohesion, mutual support, sense of belonging, and a shared sense of purpose that underpins sustainable organizational performance. It creates a resilient environment where challenges can be faced collectively. This study aims to examine the role of workplace solidarity in enhancing organizational cohesion, employees' well-being, and collective performance, while identifying the key drivers and barriers to its development within diverse professional environments. This calls for a systematic synthesis of existing literature to develop an integrated and holistic understanding of the construct, its underlying dimensions, and its implications across various organizational contexts. To generate structured and theoretically grounded insights, this study integrates two well-established organizing frameworks. The ADO-TCCM framework (Antecedents, Decisions and Outcomes; Theories, Contexts, Characteristics and Methods). In addition, this paper seeks to critically identify significant gaps within the literature and to articulate directions for future research. Given that the review was conducted from a global perspective, its findings carry significant implications for both researchers and practitioners worldwide, offering valuable insights that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries.





LIVED REALITIES OF SPOUSAL SUPPORT AMONG WOMEN DOMESTIC WORKERS IN VARANASI, INDIA

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Abstract

Spousal support is a vital dimension of social support, particularly for married individuals managing the dual responsibilities of work and home. While various sources of support are important, spousal support has been found to significantly enhance marital, work, and life satisfaction (Dakof & Taylor, 1990; Phillips-Miller et al., 2000), reduce work-family conflict, and improve physical and psychological well-being (Aycan & Eskin, 2005). Despite this, women- especially those in nuclear families - often receive less spousal support compared to men (Xu & Burleson, 2001), even though their need is greater due to reduced social networks (Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005).

India reflects these global trends, with a growing number of married women entering the labor force, including in the informal sector (Paul, 2006). Domestic workers comprise the second-largest group of informal workers after agricultural laborers, with nearly 90% being women (Paul et al., 2011). These women, often from impoverished backgrounds, typically lack the financial capacity to outsource household duties, making spousal cooperation essential to managing both domestic and professional responsibilities. This dependency is intensified by the patriarchal and collectivistic norms of Indian society, which continue to enforce traditional gender roles, especially among low-income families (Carrim, 2012).

This study, part of an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, focuses on the qualitative phase, exploring the lived experiences and expectations of spousal support among women domestic workers. A total of 44 participants were selected using purposive stratified sampling (Brown, 2019) from survey respondents reporting low or high levels of spousal support. Interviews, conducted in Hindi, were transcribed and translated to English, lasting 30 to 60 minutes. Data were analyzed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis –RTA (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2019), which emphasizes flexibility and researcher reflexivity in developing central themes (Terry et al., 2017).

Four major themes emerged:

1. Men recognized as provider – Women largely expected their husbands to fulfill the financial responsibilities of the household.
2. It is about the “very little things” – Women described minimal support from spouses, mostly during emergencies or upon request. Subthemes included (a) helping out themselves, (b) the least a man can give, and (c) seek for emotional support.
3. The choice is yours – Women valued autonomy in making domestic or work-related decisions as a form of support.





4. The family man – Women appreciated husbands who broke traditional gender roles. Subthemes included (a) my engaged and heroic husband, (b) easy food, easy life, and (c) children-centric spousal support.

Participants also shared expectations from social agencies to compensate for limited spousal support. Work-related needs included: (a) suitable jobs for themselves or husbands, (b) nearby or home-based work, (c) child-friendly factories, (d) employment agencies, and (e) social security provisions. Family-related expectations included: (a) better government schools, (b) free crèches, (c) counseling for unsupportive husbands, (d) banning alcohol, (e) reliable water supply, and (f) strict action against domestic violence.

The findings offer actionable insights to shape gender-sensitive policies and support mechanisms for women in India's informal labor sector.





UNRAVELLING THE PATH TO CAREER SUCCESS FOR WOMEN IN THE MODERN WORKPLACE

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Abstract

Purpose: The study focuses on women employees working in the IT sector of India. It highlights its findings from the COVID-19 context and technological changes that have shaped the new work paradigm. According to Statista 2024, women's labour force participation is limited to 35.5% (Statista, 2025). Studies have revealed that women have benefited from globalisation and have access to jobs, but they remain affected by a highly "patriarchal" (Srinivasan et al., 2013) social structure that limits their participation. Sharma and Kaur (2019) define that women have dual obligations of work and home and encounter several obstacles that limit their professional advancement. Against this backdrop, this article explores the obstacles to women's career success in the current work landscape. Career success has two aspects, subjective and objective. The subjective aspect is defined as an individual's perception of their success, whereas the objective aspect is related to tangible indicators of success like promotion and salary (Hughes, 1939; Abele & Spurk, 2009).

Design/methodology/approach: This article uses a qualitative research design to achieve its objectives. The data were collected from women working in the IT sector of India using semi-structured interviews. Each interview lasted for 35-40 minutes. Since women's careers are multifaceted and have several dimensions, a qualitative approach is best suited for this purpose as it can capture the depth of their experiences, expectations, perceptions, and challenges.

Findings: The study identifies five key themes that are often poorly defined but significantly affect women in contemporary work settings, especially in the post-pandemic context. Role Compression in Hybrid Workspaces highlights the blurred boundaries of remote and hybrid work cultures. Women are expected to be present perpetually, which leads to mental fatigue and burnout. It can be considered a barrier to personal well-being and sustainable productivity. Invisible support structures highlight the need for informal and hidden emotional support from family, supervisors, and colleagues that helps them to navigate and to maintain career momentum. Opportunity Freezing Post Career Breaks focuses more on the exclusion of women from many tasks after maternity or other breaks. It reflects on the assumption of reduced commitment and efficiency. Empathy Gaps in Leadership provides a clear barrier that women are facing after COVID-19, especially the male managers, who often fail to understand the nuanced needs women face in balancing work and caregiving responsibilities. Finally, Symbolic vs. Substantive Policy Shifts highlights the policy-practice gap. It is required to inculcate inclusive practices that are transparent and action-driven and should not only be written on paper. These themes provide a web of the psychological, structural, and organizational challenges that women face on a daily basis, furthermore, highlighting the need for change that goes beyond mere rhetoric.





Originality/value: This Article provides insights into women's career success by taking data from a developing nation. It identifies several barriers that limit women's participation in work. It addresses the gaps and suggests legible solutions for career success among women, especially in emerging economies and technology-intensive sectors.

Practical implications: The article provides the need for policies that acknowledge women's unique career paths and equitable conditions for leadership and career satisfaction.





SPHERICAL FUZZY OPTIMIZATION OF EMISSION REDUCTION THROUGH CARBON CAPTURE POWER PLANTS

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Abstract

The escalating climate crisis, primarily driven by rising carbon emissions, is further exacerbated by rapid economic growth, industrial expansion, and a growing population. This trend anticipates increasing electricity demand, thereby amplifying carbon emissions. Consequently, producing green electricity has become essential for sustainable development. This study proposes a framework for an integrated energy system designed to generate green electricity, minimize carbon emissions, and balance electricity supply with demand. We propose a spherical fuzzy mixed-integer linear programming optimization technique to address a critical gap in low-carbon economic dispatch models. The research focuses on the complexities of retrofitting conventional coal-fired power plants with carbon capture technologies, while considering permissible increases in electricity costs and the integration of renewable and advanced coal-fired power plants. The study examines three scenarios based on different levels of electricity costs, with each scenario's MILP optimal outcomes validated using spherical fuzzy optimization. The analysis highlights the third scenario—characterized by a 90% rise in electricity costs and an 85.58% reduction in emissions in Bihar State power plants—as the most favourable. Spherical fuzzy sets enhance decision-making by providing a broader preference domain, enabling effective management of uncertainties, and optimizing the balance between minimizing electricity costs and reducing carbon emissions.





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UNDERSTANDING INVESTOR BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS REITS IN INDIA: A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract

In India, Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) currently manage assets worth ₹1.52 lakh crore. Despite this growth, retail investor participation remains strikingly low—just 4% as of 2024—although the market is expected to expand to \$200 billion by 2030 (Agrawal, 2025). This study investigates the behavioural reasons behind this limited adoption, with a focus on investors' awareness, perceptions, and decision-making habits. The goal is to propose practical measures to promote greater participation in India's evolving REIT market.

Adopting a qualitative methodology, the research draws insights from focus group discussions with a diverse range of investors, including salaried professionals, entrepreneurs, and self-employed individuals. These are supplemented with in-depth interviews conducted with fund managers, relationship officers, and frontline sales agents from various financial institutions. This multi-stakeholder approach helps uncover nuanced perspectives around investor behaviour, the role of intermediaries, and attitudes towards regulation and risk.

The findings reveal a significant knowledge gap. Over 60% of retail investors are unaware of REITs or do not understand their functioning (Gupta, 2023). Even among those familiar with the product, many perceive REITs as risky due to market volatility, unclear regulatory frameworks, and a perceived level of complexity. Contrary to assumptions, high entry costs are not the primary deterrent, mainly since the minimum investment in listed REITs ranges from ₹10,000 to ₹50,000 (Case, 2025). Instead, concerns center on liquidity, transparency, and the ease of buying or selling REIT investments. Most investors prefer traditional instruments, such as fixed deposits or mutual funds, which are perceived as safer, simpler, and more accessible.

However, the study also notes that urban investors with greater financial literacy and access to credible advisors are more inclined to explore REITs. Advisors play a crucial role in shaping investor trust and facilitating informed decision-making. Their presence can alleviate fears and offer valuable guidance on potential returns, income stability, and long-term value creation.

Several propositions emerge from this research. First, improving investor education is vital to bridging the adoption gap. Financial institutions, SEBI, and REIT sponsors should launch targeted awareness campaigns to demystify REITs for both retail and institutional audiences. These initiatives must clearly explain the benefits, such as regular income, portfolio diversification, and access to real estate markets, while transparently communicating the associated risks and evolving regulations. Making these educational resources widely available would empower investors and foster trust.





Second, simplifying regulatory processes and tax-related communication can significantly lower the entry barriers. More straightforward guidelines on taxation, dividend treatment, and exit norms will reduce confusion and improve investor confidence. Streamlined onboarding processes and mobile-friendly digital platforms can further enhance accessibility.

This study makes a meaningful contribution to the understanding of REIT adoption by integrating perspectives from investors and financial professionals. By addressing psychological and informational barriers, India can unlock broader participation in REITs, leading not only to improved capital market depth but also to increased financial inclusion. Future research can focus on tracking the long-term performance of REITs and their role in supporting sustainable economic development.





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SELF-DISCIPLINE IN DIGITAL ERA: TECHNOLOGY MINDFULNESS- A REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

In the modern era, the notion of technology mindfulness is emerging as there is a growing attraction towards the digital world. The use of technology in a mindful manner has played a pivotal role in enhancing the well-being of online users. Additionally, the practice of technology mindfulness can strengthen the human relations which in turn create a positive and inclusive environment. Therefore, this concept highlights the need of encouraging responsible engagement in digital spaces. This review paper seeks to synthesize previous research to develop a clearer conceptual understanding of the construct. The research offers a holistic perspective on technology mindfulness by integrating insights from various disciplines. The framework-oriented systematic review was conducted by adopting well-established frameworks including Antecedents, Dimensions and Outcomes (ADO) framework along with Theories, Contexts and Methods (TCM) framework. The combination of the two frameworks ensures gaining systematic insights in order to provide high-quality research. Simultaneously, this study focuses on finding significant gaps areas in the existing literature to present guidance and meaningful suggestions for future scope. The review has broad implications for both academic researchers and practitioners as the use of mindful practices is becoming critical in the digital era.





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IMPACT OF ED-TECHNOLOGY IN LIVES OF RURAL AREA: THE CASE STUDY

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Abstract

This paper explores the transformative impact of Educational Technology (EdTech) on rural India, analyzing its role in bridging the educational divide and empowering marginalized communities. By integrating digital innovation with grassroots educational initiatives, the study investigates the challenges, opportunities, and long-term outcomes of EdTech interventions in rural settings. Employing a mixed-methods approach comprising field case studies, statistical data analysis, and semi-structured interviews the research uncovers key barriers such as infrastructural limitations, digital literacy gaps, socio-economic constraints, and policy fragmentation. A conceptual framework is developed to illustrate how EdTech enables improved access, learning outcomes, and community engagement when supported by strong stakeholder collaboration. The study concludes with policy recommendations and a strategic roadmap for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable EdTech deployment in rural India.





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TRACKING THE TRANSITION: WOMEN'S JOURNEY FROM ENTREPRENEURIAL READINESS TO ACTION

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship helps women to become financially independent, establish social prestige, and have flexibility in work. Therefore, in a developing country like India, women are actively moving towards entrepreneurship, and through this, their role in economic development has increased. Thus, for tracking the path of female students' intention towards creating their venture, the study proposed a quantitative study among female students to know about the essential elements that help women to be entrepreneurial-ready and take steps towards entrepreneurial activity. The research is centered on gathering the primary data from the survey method at the individual level. The targeted data is approximately 400 female students from different educational backgrounds. For the data analysis, the study uses Smart PLS software to assess the relationship of the latent variable through the structural equation modelling approach. It is noteworthy that the result shows, the female students are entrepreneurially ready and their intention to start their business is strong, with familial support. And, through this empirical research, findings indicate that women are not only involved in developing established businesses, but they also intend to start their own, even though they are from a business family background. Furthermore, the study reveals family support as a key variable to move female students' readiness towards business creation.





A SPECTRUM OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE KNOWLEDGE AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled technologies like augmented reality, chatbots, and social media have revolutionized consumer experiences, influenced their decision making, and purchase journeys (Hoyer et al., 2020).

We propose that the knowledge of AI is not evenly spread across different geographies and segments of consumers. Different levels of knowledge influence perceived utility of AI (Aggarwal et al., 2015), which in turn impacts the customer journey and decision making. We want to map out these levels of knowledge and understand the impact of this levels/spectrum of knowledge's impact on consumer purchase journeys and decision making. We did an extensive literature review to understand past studies on the above-mentioned topics.

Literature Review: There are only a few parsimonious scholarly works which have studied AI and people's awareness/knowledge about AI. For example, the scale by Scantamburlo (2024) tries to measure the attitude, awareness and trust towards AI and Grassini (2023) measured the awareness about smart technology, AI, robotics, and algorithms (STARA). Awareness scale by Brougham and Haar (2018) tries to measure algorithms awareness and the impact of organizational commitment and career satisfaction because of this awareness. All these scales deal with awareness and impact from the employees' point of view. Some studies like the study by Uygun, (2024) and Dergunova (2022) are approaching AI awareness from the point of view of the students and some studies approach AI awareness from the lens of medical works (Hamedani, 2023) and doctors (Van Krevelen 2010).

Because the scales were measuring awareness amongst teachers or medical professionals or employees, these scales do not address some critical and imperative points which are to be asked to consumers to determine their knowledge about AI, we are proposing to study the following objectives.

1. To find out how phyco-cultural factors impact on the acquisition of AI knowledge and its utilization in decision making.
2. To map the spectrum of consumer's knowledge about AI and to understand how it impacts on purchase journeys and decision making.
3. To find out the impact of different demographic variables on the relationship between consumer knowledge and decision making.





Proposed Methodology: The research objectives seek to study various underexplored dimensions of consumer's knowledge with regards to AI, hence making the study exploratory in nature. Thus, using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Suddaby, 2006). We propose to follow a mixed-methods approach where we propose to utilize netnography (Kozinets, 2009), online depth interviews, digital diary maintenance, (Belk, 2012) and based on the results of the qualitative study we will conduct experiments.

Contribution: This study contributes to the body of knowledge by exploring and understanding how consumer knowledge about AI at different spectrums impacts purchase journeys. It aims to be a contributing point of dialogue between consumers and professionals (Cai & Mardani, 2023, Quach, 2022, Shin., 2022), encouraging professionals to make AI transparent to consumers and create more awareness about AI.





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EXPLORING THE ROLE OF INFLUENTIAL DETERMINANTS AND BEHAVIORAL BIASES IN SHAPING INVESTMENT DECISIONS AMONG INDIAN EQUITY INVESTORS

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective of current paper is to understand the internal and external factors influencing the investors while investing on equity share market and to examine the impact of various forms of behavioral bias like confirmation, regret aversion, over-confidence, herding, recency and availability bias on investors decision making.

Methodology: The study is based on quantitative approach by adopting primary data collection through structured Questionnaire with 219 investors. The questionnaire designed to capture relevant information about various factors and bias that influences on individual investors belonging to Mumbai. The data has been analyzed by using SPSS version 22.

Findings: The study revealed that external factors influencing on equity investment are Inflation rate, Exchange rate, Economic Growth, Government policies, market volatility and tax benefits and internal factors influencing on equity investment are share price, dividend policy, profitability, company reputation, return on investment and EPS. Also, behavioral bias such as confirmation, over-confidence, , recency and availability bias influences on investors decision making. Whereas, herding and regret aversion doesn't impact on individual investors decision making.

Research Implications: The study focuses factors and bias influencing the individual investment decision towards equity market. The current paper helps investors and financial planner various bias and factors that influence investors' decision-making and motivate them to invest in various choices and avenues. It also helps investors in developing appropriate strategies for better decision-making process.

Originality: This research aims to provide a road map for the investors interested in making their investment decisions by understanding the most influencing external and internal factors investing in equity market.





SYNERGY IN MOTION: SMART ORDER SCHEDULING AND ROBOT ROUTING FOR COLLABORATIVE WAREHOUSES

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Abstract

There is an explosion of e-commerce, largely driven by technological advancements and shifting consumer behavior. In this competitive landscape, businesses are increasingly employing technologies that enable seamless collaboration between humans and robots. This synergy is not just a technological trend; it is a strategic necessity, which will also reduce operational costs. This work focuses on order picking because it is one of the most labor-intensive and time-consuming warehouse operation. Specifically, we study smart order scheduling and robot routing strategies to improve system productivity.

In the picking operation, once an order arrives, it is assigned to a robot based on a scheduling policy. The robot then navigates through the warehouse, collaborating with human pickers to collect all items associated with that order. Once complete, the robot delivers the items to a central depot. This process involves unnecessary picker travel, as studied in Azadeh et al. (2023). They propose partitioning the warehouse into multiple zones, with dedicated pickers retrieving items only within their assigned zones. Under the zoning strategy, each robot matches with a picker in each zone that contains the order's items and then proceeds to subsequent zones until all items are collected. Their results show that zoning enhances throughput by reducing picker inter-zone travel compared to a non-zoned warehouse configuration. However, it remains unclear whether alternative robot routing strategies can further improve throughput.

We therefore investigate three alternative robot routing strategies within a zoned warehouse: sequential, random, and shortest queue. In random routing, the robot visits required zones in a random sequence with equal likelihood and thereafter drops the order at the depot. In sequential routing, it begins at the zone closest to the depot and proceeds in order of increasing distance, visiting all zones that contain the order's items. In shortest queue routing, the robot first routes to the zone with the shortest robot queue and proceeds similarly for the remaining zones, thereby minimizing expected waiting times.

Robot routing significantly affects picker workload balance. Fixed routing can lead to congestion at zone interfaces, increasing robot idle times due to picker unavailability. In contrast, dynamic routing offers flexibility to avoid such congestion, thereby reducing fulfillment delays and improving overall efficiency. For instance, even if a robot is approaching a zone, congestion may delay picker availability for the robot, resulting in increased robot idle time. In such cases, dynamically rerouting the robot can help minimize delays and better utilize resources.





Orders can be classified based on the number of zones from which their items must be retrieved. Skewed demand patterns can lead to workload imbalances across zones. To address this challenge, order scheduling can help balance workloads and improve efficiency.

We first validate our approach to routing strategy evaluation using simulation data. Subsequently, we formulate a Markov Decision Process model to determine the optimal order selection policy for maximizing system efficiency. Finally, we propose a dynamic Surge-Pick policy that adaptively selects orders based on the real-time state of the system, further enhancing the overall order fulfillment process.





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ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ESG FACTORS ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE: A SMART PLS APPROACH

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors on the financial performance of firms, with a particular focus on companies based in Bangalore, India. Using a sample of 226, the research employs the Smart PLS model to analyze the relationships between ESG components and financial performance. The results reveal that strong governance and environmental practices significantly enhance financial outcomes, while social factors show a more nuanced impact. The study also explores the role of innovation, brand equity, and investor attitudes as mediators in this relationship. The findings contribute to the growing literature on ESG by providing empirical evidence from an emerging market context, highlighting the importance of robust ESG practices for long-term financial success. Future research could extend this analysis to different regions and industries, and investigate the moderating effects of global crises on the ESG-financial performance link. The global relevance of this study is underscored by its potential to guide firms worldwide in adopting sustainable practices that align with financial objectives.





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UNDERSTANDING THE DRIVERS FOR THE ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT AMONG RETAIL INVESTORS

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Abstract

Introduction: This study aims to identify the drivers that influence the retail investors to participate in sustainable investment. The second objective is to identify the key driver for retail investors.

Methodology: To conduct this study, the data were collected from 500 respondents in India, through a questionnaire. To identify the drivers, the Exploratory Factor Analysis was used, Confirmatory factor analysis was used to confirm and factors and to further validate and modelling the barriers, Structural Equation Modelling was used.

Findings: Several factors are responsible for influencing the retail investors to participate in the sustainable investment. The role of Personality factors, psychological factors, social factors, awareness, Regulations found. Regulations found to have profound influence on the adoption of sustainable investment.

Research implications—The findings are important for academia, financial advisors, fund houses, corporates, policymakers and regulators as they provide insights on the behaviour of retail investors that can help identify gaps and areas requiring special attention. Additionally, this study is contributing to society by spreading awareness of sustainability.

Originality/value – The present study offers novel contribution by adding more factors in the existing literature. The relation among factors have been explored to provide a holistic view of the decision-making process of retail investors. Further, reinforcing factors have been identified for persistence of sustainable investment behaviour among retail investors.





INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

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Abstract

Institutions are defined as “rules of the game” or humanly derived constraints that shape human interaction. It plays a crucial role in determining the level of economic growth and development attained by a country. Majority of economic literature emphasize on role of institutions as an exogenous factor influencing economic outcome. United Nations has emphasized on institutional development as a central pillar of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. Despite that, very few studies focus on factors that shape the state of institutions prevailing in an economy. Existing literature confirms several historical, geographical, and political factors as factors determining the institutional quality of an economy, undermining the role of external forces or globalization in influencing the institutional setup of an economy, which we are trying to address through this study. Using time-series data of institutional quality in India, trade and foreign direct investment, we employed autoregressive distributed lag model for analysis. Further, we also do Granger causality test to check the direction of causality. The findings confirm that trade and FDI have bidirectional relationship with institutional development of India and also have positive and significant impact on the institutional quality of India in both short and long term.





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CAN GAMIFICATION MAKE YOU FALL IN LOVE? ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF GAMIFIED INTERACTIONS WITH HEALTH AND FITNESS APPS ON BRAND LOVE

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Abstract

Any brand's ultimate goal is to imprint a sustained positive image in the mind of consumers. This study examines the impact of gamified mechanics incorporated in health and fitness applications on brand love and engagement. The study also assesses the sequential mediation of induced positive emotions and brand engagement on gamified interaction and brand love relationship. Data were collected from users of health and fitness apps through a self-administered questionnaire and analyzed using partial least square structural equation modeling technique. Findings suggest a significant positive impact of gamification on brand love, both with and without sequential mediation.





FROM SKEPTICISM TO SOLIDARITY: HOW SOCIAL ENTERPRISES BUILD TRUST IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

The foundation of any social enterprise lies in the establishment of trust, as it is trust that cements the presence of a social enterprise within the communities it serves (Hota et al., 2023; Mair & Marti, 2009). Maintaining and promoting trust among various stakeholders is paramount for the success of social enterprises (Bhatt et al., 2022; Pollack et al., 2017). This becomes even more critical when these organizations operate within challenging institutional environments, particularly those that lack strong regulation, such as in the Base of the Pyramid (BoP) context. In fact, trust is a fundamental element that enables economic activity in Base of the Pyramid (BOP) economies (Qureshi et al., 2024). We are yet to fully understand how social enterprises navigate these challenges and successfully engage the beneficiaries. Hence, in this paper, we ask the research question: *How do social enterprises operating in the high trust deficit BoP context build trust engage with the beneficiaries successfully?*

We address this gap through an inductive case study of a social enterprise operating in a slum area in India, which dealt with issues of trust deficit in the ecosystem as it tried to improve the livelihood of people living in slums. We found a four-step approach to trust building (*assess, repair, build and maintain*) that was embedded in the microprocesses adopted by the enterprise. Further, we identified two cross-cutting themes, *cultural sensitivity* and *strategic engagement*, that operate across the whole trust-building process and impact it significantly.

We contribute to the social entrepreneurship at the BoP literature in three ways. First, in line with the existing literature, we show the importance of trust-building in the success of social enterprises. Second, we go beyond existing literature and identify the process leading to trust building comprising of four subprocesses: assess, repair, build and maintain and two cross-cutting themes that impacts the process: *cultural sensitivity* and *strategic engagement*. Finally, we demonstrate how trust-building can lead to the success of the social enterprise in engaging beneficiaries and making a difference in their lives.





THE ROLE OF AWE IN SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to systematically review the existing literature on the role of awe in green purchasing behaviour by synthesising studies from 2019 to 2025 in this domain. It seeks to determine how awe acts as a driver or mediator in influencing sustainable consumer behaviour.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This study adopts a hybrid review, integrating a structured literature review and lexicometric analysis. The structured review identifies the key studies from peer-reviewed journals, while the lexicometric approach examines the evolution of themes, terminology and the conceptual linkage over time.

Findings: The review shows that awe is a powerful emotion that can encourage people to make more environmentally friendly choices. It is often triggered by experiences with nature, inspiring stories, or meaningful messages. Awe makes people feel more connected to nature, less focused on material things, and more willing to act for the greater good. It influences green purchasing behaviour by working through emotional processes like feeling small in a vast world (“small self”) or developing a deeper sense of care for the environment. The impact of awe can also depend on factors like culture, personality, and how people manage their emotions. However, current research on this topic is scattered across different fields and lacks a common framework. This review helps to bring the findings together and proposes a model that explains what triggers awe, how it works, and what outcomes it leads to in the context of green purchase behaviour.

Practical Implications: This review offers practical insights for marketers, policy makers, and sustainability communicators on how to effectively use awe in promoting green behaviour. It shows that awe-inspiring content, such as powerful nature visuals, emotionally moving stories, or messages that highlight the human-nature connection, can deeply engage consumers and motivate them to choose environmentally friendly products. By identifying the specific triggers that evoke awe (like natural landscapes, moral acts, or environmental challenges) and the psychological conditions that make it more effective (such as cultural context or emotional mindset), this study helps professionals design campaigns that go beyond facts and statistics. Instead, it encourages strategies that emotionally connect with audiences, making sustainability feel meaningful, urgent, and personally relevant. This emotional approach can increase the impact of green marketing and public awareness efforts.

Originality/value: This paper is one of the first systematic literature reviews that consolidates and analyses the role of awe in green purchase behaviour. This offers an interdisciplinary perspective and also proposes





future research directions, including underexplored antecedents, cultural considerations, and methodological variety necessary to advance this area of study.





MERE ACCOUNTING SHIFT OR MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC SIGNAL? EVIDENCE FROM NEGATIVE NON-CONTROLLING INTEREST AND COMPLEX EQUITY STRUCTURES UNDER CONVERGED IFRS 10

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the value relevance of non-controlling interest (NCI) in consolidated financial statements (CFS), focusing over two equity complexities introduced by Ind AS 110: the emergence of negative NCI and the presence of complex equity structures (CeqS). It investigates whether these subtle elements are economically significant and priced by the Indian equity market.

Design/ methodology/ approach: Based on 4522 firm-year observations from FY2015 to FY2023, we employ fixed-effects regression with firm-clustered robust standard errors to examine the matter. To strengthen causal inference, we incorporate triple difference-in-differences, propensity score matching, and entropy balancing as robustness checks along with other additional analysis.

Findings: The results highlight a dual equity discount. Negative NCI, though often small in size, carries decision-useful, value relevant information but is negatively associated with market valuation, suggesting that investors perceive it as a signal of financial distress or underperforming subsidiaries. Additionally, NCI under CeqS also value relevant but linked to lower market valuation, indicating that investors' view equity complexity as a source of risk or opacity.

Practical implications: The findings have clear implications for investors, regulators, and preparers. Investors should recognize the signalling role of NCI in evaluating group health. Regulators may need to enhance disclosure requirements around subsidiary performance and ownership complexity. Companies, in turn, can mitigate valuation losses by improving transparency in consolidated reporting.

Originality/Value: The study is the first empirical investigation into the value relevance of negative NCI and CeqS under a revised consolidation regime. Our findings offer novel insights into how accounting shifts can carry economic signals in emerging markets, offering relevance for global standard-setters and investors alike.





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INTEGRATED REPORTING, ESG SENSITIVITY, AND THE COST OF DEBT: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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Abstract

With the world increasingly aware of environmental and social issues, how companies articulate values and accountabilities has become the focus. Investors and lenders no longer look at just the financials, now they are also interested in how an organization treats its people, affects the planet, and regulates itself. Integrated Reporting (IR) fills this gap by providing a more holistic view by combining financial and non-financial information in a single comprehensive report.

In this study, we evaluate whether adopting integrated reporting (IR) leads to lower borrowing costs for companies, especially in India, where regulatory changes have increased the amount of transparent and responsible reporting. Our results suggest that firms that embrace IR, and especially those that do a good job of it, gain the confidence of lenders who perceive them as less risky because they are more capable of anticipating the future. However, not every company engages in superficial and surface-level reporting, while the substance of IR reporting must matter. Reports that are clear, transparent, and meaningful are more effective than lengthy reports full of jargon and meaningless filler.

We also look at an important dimension, ESG sensitivity. Companies that are more exposed to environmental or social risks, due to the nature of their industry or operations, stand to gain more by adopting integrated reporting. If these companies express their sustainability activities and values transparently, it alleviates stakeholder apprehension to the advantage of the company and it is possible to lower their cost of debt.

In conclusion, our research presents evidence that good reporting can create real social change. It encourages good business practice, gives companies access to capital at lower interest rates and helps to instill a culture of accountability. By demonstrating how interconnected sustainability and finance are, this study adds to the body of scholarly work demonstrating that doing good and doing well can and should coexist.





PREDICTION OF PATIENT FOOTFALL AND WAITING TIME IN HOSPITAL OPD

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Abstract

The magnitude of India's population is one of the major challenges for healthcare providers in India, and digitalization has helped hospitals utilize real-time patient records to improve service delivery (Sai Prashanthi et al., 2021). Management of patient footfall is an important aspect in improving efficiency and becomes more relevant in the context of India, where healthcare resources are limited in relation to the demand. A well-structured patient management programme can enhance care coordination, streamline transitions, boost patient outcomes, and increase revenues within hospital settings (Al Harbi et al., 2024). Predicting patient footfall aids in the better management of waiting lines, thereby improving service (Bleustein et al., 2014a). The footfall trends also help in understanding whether resources are under- or over-utilized, aiding in making improvements in capacity utilization (Bagust et al., 1999). Predicting patient footfall also aids in streamlining the scheduling process and improving workflow efficiency (Cote, 1999). It has also been found that improper management of patient footfall can lead to reduced patient satisfaction and compromised quality (Doyle et al., 2013).

In this article, we investigate the measurement of patient experience through patient waiting time and footfall using Machine Learning techniques. Value-based healthcare is a path to achieving the aspirational goals of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's "triple aim"—improving the patient experience of care, improving the health of populations, and reducing the per capita cost of healthcare (Teisberg et al., 2020). It is evident that to enhance the patient experience of care, the efficiency of the healthcare system must be improved (van Staalduinen et al., 2022). Another aspect that has a direct impact on both efficiency and patient perception of quality is waiting time. The waiting time in the hospital is linked to the patients' satisfaction and impacts the quality of medical care provided (Li et al., 2023a). Accurate prediction of patient footfall and waiting time is crucial for enhancing the operational efficiency of healthcare facilities. We answer the following research questions in this context.

1. How accurately can statistical and machine learning models predict daily patient footfall in a hospital setting using historical and time-based features?
2. Which learning model provides the most reliable and generalizable performance for forecasting patient footfall across different departments?
3. How accurately can machine learning models predict the waiting time of patients in a department?
4. What are the most important features? How does a feature influence the prediction?
5. What will be the implications of the study on implementing the Value Agenda?





A real data set from the outpatient department of a hospital located in Kerala is used to build the predictive models. We have used time series models, including ARIMA and SARIMA, and machine learning models, including Random Forests, Support Vector Regression, XGBoost, and Neural Network, to predict patient footfall. Random Forests, Support Vector Regression, and Neural Network models were used to predict patient waiting time. We have identified the important features in both cases. Interpretable machine learning techniques are used to determine the most important features, along with their contributions, using partial dependence plots and Shapley values. We find that Random Forest performs the best among the Machine Learning models used.





BRICS IN TRANSITION: UNRAVELLING GDP DYNAMICS THROUGH ECONOMETRIC SPECTROGRAMS

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Abstract

Objective: This research aims to explore the changing macroeconomic determinants of GDP in the BRICS countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—from 1995 to 2023. As the global economic landscape undergoing multiple shifts driven by crises, policy changes, and structural changes, this study aims to pinpoint the primary drivers of GDP and reveal unique temporal and frequency-based economic dynamics for each of the member nation of BRICS.

Research Gap: Despite abundant research on GDP determinants in emerging economies, most studies rely on static regression or pooled-panel models, often neglecting country-specific dynamics and temporal variations. Theoretically, prior analyses insufficiently integrates structural complexity measures like ECI and COI into macroeconomic growth frameworks. Methodologically, few studies integrate robust variable selection (e.g., LAD-LASSO), structural break identification, and time-frequency spectral analysis (e.g., Wavelet Coherency) into a cohesive approach. This study addresses these shortcomings by offering a detailed, time-sensitive analysis that supports tailored policy design across diverse national contexts.

Methodology: Country-wise analysis is used to preserve economic heterogeneity across BRICS. Year-over-year ratios ensure comparability, and ADF tests confirm stationarity. Adaptive LAD-LASSO identifies key GDP predictors while handling outliers. Structural breaks are detected using Bai-Perron tests across all variables. Finally, Wavelet Coherency Analysis explores time-frequency dynamics between GDP and significant variables. The study leverages R for robust econometric and signal processing techniques.

Findings: The analysis reveals substantial variation in GDP determinants across BRICS nations. Imports and Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) emerge as consistently significant, underscoring the importance of trade and domestic investment. China displays the most complex economic structure with a broader range of influential variables, while Brazil and Russia's GDP are more closely tied to trade and capital flows. Interestingly, structural indicators like the Economic Complexity Index (ECI) and Complexity Outlook Index (COI) show negative associations with GDP in countries like China and Brazil, possibly reflecting transitional economic trade-offs.





Structural break analysis via the Bai-Perron test highlights disruptions aligned with major global events, such as the 1998 Russian crisis, 2008 global financial crisis, and the 2020 pandemic. Inflation and complexity-related variables exhibit frequent shifts, whereas FDI flows appear more stable.

Wavelet Coherency Analysis uncovers time-varying and non-linear relationships, with stronger coherency during crisis periods—particularly in China and South Africa—emphasizing the importance of time-frequency approaches in capturing evolving macroeconomic linkages.

Originality and Contribution: This study enhances growth diagnostics by combining robust variable selection, structural break detection, and spectral analysis. By avoiding the oversimplification of pooled models, it provides tailored, time-sensitive insights that conventional regression approaches often miss.

Practical Implications: The results suggest that policymakers should pursue flexible, country-specific strategies for economic growth. While trade openness and capital formation are key drivers, the effects of structural reforms and complexity improvements must be evaluated within the context of each nation's economic framework and developmental stage.





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EDUCATION'S IMPACT ON EMPLOYABILITY: MAPPING VALUE ADDITION WITHIN INDIA'S EDUCATION-TO-WORK PIPELINE

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Abstract

Mismatch within the 3E's i.e. (Education, Employment, and Employability) in the Indian sphere creates and perpetuates an inequitable environment in the country. By evaluating factors such as knowledge level, economic status and quality of life, this paper focuses on mapping the value addition of education in order to determine the relationship between quality of education and employability. This is a mixed-methods study that utilized tools such as the School-to-Work Transition Survey (SWTS) and the Employability Assessment tool. We found that, due to a heavy focus on traditional learning methodologies, orthodox higher education did not improve the employability of the individual. This inference highlighted the deep rift between the visions of educational actors and the requirements of employers, thereby necessitating systemic-level changes and multi-stakeholder collaboration for policy reform, in order to bridge this gap.





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MINI MOGULS ONLINE: A STUDY OF DIGITAL CHILDPRENEURSHIP IN THE PLATFORM ECONOMY

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Abstract

Childpreneurs are exploring new opportunities for entrepreneurship because to the proliferation of the platform economy, which provides them with digital tools to develop, promote, and earn from their ideas. The subject of digital childpreneurs, often known as "Mini Moguls Online," is examined in this study in the framework of the platform economy. The study examines how childpreneurs who use websites like YouTube, Instagram, Etsy, and coding-based marketplaces to launch entrepreneurial ventures with a particular focus on kids between the ages of 10 and 15 in India. The study investigates key factors including technological access, parental and educational support, digital literacy, and motivations behind early entrepreneurship in association with the role of triggers including family influence, exposure to digital tools, experiential learning, and peer inspiration. The research highlights contemporary trends such as gamified entrepreneurship, social media influence, and school-based startup programs. This study uses a mixed-methods approach to investigate digital child entrepreneurship in the context of the platform economy's changing landscape. In order to comprehend the experiences, motivations, difficulties, and support networks of kid entrepreneurs working in online markets, the methodology is intended to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The study concludes by proposing a framework for responsibly supporting digital child entrepreneurship through inclusive policies, platform accountability, educational interventions and policy initiatives to cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets in children from an early age.





FACTORIES, FACTORS, AND FEDERALISM: UNPACKING MAKE IN INDIA'S IMPACT ON STATE PRODUCTIVITY

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Abstract

The path to economic development has long been debated in both academic and policy circles. Classical perspectives, such as Kaldor (1967), argue that manufacturing drives economic growth. Mehrotra (2020) similarly contends that sustained growth and poverty alleviation are not achievable without a thriving manufacturing sector. Notably, manufacturing tends to exhibit *unconditional convergence*, where productivity across countries converges toward the global frontier over time (Rodrik, 2013). Additionally, it offers strong backward and forward linkages (Hirschman, 1958), meaning it stimulates demand for inputs and supports sectors using its outputs. Rising incomes also increase demand for manufactured goods, further boosting growth (Haraguchi et al., 2017).

For middle-income countries, manufacturing is particularly vital. Su and Yao (2017) find that its growth significantly influences other sectors and drives capital and technological accumulation. However, in the past two decades, the rise of global services has sparked debate over whether manufacturing still holds this central role (Haraguchi et al., 2017). Some argue skill-intensive services could be a new engine of growth, as they generate productivity-enhancing spillovers (Romer, 1990).

Yet others caution that services alone cannot replace manufacturing. Long-term growth is better supported when services are coupled with manufacturing and construction (Chakravarty & Mitra, 2009). Dasgupta and Singh (2005) highlight their interdependence, with services both relying on and supplying inputs to manufacturing (Kathuria & Natarajan, 2013). Moreover, unlike manufacturing, services have not shown the same positive impact on productivity and GDP (McCausland & Theodossiou, 2015).

This context makes India's structural transformation particularly significant. Despite being service-led, with services contributing over half of GDP, manufacturing has consistently contributed less than 20% (World Bank Open Data). In response, the Indian government launched the *Make in India* initiative on September 25, 2014, aiming to revitalize the manufacturing sector.

Evaluating this initiative's impact, especially on Total Factor Productivity (TFP), is critical. As emphasized by Mills (1952), Hulten (1979), and Krugman (1994), productivity is central to economic welfare and living standards. Krugman famously noted, "Productivity isn't everything, but in the long run it is almost everything."

Our study is the first, to our knowledge, to assess *Make in India's* effect on manufacturing TFP across Indian states. We use plant-level data from the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), covering FY 2008–





2021. ASI, the official industrial statistics of India, provides high coverage, tracking over 65,000 plants annually. Despite challenges in handling the data, it offers valuable granularity.

We estimate TFP at the state level and assess the initiative's impact using a Difference-in-Differences (DiD) approach. Preliminary results suggest states with higher industrialization have benefited more. We also plan to analyze state-level impacts on exports. The project is currently in the data cleaning and preparation phase.





MAKING DO TOGETHER: A SCOPING REVIEW OF BRICOLAGE IN NETWORKS

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Abstract

Bricolage—the adaptive practice of recombining resources at hand —enables actors in resource-constrained environments to transform scarcity into opportunity (Baker & Nelson, 2005), while social networks provide the relational infrastructure that makes such ingenuity possible (Granovetter, 1973; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The dynamic intersection of these forces catalyzes resilient innovation, empowering marginalized entrepreneurs to circumvent exclusion, organizations to navigate crises, and communities to forge sustainable solutions where traditional systems falter. This scoping review synthesizes peer-reviewed research on the recursive relationship between social networks and bricolage, using PRISMA-ScR (Tricco et al., 2018). The result of the scoping review indicates four themes. (1) Network structure/composition - the effectiveness of bricolage depends on the structural pattern of the network in which it works. Specifically, the dimensions of relational strength (tie strength), embeddedness and norms of governance are of particular salience. The network organizes access to heterogeneous resources (material, assets, e.g. financial capital, intangible enablers, e.g. legitimacy), by modulation, hierarchically, a prime infrastructure supporting the bricolage practice. (2) Process mechanisms - process mechanism explain how network resources are transformed into bricolage action. The research uncovers three causal pathways: (a) mediation effects whereby network links enable bricolage that is in turn yields outcomes; (b) moderation effects whereby network characteristics amplify or dampen the effectiveness of bricolage; and (c) orchestration processes whereby networked assets are concertedly aligned. (3) Contextual Applications - Contextual applications indicate how the sector-specific constraints, i.e. institutional void in informal economies, time compression during crisis, and sustainability requirements, essentially re-arrange the networks bricolage relationship across poverty alleviation, disaster response, and climate adaptation settings. (4) The empirical evidence indicates a continuum of transformational results: catalytic innovation, institutional change, and community resiliency. Such successes have recursive network enrichment properties, whereby bricolage reinforces social capital, redistributes power, and expands access to resources in the future, leading to a self-reinforcing cycle of building capabilities.

The review identifies significant knowledge gaps. Current research inadequately examines network-driven bricolage as a longitudinal process, neglecting co-evolution across organizational lifecycles. Concurrently, research pays insufficient attention to power asymmetries within networks, particularly how marginalized actors face exclusion from resource flows despite demonstrating bricolage ingenuity. As its central contribution, this study advances a network-informed bricolage framework integrating structure, process, context, and outcomes. This paradigm repositions bricolage beyond individual improvisation to a collective capability where networks serve as dynamic infrastructures, bricolage functions as a catalytic engine, and outcomes recursively enrich network capital.





We advocate applying this framework to strengthen crisis-response policies through distributed bricolage networks, empower marginalized entrepreneurs by bridging institutional voids, and embed adaptive capabilities into organizational growth strategies. Through this synthesis, networked bricolage emerges as a critical lever for systemic adaptation—transforming constraints into engines of equitable innovation in an era of compounding challenges.





CARBON PERFORMANCE AND CORPORATE FINANCIAL OUTCOMES: THE MODERATING ROLE OF FIRM SIZE IN INDIAN CORPORATES

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to examine the impact of carbon performance (CP)—measured through actual Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions—on corporate financial performance (CFP) in Indian firms. It also investigates whether firm size moderates this relationship. The research is situated within emerging discourse on responsible business practices, ESG integration, and India's commitment to reducing emissions intensity under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The research addresses the strategic integration of environmental accountability into core business outcomes in an emerging economy setting.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The empirical analysis is based on panel data from 68 Indian non-financial firms over the period 2018–2023. Carbon performance is captured using absolute emission measures, while CFP is assessed using ROA, ROE, and Tobin's Q. Firm size is proxied by the logarithm of total assets. The core estimation method is the two-step System Generalized Method of Moments (GMM), which addresses endogeneity, firm-level heterogeneity, and dynamic relationships (Arellano & Bover, 1995; Blundell & Bond, 1998). For robustness, Fixed Effects (FE) and Random Effects (RE) models are also estimated to validate baseline associations and interaction effects.

Findings: The results reveal a significant negative association between carbon emissions and Tobin's Q, indicating that firms with higher emissions are penalized in terms of market valuation. The effect on ROA and ROE is weaker or insignificant. Notably, the interaction term between carbon performance and firm size is positive and significant in the GMM model, suggesting that larger firms are better positioned to translate carbon efficiency into financial gains, likely due to superior resources, stakeholder engagement, and regulatory preparedness.

Research limitations/implications: The analysis is limited to publicly listed non-financial firms with available emissions data, which may restrict its applicability to SMEs or private firms. Future research could incorporate broader ESG dimensions or sectoral dynamics.

Practical implications: The study shows that carbon efficiency can be financially beneficial, especially for larger firms, reinforcing the value of integrating environmental responsibility into business strategy. It also informs policymakers on the need to design incentives and regulatory tools that support carbon management, especially for smaller firms with limited capacity.

Originality/Value: This study contributes uniquely by using actual carbon emissions data rather than disclosure indices and by applying GMM as the main estimation strategy to rigorously test the CP–CFP





link in an emerging market. The inclusion of firm size as a moderating variable further enhances the explanatory power and policy relevance of the findings.





AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF LABOUR MIGRATION IN SELECT DISTRICTS OF JHARKHAND: THE ROLE OF REMITTANCES HOUSEHOLD INCOME, AND MIGRATION COSTS

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Abstract

Introduction: Labour migration plays a crucial role in the rural economies of India, providing a coping mechanism for households facing economic challenges. Jharkhand, a resource-rich state, experiences significant out-migration from its rural and tribal areas. This migration has profound implications for the financial stability and vulnerability of the households left behind. This study seeks to empirically assess the financial impact of labour migration on rural households in Jharkhand, focusing on the roles of remittances, household income, and migration cost.

Need of the Study: The need for this study arises from the significant role of migration in Jharkhand's rural economy, where agriculture struggles due to low productivity, seasonal fluctuations, and external shocks. While remittances are often considered a vital income source, the costs associated with migration—such as travel expenses and migration-related debts—may offset the benefits, leading to increased long-term financial vulnerability. The impact of migration on household financial resilience and vulnerability has not been adequately explored in Jharkhand's context.

Scope of the Study: This study focuses on the key districts of Dhanbad and Bokaro, where significant migration occurs, both to urban areas within Jharkhand and to other states. The study examines income changes, savings patterns, and remittances, with primary data collected through household surveys and interviews with migrant and non-migrant households. A total of 437 households (254 migrant and 183 non-migrant) were surveyed to understand their migration experiences and the related economic implications.

Methods: The study employs descriptive statistics to summarize the key financial variables such as income, savings, and remittances. Multiple regression analysis is applied to test the relationship between migration status and household financial resilience, controlling for other variables like household size and education. To explore how migration costs affect financial stability, moderation analysis is employed to study the impact of migration costs on the relationship between remittances and household financial vulnerability.

Findings and Implications: The findings reveal that migration significantly improves household income and savings, with remittances playing a critical role in enhancing financial stability. However, migration-related costs, such as debt and travel expenses, are found to reduce the long-term financial benefits for many households. Households with higher migration costs report greater financial vulnerability, as remittances do not fully compensate for the migration-related expenses. The study underscores the need





for supportive financial services and policies to reduce migration-related costs to strengthen the financial resilience of rural households in Jharkhand.

Originality of the Study: This study offers a unique empirical contribution by exploring the complex dynamics between remittances and migration costs, filling a gap in existing research on the financial vulnerability of migrant-sending households. It provides valuable insights for improving the economic sustainability of migration as a livelihood strategy in rural Jharkhand. **Keywords:** Labour migration, Remittances, Financial resilience, Migration costs, Jharkhand.





FINANCIAL DECISIONS IN FLUX: A TALE OF DIVERGING ECONOMIES UNCOVERING STRATEGIC CASH BEHAVIOUR IN UNCERTAIN MACROECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTS.

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Abstract

In an increasingly volatile economy, corporate cash holdings have emerged as a vital financial buffer, particularly for manufacturing firms navigating complex capital structures. This study undertakes a comparative investigation into the dynamics of cash holdings in developed and emerging economies, with a specific focus on the United States and India. Integrating core concepts from the Trade-Off, Pecking Order, and Agency theories, the research explores how financial leverage influences cash holding behaviour under the moderating effects of economic policy uncertainty (EPU). Utilizing a decade-long panel dataset (2015–2024) of manufacturing firms from both economies, the study employs panel regression techniques to capture heterogeneity in financial strategies across market contexts. The findings are expected to reveal non-linear relationships between Financial leverage and liquidity management, showcasing how various macroeconomic shocks collectively shape cash-holding policies. Notably, the study anticipates that EPU amplifies precautionary motives in emerging markets. By uncovering these contextual and structural nuances, this research not only contributes to corporate finance literature but also provides actionable insights for financial managers and policymakers. The study aligns with global sustainability objectives by promoting responsible financial strategies that enhance firm resilience, innovation, and economic inclusivity.





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PURCHASE CONFIDENCE VIA AR-VTO: INFLUENCE ON SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR AND PREMIUM WILLINGNESS IN LUXURY MARKET

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Abstract

Our study investigates the underexplored nexus of Augmented Reality Virtual Try-On (AR-VTO), purchase confidence, consumer willingness to pay a premium, and sustainable purchase behavior within the luxury retail sector. While recent studies highlight the necessity for luxury brand engagement frameworks leveraging social media (Aldhamiri et al., 2024) and the importance of perceived immersion in virtual experiences (Raza et al., 2024), a significant gap remains in understanding the tangible economic value and sustainability implications of AR-VTO in this high-value context. Existing literature touches upon AR-VTO's potential for enhancing retailer operational efficiency (Tan et al., 2022) and promoting sustainability by reducing returns (Watson et al., 2020), but a comprehensive model integrating these benefits with consumer financial commitment specifically, willingness to pay a premium has been largely absent.

This research addresses these gaps by exploring the mediating role of retailer operational efficiency. Drawing on Functional Attitude Theory and Social Exchange Theory, we posited that AR-VTO, by enhancing operational efficiency, would strengthen consumer purchase confidence, subsequently driving a willingness to pay a premium for sustainable luxury goods. To test our hypotheses and validate the underlying theoretical framework, a survey was administered using a questionnaire developed from a comprehensive literature review, with variables measured on a five-point Likert scale. A total of 664 consumers, all AR-VTO users and specifically queried about their willingness to pay a premium for luxury products, participated in the study.

Our findings confirm a significant positive correlation: efficient AR-VTO implementation bolsters consumer confidence, leading to increased premium willingness for sustainable luxury items. This study bridges the gap between the perceived benefits of AR-VTO and actual market behavior, demonstrating that AR-VTO is not merely a tool for engagement and efficiency but a strategic enabler for cultivating a consumer base more inclined towards sustainable luxury, thereby validating its role in driving both profitability and environmental responsibility.





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ASYMMETRIC VOLATILITY DYNAMICS IN INDIAN CAPITAL MARKETS: IMPLICATIONS FOR INVESTOR BEHAVIOR AND MARKET STABILITY

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the asymmetric relationship between the India Volatility Index (IVIX) and Nifty 50 returns, addressing a critical gap in understanding how volatility shocks differentially impact emerging market dynamics. While existing literature predominantly assumes symmetric market responses, this research investigates whether positive and negative volatility changes create distinct behavioral patterns among investors, thereby influencing market stability and social welfare outcomes in India's capital markets.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The analysis utilizes daily observations of IVIX and Nifty 50 spanning April 2015 to March 2025, employing a nonlinear autoregressive distributed lag (NARDL) framework to detect both short-run and long-run asymmetries. IVIX returns are decomposed into positive and negative cumulative components to capture differential investor reactions to volatility shocks. The methodology incorporates unit root tests (ADF and PP) to confirm return series stationarity, with optimal lag selection determined through the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC). ARDL bounds testing validates the existence of long-run cointegrating relationships between variables.

Findings: The bounds test produces F-statistics significantly exceeding critical thresholds, confirming cointegration between decomposed IVIX components and Nifty 50 returns. The error correction mechanism demonstrates negative and highly significant coefficients, indicating rapid equilibrium adjustment following market shocks. Short-run analysis reveals statistically significant coefficients for both positive and negative IVIX shocks, with positive shocks exhibiting stronger immediate adverse effects on market returns. However, long-run coefficients prove statistically insignificant, suggesting that asymmetric volatility influences represent transient rather than permanent market phenomena.

Research Limitations/Implications: The study focuses exclusively on IVIX-Nifty interactions without incorporating macroeconomic or global financial variables, presenting opportunities for future research expansion. Despite these limitations, the findings offer substantial implications for market participants, regulatory authorities, and policymakers. The research provides evidence-based insights for developing more effective risk management frameworks, enhancing trading strategies, and designing regulatory interventions that protect retail investors while maintaining market efficiency.





Originality/Value: This research contributes significantly to behavioral finance literature by empirically validating short-run asymmetry in India's stock market, offering novel insights into investor psychology and market dynamics. The study's social impact extends beyond academic contribution, providing actionable knowledge for portfolio managers, risk analysts, and regulatory bodies to develop more inclusive and stable financial markets. By understanding differential responses to volatility shocks, stakeholders can design better investor protection mechanisms and promote financial inclusion while maintaining market integrity.





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“WHEN MACHINES TELL STORIES”: GEN Z'S RESPONSE TO AI-CRAFTED BRAND NARRATIVES

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming the landscape of brand communication, particularly in how narratives are conceptualized, created, and delivered. Brands are increasingly deploying AI to generate content—including copy, visuals, music, and story arcs—with estimates indicating that 30–50% of brand communication today is AI-assisted, a figure expected to rise to 80% in the near future (Ratta et al., 2023; Forbes, 2025). Despite this surge in AI adoption, the creative and emotional dimensions of AI-generated storytelling remain underexplored in academic literature, which has largely focused on AI's operational and targeting efficiencies.

This study addresses this gap by investigating Gen Z's responses to AI-crafted brand narratives, with a focus on emotional engagement, perceived authenticity, and trust. The research has two primary objectives: (i) to analyse real-world AI-integrated brand campaigns through the lens of the Brand Experience framework, and (ii) to explore how Gen Z consumers perceive and interact with AI-generated storytelling.

Adopting a qualitative, exploratory approach, the study employs a multi-case inductive research design (Davis & Eisenhardt, 2011). It draws upon secondary data—including media reports, official brand communications, and public domain video content—to analyse three brand campaigns: Nike (innovation and legacy), Coca-Cola (visual spectacle), and Google (data-driven emotion). Thematic analysis was used to surface insights into how AI-driven storytelling shapes emotional and cognitive engagement among Gen Z audiences.

Findings indicate that while AI enhances narrative scalability and production efficiency, the success of such storytelling efforts depends on their ability to create immersive, emotionally resonant experiences. Gen Z, a cohort known for its skepticism of inauthentic messaging, responds more positively when AI-generated narratives maintain human-centric values, ethical transparency, and cultural sensitivity. The study underscores that AI should be positioned not merely as a generative tool but as a creative collaborator that enables emotionally rich and trustworthy brand narratives (Guerra-Tamez et al., 2024; Ratta et al., 2023).

This research contributes to emerging discourse on AI and marketing creativity by offering actionable insights for practitioners and researchers seeking to balance technological innovation with the human need for meaning in brand experiences.





STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES: A DATA-DRIVEN TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES AT SAIL

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Abstract

In an era defined by economic uncertainty and workforce transformation, India's Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) must reimagine leadership development to sustain performance and strategic relevance. The Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), as one of the largest state-owned enterprises, exemplifies the challenges and opportunities faced by a PSU, striving for strategic agility, operational excellence, and leadership transformation. In this context, competency-based leadership development is no longer optional, it is a strategic imperative.

This study presents a large-scale, data-driven Training Needs Analysis (TNA) conducted at SAIL, targeting senior executives at the level of E8 Chief General Managers (CGMs) and E9 Executive Directors (EDs). Using a customized self-assessment instrument grounded in SAIL's proprietary Managerial Competency Framework, the research captures self-reported proficiency across eight core leadership competencies: Strategic Focus, Business Acumen, Customer Orientation, External Stakeholder Management, People Management, Execution Excellence, Change Management, and Managing Self.

Each competency was assessed through ten behaviorally anchored Likert-scale items and three open-ended reflective questions. The dataset, comprising 43 responses from senior executives at SAIL, was collected starting June 5, 2025, over a period of one month, and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Descriptive statistics were first used to identify overall competency strengths and gaps. To ensure internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha was computed for each competency dimension, all of which demonstrated acceptable to high reliability ($\alpha > 0.7$).

A novel contribution of the study lies in the use of K-means clustering to segment managers into distinct archetypes based on their competency profiles. This learning approach revealed three actionable clusters, e.g., "Execution-Driven Managers", "Strategic Thinkers with Low People Engagement", and "Balanced Leaders", each of which requires tailored developmental interventions. Further, multiple linear regression was employed to explore the relationship between individual competencies and training urgency. Competencies such as Strategic Focus and Change Management emerged as significant predictors, highlighting areas where investment in learning can yield high returns.

In addition to empirical rigor, the study introduces a data-driven and AI-assisted vision for Learning & Development (L&D) in PSUs. Based on the patterns extracted from the clustering and regression analyses,





the paper proposes a framework for AI-powered personalization of learning interventions. This approach enables personalized learning journeys, ensures efficient resource utilization, and facilitates data-driven performance tracking, all in alignment with the principles of strategic human resource management (HRM).

The research holds practical significance for HR practitioners, policymakers, and public enterprise leaders seeking to modernize talent development systems within legacy institutions. It also makes an academic contribution by demonstrating how advanced analytics, behavioral science, and AI can converge to enrich organizational diagnosis and leadership planning in the Indian public sector, a domain often underrepresented in global management literature.

This study offers a replicable and scalable roadmap for transforming managerial development in large, complex organizations like SAIL. The implications extend far beyond a single organization, offering adaptable frameworks for the future of leadership in the Indian public sector at large.





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BRIDGING NUTRITION AND POLICY GAPS: IDENTIFYING AND ANALYZING CHALLENGES IN UTILIZING MILLETS THROUGH THE INDIAN PDS USING DELPHI AND DEMATEL METHODS

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Abstract

India's public distribution system (PDS) is one of the largest subsidised food distribution programs in the world. Since 1997, the PDS is continuously working to distribute essential commodities to rural and urban consumers in India. Several reports indicate that approximately 80 crore people are getting benefits from the PDS system. Although the PDS is effective in distributing some basic commodities at a larger scale, some studies indicate that approximately 14.5% population of India is suffering from malnutrition. The millets have essential vitamins and fibre. By supplying millets with regular commodities with the help of the PDS, the nutrition issues can be solved to a greater extent. Despite the recognised benefits of millets, their integration into India's PDS has been limited. Many challenges, such as lack of awareness, acceptance of consumers, arranging supply chains till last mile delivery etc, are hindering the efforts. To understand this gap, this study systematically explores the challenges from the academic literature and industry reports. Then, a Delphi technique is used to validate the extracted challenges for the current scenario. Experts from the PDS, academics working in the supply chain are contacted to validate the extracted challenges. The nutritional and ecological benefits of millets, their integration into India's Public Distribution System (PDS) remain limited and fragmented. Some of the important challenges extracted from the analysis are poor infrastructure, leakages in the system, weak awareness in the consumer, issues in institutional design, administrative bottlenecks, etc. This study also aims to explore the causal relationships between the extracted challenges. To achieve this objective Grey-DEMATEL technique will be used. The Grey scale enables the researcher to capture the uncertainty associated with the decision-making process. Experts from the supply chain area, PDS, and consumers will be contacted to collect the data for Grey-DEMATEL analysis. The findings will enable researchers to explore the hidden relationships between the challenges and help the researchers to explore the root cause behind the problem. The study offers numerous policy-level suggestions which can help to integrate the supply of millets into the Indian PDS to overcome the malnutrition issue in the country. This research also contributes to advancing India's goals under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2 and SDG 12).





REIMAGINING ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN GREEN MARKETING: A SPAR-4 SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AMID THE RISE OF ECO-DIGITAL CONSUMERS

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Abstract

Purpose – Anthropomorphism, or giving human-like traits to non-human things, has become a powerful tool in green marketing. It helps brands build emotional connections and encourage sustainable choices. From talking eco-mascots and friendly packaging to AI-powered brand characters, marketers use human cues to make environmental issues feel more personal. While interest in this area is growing, the research is still scattered. This study takes a close look at what has been done so far. It maps out the main themes and offers a clearer direction for future work.

Design/Methodology/Approach – This review follows the SPAR-4-SLR method. It draws from 62 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015 and 2025, all sourced from the Web of Science. A structured keyword search guided which studies were included. The analysis used thematic coding and science mapping, and followed three stages of sensemaking: scanning, sensing, and substantiating.

Findings – The review highlights four main areas of research. First, the use of human-like features in green product design and packaging. Second, how brand humanisation builds trust in eco-friendly messages. Third, the emotional and moral responses triggered by anthropomorphic environmental figures. And fourth, how personified sustainability messages shape consumer behaviour. These approaches often lead to feelings like empathy, guilt, and moral duty. Still, the field has gaps. Most studies are based in Western settings. There's not much on newer forms like AI influencers. And links to theories such as construal level theory, emotional contagion, or moral psychology are still weak.

Originality/Value – This is one of the first studies to apply the SPAR-4 review model to this topic using Web of Science data. It brings together what we know, points out what's missing, and suggests where research could go next. The paper adds to the wider conversation on how human-like cues can be used in ethical and strategic ways to support environmental thinking and action across different cultures and contexts.





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ALGORITHMS AT WORK: RETHINKING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Abstract

Introduction: The organizational landscape has been drastically transforming with the potential transformative quality of artificial intelligence (AI). In today's world, AI has expanded its boundaries across different domains by blurring the definition of "limits" and helping in significantly reshaping performance management by transforming feedback & assessment from static, annual reviews to constant data-driven systems. With approximately 54-58% of organizations currently using AI for real-time performance systems, the dashboards reportedly boosted team efficiency by 35% & the quality of feedback by 40%.

Purpose: This study aims to critically examine AI's evolving role in the performance management systems by moving from conventional to agile & data-driven frameworks. It focuses on:

1. The strategic impact of the AI's application on managerial decision-making, performance accuracy, & employee behaviour.
2. Challenges arising due to algorithmic biases, ethical oversight & employee trust breaches.
3. The balance between leveraging AI's capabilities & sustaining the human-centric values.

Method: This study uses a thematic analysis approach that looks at peer-reviewed articles from academic journals, theses, conference proceedings, organizational white papers & reports published between 2018 and 2025. Sources were selected on the basis of their relevance to AI's role in performance management, managerial decision-making & organizational behaviour.

The key themes-like algorithmic biases, ethical oversight, & employee trust breaches- were identified & interpreted through 3 theoretical lenses: JD-R (to examine how AI acts both as a resource & stressor), SET (to inspect the shift in trust & reciprocity between employees & AI-enabled performance management systems), & Organizational Justice theory (to assess perceptions of fairness).

Results: The sources show that while opting for AI in PMS has shown a significant growth in the mentioned areas: 30-32% rise in employee engagement, goal achievement improved by 50-71%, identifying underperformance by 27%, and 83% of employees (Deloitte) believed AI helps in setting clear goals & reduces unfair biases. In spite of the positive results, the concrete evidence remains limited. There is a lack of longitudinal studies, specifically around how AI impacts organizational culture & employee trust, growing concerns about algorithmic bias, transparency & ethical practices, and the findings also suggest that AI-human hybrid models may be more trusted than fully automated systems.





Conclusion: Artificial Intelligence has the ability to transform PMS by increasing productivity, fairness, & strategic insights. However, the concrete proofs are still in the initial stages. The future studies/research ought to:

1. Undertake cross-cultural & longitudinal studies.
2. Examine frameworks for ethics, trust, & transparency.
3. Evaluate the human-AI hybrid model in feedback systems.

Developing flexible, morally sound frameworks that support AI-human collaboration while upholding the fundamental human values is critical for advancing HR practices.





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SMART DEVICES, SMARTER CHOICES: EXPLORING THE TRUST– PRIVACY TRADE-OFF IN SMART HOME ADOPTION

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Abstract

Smart Home Devices, especially devices using cameras and sensors, such as – security cameras, door bells, etc., are reshaping the domestic lifestyles providing automation, convenience and control. Even with their increasing popularity, user adoption behaviour is still complex and influenced by perceived risks as well as cognitive assessments. This study focuses on two important psychological aspects that influence adoption decisions: privacy concerns and manufacturer trust. Trust is formed by the perceptions of brand credibility, security architecture, device reliability and transparency in handling the data. Conversely, privacy concerns rise from the fears of surveillance, misuse of data, and also unauthorized access of personal information. Users often face a privacy-personalization trade-off, in which they should weigh the advantages of device intelligence and automation against the risks of jeopardizing their personal data. The proposed research model examines how trust and privacy concerns influence the adoption intention towards smart home devices. The model is empirically tested using a quantitative research design. Data is collected through a structured survey targeting urban consumers in India who is currently using or considering using smart home devices. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to validate the hypothesized relationships and identify key predictors of adoption intention. The contributions of the study are: theoretically, adding consumer technology adoption models with the integration of privacy and trust dimensions; practically, by offering strategic guidance for manufacturers and service providers on building user trust and addressing privacy expectations; By exploring the cognitive and risk-based processes underlying user decisions, this research seeks to provide a holistic understanding of smart home technology adoption in data-sensitive environments.





1209

INFLATION AND INEQUALITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A MICROSIMULATION ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL PRICE SHOCKS

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Abstract

This study re-examines the distributional consequences of inflation in the contemporary global economic context, characterized by persistent and synchronized inflationary pressures across both developed and developing economies. Leveraging recent household-level microdata and integrating both traditional money income and a broader measure of economic well-being—Accrued Comprehensive Income (ACI)—this research aims to assess how inflation redistributes real income across various income classes in the 2020s. Using an updated microsimulation framework, the paper models multiple inflationary scenarios: global supply-driven inflation (e.g., energy and food price shocks), demand-pull inflation induced by fiscal stimuli, and persistent core inflation. The study also incorporates real-time policy responses such as interest rate hikes, targeted transfers, and wage indexation mechanisms. Preliminary findings suggest that lower-income households continue to face real income erosion due to higher consumption exposure to volatile essentials, whereas middle-income households experience mixed effects depending on labor market attachment and fiscal transfers. Crucially, the real income trajectories of higher-income groups hinge on the chosen income metric—those relying heavily on nominal asset gains appear to benefit under money income measures, but see relative losses under ACI when asset revaluation effects are corrected for inflation. These results have critical implications for the design of inflation-targeting frameworks and redistributive policy instruments in the post-pandemic era.





1210

FROM CONNECTION TO CONFRONTATION: A MEDIATED PATH ANALYSIS OF GEN Z'S ATTACHMENT PATTERNS AND CONFLICT BEHAVIOURS

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Abstract

Drawing on the interpersonal model of intimacy and the attachment theory, this study utilises structural equation modelling (SEM) to explore the relationships between an individual's attachment style and their conflict management styles mediated by ability to establish with a particular focus on Generation Z. The research examines how intimacy mediates employees' approaches to conflict resolution, including confrontation, compromising, negotiating, resignation and withdrawal strategies. A survey of 203 individuals with less than three years of workplace experience examines the hypothesis that conflict management styles (CMSs) are shaped by the attachment styles of an individual—secure, preoccupied, dismissive, and fearful—mediated by the ability to establish intimate relationships (incorporating self-disclosure, responsiveness, and feelings of validation). The structural models showed good fit in the case of compromise, negotiation, and resignation conflict-handling styles.

The findings suggested that the preoccupied attachment style was associated with lower usage of compromise (-0.116) and negotiation (-0.139), while secure and preoccupied styles were associated with lower confrontation (-0.513 and -0.327 , respectively). Interestingly, the dismissive attachment style was associated with a weak positive indirect effect ($+0.057$) on confrontation, suggesting perhaps a discomfort with intimacy expressed as more explicit conflict behaviour.

The results highlight the importance of fostering formative years, which can have a substantial impact on an individual's ability to establish intimacy with people and, eventually, how an individual deals with conflict. The authors suggest areas for further research, particularly in understanding the unique conflict management behaviours of Generation Z. The article concludes by discussing the theoretical implications of these findings, their practical applications in organisational settings, and recommendations for future research on workplace intimacy and conflict management.





1211

EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS OF INDIAN BANKS THROUGH INTUITIONISTIC FUZZY DATA ENVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

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Abstract

For evaluating the efficiency of decision-making units (DMUs), the traditional dynamic two-stage data envelopment analysis (DEA) is not a reliable method when the data is unclear or ambiguous. An intuitionistic fuzzy two-stage DEA model is presented in this work for scenarios that contain unclear/ambiguous information. The efficiency of the Indian banking sector is assessed in this study using an intuitionistic fuzzy two-stage DEA approach. Through an analysis of Indian banks' internal procedures, the study aims to address problems, including unclear or ambiguous data. The two subsequent phases of the bank's operations that explain the presence of unclear and negative data are premium acquisition and profit. Additionally, this paper examines the productivity shift over several periods in a two-stage DEA at a period when the data are negative and ambiguous. The Prowess database is used to gather data for Indian banks between 2014-15 and 2024-25. This method provides policymakers, regulators, and bank management with insightful information to improve resource allocation and strategic decision-making. To the best of our knowledge, no similar studies have been carried out in India.





1217

AI TO THE RESCUE OF HRM OR IS IT VICE-VERSA?

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Abstract

As organizations build capability to utilize the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in the workplace, three specific groups of thoughts have emerged: optimistic, pessimistic, and neutral, in response to AI and its impact on human resource management (HRM). The optimistic school of thought carries a positive, deterministic outlook towards AI. For example, scholars highlight the potential of AI in driving recruitment, selecting appropriate candidates, building a talent pipeline, performing merit-based performance evaluation, removing human bias, and developing internal talent (Budhwar et al., 2022). In contrast, the pessimistic school of thought carries a negative deterministic outlook, such as technostress, intrusion of privacy, and ethical/moral decision-making (Priksat et al., 2021). However, a neutral perspective does not take deterministic stands; instead, it holds up a balanced standpoint by carefully evaluating and assessing AI's potential in the workplace. While AI in the workplace continues to rise and is debated among practitioners and academic scholars, I take this opportunity to assess AI and HRM from a neutral perspective to understand their role in defining each other. Given the volume of scholarly work completed so far (in HRM and AI), now is an excellent time to reflect on the viewpoints, controversies, and outcomes of this body of work. First, I qualitatively review the AI and HRM literature. Following a detailed and systematic review, I develop a conceptual model representing the dynamic relationship between AI and HRM. Finally, I discuss in more depth how this relationship leads to an organizational outcome, followed by implications and future research directions.





VOICE OF CARE: A COMPARATIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PALLIATIVE CARE POLICIES IN KERALA AND ENGLAND

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Abstract

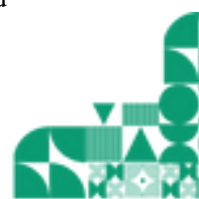
Introduction: Palliative care, once overlooked area in health care systems across the globe has gained acceptance in global policy discourses since it is recognized as a core component of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2014). The policy responses for palliative care integration vary significantly in language, priorities, and ideological framing across regions depending on cultural, institutional, and political contexts. This study aims to conduct a comparative discourse analysis of two globally recognized, but structurally different palliative care systems, Kerala, India and England to explore how these texts construct meaning, role and responsibility of palliative care. Kerala, the southernmost state of India has illustrated a successful model of palliative care delivery in low-resource settings through community participation (Vijay, Monin, & Kulkarni, 2023) and was the first state to implement a state level palliative care policy in 2008, thereby institutionalizing the community driven initiatives in palliative care. England which operates a centrally funded, professionalized care system under the National Health Service (NHS), has produced a series of end-of-life care strategies since 2008, (Sleeman et al., 2021), provides a high benchmark in palliative care policy discourse.

Objectives:

1. To examine how the concepts of care, death, and dignity are constructed and evolved over time within each region's policy texts.
2. To explore how different actors—such as the state, healthcare providers, communities, families, and patients—are positioned and assigned responsibility within the policy narratives and their ideological underpinnings.
3. To compare the discursive strategies used in Kerala and England to articulate goals, justify interventions, and define the scope of palliative care.

Methodology: The study qualitatively compares the policy texts of both regions through Critical Discourse Analysis, to uncover how language is constructing the social reality. Drawing on Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional framework of CDA (Fairclough, 1992), this study evaluates the policy document as a text, as a discursive practice and as a social practice.

Results and Discussion: Preliminary analysis reveal significant contrast between the policies of two regions. The discursive language signifies two distinct models of palliative care policy alignment, decentralized, volunteer driven approach of Kerala and England's professionalized, statutory care system. Kerala bring out the themes of equity, dignity, and social justice—rooted in cultural narratives and socialist philosophy. On the other hand, England evokes professional efficiency, individual choice, and





personalized care. Despite these differences in operationalization, both regions align to the World Health Organization's ethical framing of palliative care. The findings of the study suggest that Palliative care policy documents are not just procedural but an abode of discourse production that frames responsibility, subjectivity and ethics of care. Kerala's discourse evolved from 2008 to 2023 reveals how local governance and grassroots structures actively produce and adapt global health norms. In contrast, England's discourse emphasizes a regulatory framework, echoing its centralized healthcare logic. These variations reflect broader ideological commitments—collectivist vs. individualist, rights-based vs. duty-based, and community-led vs. clinician-led care approaches. Policy documents reveal how and local, institutional and cultural priorities are negotiated with the global norms and standards.





1220

ADVANCE BOOKING AND RETURNS CONTRACT IN AGRICULTURAL-INPUT SUPPLY CHAINS

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Abstract

Rising costs of agricultural ‘inputs’ such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides have increased affordability concerns for farmer collectives and wholesalers, especially in emerging economies. While extant research has largely focussed on farm-level yield uncertainty, less attention has been paid to upstream players like manufacturers and wholesalers of agricultural inputs. A prevalent practice in agricultural input supply chains is advance booking, where manufacturers offer discounts for pre-season orders. This study investigates whether advance booking schemes benefit supply chain entities and improve input affordability. Using a game-theoretic framework, we analyze two supply chain configurations and examine decisions on booking quantities, sales effort, and production quantities. We find that wholesalers exert greater sales effort as supply chain leaders, enabling them to place larger advance orders and reduce reliance on lower-margin regular purchases. Advance booking discounts play a crucial role in incentivizing wholesalers, particularly those with limited financial resources. We also find that the manufacturer’s production decisions are sensitive to both discount levels and cost structures, with higher costs constraining production output. Lastly, under intermediate discount and cost conditions, a returns policy can mitigate wholesaler risk and lead to mutually beneficial outcomes. The study highlights the need for collaborative approaches in addressing affordability and risk in agricultural input supply chains.





INVESTIGATING THE HERDING BEHAVIOUR IN CRYPTO INDUSTRIES

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Abstract

With the advent of technology and the rapid movement of activities towards digitalisation. Cryptocurrencies have emerged as an unconventional market that has become an alternative source of investment for investors by providing them with promising returns and portfolio diversification, especially during any adverse event in the market. A cryptocurrency is a form of electronic money that is produced and stored on the blockchain. While attempts have been made to investigate investor perspectives on cryptocurrencies, the existing literature reveals several gaps, particularly in identifying and exploring in further depth the behavioural biases of the cryptocurrencies. Therefore, to address this literature gap, we focused on exploring and examining the behavioural aspects of cryptocurrencies in various industries. The present investigates the unconditional and conditional herding behaviour in the various cryptocurrency industries using the Chang et al.(2000) model. For the present study, we have looked at the top 6 industries according to marketcap, namely, Asset management, Marketplace, Enterprise Solutions, Payments, Web 3.0 and Medium of Exchange industries. This classification of cryptocurrencies into various industries has been carried out based on the usage of the cryptocurrencies. Moreover, the interconnectivity between these herding behaviours and the crypto Fear and Greed Index is also examined using wavelet coherence analysis. The findings of this study suggest that cryptocurrencies, like any other market, portray herding and anti-herding behaviour. This study has provided empirical evidence that, in general, unconditional and conditional herding behaviour can be found in various industries depending on the nature of the industry and the response of investors. In particular, there is unconditional and conditional herding behaviour in Asset management, Marketplace and Medium of Exchange industries. Further, there is an anti-herding behaviour in the Payments and Web 3.0 industries. The empirical results of this study add broadly to the existing behavioural literature on cryptocurrency. The graphical results of this study where the coherence between the herding coefficients and the crypto FGI has been presented at different levels of frequencies shows that the herding behaviour in the market drives fear and greed in the market and vice versa. Further, it is also evident that such coherence varies across cryptocurrencies' industries. Therefore, it has significant practical implications for investors and policymakers. Investors get a clear understanding of industrial classification of cryptocurrencies, due to which they can diversify their portfolios better. Policymakers can formulate industry-specific policies for the cryptocurrency market in the same way they do for the conventional markets.





1222

TRADE DYNAMICS BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA: IMPACT ON INDIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

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Abstract

This paper investigates on the macro understanding of India and China export potential for the last twenty-two years. Both these countries have emerged as an economic powerhouse with India as a dominant player in services exports and China as a global production house. This paper investigates trade relationship between India and China on India's economic growth for the period 2001-2022. It employs Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) method to understand both the short and long run dynamics. The advantage of the ARDL model compared to traditional regression models is allowing a mix of stationary and non-stationary variables in time series data. China's exports to India have a statistically significant positive effect on GDP growth. However, it's one period lag has a statistically significant negative effect on GDP growth. According to the test results, a one-unit increase in Indian exports to China brings a change of about 0.36 percent in GDP growth while one unit increase in China exports to India now raises GDP growth by approximately by 0.27 percent. A strong positive influence of differences in China exports to India is observed in the short run for GDP growth in India. Thus, the long run association between Indian exports to China, China's exports to India and GDP growth rate of India is difficult to decipher. However, the long run effect is not statistically significant. This research study will be of great value to trade policy planners, business school academics, and macro trade planners for further investigation to understand the trade pattern between these two countries.





POWERING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH AGRICULTURAL WASTE: A HIERARCHICAL BARRIER ASSESSMENT IN THE BIOCOAL-BASED ENERGY SECTOR

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Abstract

The growing global emphasis on decarbonization, coupled with the vast availability of agricultural biomass in developing economies, presents a timely opportunity to transition from fossil fuels to sustainable alternatives such as biocoal. However, despite its potential as a clean and scalable energy source, the biomass briquetting and pelleting (BBP) industry remains underdeveloped due to multiple systemic and structural challenges. This study aims to comprehensively identify and analyze the barriers that hinder the development and growth of the biocoal/whitecoal industry in India, using a supply chain lens. A total of 18 barriers were identified through a detailed review of multidisciplinary literature and validated through expert consultations across key biomass-producing regions in India. These barriers were classified into three analytical levels; macro (policy and institutional), meso (sectoral and supply chain), and micro (firm-level and operational). To explore their interrelationships and relative influence, the study employs Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) to construct a hierarchical framework, followed by MICMAC analysis to categorize barriers based on their driving and dependence power. The ISM results reveal that foundational macro-level barriers, such as lack of government support, weak regulatory enforcement, and inadequate access to finance, exert the highest driving power and form the base of the structural hierarchy. These barriers influence several mid-level challenges related to stakeholder collaboration, knowledge transfer, and supply chain integration. At the top of the hierarchy lie dependent barriers like uncertainty in demand and supply and lack of societal adoption, which are largely outcomes of unresolved systemic issues. MICMAC analysis complements the ISM findings by classifying barriers into four categories; autonomous, dependent, linkage, and independent. Independent barriers, particularly those related to government policy and institutional support, are identified as key levers for system-wide transformation. Conversely, dependent barriers are shown to be less influential but highly impacted by other factors, highlighting the importance of strategic prioritization. The study offers theoretical contributions by applying and extending supply chain and institutional theories to an emerging, under-researched industry. Methodologically, it demonstrates the value of combining ISM and MICMAC techniques for diagnosing complex, interrelated challenges. Practically, it provides a strategic roadmap for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and new entrants, emphasizing the need for targeted policy reforms, capacity building, infrastructure development, and cross-sector collaboration. While this research presents a robust qualitative framework, it acknowledges limitations in the generalizability of adapted barriers and calls for future studies to validate findings through quantitative techniques such as Structural Equation Modeling or system dynamics. Overall, the study highlights how addressing





foundational policy and institutional gaps can unlock the potential of biomass as a sustainable energy source, thereby contributing to national energy security, rural development, and climate goals.





1224

DEI STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATING BIAS IN HR

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Abstract

As organizations strive to foster a diverse and inclusive workforce, the attention has shifted from merely creating a diverse workforce to actively integrating HR practices in organizations. This paper delves into the complex relationship between DEI goals and biases in HR practices, focusing particularly on four prevalent forms of bias: affinity bias, attribution bias, confirmation bias, and confirmatory bias. The paper further examines how these biases manifest in three critical HR functions: hiring and recruitment, performance management, and training. Looking forward, it outlines the strategies to recognize and minimize these biases, thereby creating more equitable and inclusive workplaces.





FIRMS' GREEN INVESTMENT PRACTICES AND THE ROLES OF FEMALE LEADERS

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Abstract

With the threat of climate change and emphasis on sustainability, green investments (GIs) have become the centre of thrust in the development of climate-smart industrial development. In this regard, the European Union launched the Green Deal to outline how member nations can invest in green energy and new technology solutions to reach the goal of carbon neutrality (European Commission 2020). Recent research has attracted significant attention to the growing importance of gender diversity, especially the presence of female managers in corporate leadership, promoting sustainability. Although these practices are primarily decided by institutional and market drivers, gender-based behavioral and cognitive factors are also found to influence the scale and nature of GIs.

While the impact of structural and regulatory factors on GI practices has been discussed extensively in the literature, the composition of managerial leadership is increasingly seen as one of the crucial factors in influencing a firm's environmental policies. Thus, scholarly attention has consequently increased on firm-level governance attributes, particularly the roles of executives and managers in strategic decision-making and innovation behavior. These relationships are supported by multiple theoretical foundations, including upper echelons theory, resource dependence theory, gender diversity theory, and gender socialization theory.

The present work is an attempt to add to the extant understanding of how the gender diversity in firms' management and ownership, and females in leading roles, affect the responsible decision making. Motivated by the strong theoretical foundations and limited empirical evidence, we specifically examine the role of females' proportion among the owners and female managers on a firm's decision to participate in GI and innovation in terms of the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of female managers and the proportion of females among owners on a firm's decision to make GI?
2. What is the impact of female managers and the proportion of females among owners on a firm's innovation?
3. Do the female managers and the proportion of females among owners promote GI for innovating firms?





We utilise the firm-level data from a unique "World Bank Enterprise Survey" (WBES). The outcome variable in the data is a count of GI activities, which we further classify into capital-intensive and non-capital-intensive GI activities. The application of the *Poisson Regression model* on the count outcome here reveals that the probability of making GI is lower for firms headed by a female manager compared to firms with a male manager. However, for innovating firms, the difference in the probability of making GI between firms with male managers and firms with female managers is mitigated or even reversed.

The results remain consistent after applying the *Zero Inflated Poisson* regression model to address the structural zero problem in count outcome models. To conclude, female managers exhibit a stronger disposition towards socially responsible decisions. However, amid financial constraints, the inherent risks accompanying the strategic investments seem to temper this tendency. The findings are useful and advocate for policies aimed at promoting gender diversity in corporate leadership to better utilise the gender-based sensitivities towards different aspects of corporate decision-making





1230

FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN INDIAN IT INDUSTRY: EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract

Introduction: Indian IT industry in the last four decades had phenomenal growth and currently employs more than 4 million employees with about 34 percent of those being female employees. The authors have been associated with a management institute offering exclusive part-time post-graduate degree programme and long-duration executive education programmes for the participants from Indian software industry. The participants were encouraged to bring their context and work-related challenges as a part of course assignment in the form of role-diagnostics, organizational diagnostics and case studies based on their experiences from their work settings. The paper is based on 8 case studies written by the software professionals, both male and female employees studying at the management institute.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the unique experiences and challenges experienced by female employees working in Indian IT industry.
2. To identify the causal factors for the problems and difficulties experienced by female employees.
3. To suggest measure to improve the organizational systems, processes and organizational work culture to inspire the female employees working in Indian IT industry

Methodology: The cases related to the experiences and challenges being experienced by female software employees are selected as the data for the paper. The emerging propositions and findings are identified, and a model is developed for managing and motivating female employees in Indian IT industry.

Major Findings

1. Clients being in different parts of the world is a major reason which requires the software project team members to stay back after working hours to communicate with a client particularly in project integration phase. Female employees experience that extended hours in the office comes in conflict with multiple other roles which are expected to be played by them. It becomes the cause of intra-personal and inter-personal conflict.
2. The stereotypes held by male employees towards female employees in an organization define their behaviour towards female employees and it threatens the self-concept and ego of female employees.
3. Software professionals, both male and female, being young and working for long hours with each other, experience attraction towards each other and sometimes it becomes the cause of conflict with office code and etiquette.





4. HR systems and processes are not well-defined to take care of specific needs of female employees. Some time, though HR systems and processes are well-defined, leaders in their zeal to achieve the demanding business targets do not want to be guided by HR systems and processes.
5. Female employees who take initiative to share their increased family responsibilities with members of the family are able to do justice to their work and family roles as well as to themselves as individuals.

Conclusion: In context of the emerging work-roles in Indian IT industry, female employees and organizations need to work together to help female employees to do justice to their work-roles as well as to multiple other family roles expected to be played by them.





1232

EDGE COMPUTING-ENHANCED SUPPLY CHAIN OPTIMIZATION: ADAPTIVE MULTI-SERVER JOHNSON SCHEDULING FOR SUSTAINABLE LOGISTICS AND SOCIAL IMPACT

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Abstract

This paper presents an innovative edge computing-enhanced supply chain optimization framework that integrates social impact measurement with advanced scheduling algorithms. Building upon adaptive multi-server Johnson scheduling principles, we develop a novel Adaptive Multi-Server Johnson Supply Chain Scheduling (AMJSCS) algorithm that operates on fog computing infrastructure for real-time decision-making in sustainable logistics operations. Our methodology combines mathematical modeling with simulation studies and real-world case studies. The AMJSCS algorithm partitions incoming orders based on processing characteristics and dynamically allocates resources to minimize total lead time while maximizing social impact. Performance evaluation demonstrates significant improvements over traditional First-Come-First-Served scheduling: 25-30% reduction in average lead times, 20% improvement in resource utilization, and 15% reduction in carbon footprint. This research contributes to management theory by bridging operations research, information systems, and sustainability science. Practical implications include enhanced supply chain efficiency, measurable social impact outcomes, and support for responsible business practices. The framework's edge computing architecture ensures scalability and real-time responsiveness, making it suitable for implementation across diverse industry sectors.





1233

HEURISTIC-DRIVEN ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL INVESTMENT READINESS ACROSS ASSET CLASSES: A MIXED-METHODS BEHAVIOURAL FINANCE STUDY

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Abstract

The increasing participation of retail investors in diverse asset classes has raised important questions about how individuals assess their own investment readiness as they rely on heuristics to make investment decisions across various asset classes.

This study investigates the role of cognitive heuristics—such as representativeness, availability, anchoring, affect, salience, status quo, and mental accounting—in shaping investment decisions and psychological readiness. The research seeks to quantify and classify investor readiness through a behavioural lens, bridging the gap between financial literacy and actual financial behaviour.

The study is conducted across major urban and semi-urban investment hubs[1], collecting over 386[2] responses from diverse sample of investors through structured primary surveys administered both online and in person. The survey captures demographic (age, income, experience), cognitive (financial literacy, heuristics), and psychological (risk tolerance, confidence) variables.

Descriptive statistics will summarize key traits, while regression will analyse relationships among variables. Factor analysis will validate readiness components, and cluster analysis will identify distinct investor profiles. A composite index—Overall Readiness Index (ORI)—will be developed by integrating Financial Cognition Score, Behavioural Bias Score, and Psychological Readiness Score.

Secondary data on market behaviour, participation trends, and financial inclusion reports will contextualize primary findings. The analysis will triangulate both data types to increase the robustness of insights and model accuracy.

The study aims to support advisors, fintech platforms, educators, and policymakers in developing customized financial planning tools, awareness campaigns, and behavioural nudges that enhance investor engagement and decision quality across demographic segments

[1] Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Surat, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Delhi as these cities account for more than 41% stock market investments and 52.41% of total AUM

[2] These numbers are indicative and will be increase as we get more and more responses.





1239

FRUGAL INNOVATION FOR THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID: LESSONS FROM INDIAN STARTUPS

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Abstract

In a country as diverse and resource-constrained as India, addressing the unmet needs of the Bottom of the Pyramid (BoP) population demands more than conventional innovation—it calls for frugal, context-specific, and scalable solutions. Frugal innovation refers to the process of reducing the complexity and cost of goods and services while maintaining core functionality, often designed for underserved markets. This paper explores how Indian startups are driving social impact through such innovation, transforming constraints into opportunities.

Using a qualitative, multiple-case study approach, this research examines selected Indian startups operating in sectors such as health, agriculture, energy, and education that have successfully catered to low-income segments. The study investigates the core design principles, value creation strategies, and stakeholder engagement practices these startups adopt to remain economically viable while delivering high social value.

Findings highlight three central drivers of frugal innovation: (1) resource-constrained creativity, (2) user-centric problem solving, and (3) adaptive business models aligned with local ecosystems. The paper further delves into the role of digital technologies, public-private partnerships, and community-based delivery models that amplify scalability and long-term impact.

The implications of this research are twofold. First, it contributes to the growing body of literature on inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship in emerging economies. Second, it offers practical insights for policymakers, investors, and development practitioners looking to support scalable models that address critical social challenges without compromising on affordability or accessibility.

The study concludes by proposing a framework that captures the key elements of successful frugal innovations and recommends pathways for replicating these models across different geographies and sectors. By bridging innovation with impact, Indian startups are redefining the narrative of entrepreneurship—not just as a means of economic growth, but as a tool for sustainable social transformation.





1240

AESTHETIC MAPPING OF VALUES AS PEDAGOGY FROM MORAL IMAGINATION TO GLOBAL GOALS: A FRAMEWORK FOR VALUE-DRIVEN SDG INTEGRATION IN TEACHER TRAINING

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Abstract

This study talks about a teaching method guided by practitioners that combines values-based teaching with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through creative, sensory-based thinking. The study is based on a real-time teacher workshop where instructors were shown how to use the “Values Ascension and Alignment Model (VAAM)” to assign colours and patterns to essential human values. As people thought about their own morals and values, they were more aware of the problems facing the world and the SDGs. The event made the participants more emotionally involved and gave them a creative approach to incorporate the SDGs into their daily teaching. The study uses ideas from constructivism, socio-cultural learning, and aesthetic pedagogy to create a values-to-goals consciousness model that can be used to reinvent SDGs-education as values-driven, emotionally resonant, and relevant to people all around the world. The experience thus gathered came from classroom practice that was backed up by theory.





EVALUATION OF INDIA'S NATIONAL PENSION SYSTEM TIER-I EQUITY SCHEME'S ESG PERFORMANCE: AN ANALYTIC HIERARCHY APPROACH

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Abstract

Pension funds play a huge role in terms of long-term financial planning by providing post-retirement stability in the form of payments through current investment planning. Traditional pension funds, which were once evaluated based on their financial parameters, are now integrating the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) sustainability criteria into their valuation. ESG criteria evaluate a company's sustainable practices, ethical integrity, and cooperation with regulatory demands, offering a broader perspective. Factors like natural disasters, such as earthquakes and droughts, can affect a company's production or cause infrastructural damage, or violations of laws that require paying a heavy fine and penalty, or issues like biases and toxic work environments can lead to low human resources and thus can hamper the productivity and lead to a loss of revenue. This research aims to evaluate India's nine Tier-I Equity Schemes under the National Pension System for their ESG performance by using a Multi-Criteria Decision Making (MCDM) technique through the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) tool to rank these pension funds based on their ESG inclusion and understand the relation between ESG metrics and financial parameters. Companies inclusive of ESG parameters tend to avoid such risks and manage them better, resulting in greater returns. They are becoming a significant force in contributing towards a positive environment. Using AHP and Saaty's pairwise comparison scale, this paper assigns numerical ranks to measure the significance of ESG integration in the valuation of the performance of pension funds. The fund's performance was evaluated using the ESG data obtained from the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reports (BRSR) of their parent companies. ESG integration into pension assessment remains limited, which highlights the need for transparency and direct disclosure at the pension fund level itself. This analysis concludes that ABC Pension Funds has provided the highest returns, with the governance factor showing a strong positive correlation of 0.5469 with respect to risk-adjusted returns. Therefore, governance turns out to be the most impactful metric in ESG evaluation, with women board membership having the highest weightage in the governance sub-criteria, highlighting its perceived value in promoting transparency and ethical decision-making. The results of this study can help identify which companies comply with sustainable practices and thus help in avoiding risky and unethical investments.

This research can be directly implemented by pension fund managers, ESG advisory firms, and regulatory bodies such as the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), enabling them to make more informed decisions and align their financial profitability objectives with long-term sustainability goals. This paper concludes that while funds complying with ESG benchmarks do not necessarily give the highest returns, they do offer a better and more stable long-term result. As the world





moves towards a sustainable environment, pairing ESG with investments is not only beneficial but is essential to support a better future.

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SUSTAINABILITY BY DESIGN: THE HUMAN SIDE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

This pilot study examines the impact of behavioral shifts induced by sustainable digitalization on teamwork and interdepartmental collaboration, with a focus on fostering a sustainable digital culture within organizations. Drawing on a cross-sectional quantitative research design, primary data were collected from 30 employees in an Indian IT firm. Independent sample t-tests were employed to test the hypothesized relationships. The analysis reveals that digital transformation initiatives anchored in sustainability principles significantly influence employee behavior by enhancing engagement, strengthening collaborative practices, and facilitating smoother adoption of emerging technologies. These behavioral changes serve as critical enablers in aligning digitalization efforts with organizational sustainability goals. The findings underscore the strategic importance of embedding behavioral considerations within digital transformation frameworks to maximize long-term organizational and environmental outcomes. By identifying behavior change as an independent variable influencing the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives, the study contributes novel insights to the literature on sustainable digitalization. It also addresses a notable gap by integrating behavioral science into the discourse on technology-driven sustainability transitions. The study offers actionable implications for practitioners, suggesting that organizations seeking to implement sustainable digital strategies should prioritize behavioral interventions to build adaptive capacities and promote a cohesive digital culture. This research advances the theoretical and practical understanding of how behavioral dynamics shape the trajectory and success of sustainability-oriented digital transformation in contemporary organizational settings.





1243

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON AI-DRIVEN AUTOMATION IN AGEING ECONOMIES

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Abstract

This paper looks at how demographic ageing is changing advanced economies and how AI-driven automation is being utilised as a strategy to adapt. After thematically reviewing 40+ papers the study examines four broad themes (Demographic Pressures and Macroeconomic Risks, AI and Automation as Economic Adaptation, Labor Market and Workforce Impact, Policy, Governance, and Comparative Country Strategies) The findings highlight that while automation can sustain productivity, it also amplifies skill divides, disproportionately benefiting high-skilled workers while increasing vulnerability among low-skilled and older populations. A Comparative Analysis between South Korea and Japan reveals the role of national policy in automation. The project concludes with recommendations so that the benefits of automation are equally shared.





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REPROGRAMMING HUMAN CHOICE: THE BEHAVIORAL IMPACT OF GENERATIVE AI IN DECISION MAKING

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Abstract

This study investigates whether technological aids such as ChatGPT and Google Search influence individual decision-making under uncertainty, offering empirical evidence for the emerging concept of aided rationality. Building upon the behavioral economics framework of bounded rationality (Simon, 1955), the research explores how access to artificial intelligence (AI) tools may bridge the gap toward full rationality, traditionally assumed in standard economic theory. A controlled experiment was conducted with master's-level students (aged 23–28) who were asked to make a series of choices between paired gambles, first without any technological assistance and then with access to AI-based tools. Responses from 11 such decision scenarios were analyzed using McNemar's Test to assess the statistical significance of behavioral shifts.

The results indicate significant changes in decision patterns in 9 out of 11 scenarios ($p < 0.05$), confirming the hypothesis that technology alters decision outcomes in a meaningful way. These findings suggest that individuals become more consistent with rational choice models when equipped with AI-enabled access to information. The concept of aided rationality thus emerges as a measurable and impactful cognitive state, demonstrating how digital tools enhance human decision-making capabilities. This study contributes to the evolving discourse in behavioral economics by highlighting the transformative role of AI in improving decision efficiency and reducing cognitive biases. It also holds implications for policymakers, educators, and businesses seeking to design environments that enable data-informed, optimized human behavior.





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TRANSFORMING PORT OPERATIONS: THE CASE OF THE LANDLORD MODEL AT JNPA

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Abstract

The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), India's largest container port, transitioned to the landlord port model during the 2000s. Since then, its approach has been to privatize the port operations to leverage the advanced technology, promote sustainable practices and achieve the long-term vision to become one of the top smart ports in the world. This research concentrates on understanding the adoption of the landlord model at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), India's premier container port, present a conceptual framework thereby provide insights on how and why landlord model has transformed port operations and why other ports should consider it as an alternative over other port models. The primary research question is "*How has the implementation of landlord model at JNPA affected the port's viability and performance in the long run?*". The study adopts a mixed-methods research approach presenting a mix of quantitative analysis through a combination of analytical tools and qualitative analysis through exploratory and descriptive case study. Tools like trend analysis, thematic analysis and SWOT analysis are used by the researchers to validate the data extracted during the course of study. Key findings indicate that the landlord model has improved operational efficiency and infrastructural investments for JNPA, even though integration of sustainable practices and implementation of digital technologies remains fairly difficult. The study recommended that although effective in improving the operations of JNPA, such a landlord model requires a balanced approach between regulatory oversight and policy incentives to achieve the strategic goals in sustainability and becoming smart.





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ASSESSING GREEN AND BLUE WATER USE IN RICE AND JUTE CULTIVATION: EVIDENCE FROM WEST BENGAL, INDIA (2018–2024)

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Abstract

Agriculture in India relies heavily on water resources, with a large portion of the country's freshwater used for crop cultivation. In states like West Bengal, where rice and jute are key crops, understanding water use patterns is crucial for promoting agricultural sustainability and water security. Differentiating between green water (rainwater stored in soil) and blue water (surface and groundwater used for irrigation) is vital when assessing the actual water footprint of crop production. This study investigates green and blue water use in rice and jute farming across specific districts of West Bengal, India, from 2018 to 2024. Its purpose is to identify water consumption patterns and analyze factors influencing water use efficiency. Using the Water Footprint Assessment (WFA) method, with evapotranspiration data from the India Water Resources Information System (WRIS), the research employs statistical tools like correlation analysis, regression models, and panel data techniques to explore relationships between crop production and water usage. The findings are expected to reveal crop-specific water consumption trends and how irrigation intensity and climate factors affect green and blue water dependence. Ultimately, the study aims to support data-driven decisions in agricultural water management and encourage more sustainable cropping practices in water-sensitive regions of eastern India.





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AN ANALYSIS OF PERSONALITY TRAITS ON PERFORMANCE OF MANAGERS

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Abstract

Dynamic word in management world is often regarded as alluring personality and personality can be examined by studying different traits or attributes of an individual. Personality traits are the most vital determinants of management styles. Though there are many personality models but there are we are studied five personality traits. This study focuses on five traits of personality of manager's i.e., extroversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience, neuroticism and conscientiousness. Personality traits impact on managerial performance is analysed. In order to become Successful managers must acquire all-round abilities. They should capable to plan efficiently & effectively successfully oversee assets to accomplish hierarchical objectives, yet additionally they have the administrator conduct and aptitudes of teambuilding, instructing and tutoring, encouraging, and fit for making a moderately casual workplace. This study emphasizes on middle level managers working with Tata Motors- age and qualification impact on their performance. A sample size of 70 respondents were taken for study and percentage analysis and Karl Pearson correlation tools are used to do the analysis. Study shows the few traits focus on positive impact with managerial performance and few have very little and negative relationship.





ECO-FINANCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE ROLE OF FINTECH IN SUPPORTING LOW-CARBON ECONOMIES

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Abstract

Introduction: Climate change mitigation increasingly relies on financial systems to redirect capital toward green initiatives. Eco-finance, or finance that supports environmental sustainability, is central to this shift. Simultaneously, FinTech the application of technology to financial services is revolutionizing how finance is delivered, accessed, and governed. In the digital age, FinTech innovations such as green digital loans, blockchain for carbon tracking, and AI-driven ESG analytics can accelerate the financial sector's role in climate action (Chen et al., 2021). However, the mechanisms through which FinTech drives the transition to low-carbon economies remain under-theorized.

Literature Review: Recent studies highlight the role of FinTech in democratizing green finance by improving transparency, reducing transaction costs, and enhancing investor engagement in sustainable portfolios (Chen et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). FinTech applications in green lending, carbon credit trading, and ESG performance analysis have been growing. However, most research has been descriptive or policy-oriented, with limited conceptual integration and empirical testing. There is a need for a robust theoretical model explaining the mechanisms, conditions, and impacts of FinTech on low-carbon transitions.

Theoretical Framework: This paper draws on two interrelated theoretical foundations:

1. **Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) Framework** (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990): This framework posits that an organization's innovation adoption is influenced by technological characteristics, organizational readiness, and external environmental conditions. We use it to explain FinTech adoption and eco-finance enablement as outcomes of both internal capabilities and external pressures.
2. **Institutional Theory** (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983): This theory emphasizes how institutional forces coercive (regulations), normative (social expectations), and mimetic (peer influence) affect organizational behavior. It helps conceptualize how policy stringency and institutional support moderate the FinTech–sustainability relationship.

Methodology: This study follows a conceptual research methodology aimed at theory building rather than hypothesis testing. Based on a structured literature review from top journals in finance, sustainability, and technology, we identified key constructs and their interrelationships. The proposed conceptual model includes:

1. **Independent Variable (IV):** FinTech Adoption (digital platforms, blockchain, AI in finance)





2. Mediating Variable: Eco-Finance Enablement (green credit, ESG tools, green investment access)
3. Dependent Variable (DV): Transition to Low-Carbon Economy (reduced emissions, clean energy investments)
4. Moderating Variables: Environmental Policy Stringency and Institutional Support

The model is intended for future empirical validation using SEM-based analysis across sectors such as banking, insurance, and clean energy finance.

Implications:

1. Academic: Provides a theoretical foundation for future empirical research on the digital finance–climate nexus.
2. Policy: Highlights the need for strong regulatory frameworks and institutional ecosystems to realize the climate potential of FinTech.
3. Practice: Encourages financial institutions to integrate ESG tools and digital innovations into their sustainability strategies.

Conclusion: FinTech can play a transformative role in enabling low-carbon transitions, but its effectiveness is contingent on supportive financial ecosystems and policy environments. This conceptual model links digital finance to climate goals via eco-finance mechanisms, offering a roadmap for empirical validation and multi-stakeholder action. As India and other emerging economies seek green growth, leveraging FinTech will be critical to scaling sustainable finance.





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SUSTAINABLE SME DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DIGITAL FINANCE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN INDIA: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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Abstract

Introduction: Sustainability in the 21st-century economy is not solely environmental it encompasses economic resilience, inclusivity, and equitable access to opportunity. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are central to India's economic sustainability, generating employment, fostering innovation, and contributing to GDP. However, these enterprises often lack consistent access to formal financial systems. The emergence of digital finance via mobile payments, digital lending, UPI, and fintech innovations offers scalable, eco-friendly, and inclusive financial solutions. This study explores the conceptual relationship between digital finance and SME performance, introducing financial inclusion as a moderator that strengthens this linkage in the context of sustainable economic development.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To explore the role of digital finance in supporting sustainable growth and resilience among Indian SMEs.
2. To assess how financial inclusion moderates the effect of digital finance on SME performance.
3. To propose a conceptual model that aligns digital financial ecosystems with the goals of sustainable enterprise development.

Theoretical Framework: The conceptual framework is grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Financial Inclusion Theory, embedded within the broader scope of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure). Digital finance is considered the independent variable affecting SME performance (dependent variable), while financial inclusion acts as a moderating variable. The study recognizes that digital financial systems, when inclusive and accessible, support long-term SME sustainability by improving access to capital, reducing reliance on paper-based systems, and enhancing transparency.

Hypotheses Development:

1. H1: Digital finance significantly improves SME performance.
2. H2: Financial inclusion significantly moderates the relationship between digital finance and SME performance.
3. H3: Financial inclusion has a significant effect on SME performance.





Key Contributions: This study contributes to the growing discourse on sustainable digital transformation in the SME sector. It:

1. Positions financial inclusion not only as a social goal but as a sustainability enabler.
2. Provides a theoretical framework connecting fintech with inclusive and sustainable enterprise growth.
3. Highlights how digital finance reduces environmental footprints (e.g., by lowering reliance on physical infrastructure and paper), aligning with digital sustainability goals.
4. Serves as a foundation for future empirical research on digital financial ecosystems and sustainable business practices.

Implications: For policymakers, the study emphasizes designing digital finance policies that promote long-term sustainability by expanding financial access and minimizing resource-intensive processes. For fintech innovators, it underscores the need to develop sustainable and inclusive financial tools tailored to SMEs. For SMEs, digital finance offers opportunities to scale operations with minimal environmental impact and improved financial resilience, crucial during economic uncertainties such as post-pandemic recovery.

Conclusion: Digital finance and financial inclusion are vital tools in building a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient SME sector in India. This study concludes that digital financial innovations—when coupled with deep financial inclusion—can significantly enhance SME performance while promoting sustainability. The proposed conceptual model encourages a shift toward green, inclusive, and tech-enabled enterprise ecosystems, aligned with national and global sustainability goals.





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AI ADOPTION IN WEALTH MANAGEMENT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK INTEGRATING INVESTOR BEHAVIOUR AND SUSTAINABILITY ORIENTATION IN EMERGING MARKETS

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Abstract

Introduction: The adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in wealth management has transformed how financial services are delivered, offering enhanced personalization, speed, and efficiency (Gomber et al., 2018; D'Acunto et al., 2019). In emerging markets like India, the rise of fintech has opened new pathways for financial inclusion. At the same time, there is a growing emphasis on sustainability and ethical investing, with investors seeking platforms that align with environmental and social values (Krueger et al., 2020). Despite this shift, research has largely focused on technical aspects of AI or general adoption behaviours, with limited attention to the intersection between AI usability and sustainability-oriented investor behaviour.

Objective of the Study: This study aims to develop a conceptual framework explaining the behavioural intention of retail investors in emerging markets to adopt AI-based wealth management platforms. The study seeks to integrate classical technology acceptance theory with AI-specific and sustainability-linked constructs.

Research Questions:

1. How do trust, transparency, and personalization influence behavioural intention to adopt AI in wealth management?
2. What role does sustainability-oriented investment behaviour play in moderating this relationship?

Theoretical Framework and Approach: This study builds on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) (Venkatesh et al., 2012), which includes performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), social influence (SI), hedonic motivation (HM), and price value (PV). These are extended through constructs relevant to AI adoption: trust in AI (TR), algorithmic transparency (AT), and personalization (PR) (Doshi-Velez & Kim, 2017; Rai, 2020). The concept of Sustainability-Oriented Investment Behaviour (SOIB) is introduced as a moderating variable, hypothesizing that investors with high sustainability orientation respond differently to trust and performance signals from AI platforms.

Key Arguments and Contributions: The proposed conceptual model posits that PE, EE, SI, HM, PR, and TR positively influence behavioural intention (BI) to adopt AI-driven wealth platforms. Algorithmic transparency enhances trust, while personalization supports both trust and performance perceptions.

Hypotheses:





1. H1: Performance expectancy affects behavioural intention to adopt AI platforms.
2. H2: Trust in AI influences behavioural intention.
3. H3: Algorithmic transparency influences trust in AI.
4. H4: Personalization affects both trust and performance expectancy.
5. H5: SOIB moderates the effect of performance expectancy and trust on behavioural intention.

This model contributes to the literature by integrating technology acceptance, AI transparency, and investor ethics, offering a multidimensional view of fintech adoption in emerging markets.

Implications and Conclusion: This study expands UTAUT2 to include AI-specific and sustainability-focused investor behaviours, addressing a significant research gap. Fintech designers and policymakers should consider explainable AI, ESG-aligned features, and ethical personalization to boost adoption. Empirical testing across emerging market demographics can validate and refine the framework, enabling broader applications in sustainable fintech design.





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CONSCIOUS ASPIRATION: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF SELF-IMAGE CONGRUENCE, SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION VALUE, AND BRAND AUTHENTICITY IN MASSTIGE PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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Abstract

Introduction: In today's ethically aware yet aspirational consumer landscape, brands are challenged to deliver prestige without compromising on sustainability. This conceptual paper explores how self-image congruence influences masstige brand purchase intention through the mediation of sustainable consumption values and the moderation of perceived brand authenticity. Situated within the growing discourse on conscious consumption, the proposed framework addresses a critical tension consumers face: balancing self-expressive desires with environmental responsibility, particularly in the context of masstige branding.

Background and Theoretical Foundation: Masstige brands, defined as premium brands priced for mass accessibility (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003), have emerged as a dominant force among aspirational consumers, particularly Millennials and Gen Z. These consumers value self-expression and status signaling while increasingly prioritizing sustainability (Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2020). However, the masstige space remains underexplored in sustainability research, especially concerning the psychological mechanisms driving ethical yet image-conscious purchasing behavior. Rooted in self-congruity theory (Sirgy, 1986), this paper posits that when consumers perceive a brand as congruent with their actual or ideal self-image, it enhances brand attachment and purchase intention. In parallel, the value-belief-norm (VBN) theory (Stern et al., 1999) suggests that values, such as environmental concern shape pro-environmental behavior. We propose that sustainable consumption value acts as a bridge between self-congruent brand perception and masstige purchase intention, reflecting the internalization of ethical consumption norms.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses: We present a moderated mediation model with the following relationships: H1: Self-image congruence has a significant impact on masstige brand purchase intention. H2: Sustainable consumption value mediates the relationship between self-image congruence and masstige brand purchase intention. H3: Perceived brand authenticity moderates the mediation pathway such that the indirect effect of self-image congruence on purchase intention via sustainable consumption value is stronger when brand authenticity is high. Brand authenticity is pivotal in this framework because masstige brands often risk being perceived as green washing due to their market position. Authenticity, defined as the perception that a brand is true to its claimed values and origin (Morhart et al., 2015), strengthens the credibility of sustainability claims, which in turn enhances value alignment and purchase intention.





Theoretical Contributions: This paper contributes to the intersection of masstige branding, sustainability, and consumer psychology. By integrating self-congruity theory with sustainability value frameworks, it extends our understanding of how aspirational consumers negotiate identity and ethics in their purchasing decisions. Moreover, it positions perceived brand authenticity as a crucial moderator in aligning prestige consumption with environmental values.

Managerial Implications: Masstige brands must move beyond symbolic self-expression and integrate authentic sustainability narratives. Marketing strategies should focus on reinforcing the self-brand connection while transparently communicating sustainable initiatives to enhance brand credibility and consumer trust.





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FINANCIAL RESILIENCE AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE CAPABILITIES FOR SOCIAL IMPACT IN INDIA

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Abstract

Introduction: The growing financial fragility among Indian youth, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, has revealed deep gaps in economic preparedness and adaptive financial behavior. Youth, particularly students and early professionals, often lack the financial capability and support systems to manage disruptions, making them vulnerable to cycles of indebtedness, reduced well-being, and social exclusion. This conceptual paper proposes financial resilience as a foundational construct for advancing social impact and sustainable development, especially in emerging economies like India where demographic dividend potential remains underutilized.

Theoretical Framework: This study integrates Salignac et al.'s (2020) three-pillar model of financial resilience, which includes economic resources, financial capability, and social capital, to position resilience as a multidimensional capacity shaped by both individual behavior and systemic support. It also draws from New Resilience Theory (Manyena, 2006), emphasizing resilience as a proactive, adaptive process. Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) supports the role of financial and digital literacy in capability building, while Behavioral Finance Theory (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008) explains how financial decisions are influenced by self-efficacy, risk perception, and behavioral biases. Recent works, such as Lusardi and Mitchell (2014) and Xiao and O'Neill (2016), emphasize the impact of literacy and self-efficacy on financial outcomes. Grounded in these perspectives, the paper conceptualizes financial resilience in youth as shaped by psychological traits, digital capabilities, and structural access key for sustainable social impact.

Conceptual Model: The proposed model categorizes the antecedents into three interrelated domains:

1. **Psychological Capacities:** including risk tolerance, self-efficacy, and future orientation affecting goal-setting and confidence in financial decisions.
2. **Digital Capabilities:** such as digital financial literacy and comfort with fintech, affecting access to and use of digital financial tools.
3. **Structural Enablers:** including access to financial institutions and the presence of family/community support systems facilitating resilience through external networks.

These elements collectively foster individual-level resilience, which, when scaled across youth populations, contributes to broader economic inclusion, social equity, and long-term sustainability.





Discussion and Implications: This paper makes two key contributions:

1. It offers a multi-theoretical, integrative framework for understanding financial resilience as a social impact mechanism rather than just an individual financial trait.
2. It presents context-sensitive pathways for embedding resilience building interventions into national youth development strategies, financial literacy curricula, and digital financial ecosystems in India.

The framework aligns closely with several UN Sustainable Development Goals, including:

1. SDG 1: by reducing financial vulnerability among youth;
2. SDG 4: by promoting capability-building through financial and digital education;
3. SDG 8: by enabling productive financial behavior and economic participation;
4. SDG 10: by narrowing structural gaps in access and opportunity.

This conceptual foundation invites further empirical validation and serves as a practical guide for educational institutions, fintech developers, NGOs, and policymakers working to build a financially resilient and socially inclusive generation.





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CIRCULAR ECONOMY FINANCING IN E-COMMERCE: EVALUATING BUY-BACK AND SUBSCRIPTION MODELS FOR ELECTRONIC GOODS

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Abstract

The exponential rise in electronic waste and growing consumer interest in sustainable consumption have prompted e-commerce platforms to adopt circular economy models, notably buy-back and subscription services for refurbished electronics. However, empirical evidence evaluating the comparative financial viability and sustainability impact of these models remains limited. This study addresses that gap by employing a structured primary survey of 220 e-retailers and end-users, analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The model assesses key operational drivers Revenue Stability, Customer Lifetime Value, Residual-Value Capture, Carbon Reduction, Resource Efficiency, and Circularity Performance and their impact on Financial Viability and Sustainability Impact, with Perceived Value as a mediator and Customer Trust as a moderator. SEM results support the significance of most hypothesized paths (e.g., $PV \rightarrow FV: \beta = 0.52, t = 7.4$; $RE \rightarrow SI: \beta = 0.41, t = 5.8$), confirming that circular service models can simultaneously enhance economic and environmental performance. Notably, subscription models yielded higher perceived value and stronger sustainability outcomes compared to buy-back schemes. These findings contribute to circular economy literature by integrating financial and sustainability metrics within a unified framework and offer actionable insights for e-retailers, policymakers, and sustainability advocates aiming to scale responsible electronics consumption.





MITIGATING WORK ALIENATION TO ENHANCE JOB EMBEDDEDNESS: THE ROLE OF WORK ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT IN DRIVING SOCIAL IMPACT

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Abstract

In the high-pressure context of the healthcare industry, where service quality and human care intersect, employee disconnection can severely impair organizational performance. Drawing on the core principles of organizational behavior, this study investigates how work alienation, a psychological state of powerlessness, meaninglessness, and isolation, negatively impacts job embeddedness among non-clinical hospital employees. Grounded in Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–resources (JD-R) model, this study explores the mediating role of work engagement and the moderating effect of perceived organizational support (POS) in shaping behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. This OB-informed framework integrates cognitive, emotional, and relational dynamics to inform socially impactful human resource strategies in healthcare systems. Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey administered to 109 nonclinical staff members at major Hospitals in Chennai, India. The study utilized stratified random sampling and applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) for analysis using SmartPLS 4. The findings confirm that work alienation significantly diminishes job embeddedness ($\beta = -0.406$, $p < 0.01$) and lowers employee engagement ($\beta = -0.655$, $p < 0.001$), whereas work engagement positively contributes to job embeddedness ($\beta = 0.430$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, POS significantly moderated the alienation–embeddedness relationship (interaction $\beta = 0.107$, $p < 0.01$), acting as a psychological buffer. These results underscore how employees' attitudes and behaviors are shaped by their perceived relational contract with the organization. Employees who feel alienated are less likely to identify with their roles or align with organizational goals, leading to lower embeddedness and an increased risk of turnover. However, when organizations actively foster engagement and convey supportive intent, they help rebuild the psychological ties, trust, and purpose that are hallmarks of a healthy organizational culture. This study contributes to the OB literature by contextualizing job embeddedness not merely as a retention outcome but as a reflection of deeper affective commitment, social integration, and perceived fit as key constructs within OB frameworks. The results are particularly salient in healthcare settings, where nonclinical staff often face operational pressures, low visibility, and inadequate support, yet their contributions are essential to overall system performance. By enhancing employee engagement and perceived support, hospital administrators can cultivate an embedded, motivated, and socially invested workforce, thereby aligning individual well-being with organizational sustainability. The implications of this study extend beyond theoretical contributions to practical utility. It recommends that HR practitioners in healthcare institutions incorporate OB-driven interventions, such as participative decision-making, recognition programs, and inclusive leadership, to reduce alienation and build long-term psychological contracts with employees. In addressing the psychosocial undercurrents of





work, this research aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth and directly supports the conference's mission to advance social impact through management research. Although the study is limited to a single institution and role category, its OB-based insights offer a scalable framework for improving employee connectedness and organizational health in service-driven industries.





BRAND EXPERIENCE, IDENTIFICATION, TRUST, AND SATISFACTION AS DRIVERS OF BRAND LOYALTY TOWARD SMARTWATCHES: AN SOR FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS IN THE MUMBAI METROPOLITAN REGION, INDIA

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Abstract

The rapid growth of India's smartwatch market, dominated by domestic brands such as Noise, Fire-Boltt, and boAt, presents a unique scenario where high adoption rates coexist with low brand loyalty. This study investigates the psychological and experiential drivers of brand loyalty among smartwatch users in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), applying the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theoretical framework. Specifically, it examines how brand experience and brand identification (stimuli) influence customer satisfaction and brand trust (organism), which in turn shape brand loyalty (response).

The research adopts a quantitative approach, collecting data from 1,065 active smartwatch users through a structured questionnaire. Employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the study tests six hypotheses that explore the relationships between these constructs. The findings reveal that brand experience significantly enhances both customer satisfaction and brand trust, while brand identification exerts a strong influence on brand trust and a moderate impact on loyalty. Furthermore, customer satisfaction and brand trust emerge as critical mediators, reinforcing the indirect pathways through which experiential and identity-based factors foster brand loyalty.

This study contributes to the literature in three key ways. First, it extends the SOR framework to the context of wearable technology in an emerging market, addressing a gap in research on smartwatch brand loyalty outside Western contexts. Second, it provides empirical evidence on how emotional and cognitive responses mediate the impact of brand-related stimuli on loyalty behaviors. Third, it offers practical insights for domestic smartwatch brands competing in India's price-sensitive yet experience-driven market, suggesting that cultivating trust and satisfaction through differentiated brand experiences can mitigate high customer churn rates.

The implications for marketers are twofold: (1) investing in multisensory brand experiences (e.g., intuitive interfaces, emotional engagement) can strengthen satisfaction and trust, and (2) fostering brand identification through community-building and value alignment can enhance loyalty despite market volatility. Limitations include the geographic focus on MMR and the cross-sectional design, which future research could address by incorporating longitudinal data and comparative analyses across regions. Overall, this study underscores the centrality of psychological engagement in sustaining brand loyalty within fast-evolving technology categories.





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DRIVING HUMAN CAPITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR: ALIGNING AI, SUSTAINABILITY, AND SOCIAL IMPACT

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Abstract

The automotive industry is undergoing a seismic shift where software is the new steel, and lines of code now outweigh the physical chassis in value. This transition to electric vehicles (EVs) and autonomous systems precipitates a profound human capital transformation, creating a massive upskilling demand. Directly addressing the conference theme of 'Driving Social Impact Through Management Research,' this paper explores how AI-driven HR analytics and green workforce strategies can manage this disruption equitably, fostering sustainability and societal well-being.",

This study builds on insights gained from structured interviews with global HR leaders, detailed analysis of major case studies in the automotive sector, and direct learnings from participation in international HR and automotive conferences. These engagements enabled triangulation of perspectives from industry executives, policymakers, and practitioners, ensuring that the conclusions reflect both research and practice.",

Findings reveal three critical insights. First, firms using advanced HR analytics for workforce planning report significantly higher employee redeployment rates and lower turnover. Second, sustainable workforce policies positively influence eco-friendly behaviors and operational performance. Third, inclusive talent strategies that address the industry's 24% female workforce share and embed 'just transition' principles are crucial for fostering employee commitment and community support.",

This study contributes a novel framework linking strategic HRM, AI-driven analytics, and social impact in the automotive workforce transformation. Practically, it offers a data-backed blueprint for responsible leadership, demonstrating how management research can guide organizations to ensure the transition is not only economically viable but also equitable and sustainable for all stakeholders.





GREEN PREMIUM: WHAT DRIVES GEN Z TO PAY MORE FOR SUSTAINABLE FMCG PRODUCTS?

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Abstract

Introduction: Amid escalating environmental concerns, sustainability has emerged as a central consumer value, particularly among Generation Z (Gen Z), who exhibit heightened sensitivity toward eco-friendly consumption. While the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry contributes significantly to the global economy, it also remains a major source of plastic waste and environmental degradation. Gen Z, born between 1997 and 2012, has been found to demonstrate stronger environmental consciousness and greater willingness to pay (WTP) for sustainable products compared to earlier generations (Kim & Choi, 2005; Hao et al., 2019). However, despite these attitudes, research often reveals an intention–action gap, wherein actual purchasing behavior does not always align with expressed values. This study investigates the psychological and social drivers influencing Gen Z’s WTP premium for sustainable FMCG products in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), a complex urban setting where sustainability choices intersect with affordability and convenience.

Theoretical Framework: Drawing upon prior literature, five constructs were identified as potential determinants of WTP premium:

1. Environmental Concerns (EC) – awareness and pro-environmental attitudes that shape green purchase behaviors (Kim & Choi, 2005; Hao et al., 2019).
2. Green Future Estimations (GFE) – expectations about the long-term relevance and necessity of sustainable products (Nekmahmud & Fekete-Farkas, 2020).
3. Green Perceived Benefits (GPB) – advantages such as health, satisfaction, or positive self-image (Islam & Zabin, 2013).
4. Green Perceived Quality (GPQ) – judgments about functional excellence and environmental superiority (Ali et al., 2011).
5. Social Influence (SI) – peer, family, and influencer effects on consumer behavior (Salazar & Oerlemans, 2016).

Accordingly, five hypotheses (H1–H5) were proposed, each positing a significant positive relationship between these predictors and Gen Z’s WTP premium for sustainable FMCG products.

Methodology: A quantitative survey of 1,075 Gen Z consumers (18–27) in MMR was conducted using validated scales. Data, collected on a five-point Likert scale, underwent EFA, CFA, and SEM. Constructs





showed strong reliability, and CFA confirmed excellent model fit (CFI = 0.991, TLI = 0.990, RMSEA = 0.031).

Findings: Results revealed that all five constructs—EC, GFE, GPB, GPQ, and SI—significantly influenced Gen Z's WTP premium for sustainable FMCG products. The findings highlight that environmental awareness, perceived benefits, and quality are strong predictors, while social norms and future expectations further reinforce sustainable buying decisions. The constructs were highly interrelated, suggesting that Gen Z's sustainable consumption is shaped by a combination of rational evaluation (benefits, quality), emotional commitment (concerns), and external pressures (social influence). Importantly, the study confirmed the robustness of the proposed measurement model, with all items demonstrating strong loadings and reliability.

Conclusion: This study finds that Gen Z consumers in the MMR show a clear preference for sustainable FMCG products, with environmental concern, perceived benefits, perceived quality, future outlook, and social influence all significantly shaping their willingness to pay a premium. The results suggest that sustainable consumption is driven by a mix of awareness, rational evaluation, and social norms. These insights can guide marketers in developing authentic, sustainability-focused strategies and help policymakers encourage eco-friendly consumer behavior.





ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TRAINING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING: MEDIATING EFFECTS OF OVERALL TRAINING SATISFACTION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY CONCERNING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

This study investigated the nexus between training and psychological well-being and the mediating role of overall satisfaction with training. This research concerning information technology (IT) employees was carried out by gathering data from IT sector industry employees in Chennai. Two hundred and seventy-two valid responses measuring the influence of the four reflective constructs of this empirical study of training with subscales—the effective learning assessment (ELA), training quality (TQ), overall satisfaction of training (OS) and training relevance (TR)—on the dependent construct of psychological well-being—with three subscales—autonomy (AUT), personal growth (PG), and self-acceptance (SA)—were measured. The instrument has internal consistency and reliability, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics, which range from 0.79-0.94. The model fit was excellent, as indicated by the model fit indices CMIN/DF 1.435, CFI 0.921, AGFI 0.952, GFI 0.962, TLI 0.956, SRMR 0.04, RMSEA 0.040, and P Close 0.993. Overall satisfaction with training fully mediates the psychological well-being of employees in the IT sector. Furthermore, relevant training enhances the psychological well-being of IT employees.





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THE EFFECT OF CLIMATE RISK ON CORPORATE DEFAULT RISK: A FIRM-LEVEL EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This paper examines the link between climate risks and corporate default vulnerability using firm-level data from 2015 to 2023. Default risk is assessed through three established measures— Distance-to-Default, the Altman Z-score, and the Zmijewski ZM-score—capturing both market-based and accounting-based perspectives of financial distress. A panel fixed-effects approach is employed to analyze how variations in transition risks, proxied by firm-level carbon emissions, influence default probabilities over time.

The results demonstrate that higher carbon emissions are consistently associated with greater default risks, reflecting the financial costs of regulatory pressures, reputational concerns, and technological adjustments required in the low-carbon transition. Among different emission categories, Scope 3 emissions—which encompass indirect value-chain emissions and downstream product use—emerge as the most significant predictor of default risks. This finding highlights the importance of considering supply-chain-wide carbon exposure rather than focusing solely on operational emissions (Scope 1) or purchased energy emissions (Scope 2).

The study makes two key contributions. First, it provides firm-level evidence on how transition risks propagate into financial fragility, extending the literature on climate finance beyond aggregate or ESG-based indicators. Second, it underscores the relevance of Scope 3 emissions for policymakers, corporate managers, and investors. For regulators, the findings strengthen the case for enhanced disclosure requirements; for firms, they highlight the strategic importance of managing supply-chain carbon exposure; and for investors, they provide a lens for evaluating hidden vulnerabilities in their portfolios.





1268

BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING RESILIENCE: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF GASLIGHTING AND GLASS CEILING EXPERIENCES ON INDIAN WOMEN LEADERS

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Abstract

The career progression of women executives in India has never been without bottlenecks and alongside their career growth, they have experienced the repressive effects of overt or covert forms of barriers based on systemic gender biases such as gaslighting and glass-ceiling. Gaslighting is a psychological manipulation tactic that undermines self-confidence, and the glass ceiling represents invisible barriers to career advancement. These challenges can significantly influence the development of leadership resilience, a critical capability for sustaining effectiveness in dynamic contexts. The current study is based on the foundations of resilience theory which states that individuals demonstrate positive adaptation when faced with significant adversity by leveraging personal, relational, and contextual resources.

The study adopts a mixed method explanatory design, in the first phase, a quantitative survey will be conducted among Indian women leaders across diverse sectors to measure the prevalence and perceived impact of gaslighting and glass ceiling experiences on resilience levels using validated psychometric scales. In the second phase, in-depth qualitative interviews with senior women leaders will explore experiences, coping strategies, and mechanisms that support leadership resilience.

The study contributes to theory as well as practice by extending Resilience Theory to gendered leadership contexts and by providing recommendations that drives systemic changes and empowers women communities through fair leadership representation, organizational policies, and mentoring mechanisms that support women leaders in overcoming psychological and structural barriers.





1269

STABILITY AND SPILLOVERS: HOW BIGTECHS REVAMP COMPETITION AND RISK IN INDIAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS?

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Abstract

The emergence of BigTechs in the financial sector has posed the question of their systemic relevance, given the data-network-activities loop they have created. This study aims to disentangle the network structure that the BigTechs have made in the Indian financial service industry and how the BigTech-induced systemic risk is affecting the market power and the financial stability of financial institutions. The study is aided by systemic risk, competition, stability, and causal measures that focus on contemporary technological advancements in the Indian financial sector. The selection of public banks, private banks, NBFCs, and BigTech companies based on market value is used to estimate the systemic risk and market power of the interrelated financial system, conditional on the extent of agony experienced by the firms. Weekly data pertains to the period from December 2016 to December 2023. The findings suggest that there is a spillover effect between Indian FIs and BigTech, with significant asymmetry in both its direction and magnitude. Indian FIs face notable challenges due to their deepened exposure to systemic risk induced by BigTechs. This exposure erodes their market power and stability, essentially through channels like increased pricing power and shifts in borrower behavior. The COVID-19 event has tremendously increased the connectedness level across all institutions. Our results are helpful for investors looking at the BigTech market as an opportunity and policymakers developing regulations for financial stabilization policies.





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TITLE: THE EFFECT OF AI SUGGESTION SYSTEMS ON CONSUMERS' VARIETY-SEEKING: THE MODERATING EFFECT OF SELF-CONCEPT CLARITY

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of AI-based suggestion systems on consumers' variety-seeking behavior on digital platforms like food ordering and online movie streaming websites. AI suggestions customize content using users' past transaction history and personal characteristics, influencing consumption patterns. Consumers, who increasingly understand how algorithms curate content—that their interactions determine what suggestions are made in the future—manageably change their behaviors to influence the content they consume. This study examines how adaptive behaviors, combined with AI recommendations, shape consumers' tendency to engage with variety-seeking products and experiences, which are necessary for individual development and market dynamics.

The study relies on the moderating effect of self-concept clarity, or how clear, confident, and consistent consumers are about themselves. Consumers with higher self-concept clarity would look for consistent content based on their clearly defined self-concept and thus decrease variety-seeking to avoid inconsistency. Such behavior is predicted to be motivated by fear of classification error, where flawed categorization by AI systems jeopardizes their coherent view of themselves. On the other hand, consumers with less self-concept clarity, who have a more uncertain or vague sense of self, might be less restrictive of AI personalization and still maintain higher variety-seeking tendencies.

By exploring how anxiety concerning classification errors mediates AI recommendation influence and how self-concept clarity moderates this, this research further extends psychological processes of consumer response to AI personalization. It resists the traditional notion of consumers as passive receivers, making their active facilitation of cocoons of information in content choice terms that are identity-related. The study aims to disclose potential AI personalization limitations through which attempting identity coherence may limit AI consumption, influence consumer experience, and diversity.

Theoretically, this study advances by focusing on overall attitudes to AI recommendations and particular behavior consequences within variety-seeking. It broadens identity-based consumer behavior literature by emphasizing the interactive impact of self-concept clarity with AI recommendation systems. It illuminates the psychological implications of AI categorization for consumer choice. The study identifies the strong, stable self-concept development and constraint of openness to experience as being heavily impacted by AI contexts and proposes more ethical and just AI personalization.





Lastly, this research sheds light on the nuanced interaction between AI-based recommendation systems, self-concept clarity, and variety-seeking behavior, and brings out prominently the imperative to integrate technological and psychological insights for maximizing business performance and consumer well-being.

1271

IMPACT OF GREENWASHING ON FIRM PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: EVIDENCE FROM S&P TOP 250 ENERGY FIRMS

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Abstract

Background: In recent years, firms have increasingly adopted sustainability narratives to enhance their legitimacy and attract investors, customers, and other stakeholders. However, a growing concern is the prevalence of greenwashing—the practice of overstating or misrepresenting environmental initiatives without substantial performance improvements. This phenomenon has profound implications for both firm performance (FP) and the broader agenda of sustainable development (SD), particularly in the energy sector, which faces heightened scrutiny due to its environmental impact. This study investigates the impact of greenwashing on firm performance and its alignment with sustainable development objectives, using data from the S&P Top 250 global energy firms over the period 2013–2022.

Purpose and Research Questions: The study aims to explore whether greenwashing practices undermine the positive relationship between corporate sustainability efforts and firm performance. The central research questions are:

1. How does greenwashing affect the relationship between sustainability disclosure and firm performance?
2. Does the presence of greenwashing hinder energy firms' contribution to sustainable development goals?

Data and Methodology: The analysis is conducted using a panel dataset of S&P Top 250 energy firms, covering the period 2013–2022. Greenwashing is proxied through discrepancies between ESG disclosure scores and ESG performance scores (sourced from Bloomberg/Refinitiv). Firm performance is measured using both accounting-based (ROA) and market-based (Tobin's Q) indicators. To address potential endogeneity and dynamic effects, the study applies Dynamic System GMM estimation, supplemented by Panel Quantile Regression to capture heterogeneous impacts across performance distributions.

Key Findings: Preliminary evidence suggests that Greenwashing has positive and significant impact on firm performance. Moreover, greenwashing practices appear to weaken firms' long-term contribution to sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly those related to climate action and responsible





consumption. Interestingly, the negative effects are more pronounced in higher-performing firms, implying greater reputational losses when stakeholder expectations are unmet.

Implications: For managers, the findings highlight the importance of moving beyond symbolic compliance and adopting authentic sustainability strategies that integrate ESG practices into core business models. For policymakers and regulators, the study underscores the urgency of addressing greenwashing through standardized reporting frameworks and transparency requirements. For academics, it opens new avenues to examine the intersection of greenwashing, firm behavior, and sustainable development outcomes.





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THE SECRET MECHANICS OF STRATEGIC SUCCESS: HOW ENTREPRENEURS USE STRATEGY, ETHICS, AND RESILIENCE TO DRIVE CORPORATE TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

In a world of relentless business volatility, only those entrepreneurs who master the delicate balance of strategy, ethics, and stability can truly succeed. This paper examines how strategic, ethical, and resilient entrepreneurship and leadership—drawn from literary narratives and real-world examples—can inform contemporary business practice, shaping organizational culture, behavior, and social impact. The study builds on effective leadership theories, including transformational, ethical, adaptive, servant, and resilient leadership, as well as the works of Simon Sinek, Cameron & Green, and John Maxwell. It integrates theoretical frameworks from Organizational Behavior (OB) and contemporary management research, with case study analyses of modern corporate governance to provide beneficial insights on how strategic entrepreneurship, innovation, and effective decision-making intersect to generate both business success and social value. Cases explored include Starbucks’ strategic repositioning, Netflix’s pivot to streaming, LEGO’s revival through core product focus and themed sets, Tesla’s innovation culture, and Spotify’s freemium and algorithmic growth strategy. ‘A key contribution of this article is the application of Patterson, Goens, and Reed’s ‘The Resilience Cycle’ (2009), demonstrating how adversity and crisis are the major catalysts for growth and transformation. This is illustrated through an interdisciplinary framework combining management theory, literature, and contemporary business case studies. Literary perspectives, such as Abraham Lincoln’s transformational leadership (as reflected in Whitman’s “*O Captain! My Captain!*”) and Admiral Horatio Nelson’s tactical innovation (as in Wordsworth’s “*Character of the Happy Warrior*”) and business cases, such as Marvel Comics’ transformation from bankruptcy to the Marvel Cinematic Universe, Apple’s visionary comeback, Burberry’s brand reinvention, and Airbnb’s resilient pivot from early rejection to global hospitality. These are also examined to identify major traits of effective leadership—including strategic innovation, visionary foresight, motivation, decisive action, risk management, emotional intelligence, and moral clarity—that create a successful corporate culture and influence behavior. Ultimately, this paper posits that entrepreneurs who integrate strategy, innovative concepts, ethical conviction, and resilience can do more than guide organizations; they can transform crises into growth opportunities, shape organizational behavior, and foster environments that drive measurable social, environmental, and economic impact. By uncovering the secret mechanics of corporate and management transformation, the paper delivers actionable insights for contemporary entrepreneurs, long-term organizational success, and modern management practices.





EXPLORING LEARNERS' ADOPTION OF EDTECH PLATFORMS: THE INFLUENCE OF TRUST, PERFORMANCE EXPECTANCY, AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTION AND USE BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

The rapid digital shift in education has acknowledged EdTech platforms as indispensable tools for knowledge delivery, collaboration, and learner engagement. Nevertheless, despite their potential, the actual acceptance and sustained use of these platforms remain inconsistent among learners. To address this gap, the present study explores the critical determinants of EdTech adoption by synthesizing constructs from the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework with the additional lens of trust. This study in particular examines the role of trust, Performance expectancy, and Social Influence in molding learners' behavioral intention and how such intentions translate into use behavior on EdTech platforms.

The aim of this research is to unveil the psychological and social mechanisms that drive learners' decision-making processes in adopting and using EdTech platforms. This research intend to provide clear insight on the interplay functional expectations, peer influence, and trustworthiness in shaping behavioral outcomes.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To analyze the effect of trust on learners' behavioral intention to adopt EdTech platforms.
2. To assess how performance expectancy enhances learners' willingness to engage with digital learning tools.
3. To evaluate the role of social influence in motivating learners to adopt and continuously use EdTech platforms.
4. To establish the mediating role of behavioral intention in linking these platforms to actual use behavior.

The purpose of the study originates from the fact, while EdTech is globally expanding, learner hesitancy often results from perceived credibility issues, lack of trust in data privacy, and doubts regarding platform effectiveness. In addition to this social cues and peer usage increasingly shape adoption behaviors, specifically in new generation digital-native learners. Thus, uncovering the strongest adoption drivers is vital for Policymakers, EdTech providers, and Educators.

The scope of the study focuses on online learners engaging with AI-driven and digital learning platforms in different contexts. It highlight learner perceptions, behavioral patterns, and adoption decisions ensuring generalizability within the education technology ecosystem.





The methodology used in this study is quantitative research design. Data will be collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among active users of EdTech platforms. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) will be applied to examine the relationships and test the hypothesized framework.

The outcomes of the research will benefit EdTech companies, academic institutions, educators and policymakers by offering valuable insights into developing more trustworthy, performance –oriented, and socially engaging digital learning platforms. Furthermore, learners in their own capacity, will benefit through the creation of more user-centered, secure, and motivating virtual learning environments.





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LEADING VIRTUAL TEAMS: MANAGING PERFORMANCE IN THE NEW WORK LANDSCAPE

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally transformed the workplace, forcing organizations across the globe to adapt to remote and hybrid work models. This sudden transition reshaped performance management systems (PMS), creating new complexities for organizations, leaders, and human resource professionals. While traditional PMS frameworks were designed around physical proximity, close monitoring, and in-person collaboration, the remote work environment demanded new approaches to ensure fairness, accountability, and employee engagement. This study explores the challenges of managing virtual employee performance and examines the strategic role of HR interventions in addressing these concerns. Specifically, the research investigates the lived experiences of senior HR professionals who managed employee performance during the pandemic, offering insights into the evolving dynamics of PMS in the virtual era.

Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a qualitative methodology well-suited for exploring individual experiences, the study draws from semi-structured interviews with fifteen senior HR managers from reputed firms in NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh, India. The aim was to capture their perspectives on the obstacles faced in evaluating remote employees and to identify potential interventions for improving performance management in virtual work contexts. The thematic analysis of these interviews revealed two broad themes: challenges in virtual performance management and HR-driven solutions. The first theme highlights the challenges faced by HR managers in adapting PMS to remote settings. Ensuring fairness in performance evaluation emerged as a primary concern, as the lack of physical presence often hindered visibility into employees' efforts and contributions. Managers reported difficulties in accurately tracking productivity, which raised issues of bias and subjectivity in evaluations. Sustaining motivation was another significant challenge, with remote employees often experiencing lower commitment, reduced engagement, and feelings of isolation. Trust deficits between supervisors and employees also surfaced, reflecting the strain caused by the absence of face-to-face interactions. Additionally, HR professionals identified outdated PMS processes and obsolete technologies as major roadblocks to effective performance tracking. Many systems were ill-equipped to capture real-time employee performance data, leading to inefficiencies in monitoring and data sharing. The uncertainty of remote work—particularly during the pandemic—added further complexity, as employees and managers alike struggled with blurred boundaries, shifting priorities, and increased stress levels. Leadership support was also found lacking in several organizations, making it harder for HR teams to drive performance-focused initiatives in the new work culture.

The second theme focuses on HR interventions that can enhance the effectiveness of PMS in virtual contexts. One of the most widely suggested solutions was the adoption of transparent and well-





communicated performance metrics. By defining clear expectations and measurable outcomes, organizations can ensure fairness and reduce subjectivity in evaluations. Regular feedback mechanisms were also emphasized as essential for maintaining alignment and motivation. Frequent check-ins, virtual performance reviews, and constructive coaching conversations help bridge the communication gap inherent in remote work. Another key intervention is digital upskilling, enabling employees to adapt to new tools and platforms while also equipping managers with the skills needed to effectively oversee distributed teams. Improved communication strategies, such as structured virtual meetings and collaborative platforms, were also identified as critical for enhancing engagement and trust. Importantly, leadership involvement was highlighted as a decisive factor in creating a culture of accountability, recognition, and support in virtual environments. Leaders who actively participate in performance discussions foster stronger commitment and motivation among employees. The findings underscore that managing virtual employee performance requires more than simply transferring traditional PMS practices to digital platforms. It demands a rethinking of systems, processes, and leadership approaches. By implementing transparent evaluation criteria, fostering ongoing communication, and investing in digital skills, organizations can not only overcome the immediate challenges of remote work but also build resilient performance management frameworks for the future.

This research contributes to both academic understanding and HR practice by capturing real-world challenges and offering actionable solutions. It provides a reference point for organizations seeking to refine their PMS in light of the remote work paradigm. As the future of work continues to evolve, these insights offer meaningful guidance for HR professionals navigating the complexities of virtual performance management. Ultimately, the study emphasizes that with tailored interventions and leadership commitment, organizations can transform the challenges of remote performance management into opportunities for growth, engagement, and sustained productivity.





PREFERENCES TO PROFITS THROUGH ADVERTISEMENT IN VOD STREAMING WARS

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Abstract

The growth of OTT platforms has transformed how people consume media and entertainment. Traditionally, these platforms operated under three models: Advertisement Video on Demand (AVoD), Subscription Video on Demand (SVoD), and pay-per-use. Recently, many platforms have adopted a mixed strategy to ensure financial stability. However, this strategic shift comes with challenges. Evidence from platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime suggests that consumers are generally reluctant to tolerate advertisements. Their low willingness to watch ads often results in dissatisfaction, which can eventually lead to subscription cancellations. The present study proposes a structured framework to address this challenge by focusing on profit maximization. At the first stage, it investigates consumer preferences across a range of attributes such as price, level of advertisement exposure, content genre, popularity of shows, language, and visibility. Conjoint analysis is employed as the primary method to capture the relative importance that consumers attach to these attributes. This helps to simulate realistic market scenarios and measure trade-offs in consumer decision-making. In the second stage, the study incorporates these consumer preference outcomes into an optimization framework using the Lagrangian duality method. This mathematical approach enables the formulation of conditions under which platforms can achieve optimal results. The findings show that consumers can generally be divided into two main groups. The first group is willing to accept advertisements if subscription prices are kept lower, even when the number of ads is higher. The second group prefers to pay a higher price in order to enjoy an ad-free experience. However, the results also suggest that even among consumers who favor ad-free viewing, a minimal level of advertisement may still be necessary to achieve maximum profitability for the platform. This study extends the understanding of multi-menu pricing strategies in the OTT context by linking consumer preference measurement with optimization techniques. Practically, it provides strategic guidance for new entrants and existing players in the OTT market to design effective revenue models. Ultimately, the framework supports decision-making on pricing, advertising, and content positioning in a competitive and saturated environment.





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MARKET INTEGRATION AND PRICE VOLATILITY OF WHEAT AND COTTON: INSIGHTS FROM INDIA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Abstract

In a global economy marked by rapid diversification and technological advancement, agriculture remains a vital pillar, particularly in India, where it underpins rural livelihoods and broad-based economic activity. Despite India's industrial and service sectors expanding, the agricultural sector still contributes approximately 15 to 16 per cent of GDP, while engaging around 44 to 45 per cent of the workforce. In contrast, the United States features a highly diversified economy in which agriculture, food, and related industries account for roughly between 5.5 to 5.6 per cent of GDP, but production at the farm level is only about 0.7 to 0.8 per cent. Meanwhile, the United Kingdom's agricultural sector plays a smaller role in the economy, contributing only between 0.5 to 0.6 per cent of GDP.

Wheat and cotton are significant agricultural products that greatly affect the economies of both developed and developing countries. Wheat serves as a key food grain crucial for food security, while cotton is a vital raw material for textile industries around the world. Together, these products drive trade, create jobs, and support industrial growth, making their price trends significant. For countries like India, the United States, and the United Kingdom, fluctuations in the wheat and cotton markets affect local stakeholders and have broader impacts on international trade and policy. Agricultural commodity markets are naturally unpredictable and influenced by international supply and demand changes, weather variations, shifting trade patterns, and regulatory actions. Despite the importance of these commodities, there are few studies comparing countries, especially those looking into volatility and market connections using econometric models.

This study aims to bridge this gap by taking a clear and complete approach to analyse the volatility of wheat and cotton markets in India, the US, and the UK. Secondary data is used for the analysis, which includes daily prices of cotton and wheat for the past 10 years, ranging from 2014 to 2025. The methodology includes all the diagnostic tests of stationarity, heteroskedasticity, and normality. The model incorporated for analysis is GARCH (Generalised Autoregressive Conditional Heteroskedasticity).

The findings will assist traders and investors in making better decisions based on patterns of volatility and levels of market integration. Additionally, the results are relevant for policymakers, providing insights into how prices are set, the regulatory environment, and strategies for managing risks related to price changes. By blending econometric models with an international comparison, this research adds to the understanding of agricultural market stability and global economic health.





THE PATH TO CONSUMER WELL-BEING: HOW MINIMALISM INFLUENCE SATISFACTION AND HAPPINESS AMONG GENERATION Z

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Abstract

The objective of the study is to explore the antecedents of minimalism and examine its impact on consumer well-being. The study further explores the mediating role of happiness and satisfaction for minimalism and wellbeing relationship. A theoretical framework was proposed to test the propounded relations. Data was collected using online survey from 600 respondents. The framework was empirically tested and verified using partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings suggest that owning fewer possessions is the most important determinant of minimalism followed by minimalist aesthetics and mindful consumption and confirm the impact of minimalism on consumer well-being. The study also confirms the mediation of happiness and satisfaction for minimalism and well-being relation. From the marketer's perspective, the research gives us useful information on how minimalistic living leads into consumer well-being. It brings to the forefront that accepting and advocating for minimalism can mean more emotional satisfaction and less stress. This realization allows brands to align their offerings and communication with values around simplicity, mindfulness, and thoughtful living. Using this link, marketers can create more trust and loyalty in the long term with consumers who care about well-being. The study contributes to the understanding of consumer well-being by investigating the connection between minimalism and well-being and the parallel mediation effects of satisfaction and happiness.





EDUCATIONAL DIVERSITY IN CORPORATE BOARDS AND ITS IMPACT ON FIRM PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The relationship between boardroom diversity and firm performance has become an increasingly important theme in corporate governance research. While prior studies have largely concentrated on gender, ethnicity, or independence, educational diversity remains an underexplored dimension despite its potential to influence decision-making and strategic outcomes. Educational diversity refers to the heterogeneity of academic qualifications, disciplines, and institutions represented among board members, providing boards with varied cognitive resources, problem-solving approaches, and knowledge bases. Drawing on agency theory, stewardship theory, resource dependence, and the resource-based view, this study examines how educational diversity can influence corporate outcomes through enhanced monitoring, more effective long-term decision-making, improved access to resources, and the development of competitive advantage.

Previous research presents inconclusive evidence concerning the influence of educational attainment on leadership. CEOs possessing advanced educational qualifications demonstrate superior information processing capabilities and adaptability to organisational change (Bantel & Jackson, 1989; Wiersema & Bantel, 1992), whereas technical degrees correlate with increased investment in research and development (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996; Barker & Mueller, 2002). CFOs possessing MBAs are more likely to employ stringent financial methodologies (Graham & Harvey, 2002). Nonetheless, evidence regarding the direct correlation between CEO educational attainment and firm performance is inconclusive, as studies by Jalbert et al. (2002), Gottesman & Morey (2006a), and Bhagat et al. (2010) reveal minimal or no consistent association. This indicates that educational background may be less significant at the individual level and more pertinent regarding collective diversity, such as that of corporate boards. Although few studies have investigated the impact of educational diversity on corporate performance, both in India and in other developed or developing nations. A limited number of academics have conceptualised and thoroughly examined educational diversity at the board level in its distinct capacity.

This study addresses this gap by empirically analyzing the relationship between board-level educational diversity and firm performance, with a focus on emerging economies where evidence remains sparse. Using the Blau index to capture diversity across academic streams, institutions, and degree levels, the study finds significant variation in the effects of different dimensions of diversity. Specifically, diversity in academic streams and institutions exhibits a strong positive association with firm performance at the 1% level of significance, suggesting that exposure to multiple disciplinary perspectives and institutional networks enriches board deliberations and strengthens strategic choices. In contrast, degree-level diversity shows a significant negative relationship, indicating that too much variation in educational attainment may hinder cohesion or create coordination challenges.





These findings underscore the nuanced nature of educational diversity, demonstrating that not all forms are equally beneficial. The present study contributes to the corporate governance literature by highlighting the importance of distinguishing among dimensions of board diversity rather than treating them uniformly. The findings extend beyond theoretical contributions, offering practical implications for businesses, policymakers, and investors. They underscore the necessity for customised diversity management strategies that capitalise on advantageous aspects of diversity while alleviating potential drawbacks.

Data sources: The non-financial and non-manufacturing companies listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) with an annual turnover of Rs 200 crore were chosen by the author. The information covers businesses from 2005–06 to 2021–22. The author of this study used the India Board data from the PRIME database and the Prowess database.

Methodology: Regression models have been estimated by using the dynamic panel data methodology (DPM). DPM extends conventional panel data models by integrating lagged values of the dependent variable, facilitating a nuanced comprehension of how current states are influenced by past data.





NAVIGATING DUAL INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURIAL RESPONSES TO INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEXITY.

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Abstract

Indigenous entrepreneurs frequently navigate the intersection of two divergent institutional frameworks: community-based frameworks, which emphasize kinship ties, cultural preservation, and collective ownership, and mainstream market frameworks, which prioritize profit maximization, formal compliance, and scalability. This research examines the ways in which Indigenous entrepreneurs manage dual institutional pressures and address conflicting demands to achieve legitimacy and maintain their enterprises within diverse environments. A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted to examine these issues. In accordance with PRISMA guidelines for transparent review, we conducted a search of the Scopus database and identified 110 pertinent peer-reviewed journal articles. A content analysis of the corpus was conducted to identify the primary institutional actors, categories of institutional tensions and dualities, and the entrepreneurial response strategies reported in the literature.

The analysis indicates that Indigenous entrepreneurship is influenced by various external institutions. Nine primary categories of external institutions engaging with indigenous enterprises were identified. The interaction of these institutional forces results in seven categories of institutional dualities, which represent fundamental tensions between Indigenous and mainstream logics. Entrepreneurs frequently navigate the tension between cultural embeddedness and the demands for formalization, while also weighing community well-being against profit-driven market forces. These dualities illustrate the persistent challenge of respecting indigenous values while addressing the requirements of competitive market contexts. Indigenous entrepreneurs utilize diverse strategic responses to address these tensions. Notable strategies identified are hybridization, bricolage, selective resistance, and institutional translation. Entrepreneurs utilize these approaches to reconcile dual logics and sustain legitimacy within their community and the wider market.

This study theoretically contributes to institutional theory and the expanding literature on Indigenous entrepreneurship. This study offers a comprehensive view of the management of institutional complexity at the grassroots level, thereby enhancing institutional theory with insights derived from marginalized, non-Western contexts. The synthesis emphasizes a bottom-up approach to plural institutional logics and highlights the importance of legitimacy, illustrating how entrepreneurs must align with both community norms and external market standards simultaneously. This review synthesizes findings from various studies, contributing to Indigenous entrepreneurship scholarship by presenting a framework that outlines the institutional environment of Indigenous enterprises and classifies the major dualities and coping strategies implemented.





The findings have implications for policy and practice. Entrepreneurs operating within dual logics necessitate support systems that recognize and address both aspects of their institutional context. This study advocates for the creation of culturally informed policies, such as legal frameworks and funding programs that honor Indigenous governance structures. It emphasizes the need to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and values into entrepreneurship education and to design entrepreneurship support ecosystems, including incubators, mentorship programs, and financing mechanisms, specifically for indigenous communities. Interventions can foster inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems, allowing Indigenous enterprises to prosper economically while maintaining cultural integrity, thereby enhancing these economies.





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DRIVING DIGITAL RUPEE ADOPTION THROUGH GOVERNMENT SCHEMES: INSIGHTS FROM CHINA'S CBDC ROLLOUT

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Abstract

India's launch of the Digital Rupee marks an important development in its evolving financial system. As the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) pilots this Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) across different states and sectors, integrating it with government welfare schemes offers a promising way to encourage adoption, especially among underserved and digitally excluded populations.

This study looks at how schemes like Jan Dhan Yojana, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), PM-Kisan, and state-level initiatives such as Odisha's Subhadra Yojana can be used to promote inclusive use of the Digital Rupee. India's digital payments ecosystem is quite developed. For instance, UPI processed 185.8 billion transactions in FY 2024–25, a 41% year-on-year growth in volume, indicating widespread acceptance of digital transactions.

Since Digital Rupee launch in pilot mode in December 2022, the Digital Rupee has grown steadily. Retail circulation reached approximately ₹1,016.5 crore (about \$122 million) by March 2025, representing a 334% increase from the previous year. Currently, over 6 million users are engaged with the Digital Rupee, with monthly transaction volumes nearing half a million (~500,000) across 17 participating banks. Features such as offline transaction capability and programmable money create opportunities for targeted government payments and conditional transfers.

Despite this progress, challenges remain, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas where smartphone penetration with 4G stands only 53.6%, digital literacy is limited to about 38% of households. Privacy concerns and lack of widespread familiarity further dampen adoption. To address some of these issues, RBI has tested offline wallets and token-based systems designed for low-connectivity regions.

This paper also draws comparisons from China's rollout of the Digital Yuan. Since its 2020 launch, the Digital Yuan has seen over 300 million wallets opened and more than \$400 billion in cumulative transactions by late 2024. The Chinese government has actively promoted its use through initiatives such as partial civil servant salary payments in digital yuan and integration with public transport and welfare disbursements across multiple cities. However, the Digital Yuan represents only about 2.5% of China's physical cash in circulation, signalling ongoing challenges in converting initial uptake into sustained daily use.

Preliminary findings from this ongoing research suggest that integrating the Digital Rupee into India's welfare schemes—combined with offline usability, strong data protection standards, digital literacy programs, and partnership with fintech players—can significantly boost adoption. The study aims to





develop a policy framework that supports scalable, inclusive, and trusted CBDC implementation tailored to India's unique demographic and infrastructural realities.

As final analysis progresses, this work hopes to contribute to the design of India's broader CBDC adoption strategy, ensuring the Digital Rupee becomes a practical tool for financial inclusion, transparency, and innovation.





INFLUENCE OF BUSINESS CHALLENGES ON BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF HOMEPRENEURS

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Abstract

Home-based entrepreneurship, often referred to as homepreneurship, has gained significant traction in recent years as a viable avenue for women to pursue economic independence, contribute to household income, and balance family responsibilities while engaging in entrepreneurial activity. In India, particularly in metropolitan cities like Chennai, homepreneurs play a crucial role in shaping the local entrepreneurial ecosystem by offering products and services that cater to niche markets. Despite their growing importance, these entrepreneurs face multiple challenges that directly impact their ability to sustain and grow their ventures.

This study investigates the influence of business challenges on the business performance of homepreneurs in Chennai, focusing on how different dimensions of challenges hinder or shape entrepreneurial outcomes. The research conceptualizes business challenges as a multidimensional construct that includes financial challenges, market-related challenges, operational challenges, work-life balance issues, social and family pressures, and regulatory and infrastructural constraints. For instance, limited access to credit and capital constrains financial flexibility; intense competition and lack of market access limit customer reach; inadequate operational resources affect productivity; work-life imbalance and family pressures hinder time allocation; and regulatory hurdles coupled with poor infrastructure restrict scalability.

The dependent variable, business performance, is examined through dimensions such as sustainability of business, and personal empowerment. By establishing the relationship between the identified challenges and performance, the study aims to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the constraints faced by homepreneurs in an urban context.

The empirical study adopts a quantitative research design. A structured questionnaire is developed to capture perceptions of business challenges and performance outcomes. Data will be collected from 385 women homepreneurs in Chennai, selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different sectors. Statistical tools such as descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression will be employed to analyze the data and test hypotheses regarding the influence of business challenges on business performance.

The study is expected to yield significant findings. Preliminary assumptions suggest that financial and market challenges may exert the strongest negative influence on performance, while social and family support factors may moderate the impact of other constraints. Work-life balance challenges given the dual burden of domestic and entrepreneurial responsibilities shouldered by many women homepreneurs. By





highlighting these insights, the research will advance scholarly understanding of the interplay between barriers and performance outcomes in the homepreneurship context.

From a practical perspective, the findings carry important implications for policymakers, support organizations, financial institutions, and women entrepreneurs themselves. The results can guide the design of targeted interventions such as financial schemes, capacity-building programs, digital skill development initiatives, family sensitization workshops, and regulatory simplification measures. In alignment with the conference theme, this research underscores the importance of addressing business challenges faced by homepreneurs as a means of driving social impact through management research. By empowering women homepreneurs to overcome systemic and operational barriers, societies can unlock their entrepreneurial potential, foster inclusive growth, and build resilient communities.





DECODING DEMAND: SUSTAINABILITY PREFERENCES IN SUBURBAN INDIAN TOURISM

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Abstract

The concept of moving away from mass tourism, which seek to promote some form of environmental conservation, cultural integrity, welfare aspect as well as socio economic development, impact on destination communities etc are gaining its footprint. Though the concept was available in tourism literature since the early eighties, (Cooper and Ozdil,1992, deKadt,1980, Krippendorf,1987, Smith 1990.) In current tourism understanding, which also intends to aim towards inclusive approach, different study has focused towards tourism being responsible, (Chettiparamb,2006) different sustainability included initiatives termed as alternative tourism, ecotourism, ethical tourism, green tourism community-based tourism etc has emerged in tourism literature (Scheyvens and Momsen, 2008; Sharpeley, 2000; Oliver and Jenkins, 2003; Blackstock, 2005; Cawley and Gilmour, 2008; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2009; Weeden, 2002; Hall, 2008).

This paper intends to understand the preferences of suburban people in terms of their awareness and desire to adopt this new inclusive approach of tourism-moving away from the practice of mass tourism.

The study is conducted through a structured questionnaire being circulated through google form and sent through mail. All age group from 18 years and above has been included, to understand the level of awareness as well as acceptance towards this sustainable tourism among urban communities.

A sample size of 200 has been analyzed. The study has been both quantitative as well as qualitative in nature.

The present study is conducted through a structured questionnaire being circulated through google form and sent through mail. All age group from 18 years and above has been included, to understand the level of awareness as well as acceptance towards this sustainable tourism among urban community. The study would be both quantitative as well as qualitative in nature. SPSS 16.0 software is used to understand the quantitative aspect while Textmagic.com is used to understand the qualitative response.

This paper examined the SERVQUAL model to understand the customer perception, preference and satisfaction level towards agro/eco-tourism. As a service provider any tourism organization needs to understand customer expectation to serve beyond and create delight. The theoretical instruments of five critical service elements of: reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy, can enable the organization to create a life-long experience for their customer. As the industry is moving from mass tourism to focus on aspect more aligned towards sustainable practice, it becomes yet more essential to look into all these elements to identify service gap and work towards its betterment.





The Study was done in a metro city and its suburb, hence it cannot represent the entire population. The awareness and exposure of the surveyed samples may not match with tier II or tier III citizens. Also the study had been done on a limited sample of 200 respondents, which would be increased to a larger volume in the further study. With more sample size the number of respondents who had actually visited may go up to understand the service delivery gap in a more effective manner.





RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP FOR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN A SUSTAINABILITY-DRIVEN WORLD

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Abstract

In an era of climate change, technological disruption, and widening social inequalities, organizations face growing pressure to adopt practices that align profitability with societal purpose. Responsible leadership (RL) has emerged as a critical paradigm in this context, emphasizing ethics, inclusivity, and stakeholder well-being (Maak et al., 2022). A central question guiding this paper is: *What role does responsible leadership play in fostering higher employee engagement (EE)?* To address this, the study integrates insights from Social Exchange Theory (SET), Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model.

First, SET (Blau, 1964) suggests that employees reciprocate leaders' fairness, care, and ethical orientation with higher commitment and discretionary effort. RL behaviors, such as demonstrating moral accountability and supporting sustainability, show organizational care for employees' values, fostering trust and engagement. Second, SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000) posits that engagement thrives when autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs are fulfilled. RL empowers employees by involving them in sustainability initiatives, offering meaningful work, and cultivating inclusive cultures, thereby satisfying these psychological needs. Third, the JD–R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) highlights the importance of job resources in driving engagement. RL functions as a leadership resource that reduces stress, provides value alignment, and enhances motivation, positioning employees to flourish even under demanding conditions.

Drawing on these theoretical lenses, this paper develops a conceptual model linking RL, sustainable HRM practices, and EE. Responsible leaders embed sustainability into HR practices such as training, recruitment, and performance management (Aust et al., 2020). For example, rewarding pro-environmental behaviors or offering learning programs on ethical decision-making provides employees with purpose, while signaling long-term organizational resilience. Case evidence from Indian organizations such as Tata Steel, which integrates social responsibility into HR systems, and Infosys, which emphasizes ethical leadership in talent development, illustrates how RL-oriented strategies translate into stronger engagement outcomes, lower turnover, and enhanced innovation.

Beyond empirical illustrations, this paper contributes by positioning RL not merely as a leadership style but as a strategic resource for engagement. It argues that RL creates meaning-laden workplaces where employees feel connected to broader societal goals. Such alignment elevates engagement beyond transactional job satisfaction, embedding it in a moral and sustainable organizational vision (Voegtlin et al., 2022).





For practitioners, the findings underscore the value of integrating RL principles into leadership development and HR frameworks to drive both employee engagement and societal well-being. For scholars, the paper offers a theoretical synthesis connecting RL with EE, grounded in SET, SDT, and JD–R. This provides a foundation for future empirical research examining how responsible leadership behaviors foster sustainable engagement in diverse organizational contexts.

Ultimately, responsible leadership offers a pathway to reimagine organizations as agents of social transformation. By aligning employee engagement with sustainability and ethics, RL enables organizations to simultaneously achieve competitive advantage and contribute to building equitable, resilient, and purpose-driven societies.





SUSTAINABLE TRANSITIONS IN BATTERY ELECTRIC VEHICLE SECTOR: UNVEILING CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRACTICES THROUGH SEMANTIC NETWORK ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Increasing climate risks, regulations, and pressures from customers and investors are driving the automotive industry further into a new era of sustainability. The global transition to battery electric vehicles (BEV) represents a pivotal step towards sustainable mobility, driven by the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate climate change, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Despite the rapid advancement of BEV technologies, the integration of circular economy (CE) principles into the BEV sector remains partially developed and often fragmented. Existing bibliometric studies have explored aspects of this intersection, but few have systematically applied advanced computational methods to map and structure thematic insights. This study addresses this gap by combining bibliometric techniques with an innovative text-mining approach that leverages bigram-based semantic network analysis with hierarchical clustering to uncover latent research themes and build a thematic taxonomy of the field. This mix of methods makes it possible to trace hidden patterns in the literature on circular economy and battery electric vehicles, leading to the creation of a thematic taxonomy designed from a sustainability perspective. The analysis highlights six key thematic clusters: (1) material flows and resource recovery, (2) life cycle assessment and circular business models, (3) regulatory and policy frameworks, (4) climate change mitigation strategies, (5) market dynamics and economic implications, and (6) renewable energy integration. The combination of sustainability, innovation, and CE principles will help BEV businesses make informed decisions and set effective policies, as demonstrated by these themes working together. The taxonomy developed in this study can serve as a useful benchmarking tool for managers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders. This study offers a systematic perspective on leveraging circular economy strategies within the BEV sector. Implementing circular economy practices in the BEV sector can help mitigate environmental harm, optimize resource utilization, and support the transition to cleaner and more sustainable transportation.





DRIVING FACULTY ENGAGEMENT: THE ROLE OF LEARNING ORIENTATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

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Abstract

Job engagement plays a significant role in higher education institutions (HEIs), directly impacting teaching effectiveness and student learning. Engaged faculty members are keen to learn and grow, showing higher well-being and reduced signs of quitting intentions. This study examines the role of individual factors, including emotional regulation and learning orientation, along with an organisational factor, in predicting job engagement. Data was collected by sending a structured questionnaire, selected through a purposive sampling technique, to 216 higher education faculty members in India. Findings through statistical analysis of correlation and regression reveal that one of the individual factors, which is faculty learning orientation, and another organisational factor, which is perceived organisational support, significantly predict job engagement, whereas emotional regulation has a non-significant impact. The study adds to the theoretical underpinnings of Kahn's dimensions of employee engagement by highlighting the significance of learning orientation and organizational support as key factors influencing job engagement. From a practical implication perspective, it suggests that HEI's can guard against the disengagement by promoting continuous self-learning and ensuring adequate organizational support to faculty members.





TITLE: RETAIL INVESTOR SENTIMENT IN THE AGE OF FINFLUENCERS: A BEHAVIORAL FINANCE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

India's financial ecosystem is witnessing a profound digital transformation, with retail participation in markets expanding rapidly through mobile trading platforms and social media-driven financial content. A growing share of these investors, especially millennials and first-time participants, increasingly rely on financial influencers ("finfluencers") on YouTube, Instagram, and Telegram for guidance. While finfluencers democratize access to financial knowledge, their content often blends entertainment with advice, bypasses regulatory checks, and appeals more to emotion than analysis. This raises concerns about investor protection, decision quality, and market efficiency.

Finfluencers have a strong impact on retail investors in India, with around 82% acting on their advice and 72% of those reporting profits. However, only 2% are SEBI-registered, raising regulatory and credibility concerns. About one-third give direct buy/sell recommendations, and many do not disclose sponsorships or affiliations, increasing risk, especially for investors above 40. Their appeal lies in simplifying finance and boosting financial literacy, particularly among younger and first-time investors. Earnings vary widely: top finfluencers earn ₹15–30 lakh/month, brand collaborations fetch ₹3–12 lakh per deal, while micro-creators earn ₹20,000–2 lakh/month. Overall, their influence is high but mixed—empowering for many yet risky without regulation.

The study is anchored in Behavioral Finance theory, which evolved as a response to the Efficient Market Hypothesis (Fama, 1970). The theoretical foundation was laid by Kahneman and Tversky (1979) through *Prospect Theory*, which demonstrated how cognitive biases and heuristics drive decision-making under risk. Later, Thaler (1985, 1993) institutionalized behavioral finance by highlighting anomalies such as mental accounting, loss aversion, and overconfidence. Within this framework, the present study investigates how finfluencer content affects retail investor sentiment, investment decision-making, trading behaviour, and trust in financial advice sources, while also examining the moderating roles of financial literacy, regulatory awareness, and investment experience.

A quantitative, cross-sectional survey of 400+ retail investors across Tier I, II, and III cities in India forms the empirical base of this research. Data will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and moderation analysis. Preliminary insights suggest that while finfluencers significantly amplify investor sentiment and speculative activity, higher financial literacy and regulatory awareness reduce susceptibility.





The study contributes to literature by situating finfluencers as new-age opinion leaders in emerging markets and offers actionable insights for SEBI, policymakers, and educators to balance accessibility with investor protection.





MOTIVATIONAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IN NGOS: – AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING APPROACH

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Abstract

This study explored the experiential learning outcomes of MBA students who engaged in social outreach activities through visits to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as part of the Organizational Behaviour (OB) course. Moving beyond classroom learning, the assignment aimed to provide management students with exposure to models of social Resilience, perception, attitude, sustainable practices, resilience frameworks in society and motivational dynamics in socially impactful settings. Creating meaningful and significant student interaction through activity learning is essential to promoting profound learning, civic engagement, and holistic development in today's higher education. One successful educational strategy that supports these goals is the experiential learning process, which combines academic curriculum with worthwhile community service. Student groups used a qualitative approach, recording their thoughts and evaluations of the non-governmental organisations they visited. All business management graduates should take the OB course, which aims to align them with the behavioural dynamics of the organisation, the individual, and society. These experiences encouraged students to consider motivation, resilience, and community support systems as essential elements of organisational behaviour.

NGO visits provided a rich setting for critical reflection, a crucial component of service learning, through group presentations, reflective journals, and guided debriefing. In this qualitative case study design, every NGO visit by student groups was handled as a distinct case. By gathering information from a range of sources, such as presentations, observation notes, reflective diaries, and facilitated conversations, a comprehensive understanding of organisational processes and student learning was guaranteed. A cross-case study was conducted to look at trends among the NGOs, focussing on identifying parallels and differences in leadership styles, teamwork, and motivational strategies. The findings of those who participated in this service learning were more resilient thanks to the multi-case approach, which also enabled the production of insights that are relevant to experiential learning.

Cross-case analysis revealed consistent patterns of mission-driven leadership, strong community-oriented teamwork within NGOs, and intrinsic motivation in resource-constrained environments. Through these organisational practices, students were provided with practical examples of OB principles such as leadership, motivation, teamwork, and change management. More significantly, the perseverance and inventiveness of the NGO, who demonstrated remarkable abilities despite the difficulties they encountered and the chances they had to serve society, challenged the students' conceptions of ability and success. The process of reflection revealed how, in addition to reinforcing classroom concepts, this type of exposure promoted empathy, ethical consciousness, and a more thorough understanding of corporate social responsibility (CSR).





This study demonstrates that case-based service learning through NGO visits is a cutting-edge teaching method for management education. By treating each NGO as a case and performing cross-case analysis, students were able to make the connection between theoretical OB principles and real organisational activities and gain profound understanding of social issues. The findings demonstrate how crucial it is to include service learning in MBA programs in order to produce future leaders who can effectively blend social and business impact. Ultimately, by preparing students to lead with competence and morality, these programs strengthen the link between management education and societal welfare.





WHY DID COVID-19 FACILITATE AN INCREASE IN ENERGY CONSUMPTION INEQUALITY?

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Abstract

Introduction: The subject of inequality has been at the centre of socio-economic discourse for centuries and so, scholars are in continual pursuit for devising better tools and methodologies to capture “inequality” more realistically. This has led to the greater adoption of consumption-based inequality measures in recent times. As COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities across the world, the study of inequality gained greater traction. India, with her structural inequalities and huge populations became a natural choice for many such studies. The studies so far: both income and consumption based, brought out often contradictory results. While several studies found evidence of temporary rise in poverty and income inequality early in the pandemic, the inequality settled to pre-pandemic levels by late 2021. Some found spike in income inequality during national lockdown (April 2020) which fell to pre-pandemic level even before the peak of first COVID-19 wave (September – October 2020); consumption inequality displayed analogous behaviour but with less contraction. Other studies found that the pandemic increased the inequality. Such wide variations in the finding necessitated further studies. Exploration of existing body of literature revealed that despite inherent qualitative and quantitative advantages of electricity consumption data and its growing relevance for inequality studies, no study used the same. Consequently, none availed the unique opportunity of natural experiment where pandemic induced restrictions resulted in constraints in consumption of most goods and services while electricity remains available to consumers. So, in our study we aim to fill these gaps by investigating both on theoretical and empirical plane, the behaviour of electricity consumption inequality in India— in pandemic and off it.

Theoretical Framework: First, we used Cobb-Douglas framework in a simulated world of two-good consumption basket to demonstrate that inequality in consumption of one good increase when availability of other good is restricted. Then, we carry out the same exercise in the real world where national lockdown or regional (or local) partial-lockdown led to supply-shocks for physical goods and services as electricity remains accessible through wired transmission & distribution networks.

Empirical Analysis: Using a panel data of monthly electricity consumption of 100,000 consumers of Maharashtra, India during the period of April 2018 to March 2023, we explore variability of electricity consumption inequality across pre-covid, covid (COVID-19 first, second and third wave) and post-covid periods deploying regression models. With monthly Gini value of electricity consumption inequality (derived at sub-division level) as dependent variable we explore its dependency on location and pandemic. As we know, human behaviour including consumption often changes with lag, so have used two regression models: one, without and another with, lag. We have treated both these models for both random and fixed effects.





Contribution: Through this study, we make following contributions to the existing body of knowledge. First, we found that COVID-19 complete-lockdown: a national phenomenon at the beginning of the pandemic, had a delayed positive impact on electricity consumption inequality i.e. inequality increased, for households. Second, even partial-lockdown impacted inequality positively: both immediately as well as with lag, for households. Third, inequality decreased in rural Maharashtra for household consumption both in complete-lockdown as well as in partial-lockdown, ostensibly due to food transfer and other remedial measures launched during the pandemic by the government. Fourth, electricity consumption inequality in general is higher among consumers of semi-urban and rural areas than those of urban Maharashtra. Fifth, inequality among commercial consumers of semi-urban Maharashtra increased during partial lockdown, remaining more or less unaffected elsewhere. Sixth, there was no impact of the pandemic or locations on inequality among agricultural consumers.





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THE GOVERNANCE FIREWALL: FIRM-LEVEL POLITICAL RISK AND DEFAULT

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Abstract

Political risk has emerged as an important determinant of firm financial outcomes, particularly in an era marked by geopolitical instability and regulatory uncertainty. While macro-level political risk has been widely studied, existing studies have given limited attention to firm-level exposure to political uncertainty despite its direct implications for financial distress. This study examines the impact of firm-level political risk on default risk. Furthermore, this study shows how corporate governance moderates the relationship between firm-level political risk and default risk.

In this study, I use a recent text-based political risk measure from Hassan, Hollander, Van Lent, and Tahoun (2019) to construct firm-level proxies of political uncertainty from corporate disclosures. Default risk is captured using the probability of default based on Duan, Sun, and Wang (2012). It measures the probability of a firm going bankrupt in the coming year. Using a large cross-country panel of listed firms, this study shows a positive and significant relationship between firm-level political risk and default risk. The findings suggest that increased political risk results in higher borrowing costs, constrains access to external financing, and raises refinancing vulnerabilities (Albuquerque, Koskinen, Yang, & Zhang, 2020; P'astor & Veronesi, 2013). As a result, these factors increase the likelihood of default of a firm.

Furthermore, the analysis highlights the moderating role of corporate governance. I use the governance pillar of ESG scores as a proxy for corporate governance. Consistent with agency theory (Shleifer & Vishny, 1997) and institutional theory (DiMaggio, Powell, et al., 1983; Scott, 2013), I find that a strong governance structure significantly weakens the positive relationship between political risk and default risk. These structures include greater board independence, enhanced disclosure practices, and effective risk oversight. Firms with high governance quality are better equipped to anticipate regulatory changes, manage compliance, and signal credibility to investors (Bebchuk, Cohen, & Ferrell, 2009; Gompers, Ishii, & Metrick, 2003). As a result, they reduce lenders' perception of risk.

This study contributes to the growing literature on firm-level political risk (Hassan et al., 2019; P'astor & Veronesi, 2020) by providing novel evidence on its relationship with the default risk of firms. It further advances the ESG-finance literature by demonstrating that governance quality functions as a resilience mechanism against political shocks (Dyck, Lins, Roth, & Wagner, 2019). From a practical viewpoint, the results highlight the importance of governance strategy as a risk management tool. The study has the following implications. First, for managers, the study shows that stronger governance frameworks serve as an internal hedge against political risk. Second, for investors and creditors, governance quality provides an important screening mechanism in politically volatile markets.





IMPACT OF HYBRID WORK MODELS ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN IT FIRMS

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Abstract

The emergence of work configuration in the post pandemic era has led to the widespread adoption of Hybrid Work Model, blending, remote and in traditional work to ensure employee welfare, flexibility, and productivity. While organizations across industries have incorporated this model, there remains substantial ambiguity regarding its prolonged influence on employee outcomes. This study examines the impact of hybrid work practices on employee engagement, retention, and job satisfaction with a particular focus on the mediating roles of managerial support and organizational culture. By highlighting these dimensions, the study intends to provide a holistic understanding of how organizations can tighten their Human Resource strategies in hybrid work settings.

The objectives of the research:

1. To investigate the relationship between hybrid work models and managerial support.
2. To examine the impact of hybrid work practices on organizational culture.
3. To assess the role of managerial support and organizational culture in shaping employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention.
4. To propose actionable strategies for optimizing hybrid work arrangements.

The methodology adopted for this research is quantitative. Primary data was collected using a standard questionnaire based on Likert scale measures, targeting employees who have been working under hybrid arrangements. This research has adopted simple random sampling technique across IT sector, with sample size of 456 respondents. Data analysis was done using statistical tools such as SEM to test the hypothesis.

The findings of the study suggest that the hybrid work model positively influences both managerial support and organizational culture, which in turn significantly impact employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention. Managerial support is expected to emerge as a critical determinant of employee engagement and satisfaction, while organizational culture is likely to play a pivotal role in enhancing retention and long-term commitment. Together, these mediating factors strengthens the effectiveness of hybrid work arrangements and improve organizational resilience.

The aim of this research is defined within Indian context, concentrating on organizations that have transitioned to hybrid models in the post pandemic period. The study attempts to deliver actionable





insights. The study widens the scope beyond organizational benefits, as the findings will also contribute to the border representation on sustainable work models that balance productivity with employee well-being.

The input to the society lies in its potential to direct organizations in designing people-centered policies that improve employee satisfaction and reduce attrition. By fostering an inclusive culture and facilitating managerial support in hybrid settings, organizations can generate healthier work environments that facilitate individual growth, organizational development and social stability. Thus, this research aspires to add notable contribution to both academic literature and practical business strategies.





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DOES AUDIT QUALITY INFLUENCE DEBT MATURITY OF A FIRM?

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Abstract

This study provides a comprehensive examination of how audit quality influences corporate debt maturity decisions among firms listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) in India. By analyzing data from all NSE and BSE-listed companies, the paper reports that the fraction of long-term debt in firms' capital structures rises with the presence of a Big Four auditor, suggesting that higher-quality audits substitute for short-term debt for monitoring purposes (El Ghoul et al., 2016). The findings reveal that the presence of a Big Four auditor significantly increases the proportion of long-term debt within a firm's overall capital structure. This suggests that higher-quality audits serve as a credible monitoring mechanism, reducing informational asymmetries and the need for firms to rely on short-term debt for monitoring purposes. Essentially, the assurance provided by Big Four auditors enhances the transparency and credibility of firm's financial disclosures, enabling firms to access longer-term financing options more comfortably.

The results demonstrate that firms audited by Big Four auditors tend to have longer debt maturities, underscoring the role of high-quality audits in fostering stability and investor confidence. The research also emphasizes that audit quality alleviates agency conflicts and reduces information asymmetries between management and stakeholders. Consequently, this diminished informational gap lessens the necessity for firms to rely on short-term debt, which often entails higher monitoring costs and risks. Overall, the findings suggest that audit quality, particularly through Big Four firms, plays a crucial role in enabling firms to opt for longer-term financing structures, thereby promoting financial stability and strategic flexibility. These insights underscore the importance of robust auditing standards and their influence on corporate financial decision-making in emerging markets like India.





HISTORICAL IMPRINTING, INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND EMERGING MARKET FIRMS SPRINGBOARD INTERNATIONALIZATION

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Abstract

Drawing from the organizational imprinting theory, this study extends the springboard perspective by proposing the impact of historical imprinting on aggressive internationalization of emerging market firms, conceptualized as the speed of the first cross-border acquisition (CBA). Taking the context of Indian independence as a rare historical event, this study tests the proposed hypotheses using the Cox-proportional hazard survival model on a sample of 65072 firm-year observations during 1996-2019. The results show that firms' exposure to Indian independence movements leaves a long-lasting imprinting effect and reduces the contemporary firms' speed of the first CBA. The author further finds the amplifying (or diminishing) role of foreign institutional investors' ownership and affiliation with the older business group on the imprinting effect of historical events on emerging market firms' aggressive internationalization. The author also discusses the theoretical contributions to the springboard perspective and organizational imprinting theory, along with managerial implications.

Regarding theoretical contributions, the findings from this study add to the springboard perspective and organizational imprinting literature. First, we corroborate with the notion that institutional embeddedness impacts the pattern of firm internationalization (Arikan et al. 2021, Cuervo-Cazurra 2012). The existing literature in the EMNEs context is limited to understanding the role of home country pro-market reforms event in EMNEs internationalization (Cuervo-Cazurra 2008, Cuervo-Cazurra and Dau 2009, Kumar et al. 2020, Stucchi et al. 2015). We dwell further in history to understand the imprinting effect of Indian independence event on contemporary firms' aggressive internationalization.

Second, we offer a refined understanding of which EMNEs show high (or low) imprinting effects due to the independence movement during springboard internationalization. We consider the importance of FIIs ownership in the context of emerging economies and propose that FIIs ownership alleviates the negative imprinting effect due to exposure of independence movements on firms' propensity to execute their first CBA at an early age. FIIs exert pressure to pressure aggressive internationalization to counterattack competition and increase the shareholders' returns (Lin & Fu, 2017; Tihanyi, Johnson, Hoskisson, & Hitt, 2003: 200). The imprinting effect from the historical event during the first CBA decision is also reduced by FIIs diverse network and exposure to investing in diverse cultures and countries (Choe et al. 2001, Zhou et al. 2016). These resource and capabilities form of FIIs technological and financial expertise and pool of financial and managerial resources help EMNEs better estimate the risk-return ratio (Tihanyi et al. 2003) and reduces the downside risk of aggressive first CBA decision.

Finally, we provide contextual insight about affiliated firms from which BG shows more persistence imprinting effect due to exposure to independence movements and less aggressive internationalization





behavior. We propose that firms affiliated with older BGs show a more persistent imprinting effect and less aggressive internationalization. The older BGs deep institutional embeddedness in the institutions of the emerging market characterized by limited market-based advantages and foreign competition reduce the strategic flexibility of the affiliated firms to internationalize aggressively.





1304

CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE: BUILDING TRUST, RESILIENCE, AND COMMITMENT IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

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Abstract

In an increasingly volatile and uncertain global business environment, crises—whether triggered by financial downturns, technological failures, reputational threats, or health emergencies—pose significant challenges for organizations. Crisis communication, defined as the strategies and processes employed by organizations to convey information, manage uncertainty, and reassure stakeholders during disruptive events, has traditionally been studied from the perspective of external audiences such as customers, media, or investors. However, employees, who constitute the internal backbone of the organization, often experience the most direct consequences of a crisis. Their perceptions of the organization's communication practices can shape not only immediate workplace morale but also long-term organizational resilience. This paper examines the multifaceted impact of crisis communication on employees, with a focus on their trust, engagement, psychological well-being, and organizational commitment.

Drawing on theories of organizational communication, employee voice, and crisis management, the study explores how communication strategies adopted during crises influence employees' sense of security, role clarity, and identification with organizational values. Effective communication is not merely about disseminating information; it involves timeliness, transparency, empathy, and consistency. The absence or inadequacy of these qualities can exacerbate stress, fuel rumors, and reduce employees' willingness to cooperate. Conversely, when employees perceive crisis messages as clear, honest, and supportive, they are more likely to maintain trust in leadership, demonstrate discretionary effort, and contribute constructively to recovery efforts.

The paper adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining survey data with qualitative interviews. Quantitative analysis captures patterns of employee perceptions across industries affected by recent crises, while qualitative insights highlight the lived experiences of employees navigating uncertainty. The findings suggest that employees evaluate crisis communication along three critical dimensions: informational adequacy (clarity and completeness of messages), relational orientation (empathy and respect conveyed), and participatory opportunities (spaces for feedback and dialogue). These dimensions collectively determine employees' emotional responses and behavioural outcomes, ranging from resilience and loyalty to withdrawal and disengagement.

Furthermore, the research underscores that communication is not a one-time event but an evolving process throughout the crisis lifecycle. Employees' needs shift from immediate reassurance in the onset phase, to clarity about organizational direction in the maintenance phase, to opportunities for reflection and learning





in the recovery phase. Leaders who fail to adapt communication strategies across these stages risk losing credibility and weakening organizational culture. Conversely, leaders who consistently align messages with actions create a sense of shared purpose that strengthens employee commitment even amidst adversity.

The study contributes to the literature by reframing crisis communication as an internal as well as external imperative. It highlights the need for organizations to view employees not just as passive recipients of information but as active stakeholders whose engagement is pivotal to effective crisis response. Practically, the paper offers guidelines for managers to develop communication frameworks that prioritize transparency, empathy, and inclusivity. By doing so, organizations can transform crises from moments of vulnerability into opportunities to reinforce trust, enhance resilience, and cultivate a stronger organizational identity.

In sum, this research positions crisis communication as a critical determinant of employee well-being and organizational sustainability. By focusing on the employee perspective, it advances a more holistic understanding of how organizations can navigate crises while preserving—and even strengthening—their most vital resource: their people.





1306

ADOPTION AND IMPLICATIONS OF GENERATIVE AI IN MARKETING: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

The rapid integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) into marketing, business, and educational practices has prompted a surge in academic research. This systematic literature review (SLR) synthesizes and critically assesses the current body of knowledge on the adoption, opportunities, challenges, and ethical implications of generative AI across marketing and related domains, using the PRISMA methodology. A comprehensive search was performed on the Scopus database covering publications from 2020 to 2025, with peer-reviewed and open-access articles focused on generative AI in fields such as marketing, innovation, consumer behavior, virtual influencers, education, and ethics. After initial screening, removal of duplicates, and filtering for relevance and conceptual rigor, a total of 29 articles were included for in-depth thematic analysis. The review reveals that generative AI is transforming marketing strategies, enabling content creation, customer care, education, and business innovation. Key research topics include authenticity in AI-generated communications, consumer responses to virtual influencers, corporate digital responsibility, and ethical principles for AI deployment. The literature highlights opportunities such as scalability, personalization, and efficiency, and challenges including ethical risks, authenticity concerns, data privacy, and regulatory uncertainty. This synthesis identifies gaps in empirical studies, particularly concerning long-term consumer behavior, cross-cultural perspectives, and the integration of AI ethics into business practice. It reinforces the need for responsible AI governance, stakeholder engagement, and educational interventions, offering actionable insights for practitioners and policymakers. Findings are based on a rigorous review of 29 selected articles, forming a research agenda and roadmap for future work in this rapidly evolving field.





PRIVACY, POWER, AND COMPETITION: REGULATIONS FOR RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS GROWTH

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Abstract

In the digital economy, data has become a vital asset for business innovation while simultaneously raising complex legal and ethical questions. Microtargeting, driven by behavioral insights, allows firms to sharpen competitiveness, but also highlights the fragility of existing privacy safeguards. Economic reports often call for deregulation to ease compliance and support entrepreneurship, particularly for startups and SMEs. While this promise of efficiency is appealing, unchecked deregulation risks eroding consumer privacy and undermining the trust that sustains digital markets. Deregulation can indeed stimulate entrepreneurship, but if it disproportionately benefits large firms while eroding consumer protections, it undermines both fairness and sustainability. India's evolving privacy regime presents an opportunity: by aligning business efficiency with accountability, it can enable growth that is competitive, credible, and anchored in consumer trust.

India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (or DPDP Act) embodies this dilemma. Though a landmark attempt at comprehensive data governance, the Act suffers from broad exemptions, lack of clarity on consent provisions, and limited oversight of algorithmic profiling. These gaps create unintended consequences like when large technology firms, with resources to manage compliance, can turn regulation into a competitive advantage, solidifying market dominance. Smaller firms, meanwhile, face uncertainty and higher barriers to entry, stifling innovation and restricting fair participation in the digital economy. Rather than leveling the playing field, current frameworks risk reinforcing monopolistic structures under the guise of consumer protection.

These regulatory imbalances pose strategic challenges. Firms must balance growth ambitions with the need to preserve consumer trust. Exploiting loopholes may offer short-term benefits, but reputational damage, consumer backlash, and long-term regulatory tightening can undermine competitiveness. For managers, privacy must be reframed not merely as compliance but as part of corporate strategy, governance, and brand differentiation. The challenge, then, is to design regulations that does not overburden businesses while still safeguarding individual rights. Adaptive governance tools—such as transparent AI audits, co-regulatory frameworks, and sector-specific safeguards can ease compliance without compromising accountability. These mechanisms not only prevent misuse of personal data but also help businesses embed responsible practices into their operations, creating resilience and consumer confidence.





1310

BANKS, LEARNING FROM CRISES: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

The banking sector has been reshaped by various crises such as the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), the European Sovereign Debt Crisis, and, more recently, the disruptive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. All these upheavals have pushed it towards digital innovation, amplifying the space of shadow banking, and fuelling the increased growth in non-banking financial companies (NBFCs). This defines changes as a redefinition of the financial landscape, with risks exposed in all these crises and how they have been addressed.

Our findings suggest that old banks are still under pressure from permanent features. There are persistent threats such as a liquidity drought, increased credit risk possibility, and systemic modes of failure, which are badly aggravated most of the time in crises. Over the years, the regulatory frameworks have matured. However, there remain significant gaps in the supervision of other, non-conventional financial actors within the financial ecosystem, rendering it vulnerable.

Towards this end, the paper envisages a banking sector that is much more resilient in a future transformed through digital innovation, with much more robust regulation and increased synergy across the financial landscape. The lessons learned from the previous financial crises shall therefore serve to strengthen the stability, flexibility, and adaptability of future banks against shocks and uncertainties.





STRATEGIC PRICING AND PROMOTIONAL DECISIONS FOR NATIONAL PRIVATE LABELS VS INTERNATIONAL BRANDS UNDER BOYCOTT

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Abstract

Private labels have emerged as a key competitive strategy in modern retail, offering retailers higher margins while simultaneously intensifying competition with established brands. This research develops a game-theoretic model to investigate the strategic interaction between a retailer (who owns and prices its private-label product while also selling a competing international brand) and the manufacturer of the international brand. We incorporate three critical factors into the model: (i) shelf-space allocation, which influences consumer perceptions and purchase probabilities (Amrouche & Zaccour, 2007); (ii) boycott intensity, representing consumer preference shifts toward indigenous products during nationalistic sentiment waves (Cameron, 2025); and (iii) contractual design, comparing wholesale pricing and revenue-sharing arrangements (Katewa & Jain, 2020).

The study develops a two-stage game-theoretic model. In the first stage, the international brand manufacturer sets its contract terms, either a wholesale price or a revenue-sharing fraction. In the second stage, the retailer simultaneously decides the retail price of the private label, the retail price of the international brand, and the allocation of limited shelf space between the two products. Consumers are modelled using a Hotelling-type framework (Katewa & Jain, 2020) with both horizontal and vertical differentiation. Boycott intensity, denoted by parameter $b \in [0,1]$, shifts utility perceptions in favour of the private label and against the international brand, while shelf allocation directly alters brand visibility. The demand functions are derived from the location of the indifferent consumer, yielding market shares that depend on retail prices, wholesale prices, shelf allocation, and boycott intensity.

We examine four scenarios. Case 1 (baseline) considers no boycott ($b=0$) with wholesale pricing. Case 2 introduces a partial boycott ($0 < b < 1$) under wholesale pricing. Case 3 combines partial boycott with a revenue-sharing contract, where the retailer retains a fraction ϕ of the international brand's retail revenue. Case 4 models a full boycott ($b=1$). For each case, we derive demand functions and profit functions for both the retailer and the manufacturer, and solve for the manufacturer's optimal wholesale price by maximizing its profit given the retailer's best response. Analytical results show that the optimal wholesale price decreases with boycott intensity and stronger consumer preference for the private label. Conversely, revenue-sharing contracts mitigate the manufacturer's risk by aligning the retailer's incentives to promote the international brand, but reduce the retailer's incentive to prioritize the private label when ϕ is high.

The study explicitly models the dual role of retailers as competitors and partners in private label vs international brand competition. Managerially, the results provide insights into how retailers can balance private label promotion with international brand profitability under dynamic consumer sentiments, and





how manufacturers should adapt wholesale or revenue-sharing strategies in politically and socially sensitive markets.





1312

DIGITAL DUALITY: THE PARADOX OF SHORT-FORM VIDEO CONSUMPTION AND ITS SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON INDIAN YOUTH

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Abstract

India's rapid progression toward digitalization due to its vast youthful population has revealed a new way of consuming media, binge-scrolling. Binge-scrolling, which refers to the prolonged and frequently unintentional engagement with short-form videos such as YouTube Shorts and Instagram reels, has become an embedded lifestyle behavior of young Indians. While binge-scrolling has become a normalized habit, there is a significant research gap regarding the behavior and its impacts, including the complexities and potentially bi-directionality binge-scrolling has on the well-being and academic performance of young Indians, specifically students enrolled in MBA programs where performance is heavily scrutinized. Most of the existing literature is cross-sectional, based primarily in Western contexts, and do not provide causal empirical evidence about the directionality of social media and social media-based behaviors on outcomes.

The goal of this study is to fill these gaps by examining how a more comprehensive set of psychological drivers can lead to binge-scrolling behavior, and subsequently the relationship between binge-scrolling and two consequences of well-being and academic performance. The research brings together three foundational theories, Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which discusses reasons to use technology; The S-O-R model connects external platform stimuli to internal emotional states (anxiety, FOMO, addiction, etc.), which in turn drive the binge-scrolling response that help or hinder psychological well-being and academic performance; and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) to explain how comparison through observation may foster such behavior. The study proposes a model indicating that independent variables of escapism, the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), social media addiction, knowledge acquisition, companionship, emotional enhancement, and boredom, all lead to binge-scrolling behavior. Binge-scrolling is proposed to relate to the two dependent variables of well-being and academic performance, with platform (YouTube shorts vs. Instagram reels) acting as a moderator autonomously. The proposed model will be tested through SmartPLS.

Through a comprehensive review of the literature, initial evidence suggests that psychological drivers such as escapism, FOMO, and boredom will exhibit positive and significant effects on binge-scrolling. In addition, while some may engage for positive reasons, such as enhancing knowledge, binge-scrolling will have a predominantly negative influence on wellbeing and academic performance overall since it will displace time, attention span, sleep hygiene, and social comparisons. The moderation analysis will likely identify effects depending on platform and the practical implications will highlight recommendations for schools, parents and policies, so specific interventions and educational practices may be developed to





foster healthier and more balanced digital engagement for Indian youth. Lastly, the current study will provide a valid rationale for future longitudinal studies examining causal inferences.





THE IMPACT OF COMMUTING STRESS ON DRIVER BEHAVIOR: THE MODERATING ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

In India, commuting has become a burdensome daily routine for millions and not a mere logistical necessity. With more than 65% of the population likely to be urban dwellers by 2035, commuting is now a characteristic element of city living. Cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, and Hyderabad are among the most traffic-congested in the world, where speed during peak hours falls below 20 km/h, resulting in increased travel times and increased psychological stress. Chronic exposure to congestion, reckless driving, noise, heat, and pollution causes what researchers call commuting stress. In India, the issue is compounded by poor traffic policing, insufficient public transport, and a culture of unsafe roads characterized by road rage, honking, and aggressive driving.

Despite being prevalent, commuting stress in India is under-researched. All available studies originate in the Western settings where traffic, societal norms, and infrastructure vary significantly, creating a challenge for transferability in the Indian context. Meanwhile, the rapid integration of technology into India's commuting environment adds to the complexity. Modern-day cars have telematics (GPS, real-time traffic), driver information systems (DIS) (dashboard warnings, heads-up displays), and in-car entertainment systems (ICES) (audio, infotainment, hands-free phone use). Further, smartphone-based maps and ride-hailing applications have become crucial to daily travel. These technologies can mitigate stressors by enhancing route effectiveness, providing safety alerts, and making the journey comfortable through music, but their actual value relies on the perceived usefulness (the belief that technology enhances performance) and perceived enjoyment (intrinsic pleasure with use) of drivers. Studies have shown that sometimes perceived enjoyment will overcome usefulness in maintaining adoption, highlighting the importance of emotional aspects. Yet, there is limited empirical evidence exploring how such technologies interact with commuting-induced anxiety to shape driver behavior in India, or how subjective perceptions of these technologies moderate their impact.

This research fills these gaps by suggesting a framework that theorizes commuting stress as a multi-dimensional construct in the context of India's socio-cultural and infrastructural reality. It situates driver anxiety as a mediator between commuting stress and behavioral outcomes from performance deficit to aggressive or hyper-cautious driving. It also investigates how in-vehicle technologies moderate these effects and how perceived usefulness and enjoyment decide whether technology reduces or intensifies the behavioral effect of anxiety.





1314

TRACKING THE FUTURE: HOW AI NATIVES AND IMMIGRANTS EMBRACE GENERATIVE AI IN LEARNING

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Abstract

The rapid adoption of generative AI in educational contexts raises critical questions about sustained engagement and behavior over time. While existing literature has extensively examined initial adoption, there is limited understanding of the long-term usage dynamics that sustain engagement with these technologies. This study addresses this gap by introducing a multi-study, longitudinal model that explores the evolving interaction between users and AI-powered learning tools across distinct generational cohorts—AI Natives (AINs) and AI Immigrants (AIIs). Leveraging a three-phase longitudinal panel design, this study integrates *Extended Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior (EDTPB)* with post-adoption mechanisms such as Sequential Belief Updating, Feedback, and Habit. Through multi-group analysis, the study examines how AI nativity moderates these mechanisms, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding continued AI adoption.

Our findings highlight that AI Natives tend to exhibit sustained engagement driven by habit and feedback, whereas AI Immigrants are more reliant on belief updating and rational evaluation processes. These insights challenge existing adoption models by emphasizing the role of user typology in shaping long-term technology use. This research not only contributes to the theoretical understanding of post-adoption behavior but also offers actionable insights for educators and technology designers aiming to optimize the effectiveness of AI tools in diverse learning environments. By bridging adoption theory, behavioral psychology, and generational studies, this study provides a timely contribution to understanding how AI shapes long-term educational engagement.





FROM ADOPTION TO ASSIMILATION: UNDERSTANDING AI NATIVES AND AI IMMIGRANTS IN POST-ADOPTION USE OF GENERATIVE AI

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Abstract

The diffusion of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in education has reignited the long-standing debate between Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants (Prensky, 2001), now reframed as AI Natives and AI Immigrants. While prior research has extensively examined initial adoption of new technologies, far less is known about post-adoption dynamics that sustain or hinder continued use. This study addresses that gap by integrating an Extended Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior (EDTPB) with three post-adoption mechanisms: sequential belief updating (beliefs adjusting over time), feedback loops (use shaping perceptions), and habit formation (automaticity through repeated behavior).

Drawing on a sequential mixed-methods design, the study combines qualitative and quantitative evidence. Two focus group discussions revealed striking contrasts: younger AI Natives described AI as an intuitive extension of daily routines, often equating ChatGPT with Google and integrating it into tasks as naturally as checking their phones. In contrast, AI Immigrants treated AI tools more cautiously and instrumentally, often double-checking outputs, voicing privacy concerns, or delegating AI-related tasks to others. These insights informed the development of hypotheses regarding differences in post-adoption trajectories across user groups.

A three-wave longitudinal panel survey tested these hypotheses using multi-group structural equation modeling. Findings confirm that AI Natives rely more on habitual and reinforcement-driven pathways, seamlessly embedding AI into learning routines, whereas AI Immigrants depend on sequential belief updating, carefully recalibrating their perceptions of usefulness and trust through accumulated experience. Importantly, both groups exhibited significant habit effects, suggesting that once Immigrants cross an initial threshold of comfort, they too can develop stable routines of AI use. Feedback effects from immediate usage to beliefs were weaker than expected, indicating that continuance is shaped more by accumulated history than by short-term experiences.

The study advances theory in several ways. First, it extends post-adoption research by synthesizing EDTPB with dynamic mechanisms of belief evolution, habit formation, and feedback. Second, it introduces AI nativity as a novel moderating construct, enriching the predominantly static view of technology continuance with a generational and experiential lens. Third, it empirically demonstrates that adoption is not a one-time decision but an evolving process, marked by feedback and feedforward loops.





Practically, the findings highlight the need for differentiated strategies. For AI Natives, designers and educators should leverage their propensity for habitual use while addressing risks of over-dependence. For AI Immigrants, interventions should emphasize progressive learning, trust-building, and structured support to accelerate comfort and engagement.

By bridging technology acceptance theory, behavioral psychology, and generational studies, this study provides a robust framework for understanding how AI use is sustained, diversified, and shaped by user typology. The integration of focus group narratives with longitudinal modeling creates both theoretical depth and practical relevance, positioning the work as a timely and impactful contribution to scholarship on post-adoption behavior in the era of generative AI.





EXAMINING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PATHWAYS FROM ALGORITHMIC CONTROL TO WORK–LIFE CONFLICT

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Abstract

The Indian platform-mediated work has exponential growth that has essentially redesigned employment relations, especially in food delivery, ride-hailing, and online service industries. It is estimated by NITI Aayog (2022) that the gig and platform economy will occupy over 23.5 million workers by the year 2030, and this process will be driven by technological innovation and a flexible economy that promotes greater freedom. However, this scaled-up growth has increased work-life conflict (WLC) because employees are faced with the issue of balancing. The research design proposes and tests a sequential model is employed in the study, which assumes that the technostress that occurs due to the algorithmic control is the cause of career insecurity, and finally results in the work-life conflict in the Indian platform economy. Although algorithmic management has the potential to increase the efficiency of the operations, it is also a cause of technostress, or a psychological discomfort due to a failure to adjust to ubiquitous technological expectations (Tarafdar et al., 2019). It is theorized that technostress can trigger career insecurity as employees are afraid to be substituted, inactive, or lose earning potential in an algorithm-controlled ecosystem (Sutherland et al., 2023), and spill over to the personal side to create an increased work-life conflict (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985).

The conceptualization of the aforementioned study incorporates Techno-Stress Model (Tarafdar et al., 2007) and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) to explain the cascading loss of resources. The algorithmic control is a techno-stressor that burns out psychological resources with the help of constant monitoring, inaccessible assessment mechanisms, and fluctuating working hours. COR theory argues that such depletion of resources breeds career related insecurity and consequently work life imbalance. Even though other frameworks like the Job Demands Resources (JD -R) model can also be used to explain this phenomenon, the COR theory holds a stronger position to explain the cumulative strain and spill-over effects peculiar to precarious gig work (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

The proposed model is supported by empirical evidence that supports every connection. Recent studies show that algorithmic management increases the levels of stress, reliance, and burnout among workers in delivery and service platforms (Woodcock and Graham, 2022; Mateescu and Nguyen, 2022). Emotional exhaustion and insecurity in gig workers has been observed to be predicted by technostress in India (Choudhary et al., 2024). Additionally, the WLC is made worse by career insecurity, which is unstable revenue and a sense of not belonging to the organisation, which increases work intrusion into personal life (Adisa et al., 2023).

The given research aims to fill these gaps by empirically testing the sequential model through running a cross-sectional survey of Indian platform workers. The expected results will not only add to the body of





theoretical research, such as the incorporation of the technostress and COR perspectives into the algorithmic control discourse, but also to the knowledge of the policy-makers and platform designers willing to introduce fairer and more human-centered algorithmic forms of control.





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CONSUMERS AND THE RISE OF AI: A MULTI-GENERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON BENEFITS, BARRIERS, AND BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract

This paper looks at how AI-powered ads affect the way people from different age groups behave as shoppers. It talks about the good parts—like saving time or seeing useful suggestions—and the not-so-good parts, like feeling watched or not in control. The author looked at prior research and identified important ideas such as trust, personalisation, fear of missing out (FOMO), and the desire to own or feel good after purchasing using the PRISMA approach for SLR. In-depth interviews with target respondents across generations (Gen X to Gen Alpha) were done to validate these concepts. A step-by-step technique known as laddering was used to uncover deeper meanings behind their remarks, which ultimately led to a new model titled the BEADS model (Behavioural Effects of AI-Driven Stimuli)—showing how AI messages influence feelings and actions. It confirms the connection between triggers like trust and FOMO and final decisions like hitting the “buy now” button. The model also refers to the UTAUT theory, which helps explain how people accept or reject new tech. The paper ends with a plan for a larger survey to test these links further using SEM tools, noting how different generations perceive AI differently based on comfort and past use.





DECODING CONSUMER SATISFACTION IN OTT STREAMING SERVICES: AN NLP EXAMINATION OF USER REVIEW DATA

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Abstract

The exponential growth of Over-the-Top (OTT) streaming platforms has intensified market competition, prompting service providers to prioritize consumer satisfaction as a critical differentiation strategy. However, limited research has explored consumers' post-adoption experiences and their emotions with OTT streaming platforms. Also, all the existing studies have exclusively relied on survey data, which is limited by small sample sizes and potential response biases. Addressing this research gap, this study adopts an inductive approach, utilizing online user-generated content to comprehensively examine consumers' topics of discussion, expressed emotions, and the determinants influencing their satisfaction in post-adoption experiences of OTT streaming services in the Indian context. This study incorporates a Natural Language Processing based methodology to determine the factors of consumer satisfaction by analysing 126,532 online user reviews scraped from Google Play Store for various OTT streaming apps. Structural Topic Modeling (STM) is used to extract twelve hidden themes from the user reviews. This study also explores the consumer emotions related to OTT streaming services. Grounded in Uses & Gratification Theory, this study also investigates the determinants of consumer satisfaction based on the themes of discussion. Finally, correspondence analysis is conducted to identify the themes which cause satisfaction separately from the themes which cause dissatisfaction. The findings reveal key factors driving user satisfaction, offering actionable insights for OTT providers to improve user experiences and build customer loyalty. The findings contribute a strategic framework that enables OTT providers to navigate and advance within a highly competitive market.



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