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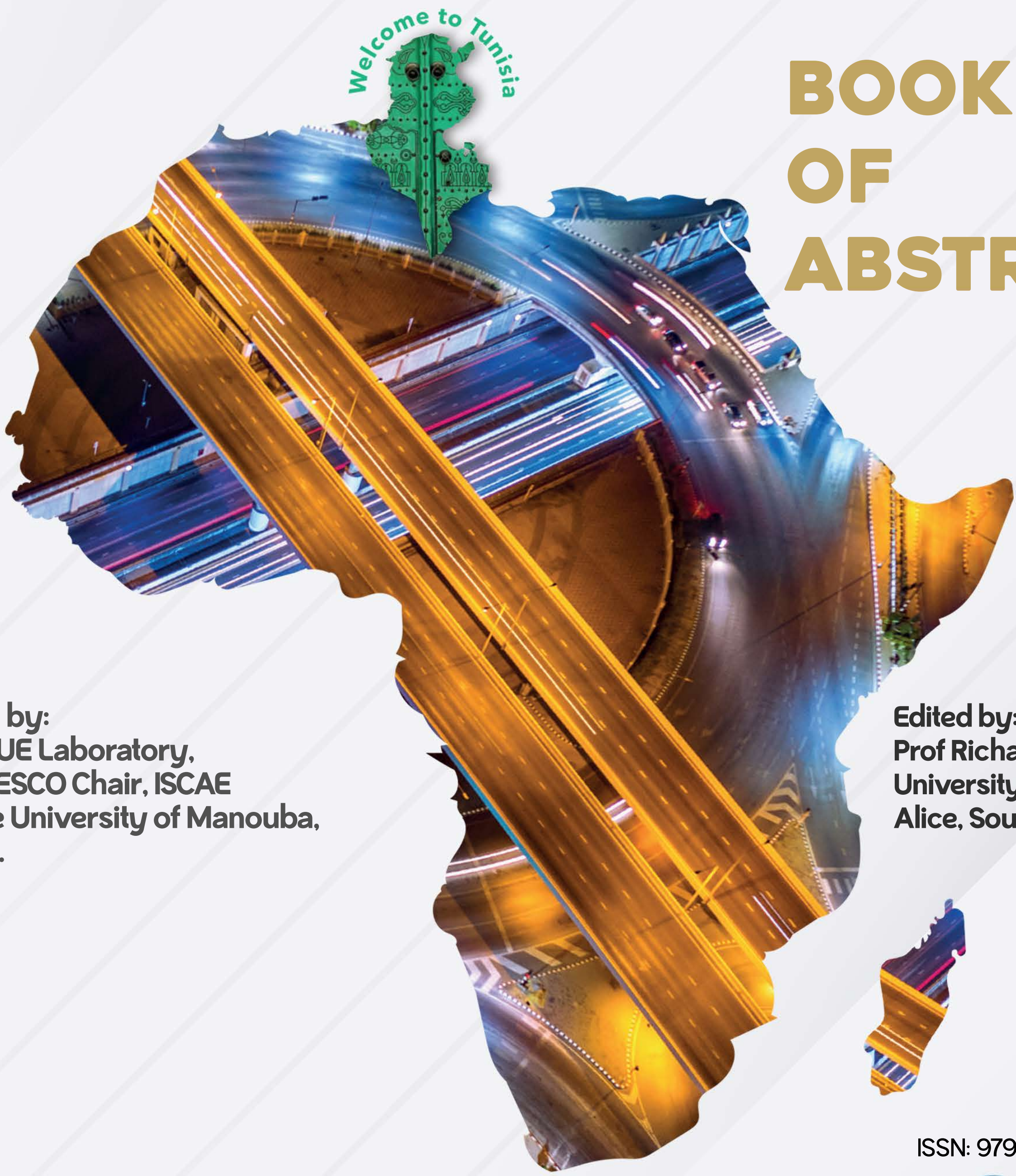
At the Crossroads of Local and Global Disruptions: Transforming Organisations for Africa's Future

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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Edited by:
Prof Richard Shambere,
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The 26th Academy of African Business and Development
(AABD) Book of Abstracts

19 to 23 May 2026
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FOREWORD

This year's conference was held from the 19th to the 23rd of May 2026 at the University of Manouba, Tunisia and presented under the theme, "*At the Crossroads of Local and Global Disruptions: Transforming Organizations for Africa's Future*." The concept of crossroads implies both vulnerability and choice, pressure and possibility. It is a space where paths and possibilities meet and converge. The choice of Tunisia was deliberate and intentional. Tunisia embodies the concept of crossroads – geographically, historically, and conceptually. In Tunisia, Africa meets the Mediterranean, and it is the intersection where the ancient meets the modern.

It is with great pleasure that we present this year's Book of Abstracts from the 26th Annual AABD Conference. The contributions in these proceedings rise to the challenge and complexities of "crossroads" and "transformations" in Africa's future. The manuscripts contained in this volume do not shy away from the complexities of our moment. These manuscripts interrogate this reality with rigour, creativity, and a deep commitment to Africa's agency. In this Book of Abstracts you will find abstracts from 10 tracks covering various topics of core questions of our time including those investigating:

- How do we grapple with local and global challenges facing Africa?
- How do we build supply chains that are efficient, resilient, and relevant for Africa?
- How can digital tools foster inclusion rather than exacerbate inequality?
- Which financial structures can stimulate Africa's growth?
- Which governance models can turn local crises into laboratories for democratic and corporate renewal?
- How can Africa harness, rather than fear, its demographic dividend?

Abstracts appearing in this volume were subjected to a rigorous review process including a desktop review by the editors that was followed by a double-blind peer review process.

We extend our deepest gratitude to this year's hosts, The LIGUE Laboratory and the University of Manouba for their warm reception and impeccable organisation of the 26th edition of the AABD Conference. We thank the authors for entrusting us with their important work. And we thank you, the reader, for engaging with these ideas. We invite you to read, reflect, and join us in the ongoing work of transforming African organisations to not only survive but to thrive at the crossroads.

Proceedings Editor,
Prof. Richard Shambare
May 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Track 1 – Accounting, Finance, Investments and Economics

Track 2 – Entrepreneurship, Small Business, and Informal Sector

Track 3 – Organisational Behavior, Human Resource Management, and Business

Track 4 – Sustainability, Business Ethics, and Social Responsibility

Track 5 – Artificial Intelligence and Information and Communication

Track 6 – Marketing

Track 7 – Operations, Supply Chain and Project Management

Track 8 – Education Management

Track 9 – Special Sessions

Track 10 – Submissions in French

Track 1:

Accounting, Finance, Investment and Economics

Corporate Cash Holdings Across Multi-Horizon Business Cycles: Evidence from Kitchin, Juglar, and Kuznets Waves

Authors

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Abstract

Corporate cash holdings behaviour is mainly influenced by firm-specific determinants such as financing constraints, precautionary motives, and agency issues. However, little research has explored how cash management policies change over time in response to macroeconomic fluctuations. This study explores a multiple-frequency business-cycle approach to examine how companies manage their cash holdings across Kitchin (short-term), Juglar (medium-term), and Kuznets (long-term) cycles. A long-term panel of publicly traded firms and a frequency-based decomposition of macroeconomic activity are used to analyse how the business cycle phase influences corporate cash management strategies. The hypothesis is: the way firms manage their cash will respond to the corresponding macroeconomic cycle. This study demonstrates empirically that firms have increased their precautionary cash holdings during contractionary phases across all three cycle frequencies, and that the magnitude of these increases with cycle length. Also, financially constrained firms and firms in cyclical industries tend to exhibit greater sensitivity to both medium- and long-wave cycles than do non-cyclical firms. By extending traditional cash-holding studies to multi-horizon business cycle research, this research provides an additional level of understanding of how corporate liquidity is managed, beyond the typical focus on static firm-level characteristics, offering a macro-financial perspective on corporate liquidity. Additionally, the results from this study can assist corporations in developing cycle-aware liquidity plans and help investors and policymakers better understand how corporate financial positions can evolve and become resilient across short-term, medium-term, and long-term economic fluctuations.

Institutional Trust and Voluntary Tax Compliance under Local and Global Disruptions: A Conceptual Framework (TRUST-4S)

Authors

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Abstract

Despite the abundance of research on tax evasion, compliance, and institutional trust, the literature remains fragmented, examining objective institutional dimensions or subjective perceptions separately, without integrating them into a unified analytical framework. This fragmentation limits the understanding of the mechanisms by which the quality of institutions influences citizens' voluntary adherence to the tax system, particularly in developing countries facing local and global disruptions. To fill this gap, this article proposes the TRUST-4S model, an integrative and multidimensional theoretical framework articulating institutional security, global stability, services oriented towards the public interest and citizen satisfaction. The model explains how these dimensions shape institutional trust, which influences voluntary tax compliance and, indirectly, the ability of states to mobilize resources to support development. It also highlights the relevance of participatory and transparent digital mechanisms to strengthen institutional trust and voluntary tax compliance. The proposed participatory digital platform is presented as a practical application of the TRUST-4S framework, enhancing transparency, continuity of public action, service alignment with citizens' needs, and satisfaction. By linking institutions, trust and fiscal performance in contexts marked by instability and disruptions, this research offers a theoretical contribution to the literature on governance, tax compliance and institutional resilience, while proposing a relevant conceptual framework for the transformation of public organizations in Africa.

Keywords: Institutional trust; Voluntary tax compliance; Tax evasion; Governance; Local and Global Disruptions; TRUST-4S; Participatory Digital Platform.

The Implementation of the Municipal Finance Management Act in the Municipalities Across South Africa

Author

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Abstract

Orientation: Municipalities across the country are experiencing poor sustainability service delivery due to ineffective financial management and accounting performance practices.
Research purpose: The study aims to explain the relationship between service delivery and the practices of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) (Act number 56 of 2003) Municipalities.
Motivation for the study: The study is relevant to the municipality's current financial crisis.
Research approach/ design and method: Quantitative method was selected, and the collection of data in the study was done from secondary data available from Stats SA and the Auditor General database.
Main findings: The findings will be shared with the municipalities across the country through the available platforms.
Practical/ managerial implication: Developing a strategic plan for sustainable service delivery and financial practice.
Contribution/ value add: The study will show a significant association between sustainable service delivery and financial practice in the municipalities.

Keywords: Sustainability, Customers, service delivery, Financial practices, Municipalities.

Ghana's Economy, Unlocking the Potential of Cocoa: A New Financing Model is Needed

Author

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Abstract

A major sector of the Ghanaian economy, the cocoa industry, has fallen on hard times recently. Indications of issues confronting the industry include Ghana's inability to deliver of 337,767 tonnes of cocoa beans she had sold forward against the 2023/2024 crop season; inability to add value to more cocoa beans to earn relatively more export revenues; inability to scale up productivity improvement programmes for cocoa farms to enhance output; inability to settle short-term cocoa bills she had sold, among others. For a better understanding of these issues, analysis of data contained in documents relating to the cocoa industry in Ghana and globally was undertaken. Recent developments in Ghana's cocoa industry were compared to existing literature on inputs and productivity of cocoa trees, use of financial derivatives, debt financing contracts and ratio analysis of industry audited financial statements. Analysis revealed that cocoa output has broadly trended downwards since 2016/2017 season; financing models for purchasing cocoa beans from farmers do not inure to processing more cocoa in Ghana; lack of financial resources to supply farm inputs to farmers to improve productivity renders plans to double production quantities unattainable under current conditions. If steps are taken to position Ghana to purchase cocoa beans from farmers with money that does not require delivery of cocoa beans, Ghana will be in position to influence grinding or processing of more cocoa beans in Ghana. To do this, government guarantees will be required to raise short-term funds. Continuous education of farmers about the benefits of productivity improvements programmes is advocated. Cocoa producers should keep an eye on development of laboratory-grown cocoa and fermentation alternatives

Influence of Personal Auditee Related Factors on The Relevance of External Auditors' Recommendations: Moderating Role of Central Government and Local Authorities Accounts Committee Interventions

Authors

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of personal auditee-related factors on the relevance of external auditors' recommendations in Tanzanian Local Government Authorities (LGAs), with a focus on the moderating role of Central Government and Local Authority Accounts Committee (CGLI) interventions. Employing a descriptive explanatory cross sectional research design using the agency and stewardship theories. The survey strategy was used and self-administered questionnaires were issued to 345 respondents across 126 LGAs who were selected using Krejcie & Morgan (1970). Respondents included key officials involved in audit and financial management processes, ensuring informed and reliable insights. Data were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), following rigorous screening for missing values, outliers and normality and reliability and validity checks (KMO = 0.904; Bartlett's Test $p < .001$) to ensure alignments of measurement of constructs. The results indicate that personal auditee-related factors (training, accounting knowledge, technological competence and auditee experience) have a positive but statistically insignificant direct effect on the relevance of audit recommendations. This suggests that individual competencies alone are insufficient to enhance perceived audit relevance's. Conversely, CGLI interventions exhibit a significant positive effect on relevance and efficiency and significantly moderate the relationship between personal auditee-related factors and relevance of audit recommendations. These findings highlight that institutional oversight and governance mechanisms enhance the effectiveness of individual auditee competencies in fostering the relevance of audit recommendations. The study concludes that audit effectiveness in Tanzanian LGAs depends not only on individual capabilities but also on supportive organizational structures and formal oversight mechanisms. It recommends integrated strategies combining professional development, technical training, resource allocation, and collaborative engagement with oversight committees to strengthen audit implementation, transparency, and accountability.

Unlocking Developing Countries' Clean Energy Endowment: Funding Structure for Renewable Energy (RE) Independent Power Producer (IPP) Infrastructure Projects

Author

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Abstract
Access to sustainable energy in Developing Economies is a concerning issue. Current energy supply fails to meet the growing demand for households and businesses, as recognised by the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) 2030 programme on sustainable development. Despite the urgent need to electrify Developing Economies, Small and medium-sized Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers (REIPP) companies face significant challenges in securing appropriate funding for energy transitions. Current funding structures are insufficient to address the REIPP funding gap. Thus, this study aims to address the funding gap by analysing critical factors that influence funding decisions for REIPPs project initiatives with the objective of answering this study's research questions. The study employed a convergent mixed methodology to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. This is develop further a funding framework that incorporates other funding instruments which attract the lowest interest, or no interest at all, denominated in local currency to fund REIPP projects in developing economies, given that developing economies' capital markets and the banking sectors are poorly developed. The results indicate that through funding RE projects, financial institutions can provide much-needed funding that promotes green energy initiatives in the respective communities with access to land to support poverty alleviation and job creation. Furthermore, results show that access to funding for RE projects remains a significant problem for REIPPs in emerging markets. The study recommends that the government focus on creating platforms that promote energy transition in emerging markets by establishing policies that focus on a strategic collaboration of private investors, financial institutions and community up-liftment while observing risk factors.

Keywords: Developing Economies; funding structures; Renewable energy independent Power Producers, Capital Structure, Risk.

Digital Transformation and Anti-Money Laundering Governance in Africa's Financial Sector: Is the Battle of Financial Crime Increasing or Decreasing?

Author

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Abstract

The transformative role of digitilization due to advancement in technology in recent era is becoming increasingly irreplaceable. The question, is technology aggravating or easing the fight against money laundering? Could the use of digital transform fight against Money Laundering (ML) in the financial sector? This study examines how digital transformational systems can be deployed to enhance AML strategies through advancing real- time threat detection, monitoring customers account, ensuring compliance along globally regulatory standards. The study used data compiled from the World Development Indicators (WDI) and the database of the Basel Institute. Based on the availability of data for the key variables, 38 countries were sampled from the African continent for the study from 2012 to 2023. Employing the pooled ordinary least squares (POLS) with Driscoll and Kray standard errors (DKSE), the results are in conformance to the conceptual expectations. The outcomes suggest that improved and secured digital platforms and increase usage of internet and mobile cellular have the potential to reduce the extent of money laundering activities on the African continent. Thus, as secured platforms are employed, the activities of money launderers and terrorist financing are thwarted, leading to improved anti-money laundering score. Similarly, increase usage of internet and mobile subscriptions serve as platforms to educate the people and track the activities of money launderers and terrorism financing, hence improvement in anti-money laundering score. Interesting findings governance and regulatory structures were made. The study projects the literature on digitalization in the field of finance and AML governance in safeguarding the financial system. The need for strategic adoption of technology has become imperative in addressing financial crimes, promoting resilient financial institution against the potent threats from money laundering.

Creative Destruction: Analyzing Tunisia's Financial Shift Toward Africa in the Context of Structural Disruption

Authors

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Abstract

Tunisia faces a strategic crossroads, This paper investigates its macroeconomic dynamics in the post-2011 era, framing the country's recent strategic shift toward Sub-Saharan Africa as a response to long-standing institutional disturbance and financial stagnation with traditional European partners. Drawing on the Schumpeterian theory of "creative destruction" regarding the interaction between local and global disruptions, we examine whether Tunisia's current economic trajectory represents a real transformation or a symptom of prolonged institutional crisis. The research is motivated by the governance weakness caused by the 2011 revolution and the succession of short-lived governments which delayed or blocked key reforms and exacerbated budget deficits. The central research question addresses whether Tunisia's financial integration into the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can effectively stabilize its economy, enhance sustainable financial development, and reduce macroeconomic risks and dependence on European markets? Methodologically, this study employs a dual approach: an institutional analysis of governance variables and an empirical case study of Tunisian macroeconomic indicators over the period 2011–2024. Our analysis highlights a rapid accumulation of public debt, doubling from 43.3% of Gross Domestic Product in 2011 to 84.6% in 2023, while inflation reached a peak of 9.3% in 2023. Our findings suggest that while the shift toward African markets offers scope for export diversification, illustrated by the issuance of the first certificates of origin in 2024 and the launch of the Libya trade corridor, its impact is constrained by underlying structural weaknesses, including socio-economic pressures, low domestic productivity, and fragmented policy coordination that raise transaction costs. The economic effectiveness of this strategy, including its contribution to SDG 17 objectives, will therefore depend on progress in macroeconomic stabilization and on strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks to support higher foreign direct investment inflows, as emphasized by Nabi(2018).

Keywords: *Tunisia, AfCFTA, Creative Destruction, Sovereign Risk, South-South Cooperation, Institutional Economics.*

Does Economic Policy Uncertainty Amplify the Resource Curse? Evidence from Panel Threshold Analysis of Income Inequality

Authors

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Abstract

This study investigates whether economic policy uncertainty (EPU) amplifies the inequality effects of natural resource rents in nine major economies from 1996 to 2021. Although the resource curse hypothesis highlights the adverse economic and social consequences of resource dependence, limited empirical evidence examines how economic policy uncertainty shapes this relationship. Using a panel threshold regression approach, we test for nonlinear interactions between EPU and natural resource rents in explaining income inequality. The results reveal a clear threshold effect: under low uncertainty, resource rents significantly increase inequality, reflecting stronger rent-seeking incentives and concentration of benefits. When EPU exceeds the estimated threshold, the impact of resource rents becomes statistically insignificant, suggesting that heightened uncertainty disrupts entrenched rent-extraction mechanisms. Control variables, including GDP per capita, institutional quality, and urbanization, also play important roles in shaping distributional outcomes. These findings demonstrate that the resource–inequality nexus is conditioned by policy stability and highlight the need for predictable institutional environments to ensure that resource wealth translates into inclusive development.

Revisiting Financial Leverage and Corporate Investment: Assessing the Moderating Effect of National Governance Quality in MENA Emerging Markets

Author

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Abstract

In the context of an emerging markets, this paper investigates the relationship between financial leverage and corporate investment with the moderating effects of national governance quality. The study utilizes a sample of 362 non-financial firms listed on 10 MENA emerging markets stock exchanges from 2010 to 2024. The model parameters are estimated using the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) framework and fixed effects econometric technique on the panel data collected. Findings concur to prior research indicating an inverse relationship between leverage and investment, implies that debt disciplinarily constrains corporate investment, especially in countries with lower national governance quality. Our findings support the overinvestment agency problem hypothesis and set vital policy and managerial implications to consider especially in the developing economies.

Cushion or Constraint? L Cushion or Constraint? Liquidity and Resilience in Financial Cooperatives Under Stress

Author

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Abstract

Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) in Uganda during and after the COVID-19 crisis, focusing on loan growth, savings mobilization, and institutional stability.

Data & Methods: We use quarterly panel data set (2014Q4-2024Q4) for 67 SACCOs, employing a continuous difference-in-differences (DiD) framework, and institutional heterogeneity to isolate the causal effect of pre-COVID liquidity on loan growth, savings growth, and institutional stability (Z-score).

Findings: we find that SACCOs with higher pre-pandemic liquidity experienced significantly stronger loan growth during the crisis and recovery phases. Placebo tests confirm robustness of the results and the absence of differential pre trends. In contrast, liquidity buffers were not robustly associated with savings growth or balance-sheet stability. Extending the analysis using a Hansen threshold framework, we find evidence that lending responses are strongest above an approximate liquidity level of 15 percent of total assets, although bootstrap confidence intervals are wide, indicating uncertainty around the precise cutoff.

Implications: For cooperative financial institutions, liquidity buffers primarily operated through credit supply rather than deposit mobilization or financial stability, highlighting the role of internal buffers in institutions operating without formal safety nets.

IFRS Implementation Approaches and Enforcement Mechanisms: A Case Study of an Enforcer in Ghana

Authors

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Abstract
Despite the growing importance of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), qualitative research on their enforcement is notably limited. This study explores the approaches to IFRS implementation and enforcement mechanisms adopted by the enforcer in Ghana. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with five key personnel of the enforcer who are involve in the implementation and enforcement of IFRS in Ghana. A thematic approach was employed to analyse the interview data with the aim of identifying the themes and patterns that emerged from the participants responses. The findings indicate a range of implementation strategies, such as conducting impact assessment, collaborating with relevant stakeholders, and providing training and guidance. Further, the enforcer plays a pivotal role in ensuring compliance through measures like imposing penalties for non-compliance, conducting periodic reviews, managing licencing processes and issuing directives. The findings of the study can guide regulators and policy makers in emerging economies to design more effective IFRS enforcement framework. By understanding the qualitative approaches and enforcement mechanisms currently in use, stakeholders can identify gaps in compliance, strengthen institutional capacity, and develop context-specific strategies that enhance transparency and comparability in financial reporting. The study contributes to the IFRS enforcement literature by providing new insights into the qualitative approaches to IFRS implementation and enforcement mechanisms within the context of an emerging economy.

Keywords: Implementation approaches, Enforcement mechanisms, IFRS, Enforcer, Ghana

Food Prices, Household Characteristics, and Dietary Choices in Togo: Evidence from Disaggregated Food Groups

Authors

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Abstract

This research examines the determinants of household food consumption choices in Togo through data from the Harmonized Household Living Conditions Survey (EHCVM), which is representative of the population, and was collected during 2021-2022. A multinomial logit model is used to estimate preferences over a set of ten food groups as well as to examine the influences of sociodemographic, income, and food prices on consumption decisions. The findings show that larger households consume more staple foods. This means they would tend to choose legumes or condiments. In addition, fruit intake is lower in larger households in comparison to smaller households. There seem to be fewer total dairy products and beverages among female heads of household, which likely reflects income constraints. It is noteworthy that price sensitivity also emerged; increasing price developments for fish are associated with significantly less consumption of fish. Further, religious status (Christian or Muslim) and age of the head of household are further considerations influencing specific food choices. These findings reiterate the necessity of implementing public policies that improve access to sufficient nutritious food for vulnerable populations while addressing spatial and social inequities related to food security in Togo.

Digital Lifelines: Fintech Lending as a Substitute for Traditional Bank Credit to SMEs in Zimbabwe (2020-2024)

Author

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Abstract

This paper quantitatively assessed the role of fintech digital lending platforms in sustaining Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) activity in Zimbabwe during a period of acute economic and currency disruption from 2020 to 2024. Its primary objectives were to measure the growth trajectory of fintech lending, analyze its correlation with the real value of traditional bank lending to SMEs, and evaluate whether fintech emerged as a critical alternative source of working capital.The research employed a quantitative, longitudinal design using secondary panel data for Zimbabwe. Quarterly data on the real value of commercial bank loans to SMEs (deflated using the Consumer Price Index) were sourced from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. Aggregated quarterly lending volumes from major Zimbabwean fintech platforms were compiled from industry reports and financial statements. A time-series regression model was used to analyze the relationship between fintech lending volume and real bank lending to SMEs, controlling for official exchange rate volatility. The results revealed a strong, significant positive growth trend in fintech lending to Zimbabwean SMEs, which increased by over 300% in real terms over the four-year period. This contrasted sharply with a 40% contraction in the real value of inflation-adjusted bank lending to the same sector. The regression analysis demonstrated a significant negative correlation, confirming that fintech lending acted as a vital substitute for traditional credit in a dysfunctional monetary environment. The study concludes that disruptive financial technology has directly transformed SME finance in Zimbabwe, providing a resilient, alternative liquidity pipeline amidst hyperinflation. This evidences a critical adaptation by businesses navigating profound local disruption, offering a pragmatic model for financial sector strategy in similar African economies.

The moderation effect of financial inclusion on the relationship between temperature variability and poverty in Tanzania

Author

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Abstract
Applying exploratory descriptive analysis and machine learning models on the national panel surveys comprising 10,832 households in 3,644 wards, and related climate change data, this paper examined the extent to which credit access moderates the relationship between temperature variability and poverty across Tanzanian wards to confirm the widely acknowledged importance of financial inclusion in facilitating adaptation to climate change. Findings revealed that credit access reduced the importance of temperature variation in affecting poverty, pushed 3% of wards from either extreme-poor or intermediate-poor to non-poor; negatively affected wards decreased from 50.8% to 24.5% for extremely-poor, from 65.3% to 26.2% for intermediate-poor, and 56.5 to 48.5% for non-poor wards an indicative of changing direction of relationship from negative to positive, hence confirming possible use credits to adapt to temperature variation. Similarly, 27% of 30 poorest wards across 30 regions were lifted from extremely-poor to intermediate-poor or non-poor; some of them had temperature variation-poverty relationships changed from negative to positive. Instances of wards being made poorer and relationships between temperature variation and poverty changing from positive to negative were also observed, an indicative households access to credits with stringent conditions, misuse of credits and or investment of funds in non-adaptation measures. Therefore, financial inclusion (affordable and quality credit access bundled with savings, insurance, payment system) coupled with financial literacy and climate change adaptation awareness are highly encouraged to reduce households' vulnerability to temperature variation.

Unlocking Capital through Sustainability: ESG Performance and Financial Flows in Emerging Economies

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Abstract

This study examines the role of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance in shaping international and domestic capital flows in emerging markets. Using a balanced panel of 82 emerging economies over the period 2000–2023, the paper investigates how ESG performance influences foreign direct investment (FDI), portfolio investment, and gross capital formation. A composite ESG index and its disaggregated environmental, social, and governance components are constructed using principal component analysis. Employing System Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) and Generalized Least Squares (GLS) estimators, the study accounts for endogeneity, dynamic effects, and cross-sectional dependence. The findings reveal that improved ESG performance is positively and significantly associated with all forms of capital flows. Environmental and governance dimensions exert the strongest and most consistent effects, underscoring their importance in reducing investment risk, enhancing transparency, and signalling institutional quality. While the social dimension shows mixed results, it remains relevant for portfolio flows. The study further demonstrates that ESG-linked financial instruments—such as green bonds and sustainability-linked loans—significantly enhance access to both foreign and domestic capital, supporting infrastructure development and long-term growth. Robustness checks confirm the stability of these results across alternative specifications and regional sub-samples. Anchored in stakeholder, institutional, signalling, and endogenous growth theories, the study contributes to the literature by providing comprehensive macro-level evidence on the ESG–capital flow nexus in emerging markets. Policy implications highlight the need to strengthen ESG regulatory frameworks, expand sustainable finance instruments, and promote regional ESG harmonization to align capital flows with sustainable development objectives.

Good Governance and the Effectiveness of Procurement Systems in the local Government Authorities. Experience from Selected LGAs in Tanzania

Author

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Abstract

This study examined the role of good governance in enhancing the effectiveness of procurement systems in public institutions. Specifically, it investigated how transparency, accountability, and stakeholder involvement influence the performance of procurement systems. Guided by the positivist paradigm, the study adopted an explanatory research design and relied on primary data. The target population comprised staff from all departments within the selected Local Government Authorities, including council mayors, from which a sample of 176 respondents and additional key stakeholders were drawn. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed through descriptive statistics and using covariance based Stractural Equation Modeling to determine the effect of good governance variables on procurement system effectiveness. The results indicated that transparency, accountability, and stakeholder involvement significantly and positively contribute to effective procurement systems. These findings provide insights into strengthening procurement practices in public institutions. The study recommends that public institutions consistently reinforce these governance pillars to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of their procurement systems.

Hotel Investment and Employment Dynamics in Developing Economies

Author

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Abstract
Tourism is a major driver of employment and growth in many developing economies, with hotel investment serving as a critical catalyst. This study examines the differentiated employment impacts of luxury versus non-luxury hotel investment across a broad sample of developing and middle-income countries. Using static models, dynamic fixed effects, and panel error correction techniques, the analysis captures both short- and long-run dynamics linking hotel investment to labor market outcomes. Results show that luxury hotel investment tends to generate higher wages, formal sector jobs, and demand for skilled labor, while non-luxury investment supports broader employment in labor-intensive segments. By situating the findings within the Keynesian multiplier theory, the study highlights tourism infrastructure as a strategic policy tool for inclusive and sustainable development, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where natural tourism infrastructure abounds. The evidence highlights the importance of tailoring investment strategies to maximize employment benefits and support structural transformation.

Dynamics of Cryptocurrencies and Exchange Rate Volatility in Africa

Authors

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Mr. Odinakachukwu Ata
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Abstract

Exchange rate volatility remains one of the most recurring economic challenges across African economies, which discourages foreign investments, fuels inflation, disrupts trade balances, and increases the cost of debt servicing. A volatile exchange rate environment often reflects structural vulnerabilities, which include over-reliance on commodity exports, weak fiscal positions, and political instability. As African economies continue to struggle with unstable currency regimes and increasing digitalisation, empirical studies on the relationship between cryptocurrencies and exchange rate dynamics in Africa are limited. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between cryptocurrency operations and exchange rate volatility in South Africa, Ghana, Egypt, and Nigeria using quarterly data from 2015 to 2024. Underpinned by the monetary theory of exchange rate determination, our empirical model was analysed using the Vector Error Correction Model (VECM) method to assess both long-run and short-run relationships. Exchange rate volatility is measured using quarterly exchange rate deviations, while transaction volumes of Bitcoin, Ethereum, BNBcoin, and Litecoin represent cryptocurrency. Findings from the study reveal that the exchange rates of all four countries depreciated over the period, with Nigeria and Ghana experiencing the most severe volatility. Bitcoin, BNBcoin, and Litecoin were found to have a positive long-run relationship with exchange rate volatility, while Ethereum exhibited a negative long-run effect. Short-run results indicate that the Egyptian Pound was the most responsive to cryptocurrency movements, while the Nigerian Naira was the least responsive. The South African Rand showed relatively less sensitivity to cryptocurrency volumes. The study concludes that cryptocurrencies have a significant and varying impact on exchange rate volatility across the selected African economies and offers policy recommendations focused on regulatory clarity, institutional strengthening, and digital currency management.

Does Governance moderate the Impact of Digitalization on Financial Inclusion in Africa? An Empirical Investigation

Author

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Abstract

The subject of financial inclusion is arousing growing interest, nevertheless,there are insufficent research on the moderating effects in an African context. The majority of studies focus on the direct impacts of explanatory variables. This research stands out by exploring, for the first time, the moderating effect of institutional quality through its interaction with digitalization measured by (the number of Internet users). It fills an important gap in the existing literature. By exploring this interaction, it provides a finer reading of the prerequisites for inclusive digitization. This study therefore makes a real contribution. The analysis is on a sample of 21 African countries over the period 2004-2021, selected according to data availability. The methodology uses several econometric tests and a panel data technique with robust estimation (standard error of the Driscoll-Kraay type) to estimate variable coefficients, taking into account cross-sectional Dependence, heteroskedasticity and autocorrelation. To ensure the validity of the results, a robustness analysis using quantile regression Bootstrap SEs was conducted, to explore the impact of variables at different levels on financial inclusion. An ARDL model was used to identify dynamic adjustments towards long-term equilibrium, in order to better understand the short- and long-term dynamics between variables, and estimates were carried out on sub-samples according to countries' level of financial inclusion, with a view to making differentiated and relevant recommendations. The three approaches lead to similar and consistent results, confirming the relevance of our estimates. The results of this study show that digitization contributes significantly to improving financial inclusion. More importantly, institutional quality acts as a lever, reinforcing the positive effect of digitization.

Effect of Value-Added Tax on the Financial Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Nigeria

Authors

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Abstract
This paper examine the Effect of Value-Added Tax (VAT) on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Yobe State, Nigeria. SMEs are crucial to Nigeria's economic growth, contributing significantly to employment, poverty alleviation, and national development. However, the implementation of VAT has introduced challenges that disproportionately affect SMEs, particularly in regions like Yobe State. The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of VAT on the performance of SMEs in Yobe State. The research adopts a descriptive survey design, targeting SMEs across various sectors, including retail, services, and manufacturing. Data were collected using questionnaires distributed to 95 SMEs, with 92 valid responses analyzed using SPSS. The findings reveal that VAT negatively impacts SME profitability and performance, with significant challenges in VAT compliance, including financial burdens and administrative difficulties. Proposed mitigation strategies, such as VAT education, simplified filing processes, and advisory support, positively influence SME outcomes. The study recommends comprehensive VAT education and training programs, simplified VAT filing processes, advisory support, policy changes, and collaboration among SMEs to enhance VAT compliance and improve performance. Limitations of the study include the focus on SMEs in Yobe State, which may not be generalizable to other regions, and the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce bias. Overall, the research provides valuable insights into the specific effects of VAT on SMEs in Yobe State and offers practical recommendations for improving their sustainability and growth in a VAT-regulated environment.

From Fear to Functionality: A Scientific Analysis of Preconceptions, Misconceptions and Myths Surrounding AI Adoption in Management Systems

Author

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Abstract
Artificial intelligence (AI) has continued to generate significant interest in administrative and managerial contexts, yet its adoption is often shaped by persistent preconceptions, misconceptions, and emotionally driven narratives. This paper offers a scientific analysis of the transition from fear to functionality by examining how inaccurate beliefs influence managerial attitudes, organizational readiness, and implementation outcomes. Drawing on contemporary research in organizational behavior, cognitive psychology, and technology-adoption theory, the study identifies the psychological and structural sources of misunderstanding, including automation anxiety, overestimation of AI capabilities, and the myth of neutrality. The analysis demonstrates that such misconceptions can distort decision-making, fuel resistance, and limit the strategic value organizations derive from AI systems. Conversely, evidence-based understanding promotes balanced expectations, enhances ethical deployment, and improves managerial confidence in AI-supported processes. The paper argues that bridging the gap between perception and reality requires a combination of capacity building, transparent communication, and empirical evaluation of AI tools within specific organizational contexts. By clarifying the misconception about AI, the study contributes to more informed, responsible, and effective integration of AI in administration and management.

Factors Influencing the Usage of Agency Banking in Rural Areas in Tanzania

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Abstract

Agency Banking has demonstrated the ability to extend access to financial services, especially for the unbanked, yet the reasons for its success remain unclear. This study examines factors influencing the use of Agency Banking in Tanzania by assessing the effect of perceived cost, agency's geographical coverage, and service quality. Adopting diffusion theory and the Technology Acceptance Model, the study explains the use of Agency Banking in terms of adoption and acceptance. Data from a random sample of agency banking users in Musoma District, Mara Region, was used. A total of 269 questionnaires were collected within the area and analyzed using Smart PLS 4.0.9.9. The findings reveal that geographical coverage positively and significantly influences agency banking usage. Service quality depicts a significant negative relationship, contrary to expectations. Lastly, perceived cost suggests a negative and insignificant effect. These results suggest that geographical coverage is a primary factor in supporting the use of agency banking and works best at the minimum service quality. It takes geographical coverage to enhance adoption, usage and access to financial services. Emphasizing the importance of the availability of the agency banking services regardless of cost and quality. The two theories provide a basis for innovation adoption and Technology Acceptance as key factors to successful usage of innovations and technologies.

Bank Competition and Gender Diversity-Sustainable Performance nexus: evidence from MENAT region

Authors

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Abstract
Enhancing banks' environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance is essential for high-quality sustainable development in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey (MENAT) region. Gender diversity, which is one of the main governance mechanisms, plays a crucial role and has a significant influence on the bank's ESG performance. This paper aims to understand the nonlinear relationship between board gender diversity and environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance. More precisely, we explore the threshold effect of bank market power on this relationship. To do so, we use a sample of 77 listed banks operating in nine MENAT countries (Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudia Arabia, Turkey, UAE) over the period 2017–2024. To explore this model, this paper employs Dynamic Panel Threshold Regression method (DPTR) approach. This method accounts for the dynamic nature of the dependent variable and potential endogeneity. The findings indicate that there is a threshold effect of bank market power on board gender diversity-ESG performance. The threshold value is estimated at 0.2553 (25.53%), beyond which (in a less competitive market) gender diversity begins to hinder ESG performance. This research contributes to the bank gender diversity and ESG literature by highlighting the role of bank market power, offering novel perceptions into mechanisms for enhancing bank sustainability.

Measuring Financial Well-Being in Africa: Constructing a Composite Well-Being Index

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Abstract
This study develops a multidimensional Financial Well-Being Index (FWBI) for African countries using data from the Global Findex 2025. While financial inclusion has expanded rapidly across Africa, particularly through mobile money and digital financial services, evidence on whether this expansion translates into improved household welfare remains inconclusive. This study argues that financial inclusion alone is an incomplete metric and proposes financial well-being as a broader, welfare-oriented construct that captures households' capacity to meet current obligations, withstand financial shocks, plan for the future, and experience reduced financial anxiety. Financial well-being is a multidimensional concept encompassing financial security and freedom. Using a two-stage Principal Component Analysis (PCA), individual indicators from the Global Findex 2025 and complementary macroeconomic data are aggregated into dimension-specific sub-indices and subsequently into a composite Financial Well-Being Index. The analysis covers a broad set of African economies and allows for cross-country comparisons. The results reveal substantial heterogeneity in financial well-being across African nations. Higher levels of financial well-being are associated with lower poverty and inequality, underscoring the relevance of financial well-being as a policy indicator. This study contributes to the literature by providing one of the first Africa-focused financial well-being indices based on the Global Findex 2025 and offers a robust analytical tool for policymakers seeking to move beyond access-based financial inclusion metrics toward welfare-centered financial development strategies.

Keywords: Financial Well-Being Index; Global Findex ; Principal Component Analysis, Household welfare, Financial security, Financial freedom

FinTech-Driven Digital Payments in Nigeria: Insights into a Rapidly Growing Financial Ecosystem

Author

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Abstract

Financial Technology (FinTech) has become a significant catalyst for financial innovation globally, facilitating quicker, more accessible, and cost-efficient payment solutions. This research analyzes the evolution and effects of FinTech-enabled digital payments in Nigeria, recognized as one of Africa's rapidly expanding FinTech centers. The aim is to examine the impact of digital payment systems on financial inclusion, transaction efficiency, and the overall digital economy. This research employs a qualitative case study methodology, utilizing secondary data sources including government reports, central bank publications, academic articles, and industry analyses pertaining to Nigeria's digital payment ecosystem. The study examines key platforms such as mobile money services, online banking, and payment processors, including Flutterwave and Paystack, to analyze their impact on the transformation of financial transactions. Initial findings indicate that FinTech-driven digital payments in Nigeria have markedly enhanced access to formal financial services, lowered transaction costs, and expedited payment processes in both urban and rural regions. Widespread mobile phone adoption, supportive regulatory frameworks, and innovative FinTech solutions have been essential in facilitating this growth. Challenges persist, including cybersecurity risks, limited digital literacy, and uneven infrastructure development, which may impede inclusive adoption. The findings underscore the increasing significance of FinTech in enhancing Nigeria's digital financial ecosystem and fostering economic participation.

ESG and Firm Performance – Evidence from Africa

Author

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Abstract

Due to conflicting empirical findings from earlier research, the debate over the impact of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) on companies' financial performance remains unresolved, despite the significant increase in ESG disclosures and activities. This study looks at how ESG composite scores affect the success of businesses across 17 African economies. Using firm-specific and macroeconomic variables, the impact of ESG and its quadratic term on the financial performance of firms will be examined. The two-step GMM estimator, which has strong standard errors, minimal sample size adjustments, and forward orthogonal deviations, is employed in this study. The findings of the study support the claim that there is a link between a company's financial performance and its overall ESG score. The study's findings show a positive relationship between ESG and a firm's return on assets (ROA). This suggests that firms that raise their ESG levels can increase their earnings. Liquidity was found to have an affirmative and significant relationship with financial performance. The study results also show that there is a U-shape relationship between ESG and firms' performance. The U-shaped non-linear relationship suggests that at some point, ESG has a negative effect on firms’ financial performance, in contrast to the square term of ESG, which has a positive effect on firms' profitability. The projected thresholds are between 31.31 and 36.326 at the 90th and 75th quantiles, indicating that up to those levels, ESG reduces firm performance. The policy recommendation of this study is that firms in Sub-Saharan Africa should adopt ESG practices into their daily operations to improve their financial performance. But they should keep their ESG operations between a threshold of 31.31 and 36.326.

The Impact of Culture Tightness on Financial Reporting Quality Around the World: The Role of Legal Origin

Authors

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Dr. Raida Chakroun
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Abstract

This study examines the impact of cultural tightness on earnings quality, using accrual-based and real earnings management as proxies. Analyzing data from 22 countries between 2020 and 2023, we observe a positive relationship between cultural tightness and earnings quality, indicating that managers in tight cultures are less inclined to engage in earnings manipulation. Our results are consistent across various robustness checks and alternative measures of TIGHT. Additionally, our findings show that the legal origin of a country influences the relationship between TIGHT and earnings quality, managers in tight cultures with civil law origins more inclined to engage in earnings manipulation. This research investigates the effect of TIGHT on fraudulent behavior and explores how cultural factors shape financial reporting quality, an area that remains underexplored in organizational behavior research.

The Influence of Religiosity on Financial Reporting Quality Across Countries: The Moderating Effect of Legal Origin

Authors

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Abstract
This research explores the connection between religiosity and earnings quality, employing accrual-based and real earnings management as key indicators. By examining data from 22 countries spanning 2020 to 2023, the study uncovers a negative correlation between religiosity and earnings manipulation, suggesting that managers in more religious environments are less prone to such practices. The robustness of these results is confirmed through multiple validation methods and alternative religiosity metrics. Furthermore, the study highlights the role of legal systems in shaping this relationship, revealing that managers in religious nations governed by civil law are more likely to engage in earnings management. This study emphasizes the need for greater awareness of earnings management, particularly in religious nations with civil law legal origin. Additionally, it Builds on Yamen et al. (2021) recommendation to investigate cultural influences beyond Hofstede's framework.

Attitudes, and Affect Heuristics Shape ESG Investment Intentions on the Ghana Stock Exchange

Author

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Abstract

The study investigates how psychological and socio-cultural factor influences Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investment intentions among investor on the Ghana Stock Exchange, and further assesses whether these intentions result in measurable observable portfolio flows. While Ghana has adopted regulator-led ESG disclosure frameworks and is promoting sustainable finance, there remains limited empirical evidence on the behavioural foundations of domestic ESG demand. This research addresses this gap by developing and testing an extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) model that integrates environmental attitudes, social norms, and affect motivations specifically, warm glo and affect heuristics which are key antecedents of ESG investment intention in a collectivist frontier market context. This study will use a sequential, mixed methods quantitative design which is in two phases. First, a firm-level ESG disclosure index has been developed using GSE mandated reporting templates and annual reports from 2023-2025, alongside secondary market data on trading volumes and fund flows. Secondly, primary data have been collected through a structured survey targeting retail and institutional investor in Accra, Kumasi, and Takoradi using proven psychometric scales. The data will be analysed with confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), including multi-group moderations tests for variables such as age, financial literacy, investment experience, gender, income, risk tolerance, and religiosity. A panel regression will be done to explore if the data correlates aggregated ESG intention scores with real market behavior.

The research aims to demostrate that social norms, environmental attitudes and affective motives are key predictors of ESG investment intentions wth social norms having a more pronounced influence in Ghana's collectivist context. The findings will offer practical insights for the Securities and Exchange Commission of Ghana (SEC), and the Ghana Stock Exchange and asset managers regarding culturally aligned disclosure design, investor education, and sustainable product development.

Digital Payment Adoption and Liquidity in Tunisian Small and Medium Enterprises: Assessing the Mediating Effect of Financial Transparency

Authors

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Abstract
The digitalization of payments has become a crucial tool to optimize financial operations in African economies. In the Tunisian context, the progressive adoption of digital payments by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) has facilitated a structural change in financial management, as well as in liquidity, and increased legal requirements. This article analyzes how digital payments impact the liquidity of these Tunisian businesses, highlighting the mediating role of transparency. The research examines how this financial technology interacts with local transformation and control mechanisms. The methodology of this study is based on a quantitative approach between digital payment adoption, the level of financial transparency, and liquidity. Data were collected from 2020 to 2024 from Tunisian commercial small businesses and analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM). The empirical analysis is grounded in a context characterized by liquidity constraints, limited accounting practices, and institutional pressures related to financial reporting and regulatory compliance. By focusing on businesses, the study captures the realities of organizations exposed to cash-flow volatility and operational disruptions. The proposed research model integrates digital payment adoption as a driver of organizational transformation, while financial transparency is conceptualized as a mediating mechanism to convert technological adoption into improved financial outcomes. The results indicate the adoption of digital payments improves cash flow monitoring, to improve financial transparency. This transparency plays a key role in enhancing liquidity, financial decision-making, and the resilience of small businesses. Specifically, the findings suggest digital payment systems contribute to greater traceability of financial flows and improved managerial visibility. These mechanisms strengthen firms' capacity to anticipate liquidity needs and respond to economic uncertainty. This study contributes to the literature on the digital transformation of African organizations by showing digital payments and transparency essential tools for the sustainability and competitiveness of small businesses.

Keywords: Digital payments, liquidity, financial transparency, SMEs, Africa.

Digital Institutions, Governance and Corruption: An Econometric Study of the Mena Region

Author

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Abstract

This study investigates the determinants of corruption across 18 MENA countries from 2011 to 2024, emphasizing the moderating role of digitalization in governance effectiveness. Using Feasible Generalized Least Squares GLS and GMM estimations, two models are developed: a baseline model assessing the impact of governance indicators—political stability, regulatory quality, and voice and accountability on the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), and an extended model incorporating the Digitalization Index (DIGIT) and its interaction effects. Results reveal that political stability and regulatory quality significantly reduce corruption, while voice and accountability remain insignificant. Digitalization directly lowers corruption and strengthens the positive effects of political stability and regulatory quality, demonstrating its role as an institutional amplifier. The findings highlight that digital transformation alone is insufficient to curb corruption; its success depends on strong, stable institutions and inclusive socio-economic development. Policy implications underscore the need for integrated governance–digitalization strategies to enhance transparency and institutional integrity in the MENA region.

The Role of Venture Capital in Financing Startups and Fostering Innovation in Africa

Authors

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Abstract
This paper analyzes the role of venture capital in financing startups and promoting innovation in Africa, with a particular focus on the Algerian experience. The study aims to define the conceptual framework of venture capital and examine its contribution across the various stages of startup development. The research adopts a descriptive–analytical methodology based on secondary data obtained from reports and statistics issued by international institutions concerned with venture capital investment and innovation. The results indicate that venture capital represents a vital financing mechanism for startups and plays a significant role in enhancing innovation and economic growth in Africa. In 2021, the total value of venture capital investments on the African continent exceeded USD 5 billion. In Algeria, venture capital investments reached USD 43 billion during the same period, ranking the country eighth at the continental level. Nevertheless, venture capital activity in Algeria remains limited compared to leading African countries, particularly Nigeria, which ranked first with investment values amounting to USD 1.8 billion. The study concludes that strengthening the venture

Do Interbank Relationships Mediate or Moderate the Relationship between Bank Capital and Bank Commercial Lending Behavior of Banks in Tanzania

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Abstract

Interbank relationships affect liquidity, which in turn affects banks' ability and willingness to lend to households and firms. From a market-discipline and regulatory perspective, bank capital affects the extent to which banks participate in the interbank markets hence the link among capital, interbank activity, and banks' commercial lending. This study examines whether interbank deposits and interbank lending mediate or moderate the relationship between capital and bank lending in Tanzania where the interbank market is still in its nascent stage and lending is growing. Quarterly data on 25 commercial banks from 2010 to 2022 were used. On one hand, results showed partial mediation by interbank lending, with no mediation effect of interbank deposits. On the other hand, interbank deposits have a significantly positive moderating effect, while interbank lending has no moderating effect. Furthermore, results show that liquidity, capital, deposit requirements, diversification, and regulatory pressure significantly reduce commercial lending, whereas profitability, bank size, and merger experience increase the same. Theoretically, the results imply that market discipline is enhanced by higher interbank lending, while higher deposits undermine it. Thus, market discipline strengthens as banks can borrow more easily and expand lending. Moreover, given the partial mediation, policies can leverage market discipline to encourage peer monitoring. Policies aimed at credit expansion in Tanzania should consider interbank liquidity rather than rely solely on capital regulations. Bank managers should consider the interplay between interbank lending and commercial or non-bank lending for bank stability.

Re-Examining The Fundamental Determinants Of Exchange Rate Volatility in South Africa: A Case of the Us Dollar Against The South African Rand

Author

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Abstract

This study re-examines the fundamental determinants of exchange rate volatility in South Africa, focusing on the rand–US dollar exchange rate. Exchange rate volatility remains a key factor affecting South Africa's integration into the global economy, influencing external reserves, foreign exchange availability, and export performance. Despite extensive research on the rand, there remains a gap in recent and comprehensive analyses that incorporate macroeconomic and commodity-market factors, particularly in the context of post–global financial crisis dynamics, commodity price shocks, and evolving policy environments.

Using annual data from 2010 to 2024, the study employs the GARCH (2,1) model to analyse the dynamic behaviour of exchange rate volatility and identify its core determinants. The findings reveal that trade openness and gold prices exert a negative effect on exchange rate volatility, suggesting that increased trade activity and stronger gold prices contribute to greater exchange rate stability. Conversely, interest rate differentials, inflation rate differentials, foreign reserve volatility, and crude oil prices have positive effects on exchange rate volatility, indicating that fluctuations in macroeconomic conditions and commodity markets intensify instability in the rand. The study further highlights important policy implications. Increasing trade openness through export diversification and regional integration can enhance exchange rate stability. Aligning domestic interest rate policies with global trends and improving policy communication may help reduce volatility associated with interest rate differentials. Strengthening the inflation-targeting framework is essential for mitigating the effects of inflation differentials, while transparent and adequate foreign reserve management can cushion the economy against reserve-related volatility. Additionally, diversifying the energy mix and implementing price stabilisation mechanisms can reduce the destabilising effects of crude oil price shocks. Overall, the study provides updated empirical evidence on the macroeconomic and commodity determinants of exchange rate volatility in South Africa and offers policy-relevant insights to support exchange rate stability and macroeconomic resilience.

The Influence External Auditors' Competence on the Relevance of External Auditors' Recommendations in Tanzanian Local Government Authorities

Authors

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of external auditors' competence on the relevance of audit recommendations in Tanzanian Local Government Authorities (LGAs). Employing a descriptive explanatory cross-sectional research design using the agency theory and the theory of inspired confidence in auditing, the survey strategy was used, and self-administered questionnaires were issued to 345 respondents across 126 LGAs who were selected using Krejcie & Morgan (1970). Main respondents comprised top LGA officials who are basically involved in audit and financial management functions. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed for data analysis following rigorous data screening and validation procedures (KMO = 0.904; Bartlett's Test $p < 0.001$). The findings reveal a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between external auditors' competence and relevance of audit recommendations (SRW = 0.960). This result suggests that greater auditor competence substantially improves the relevance of recommendations. At the construct level, technical expertise, continuous professional development, audit experience, and adherence to ethical standards emerged as critical dimensions of auditor competence. The study shows that auditor competence is crucial for effective audits, improving transparency, accountability, and financial management in Tanzania's local governments. Consequently, the hypothesis that external auditors' competence has a positive and significant influence on audit report relevance is supported. The study recommends the Tanzanian Supreme Audit institutions invest more resources in fostering technical expertise, continuous professional development, sharing experience and adherence to ethical standards.

International Reserves, Money and Inflation in post-liberalization Africa

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Abstract
Conventional wisdom in economics suggests that changes in international reserves have impact on money supply, and, in turn, consumer price inflation. However, there is not much convincing empirical evidence to support this notion on a regional or global basis, especially in the period of largely floating or flexible exchange rates. The early empirical investigation of 126 IMF member countries by Heller (1976) concluded that increases in international reserves lead to inflation, but the study is limited to the period under fixed exchange rates (1951-1974). A recent study by Elhiraika & Ndikumana (2007) of 21 African countries covered the period of mainly Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), during which the countries were still reforming their exchange rate systems. The present study extends the analysis of the impact of changes in international reserves on the price levels of African countries to the post-liberalization era using panel data covering the period 1996-2023.

Do Green Investment Funds Drive Sustainable Industrial Development in Africa? Evidence from a Quantile-Based Panel Approach

Authors

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Abstract
This study investigates the dynamic and heterogeneous relationship between green investment funds and industrial sustainability in African countries over the period 2000–2021. Using the Panel Method of Moments Quantile Regression (MMQR), we analyze how green finance influences sustainable industrial development across different levels of sustainability, while accounting for macroeconomic, institutional, and social factors, including trade openness, GDP, foreign direct investment, natural resources, control of corruption, political stability, poverty, and income inequality. The results indicate that green finance has a positive and significant effect on industrial sustainability, with stronger impacts observed in countries that are already relatively more sustainable. These findings suggest that Africa's transition toward sustainable industrialization requires not only the expansion of green finance but also improvements in institutional quality, technological capacity, and social development. Policymakers should adopt targeted, multi-dimensional strategies to maximize the effectiveness of green finance and foster inclusive, environmentally sustainable industrial growth.

Industrialisation-Income Inequality Nexus in Nigeria: The Role of Natural Resources Endowment

Authors

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Abstract

Despite Nigeria's vast natural resource endowment, the economy has been characterised by slow industrialisation and economic growth, while income disparities persist. While there is a surfeit of studies on the industrialisation-income inequality nexus, there is a paucity of studies on the role of natural resource endowment in this relationship. Therefore, this study explored the effect of industrialisation on income inequality in Nigeria and how natural resource endowment influences this relationship from 1985 to 2023, using the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) model. The results revealed that industrialisation had a positive effect on income inequality in both the short- and long-run, suggesting that it amplifies income gaps. After controlling for natural resource endowment, the effect remained unchanged. This indicates that abundant natural resources in Nigeria are not in any way attenuating income disparities. However, foreign aid is found to be crucial for reducing income inequality, as it has a significant negative effect on income inequality. Based on these findings, the government needs to strengthen the mechanism for managing abundant resources and ensuring the proper utilisation of accruing revenue to enhance industrialisation and reduce income inequality.

Track 2:

Entrepreneurship, Small Business, and Informal Sector

Building the Future Today: Innovation and Transformation in Nigeria's Small and Medium Enterprises SMEs

Author

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Abstract

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) remain the cornerstone of Nigeria's economic development, accounting for the majority of businesses and contributing significantly to employment and GDP. However, persistent structural challenges, including limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and regulatory bottlenecks, continue to constrain their growth and competitiveness. In the face of global disruptions and domestic macroeconomic volatility, innovation and transformation have become imperative for SMEs to thrive in a rapidly evolving business landscape. This paper explores how Nigeria can "build the future today" by leveraging innovation as a catalyst for SMEs transformation. It synthesizes recent policy frameworks, including the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS 2020–2030) and the Nigeria Startup Act (2022), alongside regional integration opportunities under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The analysis highlights four strategic pillars for sustainable SMEs growth: (i) strengthening digital infrastructure and skills to enable technology adoption; (ii) expanding access to finance through innovative mechanisms such as movable collateral registries and blended finance instruments; (iii) enhancing market integration via digital trade protocols and export readiness programs; and (iv) upgrading productivity in high-potential sectors such as agro-processing, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, and creative industries. Building on evidence from World Bank diagnostics, AfDB trade finance initiatives, and ecosystem reports, the paper offers a practical roadmap for policymakers, financial institutions, and SMEs leaders. It contends that coordinated investment in digital transformation, financial innovation, and trade facilitation will unlock competitiveness, create jobs, and drive inclusive growth. By adopting these strategies, Nigerian SMEs can move from survival to scale, positioning themselves as catalysts of economic resilience and regional integration in the digital age. The paper concludes with recommendations to enhance Nigeria's SMEs sector for researchers, practitioners, and development partners committed to advancing enterprise transformation in Nigeria.

Keywords: SMEs, AfCFTA, digital economy, ecosystem, finance, innovation, development, transformation, Nigeria, World Bank,

Generative AI Adoption and Platform Dependency in Tourism SME Networks: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has disrupted tourism digitalisation since late 2022, profoundly reshaping small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) business networks while entrenching platform dependencies—dynamics critically underexplored in existing literature. This systematic literature review addresses this gap by investigating GenAI adoption patterns, network effects, and platform power asymmetries in tourism SME contexts, aiming to propose resilient integration frameworks and a forward-looking research agenda. Following PRISMA guidelines, we synthesised 73 peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2025. Employing thematic synthesis and meta-analytic techniques on empirical studies, analysis yielded five transformative themes: (1) platform-mediated technology diffusion steering SME innovation pathways; (2) network embeddedness as a double-edged adoption moderator, evidenced by curvilinear density effects (pooled quadratic $\beta = -0.38$, 95% CI [-0.52, -0.24] across 12 studies); (3) deepening AI-platform lock-in vulnerabilities; (4) collaborative resistance through cooperative digital ecosystems; and (5) asymmetric value capture favouring dominant platforms. Key findings advance the novel **Platform-Network Co-evolution Framework**, integrating technology adoption theory, network theory, and platform capitalism perspectives to model sustainable GenAI strategies. Critical gaps persist in longitudinal analyses, Global South empirics (particularly South African tourism SMEs), and GenAI-specific evidence. This review delivers actionable priorities: temporal configurational studies, policy interventions against platform hegemony, and empowerment mechanisms for networked SME resilience in AI-transformed tourism ecosystems.

Keywords: Generative AI, tourism SMEs, platform dependency, business networks, network theory

Entrepreneurial Leadership and Organizational Agility in the Context of Global Uncertainty: The Case of Small Firms in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study focused on entrepreneurial leadership and organizational agility in the context of global uncertainty. This study employs a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional survey approach. The target group for this study includes managers, supervisors, and high-level employees in small scale enterprises. The study used a stratified random sampling method to ensure proper representation of various levels of management and functions. The sample size of the study was 250 respondents. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential analysis. Regression weight of structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized effects of entrepreneurial leadership dimensions on organizational agility. Findings revealed that entrepreneurial leadership has a significant positive effect on organizational agility via visionary thinking, proactivity, flexible strategies, and decision-making under uncertainty, rather than risk-taking. The study concluded that entrepreneurial leadership is a significant antecedent of organizational agility. The study recommended that organizations that aim to improve their organizational agility should focus on developing entrepreneurial leadership skills that extend beyond developing risk-taking abilities.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Leadership, Organizational Agility, Visionary Orientation, Risk-Taking Propensity, Strategic Flexibility

Women Entrepreneurs in the Era of Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Objective: Women's entrepreneurship is an essential catalyst for fostering inclusive economic growth, generating employment opportunities, and alleviating poverty in African economies. Recent advancements in digitalisation, comprising digital platforms, financial technologies, and AI tools, have exacerbated both local and global disruptions that influence entrepreneurial endeavours. Although digital technologies are frequently characterised as empowering tools for women entrepreneurs, the current body of research concerning women entrepreneurship and digitalisation in Africa is notably fragmented, exhibiting minimal focus on AI. This study endeavours to systematically review and synthesise the extant literature on women entrepreneurship, AI, and digitalisation in the African context, while identifying principal themes, research gaps, and prospective avenues for future inquiry.
Methodology: The study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology in accordance with PRISMA guidelines. An exhaustive search was conducted using the Scopus and Web of Science databases. Peer-reviewed journal articles published in English from 2015 to 2025 were selected based on established inclusion and exclusion criteria centred on women, entrepreneurship or self-employment, digital technologies and African contexts. The selected studies were analysed using a thematic synthesis approach.
Key Findings: Previous research reveals various themes. Prior investigations indicate that digital gender disparities hinder women entrepreneurs' access to digital infrastructure, competencies, and affordable technologies. Research on fintech and digital financial inclusion shows enhanced access to financial services, alongside novel forms of exclusion for women engaged in informal enterprises. Emerging scholarship emphasises the significance of platform-based entrepreneurship in broadening market access, while frequently perpetuating informality. Nevertheless, preliminary evidence indicates a conspicuous deficiency in AI-specific empirical research, particularly regarding sophisticated AI-enabled tools in the realm of African women's entrepreneurship. Institutional and socio-cultural factors are often recognised as moderating factors that shape digital outcomes.
Keywords: Women entrepreneurs, Digitalisation, AI, SLR

Catalyzing Entrepreneurship through Enset-Based Enterprises: Promoting Small Business Development in Ethiopia

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Abstract
Enset (*Ensete ventricosum*) is a nutritionally rich, culturally significant staple crop for over 25 million people in Ethiopia, yet its commercialization and value addition remain limited, constraining economic opportunities for smallholder farmers, particularly women. This study demonstrates how targeted innovation and entrepreneurship interventions can transform enset into a driver of small business development and inclusive economic growth. Through a collaborative approach involving research institutions, local cooperatives, and start-ups such as Lucy Enset, we developed and commercialized value-added enset products, including gluten-free, organic, and diabetic-friendly flours, snacks, and traditional foods such as Kocho. Innovations in processing technologies and product standardization ensured consistent quality, food safety compliance, and market competitiveness. Complementary capacity-building initiatives provided smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs with training in production, business management, and market engagement. These efforts resulted in the establishment of 42 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across five regions of Ethiopia, predominantly led by women, generating income, creating jobs, and enhancing food security. Pilot commercialization demonstrated successful integration into local, regional, and international markets, highlighting the economic viability of indigenous food-based enterprises. The approach also facilitated knowledge transfer, machinery development, and scalable business models suitable for informal sector actors. The findings underscore the potential of leveraging indigenous crops for entrepreneurship and small business growth, illustrating how culturally rooted food systems can be transformed into inclusive, sustainable economic opportunities. This study provides actionable insights for policymakers, development practitioners, and entrepreneurs seeking to replicate similar models in other low-resource contexts.

Beyond Binary Classifications: A Systematic Integrative Review Protocol for Understanding Informal Service Work

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Abstract
This paper presents a protocol for a systematic integrative review addressing a critical conceptual gap in management scholarship: the inadequacy of binary formal-informal classifications for capturing the complexity of informal service work. With over 75 million domestic workers globally, the vast majority of whom are employed informally, existing dichotomous frameworks obscure crucial variations affecting vulnerable populations, particularly across African contexts. We outline a methodological approach designed to develop an evidence-based multidimensional framework through inductive analysis of literature spanning HRM, service management, and development studies. We employ a systematic integrative review approach combining systematic procedures with interpretive synthesis to generate higher-order theoretical constructs. The protocol encompasses five phases: systematic literature search across major databases; data extraction from 80 – 100 papers using structured protocols; inductive pattern analysis; framework construction; and stakeholder validation. This interdisciplinary design bridges fragmented literatures where HRM examines precarious work predominantly in formal contexts, service management largely ignores informal settings, and development studies lack integration with management theory. Existing scholarship suggests informal service work may vary along spatial, visibility, and regulatory dimensions, yet no comprehensive framework captures this complexity. Our protocol is designed to inductively derive dimensions from the literature rather than impose predetermined categories. We seek feedback on methodological design choices and theoretical positioning before completing analysis, ensuring the resulting framework serves African organisational contexts navigating formalisation pressures and regulatory change.

Keywords: Informal service work; systematic integrative review; review protocol; domestic workers; Africa; decent work

Politicised food security governance amongst the South African small-scale Farmers

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Abstract
Countries in the Global South, including South Africa, have common problems to sustain food security programmes at local government level, which are mostly haphazardly funded by government. The lack of positive impacts on and outcomes of government-funded programmes at local level is causing failure to increase food security despite the existence of multiple local economic policies and structures to support small-scale farmers. The food security system and subsistence farming at local level are failing even though cohesive, coherent, and globally benchmarked policies and structures to drive a food security agenda are in place. Using a multiplicity of theories (Sabatier's policy processes and outcomes theory, the entrepreneurship theory, the incremental theory, the stakeholder theory and the network governance theory), 32 in-depth interviews were conducted with diverse actors from all spheres of government, non-profit organisations and universities. The study sought to research policy and decision-making coherence, fragmentations, bottom-up vs top-down approaches, political and cognitive influence, governance challenges, business opportunities and stakeholder collaborations and connections to improve food security through small-scale farmers in the Eastern Cape province located at local level. The study revealed factors that contribute to increased food insecurity within the province, which include policy incoherence, structural fragmentations, the top-down policy and decision-making implementation, duplications of activities, political interference and different actors working in silos.

Resilience and African Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

African SMEs face unprecedented disruptions, including economic shocks, political instability, infrastructure deficits, and pandemics, yet their resilience mechanisms remain inadequately synthesized. While recent reviews have examined SME resilience broadly or focused on specific regions, no systematic review has comprehensively integrated the multidimensional nature of resilience—financial, operational, organizational, supply chain, and technological—specifically within Africa's unique institutional context across the 2010-2025 period marked by digital transformation and COVID-19. This systematic literature review aimed to identify, synthesize, and critically evaluate empirical and theoretical evidence on resilience factors, strategies, and outcomes among African SMEs. Following PRISMA guidelines, we systematically searched Scopus and, to supplement the search, targeted Google Scholar, SciSpace, and arXiv for emerging research, covering publications from 2010 to 2025. Of the 847 initial records identified, 30 peer-reviewed studies with explicit theoretical grounding met the inclusion criteria after rigorous screening. Key findings reveal that African SME resilience is shaped by dynamic capabilities (resource reconfiguration, strategic flexibility), social capital (network density, institutional relationships), digital transformation readiness (infrastructure access, digital literacy), and the quality of institutional support (policy coherence, financial access). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital adoption while exposing infrastructure gaps and governance weaknesses. This review contributes an integrated conceptual framework that links micro-level capabilities with meso-level network effects and macro-level institutional factors, advancing resilience theory in developing-economy contexts. Practical implications include prioritizing digital literacy programs, strengthening financial access mechanisms, and fostering collaborative ecosystems. Future research should pursue longitudinal designs, cross-country comparative analyses, evaluations of experimental interventions, and antifragility frameworks that enable SMEs to thrive beyond mere survival.

Keywords: African SMEs, Resilience, Dynamic Capabilities, Digital Transformation, Institutional Support, Systematic Literature Review, Developing Economies

Balancing Economic Growth and Net-Zero Transitions in Developing Economies: A Comparative Case Study of Policy Strategies in Contexts of High Informal Economy

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Abstract

Achieving net-zero emissions while sustaining economic growth presents a critical challenge for developing countries, particularly those with large informal economic activities and limited institutional capacity. Although net-zero policies are increasingly promoted as a global solution to climate change, their effectiveness and transferability across countries with similar economic structures remain underexplored. Existing research highlights the importance of learning from countries that have successfully balanced growth and sustainability, yet comparative analyses that explicitly link economic structure, especially the interaction between formal and informal sectors, with successful net-zero strategies are limited. This study addresses this gap by examining how selected developing and emerging economies with comparable levels of development and high informality have implemented net-zero policies without undermining economic performance. Using a comparative case study methodology, the research analyses countries that have demonstrated measurable progress towards net-zero emissions while maintaining economic growth. The study examines policy design, governance arrangements, implementation mechanisms, and the role of co-production initiatives involving governments, private actors, and informal economic actors. Particular attention is given to how net-zero policies have been adapted to local economic realities, including labour-intensive green activities, energy transitions, and inclusive climate governance frameworks. Both successful and less effective policy experiences are analysed to identify enabling factors, constraints, and trade-offs. By drawing lessons from countries that have advanced towards net-zero targets, the study provides evidence-based insights into how developing economies can align climate mitigation with development objectives. The findings contribute to academic debates on sustainable development and just transitions by demonstrating how net-zero policies can be designed to support economic growth rather than constrain it. The research also offers practical policy implications for developing countries seeking inclusive and context-sensitive pathways to net-zero emissions, particularly in economies where informal activities play a significant role.

Marketing Challenges for Africa's Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs): A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis

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Abstract
Current research identifies three main challenges that affect the competitiveness of Small and Medium-Size Enterprises (SMEs): financial, strategic, and marketing management. Although these challenges are internal, they are often influenced by the environmental context in which SMEs operate. African SMEs face both primary challenges and unique features of their local environments. This study uses a systematic literature review to explore marketing management challenges in the African SME context. The PRISMA framework is applied to gather and analyze secondary data from databases such as Elsevier, SCOPUS, Emerald, and Google Scholar, covering the years 2010-2025. Early findings highlight key marketing challenge variables, including price sensitivity, language barriers in marketing, the delivery process, service quality, regulatory challenges in marketing, and privacy issues related to marketing. Further discussion is provided.

ICT-Enabled Hybrid Entrepreneurship in Africa: An Empirical Single-Case Study of uLesson's Digital Tutoring Ecosystem in Nigeria

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper examines how ICT-enabled digital tutoring platforms may contribute to youth employability and human-capital development in Nigeria, using uLesson as a qualitative archival-documentary case of hybrid entrepreneurship in African EdTech.
Design/Methodology/Approach: The study analyses publicly available documents published between 2019 and 2025, including company announcements, founder interviews, investor communications, media reports, policy documents, and sector reports. The analysis uses thematic coding guided by entrepreneurial ecosystem, digital inclusion, frugal innovation, and hybrid entrepreneurship perspectives, while distinguishing documented evidence from analytical inference.
Findings: Five themes show how uLesson relates to Nigeria's youth-employment challenge through employability pathways rather than measurable unemployment reduction: response to educational institutional voids; frugal design for affordability and access; hybrid commercial-developmental logic; platform-related work and digital-skill pathways; and ecosystem partnerships with investors, telecommunications actors, and education stakeholders. Public archival evidence supports claims about platform activities, design choices, and partnerships, but not causal claims about job creation, wages, user labour outcomes, or national unemployment effects.
Originality/Value: The paper integrates entrepreneurial ecosystem, digital inclusion/frugal innovation, hybrid entrepreneurship, and youth employability perspectives into a single framework for analysing African EdTech platforms under institutional constraints.
Practical and Policy Implications: The findings emphasise affordable access, impact measurement, and partnerships linking digital learning to employability.

Keywords: Digital tutoring; ICT innovation; hybrid entrepreneurship; digital inclusion; frugal innovation; youth employability; archival case study; Nigeria; uLesson.

Managing Business Risk in Post Covid-19 Era with Entrepreneurial Orientation: A Narrative review

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Abstract
Despite the socio-economic challenges faced globally by nations all over the world as a result of covid-19 pandemic, substantial businesses have made tremendous success due to application of entrepreneurship techniques in solving the emerging business problems. Resilient entrepreneurs resort to taking into account the new needs of the customers, moving to online channels for sales, in case of supply chain disruption and sourcing from new suppliers. Other strategies employed by entrepreneurs include focusing on working with new partners in the digital environment and replacement of their products to meet pandemic demands. Entrepreneurial orientation has on many occasions been seen as one of the strategies for business success in a crisis situation like the Ebola virus, covid19 and the other contagious diseases that confronted the world at some time. This study employed review of the recent studies on the impact of entrepreneurial orientation on covid-19 forced business realities to reveal other ways and directions to enhance knowledge and strategic framework in managing business risk in the post-pandemic era.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, Covid-19, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Innovation, Creativity.

From Learning to Launching: Stimulating African Student-Led Venture Creation for Inclusive Economic Growth

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Abstract

In Africa, the severity of youth unemployment is more significant than any other part of the world. Against this backdrop, many universities are rising to the challenge by supporting the launching, development and growth of student-led ventures. This can help to improve the self-employment prospects of graduates and contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic growth. While entrepreneurship is generally viewed as a critical solution to the youth unemployment problem, a major challenge in the domain of entrepreneurship education is the conflicting evidence of its impact on student-led venture creation. Increased investments are being channelled to entrepreneurship education by governments, funders and universities globally, yet there is consensus that policy makers and the education community lack an adequate understanding of the diverse types of programmes and their effectiveness. The study examined the influence of entrepreneurship education on student venture creation, with a specific focus on the relative impact of action-oriented versus theory-oriented approaches across universities in Sub-Saharan Africa. With a focus on former participants of the British Council's Innovation for African Universities initiative, data were collected through a self-administered online questionnaire and analysed through correlation and regression tests. The findings provide contextualised insights on stimulating university student-led venture creation in the African context. A strong positive correlation was found between action-oriented approaches and student-led venture creation. To further advance scholarly work in this field, the study proposes an adjustment to the application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour to incorporate action and theoretical approaches to entrepreneurship education. The findings would be of great interest to educators, government policy makers, funders and university leaders as they provide evidence of the role that action-oriented entrepreneurship can play in equipping students with the attitudes, intentions and skills that can foster business creation, therefore contributing to job creation and inclusive economic growth.

Do Savings Groups Shield Against Economic Shocks? Evidence from Disaggregated Household Data.

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Abstract
Households in low-income countries face frequent covariate and idiosyncratic shocks that undermine income stability. Formal insurance and credit remain limited in these areas, leaving informal financial groups such as savings groups (SGs) as key informal safety nets. This study look at whether longer participation in savings groups improve members' resilience to idiosyncratic and covariate shocks. Using 2023 cross-sectional data on 12,988 SG members in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso, we estimate heterogeneous treatment effects with doubly robust augmented inverse probability weighting (AIPW). We find that both idiosyncratic and covariate shocks significantly reduce household income. SG membership protects against idiosyncratic shocks, but not covariate shocks. These results suggest that SGs function as informal insurance mechanisms against household-specific risks but face structural constraints under covariate shocks with important implications for resilience-building policy.

Gender-Transformative Practices in the Informal Economy: Evidence from Women-Based Village Savings and Loan Associations

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Abstract

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) play a pivotal role in Africa's informal economy by supporting women's entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and collective organisation. Yet, limited attention has been given to how organisational design choices, especially structured engagement of men in gender-transformative training, shape women's empowerment trajectories. This study investigates men's participation in VSLA-linked gender training as a transformational mechanism within women-based VSLAs, drawing on Kabeer's resources–agency–achievements framework and the Gender Transformative Approach.

Using multi-country VSLA data from Sub-Saharan Africa, we estimate a series of structural models assessing how length of VSLA membership influences men's engagement in gender training, women's participation in leadership, income-generating, and sexual and reproductive health training, and women's participation in community-level decision-making. Models incorporate individual characteristics, year fixed effects, and country fixed effects to capture organisational and contextual heterogeneity. Results indicate that men's engagement in VSLA-linked gender training significantly enhances women's participation in leadership and entrepreneurship-oriented training and is directly associated with women's participation in community-level decision-making. Leadership and income-generating activities training emerge as critical organisational pathways through which informal financial groups translate resources into agency and collective outcomes. Longer VSLA membership further strengthens these effects, underscoring the cumulative and institutional nature of organisational transformation within the informal sector. The study contributes to entrepreneurship and informal sector research by demonstrating that gender-transformative practices embedded within grassroots financial organisations can strengthen, rather than undermine, women-centered enterprise development. Policy implications highlight the importance of integrating structured male engagement into VSLA programming to support inclusive organisational transformation and sustainable entrepreneurship in Africa's informal economy.

The Impact of Servant Leadership on Organizational Sustainability in Reference to SME Development Agency Employees: Mediating Roles of Employee Creativity and Psychological Resilience

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Abstract

Exploring the Impact of Servant Leadership on Organizational Sustainability In Reference To SME Development Agency Employees: Mediating Roles of Employee Creativity and Psychological Resilience. The study was conducted to explore the indirect impact of servant leadership on perceived organizational sustainability (POS) via employee creativity and psychological resilience in the SME sector in Addis Ababa. To achieve the research objective correlational research design was applied. The target population for this study constituted of one hundred seventy-eight (178) experts of SME development agency at the city, sub city and Woreda level. The sample size taken was 123. Pertinent data for the study were gathered through self-administered structure questionnaires. Lastly the study was analyzed using structure equation model. The result was summarized in the following way. The indirect impact of servant leadership via EC is with Coefficients (Beta) = 0.325 and p-value = 0.022. In addition, indirect impact of servant leadership via PR is with Coefficients (Beta) = 0.301and p-value = 0.023. Servant leadership's direct impact is weak. Employee creativity can enhance the impact via its mediating role. In addition psychological resilience has also a mediating role. So, it is better to aid employees for they have ways for dealing with situations that occur In addition, it is better to support employees for they see major organizational changes as an opportunity for personal growth.

Key terms; Servant leadership, Perceived organization sustainability, Employee creativity, Psychological resilience

Relational Foundations of Entrepreneurial Ecosystems in Africa: Identification, Trust, and Knowledge Sharing

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial ecosystems are widely characterised as community-embedded and relational in nature, yet empirical research examining the micro-level social mechanisms that underpin ecosystem participation remains limited, particularly in African contexts. This work-in-progress study seeks to explore how ecosystem communities are experienced by actors within entrepreneurial ecosystems across Africa, with a particular focus on ecosystem identification and interpersonal trust as core, yet under-examined, relational dimensions. Drawing on entrepreneurial ecosystem and social capital literatures, the study adapts and extends established community-based models of information and knowledge sharing—originally developed in online-based investment and crowdfunding communities (Baah-Peprah et al., 2025) —to the entrepreneurial ecosystem context. In doing so, it investigates whether and how identification with the ecosystem and trust among ecosystem actors may be associated with knowledge-sharing intentions and behaviors, which are widely recognised as important but unevenly distributed ecosystem resources. The proposed research design involves ongoing survey data collection from entrepreneurs and ecosystem support actors operating in major entrepreneurial hubs across Africa, with the intention of including at least one country from each African region. Data analysis is planned, using structural equation modelling. The study also explores a set of potential antecedents—including enjoyment of ecosystem participation, perceived homophily, shared outcome expectations, social tie strength, and normative pressures—to better understand how ecosystem communities may form and evolve. By positioning Africa as a comparative empirical setting, this study aims to contribute to theory-building and replication-extension efforts in the entrepreneurial ecosystem literature, while offering early insights into how relational and community-based mechanisms may operate within ecosystems characterised by institutional heterogeneity and uneven resource distribution.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial ecosystems; ecosystem identification; trust; knowledge sharing; Africa

Reference:

Baah-Peprah, P., Shneor, R., & Munim, Z. H. (2025). “In this together”: on the antecedents and implications of crowdfunding community identification and trust. *Venture Capital*, *27*(4), 403–433. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691066.2024.2310232

How Small Exporters Navigate Digital Platforms: Balancing Benefits with Independence

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Abstract
Digital platforms promise to democratize international trade by reducing export barriers, yet existing research overlooks how these same platforms create dependencies that may ultimately constrain long-term export performance. This paradox is particularly acute for resource-constrained SMEs who lack alternatives to platform-mediated market access while being vulnerable to extractive platform practices. Current literature treats digital technologies as uniformly beneficial for exporters and fails to theorize the temporal evolution of platform relationships from initial emancipation to potential entrapment. This study addresses these gaps by introducing the Frugal-Twin Sovereignty Paradox – a framework explaining how resource-constrained exporters simultaneously experience liberation and constraint through digital platform engagement. Integrating effectuation theory, resource dependence theory, and frugal innovation principles, the framework introduces two novel constructs: frugal digital twins (low-cost virtual product representations using accessible technologies) and sovereignty balancing capabilities (organizational routines enabling selective platform engagement while preserving autonomy). A three-stage process model explains how initial digital emancipation through frugal twins creates data exhaust that platforms leverage for value extraction, leading to an inverted U-curve of export performance over time. The framework yields five testable propositions and provides strategic guidance for SME managers, platform operators, and policymakers navigating the complexities of sustainable digital export development.

Sustainable Digital Transformation and Digital Darwinism in SMEs: A Scoping Review of Evidence from Emerging Economies

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Abstract

Digital Darwinism, the process by which businesses that do not survive technological evolution will die out, poses existential challenges for small and medium sized business enterprise (SME) in emerging economies. This scoping review seeks to examine whether SMEs in emerging economies are adopting digital technologies as a survival response and it also critically evaluates the sustainability nature of such patterns of adoption. Following Arksey and O'Malley's framework, the study systematically searched four databases and identified 18 empirical studies published between 2020-2025 that met inclusion criteria. The analysis reveals a paradox; while 67% of the studies confirm digital technology adoption for African SMEs, only 23% show sustainable implementation involving strategic integration, resource alignment and long-term capability building. SMEs in emerging economies display reactive, not strategic digitalization, with SMEs predominantly adopting rather rudimentary digitalization tools (digital payments, social media marketing), without any deep business model transformation. Crisis driven adoption during the Covid-19 period saw a 34% accelerated uptake of technology, however 58% of technology implementations were found to be superficial and unsustainable in the post-pandemic world. Critical mediating factors include infrastructure deficit, digital literacy gaps, financing constraints, and institutional voids. The review confirms the applicability of digital Darwinism in emerging markets but highlights that the survival pressures may not automatically lead to sustainable transformation.

The Effect of Entrepreneurial Marketing Dimensions on Supply Chain Resilience in Tanzania

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Abstract
This study explores the influence of entrepreneurial marketing (EM) dimensions on supply chain resilience (SCR) amongst Tanzanian SMEs in the food processing sector. Anchored on the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT) as theoretical lenses, this study investigates the role of resource leveraging, proactiveness, customer intensity, innovativeness, and value creation on SCR. This is a quantitative study involving a survey with a structured questionnaire, with collected data being analysed through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test the hypotheses of interest. This study found a positive relationship between each of the selected EM dimensions and SCR, with resource leveraging and proactiveness being the two most powerful predictors of SCR. The results show that strategic deployment and leveraging of resources, proactive anticipation of risks and unprecedented changes in the market landscape and establishing and maintaining durable relationships with customers can help to improve SCR in environmentally resource-constrained and turbulent supply chain landscapes. This study contributes to supporting SME managers with practical insights on how they can develop SCR from an entrepreneurial marketing perspective. This study also advises policymakers on the design and execution of SME support programmes, as well as provides vital context-specific insights for industry associations and leaders supporting indigenous firms in Africa and beyond. Future studies should focus on investigating the role of digitalisation while establishing innovative policy interventions and solutions by which SCR could be strengthened.

Green Entrepreneurship Adoption by Small Businesses Operating in the Zimbabwean VUCA Environment

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Abstract

Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA), driven by macroeconomic instability, policy inconsistency, climate change impacts, and limited access to finance, characterised Zimbabwe's business environment. In such an environment, green entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial ventures that explicitly integrate environmental sustainability into their business models, offers a strategic pathway to resilience and sustainable economic development. The paper sought to establish the effect of adopting environmental conservation by Small Businesses operating in the Zimbabwean VUCA environment, to examine the impact of entrepreneurship innovation on Small Businesses operating in the Zimbabwean VUCA environment, to assess the influence of economic viability on Small Business operating in the Zimbabwean VUCA environment, and to evaluate the effects of entrepreneurship social responsibility on Small Businesses operating in the Zimbabwean VUCA environment. The literature review indicated that scholars concentrated on the green entrepreneurship of big companies. The study adopted the interpretative paradigm that advocated a qualitative approach using interviews of 15 Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce members in Gweru Province. The study established that Small Businesses face challenges when it comes to the adoption of green entrepreneurship to cushion them against a VUCA environment in Zimbabwe. Additionally, the study revealed that, regardless of opportunities availed by green entrepreneurship, Small Businesses failed to harness them due to a lack of capital and societal support. The researchers recommend the policy formulation and financial model that supports Small Businesses in Zimbabwe as a panacea to the VUCA environment.

KEY TERMS: VUCA; Green Entrepreneurship; Small Businesses; Entrepreneurship Innovation

Entrepreneurship versus Talent Management Practices in Ghana: A Systematic Literature Review

Author

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Abstract

This chapter examines the distinct yet complementary paradigms of entrepreneurship and talent management (TM) practices in Ghana, exploring their divergent approaches, shared challenges, and potential for strategic integration. Drawing on empirical evidence from Ghanaian small and medium enterprises (SMEs), public institutions, and the banking sector, this analysis reveals fundamental differences between entrepreneurial management and formal talent management systems. Entrepreneurship in Ghana is predominantly characterized by owner-led, resource-constrained practices focused on firm survival and market opportunity exploitation, emphasizing strategic orientation, reward philosophy, and entrepreneurial culture through informal human resource mechanisms. In contrast, talent management practices centre on systematic recruitment, development, performance management, and retention strategies that enhance employee attitudes, psychological contract fulfilment, and organisational citizenship behaviour, demonstrating measurable impacts on job satisfaction, affective commitment, and multidimensional employee performance. Both domains face significant challenges. Entrepreneurs struggle with limited financial access, human capital gaps, poor financial record-keeping, and inadequate institutional support, particularly affecting women entrepreneurs and necessity-driven ventures. Talent management practitioners encounter difficulties in training delivery, leadership effectiveness, and inconsistent implementation across sectors, amplified by Ghana's institutional environment, including regulatory bottlenecks and limited market information systems. Despite these differences, substantial opportunities for integration exist. Entrepreneurs' human capital acquisition processes provide natural entry points for structured TM practices in SMEs. Strategic integration mechanisms include HR planning linked to growth strategies, succession planning, collaborative networks for shared training, and leveraging entrepreneurial networks as talent pipelines. The chapter concludes with practical implications: organizations should adopt basic HR planning systems and targeted TM practices; policymakers should formalize support for women entrepreneurs and develop clear national entrepreneurship policies. This comparative analysis demonstrates that entrepreneurship and talent management are complementary approaches that, when strategically integrated, can address Ghana's human capital challenges and enhance organizational competitiveness in Africa's dynamic business environment.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Talent Management, Human Resource Management, SMEs, Ghana

Sustainable Tourism Entrepreneurship in Sub-Saharan Africa Amid Climate and Digital Disruptions: A Prisma-Guided Systematic Literature Review

Authors

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Abstract
The Sub-Saharan African tourism sector confronts escalating disruptions from climate change, digital transformation, and post-pandemic recovery, disproportionately impacting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in resource-constrained environments. This PRISMA-guided systematic literature review synthesizes the state of knowledge on sustainable tourism entrepreneurship in Sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on SME strategies to navigate intersecting climate vulnerabilities and digital shifts.

Research Objectives: The review seeks to: (1) synthesize sustainability practices among tourism SMEs in African contexts; (2) identify dominant themes, research gaps, and contradictions; (3) examine climate-digital disruption intersections; and (4) propose a forward-looking research agenda with resilience frameworks.

Methodology: Following PRISMA 2020 guidelines, 89 peer-reviewed articles (2010–2024, emphasizing 2020–2025 trends) from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar were analyzed. Inclusion criteria targeted tourism SMEs, sustainability, Sub-Saharan contexts, and climate/digital disruptions; quality appraisal employed standardized empirical and theoretical benchmarks.

Key Findings: Five emergent themes include: (1) sustainability as competitive edge for resource-limited SMEs; (2) digital technologies as dual enablers/disruptors; (3) climate adaptive capacity in tourism communities; (4) institutional voids hindering entrepreneurship; and (5) hybrid models blending local authenticity with global digital connectivity. Gaps encompass scarce longitudinal evidence, underexplored policy impacts, and limited cross-regional comparisons (e.g., SADC vs. East Africa). This synthesis bridges fragmented scholarship, offering an integrated framework for empirical advancements.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism Entrepreneurship, Climate Resilience, Digital Transformation, Sub-Saharan SMEs, African Tourism Disruptions

Savings Groups and Household Resilience to Shocks: The Moderating Role of Savings Group Duration

Authors

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Abstract

Households in low-income countries face frequent covariate and idiosyncratic shocks that undermine income stability. Formal insurance and credit remain limited in these areas, leaving savings groups (SGs) as key informal safety nets. This study examines whether the duration of SG membership enhances household resilience to shocks in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. Using cross-sectional data from 12,298 members of women-only SGs, we apply propensity score matching and high-dimensional fixed effects regression to estimate the moderating effects of membership duration on household income resilience. As a robustness check, we implement two-stage least squares (2SLS) using the age of SG as an instrumental variable. Each additional year of membership increases household income, though with diminishing returns. SGs significantly buffer idiosyncratic shocks, but offer limited protection against covariate shocks. These findings show that SGs are a significant but limited tool for building household resilience to shocks through the financial resources and social capital within the SGs. Strengthening SGs to better absorb idiosyncratic shocks, while simultaneously enhancing formal linkages to financial institutions and insurance schemes for covariate shocks, could help mitigate the adverse effects of future shocks.

Transforming from Informal to Global Ready Enterprise: Legal and Policy Pathways for African Businesses; A Case of Tanzania.

Author

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Abstract

The transformation of informal businesses into globally adaptive enterprises has emerged as a central legal and policy concern across Africa. While informality continues to dominate African economies, contemporary disruptions arising from digitalisation, evolving trade standards, climate and sustainability requirements, and regional economic integration have intensified demands for business transformation. This paper examines how existing legal and policy frameworks, particularly in Tanzania, shape and, or constrain the ability of businesses to transition from informality and attain global readiness. Employing a doctrinal and policy-oriented methodology, the study examines national, regional, and global regulatory regimes affecting businesses. At the national level, it analyses Tanzanian laws and policies governing business registration, taxation, regulatory compliance, and trade facilitation. At the regional level, it considers legal frameworks under the East African Community and the African Continental Free Trade Area, while also situating African businesses within global standards relating to digital commerce, trade facilitation, and climate-related compliance. The paper demonstrates that regulatory complexity, overlapping institutional mandates, and limited sensitivity to local business realities often transform legal frameworks into barriers rather than pathways to global readiness. It further argues that formalisation alone does not guarantee successful integration into global markets, as many formally registered African businesses continue to face structural, regulatory, and compliance-related constraints. The study concludes by advocating for adaptive and context-sensitive regulatory approaches that align domestic frameworks with regional and global obligations while remaining responsive to local economic conditions. Using Tanzania as a case study, the paper contributes to scholarly and policy debates on business formalisation, regulatory reform, and sustainable enterprise development in Africa.

Keywords: African enterprises, Business formalization, Global business readiness. Legal and policy reform, Regulatory complexity.

Understanding Barriers to Digital Transformation in SMEs: A Capability-Based Perspective from the Global South

Authors
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Abstract
Digital transformation is an essential strategy enabling SMEs to enhance their efficiency, competitiveness, and long-term viability. However, the adoption of digital transformation among SMEs in the Global South remains inconsistent, sluggish, and fragmented, despite its potential benefits. The existing literature has extensively examined the outcomes of technology adoption and individual factors; however, there is a notable lack of cohesive empirical studies that integrate readiness, barriers, and organizational capabilities within a coherent theoretical framework tailored to the SME context. This paper addresses the deficiencies by examining the barriers to digital transformation adoption in SMEs, drawing on a comprehensive review of international and African literature. The findings show that internal and external constraints hinder digital transformation in SMEs. They lack digital and technological capabilities, inhibit innovation, resist change, have rigid organizational cultures, lack management skills, experience strategic uncertainty, and view digital technologies as too complex, expensive, time-consuming, and uncertain in terms of return on investment. SMEs are limited by a lack of digital infrastructure, reliable internet access, cybersecurity, financial resources, intense competition, limited market access, inadequate government support, and restrictive regulations. These barriers reinforce each other, hindering SMEs' digital transformation readiness. This research contributes to the existing literature by providing an empirical understanding of the obstacles to digital transformation faced by SMEs in the Global South, and by informing the development of a digital competency framework that integrates organizational capabilities, managerial skills, and employee competencies across various proficiency levels. The findings are valuable for policymakers, development finance institutions, and SME support agencies aiming to create targeted interventions that address structural and capability-related barriers to SME digital transformation.

Healthcare Entrepreneurship in Africa: Literature Review and Research Questions

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Abstract
In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant evaluation and reconsideration of healthcare delivery systems across the globe. Given disparities in access to healthcare, quality of healthcare received and investments into healthcare infrastructure, there are countless opportunities for entrepreneurs to develop products and services that will improve healthcare outcomes while creating sustainable ventures. However, there is much to be learned in general about healthcare entrepreneurship and specifically about the opportunities and limitations for healthcare entrepreneurs across Africa. This paper seeks to provide a review of the emerging field of healthcare entrepreneurship and then explore the research that has focused on the African continent. This paper will explore on which countries is the research focused, who are the focal actors, what theoretical perspective is provided, which research methods are used and what are the key recommendations and contribution of each paper to the field.

Constraints and SME Performance in Botswana's Business Ecosystem

Authors

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Abstract

This study investigates how key ecosystem constraints, such as access to finance, tax administration, skills shortages, and competition from informal firms, are associated with SME performance in Botswana. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs are widely recognised as engines of employment and diversification, yet their growth in developing and emerging economies is often constrained by weaknesses in the business ecosystem. Using firm-level data from the 2023 World Bank Enterprise Survey, the analysis employs probit regression models with interaction effects to examine the likelihood of sales, employment, and capacity utilisation growth among SMEs. The results show that business ecosystem constraints are consistently and negatively associated with SME performance, with financial constraints exerting the strongest effect across all outcomes. The findings further reveal substantial heterogeneity in firms' responses to these constraints. Medium-sized SMEs are significantly more resilient to financial and institutional obstacles than smaller firms, indicating that accumulated organisational capabilities moderate the impact of ecosystem weaknesses. Sectoral and spatial patterns also emerge: manufacturing firms are particularly constrained by skills shortages. In contrast, retail and service firms are more exposed to informal competition. By integrating the entrepreneurial ecosystem perspective with the Resource-Based View, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating how external constraints and firm-level capabilities jointly shape SME performance in an African upper-middle-income economy. The findings suggest that policies aimed at improving SME outcomes should address ecosystem bottlenecks while simultaneously supporting firm scaling and capability development.

Excess Bank Reserve, Lending and Entrepreneurship Development in the CEMAC Zone

Authors

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Abstract
Due to the financing difficulties faced by entrepreneurs in many regions in Africa to start a business, there is the need for banking institutions to use least costly financing strategies to promote entrepreneurship. From reports of the IMF report (2023 & 2024), the CEMAC zone also has issues of financing entrepreneurial projects. Based on that this study tends to look at the relationship between excess bank reserve, lending and entrepreneurship development. Precisely, this study examines the mediating effect of excess bank reserve and lending on entrepreneurship development. Using the Barron and Kenny Model, we implemented a dynamic pane data analysis, taking into consideration all the banking sector of the member states of CEMAC. The results show that, Excess bank reserve can significantly promote entrepreneurship development in the CEMAC zone, secondly there is an inverse relationship between lending and entrepreneurship development, and lastly, lending fully mediates excess bank reserve on entrepreneurship development. This therefore implies that excess bank reserve can be used for lending to boost entrepreneurship in the CEMAC zone. Based on the results, the authors suggest that banks should have an optimal excess reserve, secondly, the study recommends that banks should use excess bank reserve as lending to promote entrepreneurship.

Transforming Micro and Small Enterprises as Cornerstone for Nigerian Development and Growth

Authors

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Abstract

SMEs are the backbone of economic development within most nations. Nigeria is no exception to this contention. However, their contribution is severely tempered and constrained by persistent structural challenges and unexpected disruptive forces. The challenges facing would-be entrepreneurs and established enterprises are thus formidable. This paper focuses on the potential for a more effective fostering and facilitating of Nigerian MSE entrepreneurial capability and resilience in addressing and navigating their challenging operating contexts. Drawing upon our creative contextual-processual analysis-based case study investigations, we examine how growth-achieving MSEs effectively cope with, manage and are constrained by the disruptive environments in which they operate. Proffering how those involved in, and have impacts upon, their development can more effectively deliver their support provision through fostering a more robust self-understanding of the distinctiveness of small businesses vis-à-vis large companies, the challenges faced, and best entrepreneurial management, organisational, and learning practices undertaken by MSEs**.** Integral to our research is the anchoring of the explanatory potential of Personal Construct Theory in the personal learning and theorising processes that we, as individual researchers and owner-managers, undertake in dealing with the unfolding change situations we face. PCT draws attention to our naturally predictive characteristics and the potential role for building small business management insight in a 'guiding lenses' form that can assist the predictive and sense-making attempts of owner managers, and support providers, in dealing with their unpredictable operating environment. Our key research findings are offered as such 'guiding lenses' (or 'informing spectacles') through which entrepreneurial ecosystem-situated owner managers and co-actors can reflect upon and enhance their current personal constructs and worldviews of small business and its idiosyncrasies, and thereby foster more harmonious and effective management behaviours and support inputs and relationships.

Key Words: MSEs, owner-manager; uncertain external environment, Personal Construct Theory; entrepreneurial capability; entrepreneurial ecosystem; productive entrepreneurship

Determinants of Entrepreneurial Behaviour in Persons with Disabilities: The Roles of Digital Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education

Authors

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Abstract

Disability remains a critical global concern due to its profound health, economic, and social implications, which collectively threaten progress toward sustainable development. According to the World Bank (2024) and the World Health Organization (2024), approximately one billion people representing 15 percent of the global population live with some form of disability, with about 80% residing in developing countries. Africa accounts for an estimated 40 percent of this population, and in Nigeria, roughly 19 million persons (9%) live with disabilities. Disability often exacerbates poverty by limiting access to employment, education, and healthcare. Recognizing this, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 4, 8, 10, and 17, emphasize disability-inclusive development, while the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) advocates full social integration. Entrepreneurship has been widely identified as a viable pathway for empowering disadvantaged groups, including persons-with-disabilities (PWD). Extant literature highlights the pivotal role of entrepreneurship education and digital literacy in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour. However, limited attention has been given to the interplay between education for digital entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and digital entrepreneurial behaviour among PWD in the developing world setting. This study therefore draws on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to examine these relationships within the Nigerian context. The study addresses four key questions: (1) Does education for digital entrepreneurship influence attitude, perceived behavioural control (PBC), and digital entrepreneurial behaviour among young PWD? (2) Does digital literacy influence attitude, PBC, and their digital entrepreneurial behaviour? (3) Do attitude and PBC influence digital entrepreneurial behaviour? (4) Do attitude and PBC mediate the relationships between education for digital entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and digital entrepreneurial behaviour?

We anticipate that education for digital entrepreneurship and digital literacy will exert significant positive effects on attitude and PBC, which in turn will enhance digital entrepreneurial behaviour among young PWD.

Track 3:

Organisational Behavior, Human Resource Management, and Business

Opportunity in Crisis: Leadership, Disruption, and Rapid Organizational Change at a Ugandan University during COVID-19

Authors

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Dr. Richard Sebaggala
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Abstract

This paper aims to examine how Uganda Christian University (UCU) utilized the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity for rapid organizational transformation, challenging traditional models of planned, incremental change in the context of higher education. Employing a qualitative single-case study design, the research analyzes UCU's leadership decisions and institutional responses during the period of 2020–2021. The study draws on a variety of data sources, including documentary evidence, administrative records, media reports, and secondary literature. It is anchored in emerging change-management theory, particularly Kerrissey and DiBenigno’s (2025) framework for leading change under uncertainty and is further informed by theories of punctuated equilibrium and organizational adaptation under extreme uncertainty. The findings reveal that UCU’s leadership reframed the COVID-19 pandemic as a strategic opportunity rather than merely an existential threat. This perspective led to rapid implementation of institution-wide online learning, restructuring of costs through outsourcing and employment reforms, and sustained long-term capital investment despite financial uncertainties. These changes were executed at an unprecedented speed and scale, resulting in academic continuity, enhanced digital capabilities, stabilized finances, increased enrolment, and improved institutional resilience. This paper contributes to change management and leadership scholarship by providing empirical evidence from a low-resource African higher-education context, where crisis-driven transformation is often underexplored. It argues that opportunistic change represents a distinct and effective mode of organizational adaptation during extreme disruption, offering valuable insights for university leaders and policymakers on leveraging crises to overcome institutional inertia, accelerate innovation, and promote long-term sustainability.

Can the possession of essential transferable/soft skills by graduates threaten the scare of Artificial Intelligence? Evidence from employers and graduates

Author

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Abstract

The study aims to contribute to the discourse regarding plausible solutions to reducing the graduate unemployment situation and the perceived fear of AI taking on people’s jobs. The gap between graduates’ perceptions of relevant soft skills and employers’ perspectives was unraveled to get the former equipped. Conducting interviews with fifteen HR experts and twenty graduates and data analysed thematically, the study found that both groups of respondents were knowledgeable about the role of soft skills in enhancing employability. Relevant soft skills included communication, time management, leadership, emotional intelligence, and adaptable skills. The development of these soft skills were to be the shared responsibility of graduates, parents, teachers, the government, employers and religious bodies.

Work–Life Balance in Nigeria: A Comparative Literature Review of Experiences in the Public and Private Sector

Author

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Abstract
This paper examines work–life balance (WLB) in Nigeria through a comparative analysis of the public and private sectors, highlighting how structural, cultural, technological, and gendered dynamics shape employees' lived experiences. The study aims to understand how organisational systems, societal norms, and evolving workplace expectations influence WLB outcomes, particularly for women. Drawing on literature published between 2018 and 2025, supported by personal reflections from nearly two decades of professional experience across sectors, the paper adopts a qualitative, context-sensitive interpretive approach. Key themes were identified through a review of peer-reviewed research, policy documents, and empirical Nigerian studies, with lived experience integrated to deepen contextual understanding. Findings reveal that the public sector is characterised by rigid bureaucratic structures, limited digital capacity, and weak implementation of existing WLB policies, resulting in restricted flexibility for employees. In contrast, the private sector demonstrates greater innovation through flexible arrangements, technological integration, and modern HR practices, yet these benefits are often undermined by workload intensification, performance pressures, and an "always-on" culture. Across both sectors, gender emerges as a defining force: women disproportionately shoulder domestic labour, emotional labour, and caregiving responsibilities due to entrenched patriarchal norms and declining availability of reliable domestic support. These burdens significantly affect their wellbeing, productivity, and career progression. Technological disruption and remote work introduced new opportunities but also amplified inequalities and blurred work–home boundaries. The gap between policy and practice remains pervasive, with many WLB initiatives functioning symbolically rather than substantively. The paper concludes that meaningful progress requires multisectoral transformation, including enforceable gender-responsive policies, digital investment, flexible work structures, childcare support, and cultural change. Achieving sustainable WLB in Nigeria demands coordinated commitment from organisations, policymakers, and society to create humane, equitable, and productive workplaces.

Silent Suffering: Mental Health Risks and Support Gaps Among Humanitarian Aid Workers in Northeast Nigeria's Boko-Haram Insurgency Affected States.

Author

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Abstract

Humanitarian aid workers operating in Boko Haram–affected regions of Northeast Nigeria face persistent exposure to violence, resource constraints, and high operational stress, yet their mental health needs remain understudied. This quantitative study investigated the prevalence and predictors of mental health challenges among aid workers serving in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States. A total of 312 respondents, drawn from international NGOs, local NGOs, and government emergency agencies, participated in a cross-sectional survey. instruments: The Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21) was used to assess psychological symptoms, the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS) to measure trauma-related distress, and a researcher-designed Occupational Stress Inventory (OSI) validated through expert review (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87). Surveys were administered anonymously using a secure online platform and field-supported paper questionnaires. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple regression analyses were conducted using SPSS (v.27). Results showed high levels of psychological strain, with 42.6% of participants reporting severe to extremely severe depression, 51.3% experiencing severe anxiety, and 47.8% meeting the threshold for secondary traumatic stress. Occupational stress significantly predicted depression ($\beta = .41$, $p < .001$), anxiety ($\beta = .37$, $p < .001$), and traumatic stress ($\beta = .45$, $p < .001$). Workers with frequent exposure to violent incidents were twice as likely to report high distress compared to those with low exposure (OR = 2.14, $p < .01$). Regression models accounted for 39–48% of the variance in mental health outcomes. Findings highlight the urgent need for structured mental health support within humanitarian organizations. Policy recommendations include mandating psychological risk assessments, integrating mental health provisions into security policies, and enforcing rest-and-rotation guidelines. Practice recommendations emphasise regular debriefing, trauma-informed supervision, and access to confidential counseling. Research recommendations call for longitudinal studies to track the long-term psychological impact and for mixed-method research to capture contextual stressors that influence humanitarian workers' wellbeing.

An Overview of Impediments to Local Government Administration on Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Review

Author

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Abstract
Local Government Administrations emerged for the purpose of decentralising local governance so as to bring developments closer to the people at the grassroots and meet their socio-economic needs. That is why the 1976 and other Local Government Reforms were geared towards making the Local Government Administrations more effective and efficient in satisfying the demands of the local people. This saw to the rising revenue allocation from the federation account by 400% monthly from 1999-2001, and further by 800% since the period 2015-2025. Yet, Local Government Performances in Nigeria has been very minimal failing to meet up the expectations of their people. This paper reviewed the factors impeding the performances of Local Government Administration on the provision of effective service delivery in Nigeria with special reference to mismanagement of resources, State/ Local Government joint account system, and lack of professional personnel were the main areas of consideration. Data were sourced from already published materials to view the perspectives of different scholars on the factors impeding Local Government Administration on effective service delivery in Nigeria. The findings indicates that most Local Governments in Nigeria have failed to meet up to their expectations in spite of the increasing fundings from the statutory accounts. It revealed that factors such as mismanagement of resources, state /local government joint account, and lack of professional personnel were some of the reasons for the failure. Hence, suggests that strengthening of accountability measures and abolishing of state/ local joint account will enable them provide effective services for their people.

Key Words: Local Government, Service Delivery, Mismanagement of Resources, State/Local Government Joint Account and Professional Personnel

Traditional Chinese Medicine Strategic Alliance and Direct Investment in the Health Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa

Author

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Abstract
One Belt and One Road (OBOR), also known as *Yi Dai Yi Lu* in Mandarin, is an ambitious Chinese economic and strategic initiative aimed at opening up business opportunities along the land-based Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road. The One Belt initiative connects the Asia-Pacific and the Asia-European regions to foster economic partnerships and enhance infrastructure development. On the other hand, One Road connects Europe through the Indian Ocean and the Pacific through the South China Sea. The initiative was designed to accommodate economic assets and safeguard the liabilities of all players. OBOR has attracted over 152 nations, with emerging countries playing a major role as participants. This initiative involved 53 out of 55 African countries, strengthened trade and connections between the two regions, with a focus on infrastructure development. The focus of this research is on how the region can benefit from a cooperative partnership with China to upgrade traditional medicine activities, rather than health-related assistance from them. A framework that supports the OBOR pillars of connectivity and partnership was proposed to address health challenges faced by participatory Sub-Saharan African Countries, using Nigeria as a case study. The research employed a qualitative research method and found that strategic alliances and outright foreign direct investment in African Traditional Medicine collectively result in positive-sum gains for all participants. In conclusion, we argued that concentrating Chinese special health-related aid on what is available within the African environment and consistent with their culture will benefit the world at large. In so doing, we contribute to the recent conversation that Chinese aid to Sub-Saharan African countries is genuine, as with its previous contributions.

From Data to Development: How African Firms Build Sustainability Advantage Through Digital Intelligence

Authors

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Abstract

Firms increasingly use social media analytics (SMA) to track stakeholder expectations, yet little is known about how SMA translates into sustainable organisational development (SOD), particularly in emerging economies with uneven digital readiness. Grounded in the dynamic capabilities and knowledge-based view, this study proposes a sustainability intelligence framework in which competitive intelligence (CI) converts SMA-derived insights into sustainability outcomes. We further theorise that digital transformation (DT) and digital capabilities (DC) moderate the effectiveness of CI in driving SOD. Using survey data from Ghanaian firms analysed through PLS-SEM, results show that SMA influences SOD only indirectly through CI. This indirect effect strengthens significantly when firms possess high digital transformation maturity and strong digital capabilities, and weakens under low digital readiness. The study positions SMA as a strategic sustainability resource, clarifies the digital conditions under which intelligence processes shape sustainability performance, and provides rare evidence from an African business context.

Transforming African SMEs through Employee Engagement and Sustainable HRM: Insights from Nigeria and Ghana

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Dr. Agu O Agu Agu O Agu
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Abstract

This study explores how employee engagement and sustainability practices interact as complementary drivers of sustainable human resource management (HRM) within small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria and Ghana. In an era defined by local and global disruptions—economic, technological, and environmental—the research investigates how African organizations adapt their people management systems to sustain performance and responsibility under resource constraints. Drawing on the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model and Stakeholder Theory, sustainability is conceptualized as a contextual job resource that enriches meaning, trust, and identification at work. Using cross-sectional survey data from 610 managers analysed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the study examines whether employee engagement initiatives—beyond improving motivation and retention—also serve as informal mechanisms for embedding sustainability in resource-constrained environments. The ultimate goal is to identify HRM pathways through which African SMEs can transform disruption into opportunity and align employee well-being with sustainable organizational performance.

Keywords: Employee Engagement; Sustainable HRM; Organizational Transformation; SMEs; Sustainability Practices; Africa; Disruptions

Examining the Impact of Retrospective Insights on Effective Project Implementation in Ghana

Author

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Abstract
This study examined the critical role of retrospective insights in the implementation of complex projects in the energy sector of Ghana. We used multiple qualitative methodology for data collection for the study. These methods comprised, semi-structured interviews with three management-level executives, document reviews of annual reports issued to the Energy Commission of Ghana from 2020 to 2024, and observation through site visits. Accordingly, the data were analyzed using thematic and document analysis. The findings indicate that the systematic tailored application of retrospective insights from past projects fostered collaboration and problem-solving among project team members and stakeholders which contributed to effective risk management in project execution. Findings also show that retrospective insights lead to informed decision-making among project team members to learn from best practices which enable the smooth completion of project construction. The study recommends integrating retrospective insights during the project development and implementation phases, where strategic decisions are made. Additionally, the study recommends that regulatory bodies mandate project managers to compile and submit dossiers of retrospective insights. These dossiers would serve as part of the project's obligations, helping to inform and guide future initiatives thereby fostering continuous improvement and enhancing overall project success.

Inclusive Policy as a Strategic Investment in Organization's Human Capital

Author

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Abstract
Inclusivity in the workplace requires more than symbolic representation; it demands intentional policy design, meaningful participation, and sustained leadership commitment. This paper examines workplace inclusivity as both a practical and ethical responsibility, framing inclusive policy as comparable to everyday acts that remove barriers and enable participation. Drawing on contemporary research and Canadian workforce data, the paper highlights persistent representation gaps across gender, race, Indigenous identity, and disability status. For example, while women comprise approximately **57.6%** of the federal public service workforce, they remain underrepresented in senior leadership roles, and persons with disabilities account for only **7.9%** of employees despite representing a larger share of the working-age population (Government of Canada, 2024). The paper argues that inclusivity is most effective when embedded into organizational policy through clear goals, stakeholder engagement, and evidence-based decision-making. By positioning inclusivity as an ongoing organizational commitment rather than a static objective, this paper offers a practical framework for fostering workplaces that promote belonging, innovation, and employee well-being.

Lost-Time Injuries, Fatalities, and Return-to-Work Outcomes: A Pan-Canadian Analysis of Workers' Compensation Data (2024)

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Abstract

Background: Workers' compensation systems provide critical protection to employees who suffer workplace-related injuries and illnesses. Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC) publishes annual Key Statistical Measures (KSMs), offering a comparative overview across provinces and territories.

Objective: This paper analyzes 2024 KSM data to examine patterns of lost-time injuries, fatalities, and return-to-work outcomes across Canadian jurisdictions, with emphasis on variations in frequency, severity, and disability duration.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive analysis of the 2024 KSM dataset was conducted. Metrics included reported claims, lost-time injury frequency, fatalities - by cause, average duration of disability, long-term wage-loss prevalence, and return-to-work indicators.

Results: In 2024, Canadian jurisdictions reported substantial variation in injury and disability outcomes. As per Lost-time injury frequency ranged from 1.35% in Quebec to 2.60% in Nova Scotia. These accepted fatalities totaled 246 in Alberta, 203 in Quebec, and 146 in British Columbia, with occupational diseases accounting for most deaths. Disability duration showed striking variance: average composite claim duration exceeded 100 days in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, compared to under 40 days in Nova Scotia. Long-term wage-loss persistence after two years was lowest in Quebec (0.82%) and highest in Manitoba (4.22%). In British Columbia, where 98.5% of wage-loss claims were resolved within one year.

Discussion: Findings highlight significant interjurisdictional variability in workplace injury outcomes. Provinces with lower lost-time claim frequency (e.g., Quebec) nonetheless reported high fatality counts, likely reflecting occupational disease burdens. Longer disability durations in Manitoba and Saskatchewan may reflect differences in adjudication practices, industry composition, or healthcare access.

Conclusion: The 2024 KSM data reveal that while Canadian workers' compensation systems share common goals, outcomes vary substantially across jurisdictions. Comparative monitoring is critical for identifying best practices and informing policy interventions to enhance worker protection, return-to-work supports, and system sustainability.

Keywords: Workers' compensation, occupational health, lost-time injuries, fatalities, return-to-work, Canada

Fixed To Growth Mindset and Public Service Performance

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Abstract

The central aim of this study was to address growing concerns about public sector performance and to identify factors that could change public employees' mindset and lead to improved outcomes. The research employs a qualitative phenomenological approach and uses an exploratory design to explore the issues involved. Face-to-face interviews were conducted, and data were analysed using NVivo 17 through thematic content analysis. The study identified seven themes that influence participants' realities: work-enhancing practices, innovative behaviour, work efficiency, self-compassion, educational attainment, leadership, and pro-activeness. It was concluded that a shift in mindset is essential for improving public service performance. Achieving this requires the involvement of all stakeholders – from top leadership to rank-and-file staff. The primary responsibility rests on leadership to drive the change. It was recommended that the current civil service charter be revised to promote a growth mindset. As a contribution to knowledge, this study emphasises employee cognitive development as a key indicator of public service performance, thereby enriching the existing literature on the public sector.

Track 4:

Sustainability, Business Ethics, and Social Responsibility

Poverty, Fiscal Sustainability and Urban Economic Development in African Cities: A Fiscal Capability Framework

Author

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Abstract

African metropolitan municipalities confront a deepening fiscal paradox: they carry expanding service delivery responsibilities while operating within urban economies characterised by persistent poverty and limited household affordability. This paper develops an integrated sustainability governance framework for understanding how urban institutions support socially inclusive and economically resilient development in emerging economy cities. Drawing on metropolitan and national longitudinal data from South Africa (2008–2019), the study integrates fiscal federalism, fiscal stress theory, and Sen's (1999) capabilities approach to examine how urban socioeconomic conditions influence institutional capacity to achieve sustainable development outcomes aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The dataset covers the period up to 2019; the authors acknowledge that this constitutes a methodological limitation, discussed in Section 7. The empirical analysis indicates that poverty and basic human needs deprivation are the strongest observed constraints on both fiscal sustainability and broader urban sustainability outcomes (Mbulawa, 2019; Auditor-General of South Africa, 2020). Infrastructure quality, population growth, and unemployment do not demonstrate statistically significant independent effects once affordability conditions are considered, suggesting that municipal fiscal stress in African cities appears to be associated with demand-side socioeconomic conditions rather than administrative or infrastructural factors (Watson & Hassett, 2016). The paper advances a Fiscal Capability Framework (FCF) that links household welfare, municipal fiscal capacity, and urban economic performance. Because many African cities provide the institutional and infrastructural platforms for labour markets and firm activity (Bahl & Bird, 2018; Roy, 2018), municipal fiscal capacity affects private sector development, investment viability, and urban competitiveness. Urban fiscal sustainability can be understood as a foundational institutional condition for sustainable cities, inclusive economic participation, and resilient urban systems. Addressing urban poverty emerges not only as a social policy concern but as a core sustainability requirement for stable business ecosystems and long-term urban development across African metropolitan regions (United Nations, 2024).

Role of Foreign Direct Investments in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the African Region

Authors

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Abstract

The adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has sparked considerable scholarly interest in the mechanisms required to realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as the global dialogue centres on reconciling disparities among nations to foster inclusive growth. In order to fulfil these objectives within the designated timeframe, they must be accompanied by sufficient financial resources, infrastructural advancements, and the institutional robustness of the nations involved. Developing and third-world countries encounter a multitude of economic, political, and environmental obstacles. There has been a relative lack of scholarly attention to the commitment of underdeveloped nations to the SDGs. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) serves as a pivotal mechanism for mobilising capital to these nations, thereby addressing their financing deficiencies. This research investigates the influence of FDI and institutional quality on the progress of selected SDG objectives in the African region for the period 2000-2022, subject to data availability. The study employed a panel data approach utilising the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) technique. The research indicated that FDI can play a substantial role in facilitating the attainment of the SDGs; however, such achievements are likely to materialise in the long term. The study highlights that financial investments, in tandem with institutional excellence, operate as a vital spark for sustainable advancement. This paper concludes by outlining the policy implications for the countries analysed, aimed at enhancing their success in achieving the SDGs.

Drivers of Proliferation of Unauthorized Retail Drug Outlets in Tanzania

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Abstract
The proliferation of unauthorized retail drug outlets in Tanzania threatens public health and regulatory efficacy. These outlets operate without the requisite national or international certification, sidestepping regulatory review and often dispensing prescription drugs that are either substandard or of questionable quality. Despite Tanzania's initiatives, such as licensing DLDBs and ADDOs to control the distribution of non-prescription drugs, the persistence of unauthorized drug outlets undermines regulatory frameworks and put patients at risk of drug resistance, adverse reactions, and fatalities from counterfeit medications. This article therefore, examines the drivers of proliferation of unauthorized retail drug outlets in Tanzania. Specifically, the article examines the influence of bureaucratic procedures, regulations and risk awareness on the proliferation of unauthorized retail drug outlets in Tanzania. The article uses data collected from 300 retail drug outlets operators in Tanzania using a structured questionnaire. The findings suggest that, risk awareness greatly influence proliferation of unauthorized retail drug outlets, followed by Regulations. Bureaucratic procedures, while relevant, has a comparatively less influence on the proliferation of unauthorized retail drug outlets in Tanzania. The article underscores the importance of enhancing both public awareness and regulatory frameworks to effectively address the issue of unauthorized retail drug outlets in Tanzania. The article recommends risk awareness programs and Public education initiatives to the general public and drug retail outlets. Regulatory measures should be put in place to address the problem of unauthorized retail drug outlets in Tanzania. Furthermore, bureaucratic processes should be streamlined in order to mitigate the proliferation of unauthorized drug outlets in Tanzania. By focusing on these areas, stakeholders can more effectively combat the growth of these illicit outlets and improve public health and safety.

Key words: Proliferation, Unauthorized Retail drug outlet, Drivers

The Interplay between Environmental Accounting and Carbon Performance in Value Creation

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Abstract
This study investigates whether environmental performance, assessed through green accounting metrics, translates into financial value. It addresses the question: to what extent does corporate carbon performance create financial value, and how is this relationship moderated by a firm's emissions trajectory? The study uses a longitudinal panel of UK-listed firms from 2012 to 2023, employing two-way fixed effects models to test two hypotheses. Results show a marginally significant positive relationship between lower emission intensity and ROA, supporting the operational efficiency channel. The relationship with Market-to-Book ratio is fragile and context-dependent. The hypothesized moderating effect of emissions trajectory is not supported, indicating that markets focus on current performance levels rather than improvement trends. The findings highlight carbon efficiency as an operational value driver in the UK context, with implications for managers, investors, and policymakers in the low-carbon transition.

Public Sector Corruption and Human Development Outcomes Across Nigerian States

Author

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of public sector corruption on human development across Nigeria's 36 states from 2006 to 2024. Using a balanced panel dataset, it traces how these patterns shift both across states and over time. Corruption is measured through a composite index that brings together prosecution records from the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), along with integrity scores from state governance assessments. Human development is evaluated through recognised indicators in education, healthcare and living standards, drawing on data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The analysis relies on a fixed effects regression model with panel corrected standard errors, which allows the study to control for differences among states as well as shared national shocks. The findings show a consistent and compelling trend: corruption has a marked and negative effect on human development. States with higher corruption scores tend to experience lower school enrollment, reduced access to quality healthcare, higher multidimensional poverty and slower improvements in infrastructure and social services. The study argues that when public resources are diverted or poorly managed, essential investments decline and institutions lose the capacity to meet development needs. Addressing this challenge requires strong and sustained governance reforms. Such reforms are crucial for enhancing service delivery and fostering the conditions necessary for sustainable human development throughout Nigeria. Transparent, accountable and participatory budgeting, backed by integrated digital systems for public financial management, can reduce leakages, strengthen accountability and create a more supportive environment for human development to advance across Nigeria.

Comparative Analysis: Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Canada vs. Nigeria, focusing on Local and Global Disruption Effects.

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Abstract

Research Objectives

This paper explores the ways in which external environmental factors drive performance, resilience, and long-term viability for Small and Medium Enterprises in Canada and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria. This effort shall seek to analyze how economic, sociocultural, and sustainability-related disruptors shape the operational capacities of both countries and identify major points of divergence and convergence in the vulnerability of their SMEs.

Methodology

The study adopts a comparative qualitative design with secondary data drawn from reputable national and international institutional sources, namely, Statistics Canada; Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, ISED; PwC Nigeria MSME surveys; and IFC–World Bank MSME diagnostic reports. Data comparison was performed on standardized economic metrics: employment contribution, infrastructure quality, access to finance, labour market conditions, and exposure to global shocks that assess variations across the two environments.

Key Findings

The findings show that Canadian SMEs are mainly affected by cost-driven impetuses, such as inflation, increased input prices, labor shortages, and high interest rates, which have impacts on profitability, investment capacity, and labor productivity. For Nigerian MSMEs, the main impetuses to growth or improvement include structural barriers: unreliable electricity, inefficient transport systems, limited access to formal credit, volatility in currency exchange, and unwieldy regulatory systems. However, for both Nigerian and Canadian SMEs, external shocks related to global instability in supply chains and commodity price volatility do pose a significant threat. From a comparative analytical perspective, the study indicates that Canadian SMEs would have relatively strong institutional support systems in comparison with the greater dependence of Nigerian MSMEs on informal markets and external donor programs. This evidence points out that context-specific policy interventions are required, which will leverage resilience and competitiveness for long-term sustainability.

Keywords: Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs); External Environmental Factors; Economic Disruptions; Sociocultural Dynamics; Sustainability Practices

Exploring the Influence of Environmental Communication Strategies and Behavioural Change on Climate Actions: New Empirical Evidence from Africa

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Abstract

Anthropogenic activities have significantly compromised the integrity of the global climate systems. As a result, public responses to climate change communications are often marked by scepticism, with individuals perceiving such messages as driven by ulterior motives. This perception diminishes the likelihood of behavioural shifts and engagement in pro-environmental actions. Drawing on sustained environmental sustainability strategies aimed at fostering behavioural change, our findings identify social media and television as the most effective platforms for strategic engagement in climate action. Rooted in a cross-sectional research design, the study employed regression and correlation analytical techniques to establish that a statistically significant correlation exists between environmental communication strategies and individual actions addressing climate change. Moreover, heightened awareness, targeted behavioural interventions, and robust communication efforts collectively enhance participation in climate sustainability initiatives. Demographic factors—including age, gender, and geographical location—emerge as influential determinants of climate-related action. However, occupational distribution appears to exert a constraining effect, limiting the extent of engagement in climate change mitigation efforts.

Reconceptualising Organisational Resilience in African SMEs: Lessons from Global Sustainability Frameworks

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Abstract

In an era characterised by interlinked local and global disruptions, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Africa face persistent challenges in sustaining operations while fostering long-term resilience. This paper critically explores the evolving notion of organisational resilience through the lens of sustainability and systems thinking, drawing on secondary data and theoretical synthesis. Using a systematic review of over two decades of literature in sustainability management, resilience theory, and post-disruption organisational adaptation, the study identifies key mechanisms that enable enterprises to thrive amidst turbulence. It examines established resilience models from the UK and Europe—particularly frameworks developed under the UK's DEFRA and the EU's Green Deal—and evaluates their applicability to African business ecosystems marked by institutional volatility and resource constraints. The paper proposes a conceptual model that integrates three dimensions of resilience: adaptive capacity, strategic foresight, and inclusive governance. By contrasting global frameworks with African contextual realities, the model offers insights for policy and practice on how SMEs can build structural and cognitive resilience without sacrificing sustainability commitments. Theoretically, the study extends the discourse on resilience by embedding ethical and sustainability considerations into organisational transformation processes. Practically, it informs policymakers, business support agencies, and development institutions seeking to strengthen the sustainability orientation of African SMEs. The paper contributes to the REF criteria of originality, rigour, and real-world impact by synthesising global insights for regional transformation without relying on primary data collection.

Keywords: Organisational resilience; Sustainable management; SMEs; Systems thinking; Disruption; Sustainability frameworks; Africa; Knowledge transfer; post-crisis transformation; Resilient business models

An Exploration of Sustainable Supply Chain Management Practices at Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone

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Abstract

Background—*Sustainable* Supply Chain Management (SSCM) has become more prominent as organizations look for ways to implement business operations that support economic and environmental sustainability. The Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone (RBIDZ) offers an opportunity to research SSCM and the implementation of sustainability principles within the Special Economic Zones in South Africa. Although RBIDZ recognizes sustainability as part of the organizational values, it should be noted that implementation of sustainability at RBIDZ is fragmented in the Safety, Health, Environment, and Quality division. Previous research shows challenges of sustainability within industrial zones. It should be noted that there have been limited studies on SSCM within Special Economic Zones.
Purpose/Objective—Exploring SSCM practices at RBIDZ, identify the primary challenges that create an inefficient use of SSCM resources, and propose recommendations and innovative solutions to an integrated SSCM system
Methods- The technique used for data collection is a qualitative approach that includes conducting semi-structured interviews with the primary business units within the RBIDZ structure such as Corporate Services, Finance, Business Development & Support, as well as Zone Development & Operations. Thematic analysis has been used to analyze the collected data. The ATLAS.ti analysis tool has been used.
Expected Outcomes- This research intends to bring forth the existing SSCM policies at RBIDZ, focus on important challenges such as the gap in technology, budget limitations, and constraints from regulations, and come up with practical solutions to improve SSCMP. The research outcomes will help develop strategies for Industrial Development Zones.
Conclusion—In filling the gaps existing within SSCM at RBIDZ, the research within this document offers evidence-informed recommendations that help improve the industrial sector's sustainability practices. The findings of the research will offer an analysis that builds on knowledge within the academic community and offers practical implementation of SSCM at Special Economic Zones.

Understanding Consumer Justifications for Adoption or Resistance of Solar Panels: A Behavioural Reasoning Perspective

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Abstract

The transition toward sustainable energy consumption has heightened scholarly and policy interest in understanding the determinants of green consumption behaviour. Despite widespread environmental concern and favourable attitudes toward eco-friendly products, actual purchase behaviour often lags behind intentions, creating what is commonly referred to as the green gap. This study examines the factors that influence or inhibit the purchase intention of high-involvement green products, with a specific focus on solar panels adoption intentions in Ghana. Drawing on the Behavioural Reasoning Theory, the study assesses how the value of openness to change influences consumers' reasons for and against solar panel adoption. In particular, it investigates how reasons serve as mediating mechanisms that connect personal values with purchase intentions; hence, it offers a more nuanced explanation of consumer decision-making in the green marketplace. Using a quantitative approach, survey data were collected from Ghanaian households to capture consumers' values, reasons for and against adoption, and purchase intentions regarding solar panels. The data were analysed using structural equation modelling to test the hypothesised relationships. The study provides empirical insights into how pro-environmental values translate or fail to translate into actual behavioural intention when mediated by competing reasons. Findings are expected to contribute to both theory and practice by clarifying the role of reasons in bridging the gap between values and behaviour. Theoretically, the study extends applications of Behavioural Reasoning Theory in the context of green consumption, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where empirical evidence remains limited. Practically, it provides implications for policymakers and marketers seeking to design interventions and strategies that address consumer resistance, build trust, and foster greater adoption of renewable energy solutions.

Green Governance Adoption for the Small Business Sustainability in Zimbabwe

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Abstract
Unstable currency, rapidly changing economic policies, political instability, and unpredictable operating environment characterised the environment Small Businesses in Zimbabwe operate in. The adoption of any strategy becomes very difficult in such environment. The study sought to establish the effects of transparency green governance on Small Business sustainability in Zimbabwe, to examine the impact of accountability green governance on the Small Business sustainability in Zimbabwe, to assess the effects of participation green governance on Small Business Sustainability in Zimbabwe, and to evaluate the impact of sustainability green governance on the growth of Small Businesses in Zimbabwe. The literature review indicate that scholars concentrated on big companies' adaptation of green governance and the literature does not provide a model on the nexus of green governance and Small Businesses Sustainability. Hence, the study intent to provide a framework for Small Businesses operating in difficulty environments. The study adopted Pragmatism Paradigm that advocated Mixed Methods Approach. The researchers interviewed 15 Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce members, Gweru Charter and distributed 132 questionnaires to Small Businesses in Gweru Urban, as city in Zimbabwe. The study analysed quantitative data using regression and correlation analyses, and qualitative data using thematic analysis. The researcher integrated the results to come up with generalisations. The integrated results showed that regardless of green governance adoption, many Small Businesses failed to harness them due to lack of funding. Additionally, many Small Businesses struggled to grow due to lack of meaningful governance strategies. The study recommends a funding model and deliberate policy formulations that support Small Businesses to adopt green governance.

KEY TERMS: Green Governance; Small Business Sustainability; Transparency Green Governance; Accountability Green Governance

From Compliance to Resilience: ESG and African Indigenous Knowledge Systems in East African SME Ecosystems

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Abstract

Across cultures and centuries, communities have asked a similar set of questions: What do we owe one another? How do we steward what we inherit, and what we pass on? How do we create prosperity without degrading the very systems that make prosperity possible? These questions have renewed urgency for SMEs in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania operating amid climate stress, market volatility, and recurring disruption. ESG frameworks increasingly shape sustainability expectations, yet in data-constrained settings implementation can default to external compliance checklists that are weakly connected to local legitimacy. This proposed qualitative study examines how ESG is interpreted, adapted, and enacted when it intersects with African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) within multi-stakeholder SME ecosystems. It centers a core tension: short-term survival under disruption versus long-term stewardship anchored in locally legitimate values and community accountability. Research questions asked: (1) How do ecosystem actors make sense of ESG expectations relative to locally legitimate values and stewardship norms? (2) How do SMEs navigate survival versus stewardship when ESG requirements collide with disruption and resource constraints? (3) What typology of ESG approaches emerges as SMEs translate, hybridize, or resist ESG through locally grounded practices? The study uses a multi-sited design across mixed SME sectors and triangulates approximately 20 semi-structured interviews with SME leaders, workers, supply-chain partners, financiers, policymakers, civil society actors, and community elders; a short survey on perceived ESG salience and legitimacy; government archival and policy records; and field observations. Iterative coding and abductive comparison will be used to build a grounded typology. Anticipated findings include four emergent patterns: symbolic compliance, buyer-driven auditability, community-anchored stewardship, and hybrid resilience builders that convert locally legitimate values into verifiable routines. The study informs cross-sector partnerships seeking ESG approaches that protect near-term viability while strengthening long-horizon stewardship in African SME ecosystems.

Effectiveness of Ethical Conduct on the Public Procurement Performance: A Case of Makonde Plateau Water Supply and Sanitation Authority

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Abstract

This study assessed the effectiveness of ethical conduct on public procurement performance, focusing on transparency, fairness, and due diligence on public procurement performance at the Makonde Plateau Water Supply and Sanitation Authority. Guided by the stakeholder theory. A descriptive research design was employed, involving 127 participants selected through simple random sampling and 10 from purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and interviews, then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods, including regression analysis. The findings revealed that transparency had a significant positive effect on procurement performance ($B = 0.398$, $p > 0.000$), demonstrating that open and accessible procurement processes enhance public trust and reduce opportunities for malpractice. Fairness also showed a strong positive influence ($B = 0.372$, $p > 0.001$), indicating that equitable treatment of suppliers improves competition and compliance. Similarly, due diligence was found to significantly contribute to procurement performance ($B = 0.411$, $p > 0.000$), confirming that thorough supplier vetting and contract review help minimize risks and strengthen accountability. The study concluded that procurement performance is greatly enhanced when transparency, fairness, and due diligence are systematically integrated into procurement practices. It recommends that public institutions institutionalize these principles through continuous staff capacity building, clear communication of procurement procedures, and consistent monitoring of contract implementation. Doing so will not only improve service delivery and efficiency but also foster stakeholder confidence and sustainable use of public resources.

Keywords: *Ethical Conduct, Public Procurement Performance, Transparency, Fairness and Due Diligence*

Education for Sustainable Development and Africa 2063 Agenda, a Dream or a Reality: The Tunisian Context as an Example

Author

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Abstract
Agenda 2063 and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) are closely intertwined in African policy discourse, where education is supposed to be framed as the key to a prosperous, just, and sustainable continent. Yet research consistently reveals a gap between visionary regional commitments and implementation in regard to curricula, institutional governance, and addressing inequities. Emerging scholars call for ESD that is explicitly transformative—decolonial, justice-oriented, STEM-rich, and technologically enabled, and grounded in African philosophies such as Ubuntu. This article maps the alignment between SDG 4 (Quality Education), ESD, and Agenda 2063 in the Tunisian education system, with a particular focus on SDG 4 indicators. Conceptually, it draws on transformative ESD frameworks that treat the SDGs and Agenda 2063 as socio-ecological end-points and redefine education as a lever for systemic change through participatory construction of visions, competencies, and pedagogies. Empirically, it mobilizes SDG 4's global indicator set—especially 4.7.1 on mainstreaming ESD in policy, curricula, teacher education, and assessment—to analyze Tunisian national curriculum, teacher-training standards, and assessment documents across micro (classroom), meso (institutional), and macro (policy) levels. Findings will explore the extent of progress on "classical" SDG 4 dimensions (access, participation, basic learning) rather than on deep, system-wide integration of ESD and transformative pedagogy. Based on SDG 4.7 monitoring and ESD competency frameworks, the article proposes a Tunisia-adapted set of input, process, and outcome indicators that captures both the depth and speed of transformative ESD integration to be used as an illustration for the rest of the African countries. Recommendations address the alignment of Tunisian reforms with SDG 4 and Agenda 2063 for more transformative ESD outcomes, decolonial and justice-oriented teacher education, and robust monitoring tools that link learner agency, institutional practice, and continental aspirations for a just and sustainable African future.

Measuring What Matters: A Corporate Social Investment-Based Structural Evaluation Model for Public Good Investments in African Philanthropy

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Abstract

Corporate Social Investment (CSI) has emerged as a salient response to Africa's development priorities in an era of shrinking public budgets and aid. However, the potential of CSI is limited by the lack of robust, context-sensitive evaluation frameworks. This research enriches the Made-in-Africa Evaluation (MAE) discourse by presenting and validating a culturally resonant structural model to evaluate CSI's contribution to sustainable development. We utilised Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to gather data from 427 respondents, comprising CSI managers and community stakeholders across South Africa. The indices for the measurement model support the good validity of the measurement model (CFI = 0.945, TLI = 0.939, SRMR = 0.0306, RMSEA = 0.059). The analysis also confirms that all constructs had an AVE of over 0.50 and a composite reliability of 0.86. In structural results, efficiency ($\beta = 0.78$, $p < 0.05$) and sustainability ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$) were positively and significantly related to impact, while relevance, coherence, and effectiveness were not significant. The theoretical findings of this research validate the concept of CSI within the African knowledge system, and the practical findings provide policymakers and practitioners with an evidence-based model to synchronise CSI initiatives with development goals and incorporate evaluation methods for accountability and epistemic justice.

Leveraging Eco-entrepreneurship and Ecological Taxation to Mitigate CO2 Emissions: Fresh evidence from the panel ARDL Approach

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Abstract
This study investigates the intricate relationships between ecological taxation, green innovation, renewable energy (RE), and economic growth within a panel of six developed and developing countries from 2015 to 2023. Employing the ARDL model and Granger causality tests, the analysis examines how these factors affect environmental degradation, particularly CO2 emissions. While extensive research has been conducted on environmental degradation, there is a notable gap in studies exploring this issue through the lens of eco-entrepreneurship. Our results indicate that, in developed countries, environmental taxes and eco-entrepreneurship play a pivotal role in achieving long-term reductions in CO2 emissions. Conversely, in developing countries, the impact of green innovation is constrained by significant structural barriers, such as weak governance and insufficient infrastructure. To address these challenges and enhance the potential of green innovation for advancing environmental sustainability, we advocate for increased financial support for eco-enterprises and the implementation of targeted policy reforms to strengthen governance structures in developing nations.

Consumer Motivation for the Purchase of Renewable Energy Products: An Analysis Using the Laddering Technique

Authors

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Abstract

In an African context characterized by structural environmental challenges, a strong dependence on fossil energy, and heightened exposure to climatic and economic disruptions, modes of energy production and consumption are undergoing profound transformations. Long regarded as an essential resource yet largely taken for granted, energy is increasingly becoming a strategic issue at the core of sustainable development trajectories, economic sovereignty, and social inclusion across the African continent. In this context, renewable energy technologies particularly photovoltaics emerge as major levers of transformation. This research aims to understand the cognitive mechanisms underlying the shift from passive to active energy consumption by drawing on the theory of perceived instrumentality. It seeks to enrich the analysis of motivational cognitive processes associated with the adoption of renewable energy products by highlighting the structuring role of the material dimension of energy. The study relies on the laddering technique conducted with potential consumers. The results reveal different levels of abstraction through a cognitive chaining structure based on nine attributes, thirteen consequences, and ten values. The construction of a hierarchical value map enables visualization of the relationships among these cognitive elements and allows three distinct consumer profiles to emerge: a performance- and economic-efficiency-oriented profile, a profile driven by ecological and collective values, and a profile sensitive to pleasure, innovation, and identity expression. Photovoltaic energy thus appears as a committed product that may simultaneously represent a well-being-oriented purchase and a militant act, while highlighting the dual role of consumers as both buyers and producers of energy. These profiles provide a relevant framework for the development of differentiated communication strategies and public policies aimed at fostering the adoption of renewable energy in African contexts. This research lies in demonstrating how the perceived instrumentality of photovoltaics sheds light on the cognitive structures underlying the transition toward active energy use.

Navigating Disruptions Through Organizational Hybridization: The Case of an African non-profit organization in a Post-Revolutionary Context

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Abstract

African civil society organizations face pressures from both local and global disruptions as they transform their practices. Drawing on a qualitative case study of the Tunisian Scouts during the period 2019-2023, we analyze how a historic association adapts its organizational social responsibility (OSR) practices amid multiple challenges: the 2011 tunisian revolution (local challenge), worldwide economic instability, and the COVID-19 pandemic (global challenge). The organization under study develops hybrid transformation mechanisms that combine modern management practices with traditional values, thereby constituting a distinctive African OSR configuration. Organizational hybridization acts as a strategic response to institutional pressures, enabling the organization to integrate international standards while maintaining local authenticity and community legitimacy. These findings contribute to understanding endogenous transformation processes for African organizations facing ongoing disruptions, providing insights into how local organizations can convert disruptions into opportunities for sustainable development.

Dynamic Equilibrium in Social Spending: An Investigation into China's Government expenditure Impact on Maternal Health, Disease Control, and Schooling

Author

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Abstract
This study investigates the association between China's public expenditure in the health and education sectors and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 and 4. Using data from 1995 to 2022, the research employs both Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) and Nonlinear ARDL (NARDL) models to distinguish between short- and long-run dynamics while capturing the speed of adjustment and the asymmetric effects of funding shocks. The results from the ARDL model reveal that government expenditure produces the most substantial and immediate effects on primary enrollment, which corrects 26% of its disequilibrium each period. In contrast, secondary schooling shows lagged effects with a 60% adjustment process, while tertiary enrollment remains driven by long-run structural investments. Regarding health, public spending significantly reduces maternal and neonatal mortality in the short term. Crucially, the NARDL analysis uncovers significant asymmetries in how social outcomes respond to expenditure changes. Findings indicate that funding negative shocks often have a more rapid and detrimental impact than the benefits gained from funding increases, particularly regarding neonatal health and tuberculosis treatment success. While secondary education responds powerfully and immediately to positive funding shocks, tertiary education is highly sensitive to funding reductions, which exert a delayed but major negative impact. These findings provide practical guidance for policymakers, suggesting that while primary education and mortality reduction may respond quickly to funding, secondary and tertiary sectors—and long-term disease control—require stable, non-volatile financial commitments to prevent the disproportionate damage caused by fiscal retrenchment.

Toward Responsible and Sustainable Agricutural management: Analysis of Farmer's Perceptions in the Tunisian Regions Manouba and Mornag

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Abstract
This study investigates how farmers in the Manouba and Mornag Tunisian regions perceive and integrate responsible and sustainable practices in the management of their farms. Responsible management is reflected in the strategic allocation of key resources (water, inputs, land) and the management of relationships with various stakeholders (suppliers, CRDA, CTV,UTAP, Ministry of Agriculture, etc) . The study adopts a comprehensive qualitative approach and an abductive methodology in three phases: an exploratory phase with 13 in-depth interviews to define the research problem and theoretical framework (Resource Dependence Theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) and Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1982), a main phase with 12 semi-structured interviews, and a complementary phase with 3 additional interviews after analysis, alongside non-participant observation throughout the research. The applied theories help understand resource dependencies and power asymmetries among stakeholders in farm management. Results show that, despite awareness of sustainability issues and the adoption of certain innovations (hydroponics, soil analysis to save water and inputs, desalination), farmers still rely on traditional practices. Their decision-making capacity remains limited by resource scarcity, indebtedness, and the dominance of certain stakeholders, within a context of perceived weak institutional support. The study highlights that transitioning toward responsible agriculture in these regions depends not only on individual farmers' willingness but also requires a reconfiguration of dependency structures and governance mechanisms shaping their decisions.

CSR in Africa: A Bibliometric Analysis for a Context-Specific Theorizing Framework

Authors

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Abstract

Abstract: This article analyzes the evolution of research on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Africa and proposes a new theoretical framework rooted in the realities of the continent. First, an exhaustive bibliometric study conducted on Scopus and Web of Science made it possible to identify a corpus of 4,165 documents published between 1964 and 2025. The results reveal robust annual growth of 9.94% and a three-phase trajectory, marking the transition from reactive philanthropy to strategic alignment with ESG criteria and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Secondly, to overcome the under-theorization of Western models, this work rigorously applies the methodological framework of Hong et al. (2014) to develop a "Context-Specific Theory" (Context-Specific Theory). The concept of CSR is broken down into measurable endogenous variables: state substitution CSR (infrastructure), human security CSR (social stability) and ancestral governance CSR (customary norms). The analysis shows that the effectiveness of these practices is moderated by complex interactions with the "institutional voids", the Ubuntu philosophy and traditional legitimacy. In conclusion, this article defines CSR in Africa no longer as a simple cost of compliance, but as a central social artifact and a survival mechanism essential to obtaining the social license to operate. This framework offers researchers and managers a strategic tool to manage sustainability in emerging economies.

Advertising Impact on the Adoption of Deposit Systems: A Case Study of a Tunisian Soft Drink Brand

Authors

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Abstract
The reuse and recycling of household packaging has become a strategic priority in the energy transition of our economic models. Deposit systems for reuse appear as an ambitious solution for reducing the environmental impact of packaging. In a context of growing awareness of environmental issues, but hampered by deeply ingrained consumption habits, this study examines, through a controlled experiment conducted with 275 Tunisian consumers, the impact of an eco-friendly advertisement promoting a soft drink brand's deposit-return scheme on the adoption of this system. It is understood that a strong environmental awareness among consumers improves the perceived impact of the deposit system for glass bottles on their purchase intentions. This study explores the impact of eco-friendly advertising on the attitudes of Tunisian consumers. We examine how advertising messages promoting environmental aspects (deposit systems) are perceived and interpreted, and to what extent these perceptions influence behavioral responses. This work contributes to a better understanding of green consumption in Tunisia by providing actionable information for marketing practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. The objective is to guide sustainable communication strategies in the Tunisian market, aligning commercial effectiveness with sustainable involvement.
Using a structural equation model, the results confirm the theoretical relationships derived from the Theory of Planned Behavior and highlight the central role of sustained involvement and trust as explanatory drivers of the adoption of the deposit-return scheme. This research contributes to the literature on innovative adoption in emerging contexts and offers operational recommendations for marketing decision-makers and institutional actors involved in the transition to a circular economy in Tunisia.

Keywords: Brand Trust, Circular Economy, Deposit for Reuse, Green Advertising, Sustainable Involvement, Theory of Planned Behavior.

Maternal Health and Healthcare Spending: A Comparative Analysis in Sub-Saharan Africa

Author

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Abstract

This article explores the association between healthcare expenditure and maternal mortality in eight African countries from 2000 to 2014. Using fixed and random effects models, we find that private healthcare expenditure is significantly and negatively associated with maternal deaths, while public expenditure shows a weaker and statistically insignificant relationship. These findings highlight the importance of understanding how different funding channels influence maternal health outcomes.

Introduction

Maternal health is a cornerstone of public health and a key development indicator. This study assesses the relationship between maternal mortality and healthcare spending in Sub-Saharan Africa, disaggregating public and private expenditure.

Methods

We used panel data from 2000–2014. The dependent variable is the number of maternal deaths (NMD), and independent variables include public (HEPP) and private (HEPT) healthcare expenditures as a % of GDP. Models employed: random and fixed effects. Table 5 shows regression results.

Results

Table 1: Healthcare Expenditure and Maternal Deaths

Panel A: HEPP and LNMD

Panel B: HEPT and LNMD

Random Effects

Random Effects

LNMD

Coef.

Coef.

HEPP

-0.0356

[0.0218]

HEPT

-0.0871**

[0.014]

Intercept

8.578***

8.793***

[0.366]

[0.373]

R-sq

0.0238
0.02584
Wald chi2 (1)
2.66
39.07***
Hausman test
chi2
prob>chi2
0.08
0.7809
0.09
0.9741
Note: ***, **, and * are statistically significant at 1%, 5% and 10% respectively.

Private healthcare expenditure has a statistically significant negative coefficient of -0.0871 ($p < 0.05$). Public healthcare spending had a coefficient of -0.0356, which was not statistically significant.

Discussion

Findings suggest private healthcare plays a critical role in maternal health. The limited effect of public expenditure may relate to inefficiencies or poor targeting. Out-of-pocket costs under private systems remain a concern for access equity.

Conclusion

To improve maternal outcomes, governments should consider regulating private healthcare access and improving the efficiency of public sector funding.

Listening To Sustainable Luxury: An Exploratory Study on The Perception of Podcasts as a Green Communication Tool

Authors

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Abstract

The fashion industry contributes between 3% and 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. In the climate crisis context, luxury brands are increasingly required to legitimize environmental commitments through credible communication. Yet sustainable discourse in luxury faces ecological skepticism and accusations of greenwashing. This study examines how environmentally engaged consumers perceive podcasts as a sustainable communication lever in the luxury sector.

The research mobilizes Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz et al., 1973) to explain listening motivations, Narrative Transportation Theory (Green & Brock, 2000) to understand immersion and persuasion, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) to analyze central versus peripheral processing. The sustainable luxury paradox is interpreted through Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957), highlighting tensions between luxury and sustainability.

An exploratory qualitative design was used. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews with 22 participants, including exposure to two stimuli: an episode of Kering's podcast *Fashion Our Future* and an equivalent YouTube video. Thematic analysis was conducted with NVivo15.

Findings reveal a marked perceptual dichotomy. Compared to video, the podcast generates stronger immersion, mental imagery, and emotional proximity to the speaker, fostering identification and empathy. However, the concept of "sustainable luxury" is largely perceived as contradictory, reflecting persistent structural skepticism. Listening motivations are threefold: cognitive (learning and information seeking), affective (vocal intimacy and authenticity), and practical (multitasking convenience). Credibility is primarily evaluated through the central route, with participants demanding factual precision, transparency, and demonstrable proof. Any promotional tone or vague claims immediately heighten perceptions of greenwashing.

Listeners prioritize transparency over aesthetics, requiring brand humanization to be grounded in tangible proof to influence purchase behavior. Brands should adopt an educational tone and provide demonstrable evidence through hybrid tools. Future research could apply quantitative methods or explore the cosmetics sector.

Smart Cities and Sustainable Urban Development in South Africa: Governance Readiness, Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract
The transition toward smart cities has increasingly been positioned as a pathway to sustainable urban development. Beyond technological modernisation, smart city initiatives raise important questions regarding social inclusion, environmental sustainability, governance accountability, and equitable access to urban services. In developing country contexts, digital urban transformation may either reduce or deepen existing inequalities depending on institutional capacity and governance arrangements. In South Africa, national and municipal policy frameworks promote digital transformation and smart infrastructure as mechanisms for improving service delivery, sustainability, and citizen participation. However, persistent challenges — including financial constraints, governance inefficiencies, energy instability, and the digital divide — may limit the extent to which smart city initiatives contribute to inclusive and socially responsible urban development. This paper evaluates the readiness of South African cities for smart city development by analysing policy initiatives, governance capacity, financial sustainability, socio-economic conditions, and stakeholder participation. The analysis focuses on whether current smart city strategies support equitable access to services, responsible governance, and sustainable urban outcomes rather than technological adoption alone. The findings indicate that while progress has been made in digital infrastructure and policy design, institutional, socio-economic, and ethical governance challenges must be addressed to ensure that smart city development advances sustainability and social responsibility. The study therefore argues that smart city transformation in developing economies should be evaluated not primarily as a technological project, but as a governance and sustainability intervention shaping inclusive urban futures.

Keywords: Smart cities; sustainable urban development; governance; social inclusion; digital divide; sustainability; South Africa.

Perceived CSR Inauthenticity and Employee Outcomes in Emerging-Economy SMEs: The Role of Discourse Practice in a Tunisian Manufacturing Context

Author

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Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become a strategic necessity for organizations seeking legitimacy and stakeholder trust, yet its effectiveness increasingly depends on perceived authenticity. In resource constrained SMEs operating in emerging economies, discrepancies between proclaimed CSR commitments and actual practices frequently generate perceptions of corporate hypocrisy, which can negatively affect internal stakeholders. This study examines how perceived (in)coherence between CSR discourse and practice operationalized through authenticity indicators (coherence, transparency, and strategic integration) influences employees' advocacy behaviors and retention intentions in a Tunisian manufacturing SME (N=52). Drawing on social identity theory and attribution theory, the research adopts a quantitative dominant sequential explanatory mixed methods design based on an anonymous employee questionnaire. Preliminary findings reveal predominantly negative to moderate perceptions: over 5% rate overall CSR engagement as weak or very weak, nearly half report low personal involvement, approximately 46% perceive low discourse practice alignment (with 30.8% strongly disagreeing), and transparency is judged insufficient by half of respondents. Only about 40% believe CSR enhances organizational reputation, highlighting substantial skepticism. The study contributes micro-level CSR evidence from an under researched North African context, where proximity and limited external accountability may amplify the behavioral consequences of perceived inauthenticity. It offers context sensitive insights for SME managers aiming to align rhetoric with practice and strengthen internal legitimacy in export oriented developing economy settings.

Keywords Perceived CSR authenticity, corporate hypocrisy, Employee advocacy, SME CSR, MENA region / Tunisia.

Financing Green Cities in Emerging Economies: A Systematic Review of Institutional and Fiscal Mechanisms

Authors
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Abstract
Rapid urbanisation and escalating climate risks have intensified pressure on municipal financial systems in emerging economies. While green cities have gained policy prominence, financing mechanisms remain fragmented and unevenly institutionalised. This study conducts a PRISMA-guided systematic review of peer-reviewed literature published between 2010 and 2025 to examine institutional and fiscal mechanisms underpinning green city financing in emerging economies. Fifty-six studies were synthesised using thematic analysis. Findings reveal four interdependent clusters: green bonds and capital markets, intergovernmental fiscal transfers, public–private partnerships, and institutional capacity and governance reforms. Drawing on institutional theory, the study demonstrates that while regulatory frameworks and normative pressures drive the adoption of green finance instruments, their effectiveness is ultimately constrained by weaknesses in the cognitive pillar, particularly limited administrative capacity, technical expertise, and institutional learning. As a result, green finance initiatives in emerging economies frequently remain symbolic rather than transformative. The study advances the literature by shifting the analytical focus from isolated financial instruments to an integrated institutional financial governance architecture, and by identifying the cognitive pillar as the critical determinant of implementation effectiveness. It argues that strengthening institutional capacity is essential for translating financial innovation into sustainable urban outcomes. The findings contribute to sustainable finance scholarship and offer policy guidance for enabling fiscally credible and institutionally grounded green city transitions.

Track 5:

Artificial Intelligence and Information and Communication

Determinants of Blockchain Adoption Intention, Actual Usage and SME Performance: Evidence From an Extended UTAUT Model

Author

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to use an extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model to investigate the association among the determinants of blockchain adoption intentions (BAI), actual blockchain usage (ABU), and financial and market performance among small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana. The study attempts to develop an integrated model based on the UTAUT framework to understand and predict the determinants of BAI by incorporating SMEs context-specific constructs. Data were gathered from 527 SME managers in Ghana using an online survey. The analyzes were performed using Smart partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS – SEM) technique to present the factors that influence the intentions to adopt blockchain and actual usage. The results indicate that performance expectancy (PE), facilitating conditions (FC), social influence (SI), IT competency (ITC), organizational readiness (ORD), and top management commitment (TMC) significantly influence SMEs blockchain adoption intentions. However, effort expectancy (EE) had an insignificant relationship with SMEs' blockchain adoption intentions. The results further indicate that BAI positively affects ABU which in turn affects SMEs' financial and market performance. The proposed UTAUT model provides valuable information for SMEs when maneuvering their blockchain adoption strategy intentions. Our paper represents the first to use the UTAUT original variables to explore the determinants of BAI as well as ABU in the context of SMEs in a developing economy. Previous works have mostly used the TOE framework to examine only the adoption intentions without actual usage of blockchain technology.

Algorithmic Accountability: AI as a Tool for Institutional Whistleblowing and Corruption Risk Mapping in Africa

Author

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Abstract

In many African nations, whistleblowing remains a high-risk, individual act with limited systemic impact on pervasive corruption. This paper proposes a paradigm shift: leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to transition whistleblowing from a vulnerable, ad-hoc disclosure into an integrated, institutional safeguard. We develop a conceptual framework where AI serves as a force multiplier for accountability ecosystems. Specifically, we examine how machine learning algorithms—particularly natural language processing and anomaly detection networks—can anonymize whistleblower reports, triage their credibility, and map latent corruption networks by analyzing disparate public and administrative datasets. Grounding our analysis in real-world cases from Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa, we critically assess the dual-edged potential of such systems. While AI can empower citizens and oversight bodies by providing scalable detection and protection mechanisms, its deployment introduces profound risks, including algorithmic bias that could marginalize already vulnerable groups, the potential for state-enabled surveillance, and the exacerbation of existing digital divides. We argue that for AI-enabled whistleblowing tools to be legitimate and effective in African contexts, they must be embedded within robust legal and ethical frameworks that prioritize human rights, transparency, and civic oversight. This interdisciplinary study synthesizes insights from computer science, governance studies, and African political economy to offer a nuanced roadmap for researchers and policymakers seeking to harness technology for accountability without compromising democratic values.

Improving Traffic Analysis and Prediction for 5G Network Slice Through Machine Learning

Authors

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Abstract

The management and operation of the Fifth Generation (5G) and future 6G mobile networks is speedily utilizing Artificial intelligence and machine learning as its key functions. Vast, complex data streams are managed and interpreted using Network traffic analysis. A novel approach for traffic analysis and prediction is proposed in this paper, specifically tailored for 5G network slicing by means of machine learning methods to address the challenge of accurately processing data for network optimization. The paper evaluates both SimplePredictor baseline and advance RandomForest model for predicting 5G bandwidth demand and identifying anomalous flows. Results indicate that Random Forest models significantly outperform the baseline in both tasks. Significantly, by strategically tuning the classification threshold for the RandomForestClassifier for security anomaly detection, we achieved an exceptional Recall of 0.985 with a zero False Positive Rate, highlighting the critical role of model output optimization in security-sensitive applications. This work demonstrates the efficacy of advanced ML approaches in addressing complex challenges in modern telecommunications and IoT security, paving the way for more intelligent and resilient network infrastructures. providing a foundation for more intelligent and automated resource allocation within complex 5G environments.

The Algorithm and the Self: Navigating AI, Surveillance, and the Quantified Employee

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Abstract

This chapter examines how AI-enabled, data-driven management is reshaping contemporary work by governing hiring, performance evaluation, and everyday oversight through algorithmic decision-making. It argues that while algorithmic systems promise efficiency and objectivity, they also intensify surveillance, quantification, and control in ways that profoundly affect employee identity, autonomy, and psychological well-being. The chapter foregrounds three core themes: the persistence of algorithmic bias in organisational processes; the tension between transparency, accountability, and employee privacy; and the psychological consequences of continuous performance monitoring for the “quantified employee.” Drawing on surveillance studies, organisational psychology, and digital ethics, it highlights a critical gap between technical debates on fairness and the lived experiences of workers subjected to automated judgment. The central question asks how AI-driven management practices reconfigure the self at work and what ethical obligations this generates for organisations, designers, and policymakers. In response, the chapter offers insights that link algorithmic governance to changing forms of subjectivity, alongside practical recommendations for regulating and designing AI systems that protect dignity, agency, and inclusion. It concludes that responsible adoption of workplace AI requires human-centred, ethically informed approaches that resist reducing employees to data points and that recognise the deep entanglement between algorithms and the making of the self.

"What Do I Bring to the Table?" Reflections of Female Students Towards AI

Author

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Abstract

The underrepresentation of girls and women in technology, particularly in artificial intelligence (AI), is a concern globally and more specifically in Africa. As such, the *Girls in AI* platform was created to sensitize, motivate, and recruit secondary school girls to computer science, specifically to Artificial Intelligence (AI). The platform is an initiative by DarasaTech and AI4D Labs to increase interest in AI, contextualize technically rigorous AI concepts for solving community challenges, and address barriers that could discourage girls from pursuing computer science. This commentary reports on an awareness and sensitization workshop involving secondary school girls in Tanzania. It accounts for focus group discussion and feedback on the participants' perception of their role in AI. The responses show that students had significant mastery and confidence in their role as females in AI, heightened awareness of AI careers, and interest in pursuing STEM-related careers. The findings aim to inform policymakers and educational practitioners on the importance of fostering a conducive STEM learning environment for youth, especially girls, to cultivate a conducive local solution-oriented AI ecosystem.

Assessing The Enablers and Constraints of Big Data Adoption in an Insurance Company in Ghana

Author

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Abstract

The main aim of this study is to explore the enablers and constraints of big data adoption in an insurance company in Ghana. With a sample size of 60 employees selected via convenience sampling, the study utilized descriptive statistics to analyse the data using SPSS 26. The findings indicate that the main enablers of big data adoption include value-added to customers, impact on the organizational output, raising the service standards, fraud detection, and improving risk assessment. The major constraints to big data adoption are the internal financial problems to support training of big data to the employees, inadequate technical capabilities of employees, lack of top management support, and insufficient Internet for big data support. The study recommends that big data implementation must be given ultimate support by stakeholders of the insurance companies, as well as the government, to exhibit effective improvement in service quality in this organization and other insurance companies in Ghana.

Balancing Innovation and Credibility: Customer Perception of AI – Generated Content of Legal Brands South Africa

Authors

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Abstract

This study investigates South African digital natives' perceptions of AI-generated marketing content and its influence on brand evaluation. Through semi-structured interviews with twelve participants selected via self-selection and snowball sampling, the research applies thematic and textual analysis within a qualitative framework to uncover nuanced consumer responses. Findings reveal that AI authorship elicits mixed reactions: while AI-generated brand personality is often viewed as innovative and forward-thinking, it also raises concerns about authenticity and originality. Brand performance is associated with efficiency and reduced human effort yet questioned for its lack of depth and personalisation. Brand consideration and credibility are shaped by both the perceived quality of AI-generated content and the extent of human involvement. Participants demonstrated an ability to identify AI-generated material and relied on existing schemas to interpret its impact. These insights offer strategic guidance for South African marketers, highlighting the importance of maintaining content quality, meeting consumer expectations, and integrating human oversight to mitigate potential drawbacks. The study also underscores the need for AI developers to refine algorithms for greater contextual relevance and diversity in marketing outputs. The emerging market context contributes to the broader discourse on consumer acceptance of AI in marketing, offering valuable implications for brand communication strategies in digitally evolving environments.

Keywords: brand perception, AI-generated content, South Africa, digital natives, schema theory, brand equity

Responsible and Inclusive AI Governance in Africa: A Scoping Review

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Abstract
Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly recognized as a transformative force for socio-economic development across Africa, yet its rapid diffusion raises critical questions about responsibility, inclusivity, and governance. Existing global frameworks (such as the OECD Principles on AI and the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI) provide normative guidance but remain inadequately contextualized for African socio-political realities. This study conducts a scoping review to map and synthesize existing scholarship on responsible and inclusive AI governance in Africa, focusing on the intersection of ethics, policy, and sustainable development. Following Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) framework and PRISMA-ScR guidelines, peer-reviewed articles, policy papers, and grey literature published between 2015 and 2025 were systematically identified across Scopus, Web of Science, IEEE Xplore, and Google Scholar databases. The final corpus (n = 78) includes key works such as Batool, Zowghi, and Bano (2025) on global governance models, Effoduh et al. (2024) on inclusive data governance in Africa, and Wakunuma et al. (2022) on AI and the Sustainable Development Goals. Preliminary synthesis reveals three dominant themes: (1) the fragmentation of governance initiatives across African regions; (2) limited stakeholder inclusivity, particularly among women, rural communities, and informal sectors; and (3) weak institutional capacity for AI ethics implementation. Building on these findings, the paper proposes an African AI Governance Maturity Framework (AAGMF) comprising four dimensions: policy coherence, ethical capacity, data justice, and stakeholder participation to guide future research and policy interventions. By contextualizing responsible AI within Africa's unique governance ecosystems, this review contributes to the global dialogue on ethical AI and positions Africa not merely as a technology adopter but as a normative innovator. The paper aligns with the AABD 2026 theme, "At the Crossroads of Local and Global Disruptions: Transforming Organizations for Africa's Future."

Digital Governance in Nigeria: Exploring the Transformative Potential of E-Governance Systems

Author

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Abstract
This study examines the adoption and implementation of e-governance initiatives in Nigeria, highlighting their potential to enhance transparency, efficiency, and citizen engagement in public administration. The research employs a qualitative approach, drawing on secondary sources including government reports, policy documents, and scholarly literature to analyze the current state of digital governance in Nigeria. The study focuses on key e-governance projects, such as online service delivery platforms and digital record management systems, assessing their impact on administrative processes and service accessibility. Preliminary findings indicate that while e-governance initiatives have improved information dissemination and reduced certain bureaucratic inefficiencies, challenges persist in areas such as infrastructure limitations, digital literacy, and policy coordination. Additionally, the analysis suggests that institutional readiness and stakeholder collaboration play a critical role in determining the success of digital governance efforts. These insights provide a foundation for further research into strategies for enhancing e-governance adoption in developing countries. The study underscores the importance of sustained investment in technology, training, and regulatory frameworks to realize the full benefits of e-governance in Nigeria.

State of Readiness for Artificial Intelligence as a Tool For Reshaping the Kenyan Animation

Author

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Abstract
The state of Animation in Africa is changing drastically through the introduction of Artificial Intelligence within its space. Since there is limited literature on the impact of Artificial intelligence on the Animation space in Kenya, this article provides the results of an investigation on the impact of AI within the Kenyan animation spaces through a collection of data based on interviews. The research was grounded under the technological determinism theory which indicates that technology is the tool that can provide social change. The findings on the study indicate that while the industry is ready to embrace the AI tools into their pipeline as a measure of increasing efficiency while maintaining creative integrity.

Lawyer-Client Privilege and Virtual Proceedings in East Africa: Safeguarding Confidentiality and Fair Trial Rights in the Digital Age in Uganda and Kenya

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Abstract

The rapid digital transformation of East African judiciaries, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has introduced virtual proceedings and remote legal consultations as new norms in the administration of justice. While these innovations enhance efficiency and continuity, they also raise complex challenges for the protection of lawyer-client privilege and the right to a fair hearing. Existing statutory frameworks in Uganda and Kenya, largely designed for physical interactions, do not adequately address confidentiality in digital communications, leaving gaps in regulation and professional practice. Issues such as interception risks, inadequate infrastructure, communication barriers, and inequalities in access pose significant threats to both privacy and fair trial guarantees under national and international law. This paper critically examines these challenges within the East African countries, mainly Kenya and Uganda. It highlights the need to align lawyer-client privilege with data protection regimes, invest in secure digital infrastructure, and adopt harmonised East African Community standards for virtual proceedings. The paper further underscores the importance of professional training, client education, and institutional safeguards to strengthen trust in digital justice systems. Hence, it argues that without deliberate reforms, virtual proceedings risk undermining the very principles of confidentiality and fairness they are meant to uphold. However, with coherent regulation, secure technology, and inclusive access, East African judiciaries can preserve the integrity of lawyer-client privilege while embracing the opportunities of the digital age.

Keywords: Lawyer-Client privilege, digital age, digital communications, confidentiality, virtual hearings, end-to-end encryption.

Democratizing Animation: AI-Driven Pipeline Optimization in Emerging Creative Markets

Authors

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Abstract

The animation sector in emerging regional markets is currently undergoing a significant transformation, driven by an increasing demand for localized content and global outsourcing opportunities. However, traditional production cycles remain resource-heavy, often requiring significant capital and labor-intensive manual workflows. This study investigates the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to democratize the animation pipeline, focusing on how regional studios can leverage automation to produce high-quality content at a fraction of traditional costs. By analysing current adoption rates among local practitioners, this research identifies key entry points for Generative AI within the production lifecycle: from pre-visualization to final rendering. The study moves beyond theoretical application to examine real-world case studies of artists who have successfully integrated accessible AI tools to streamline cognitive-intensive tasks, thereby increasing individual output and studio scalability. The findings culminate in a strategic framework designed to serve as a benchmark for local industry players. This framework provides actionable insights into navigating the transition from legacy processes to AI-enhanced workflows. Ultimately, the democratization of these technical processes lowers the barrier to entry, allowing a broader range of creative entrepreneurs and independent studios to compete on a global stage regardless of their physical infrastructure. By shifting the focus from manual labour to creative direction, this shift positions the regional industry as a highly efficient, tech-forward hub for the next generation of global storytelling.

Track 6:

Marketing

The Double-Edged Sword of Humour: Message Retention in TikTok Influencer Advertising among Generation Z in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The rapid rise of TikTok as an entertainment-driven social media platform has significantly transformed digital advertising strategies across emerging markets. In Zimbabwe, brands increasingly partner with humour-oriented influencers to engage Generation Z consumers. While humour enhances engagement and emotional connection, its effectiveness in fostering message retention remains underexplored. This study examines whether humour in TikTok influencer advertising enhances or undermines brand and product recall among tertiary students in Zimbabwe. Grounded in Uses and Gratifications Theory and supported by humour theory (incongruity and benign violation frameworks), the study adopts an interpretivist qualitative design. Data were collected through 25 in-depth interviews and four focus group discussions (n = 45) with active TikTok users aged 18–45 at Midlands State University. Thematic analysis was employed to examine how humour influences cognitive processing, brand recall, and advertising effectiveness. Findings reveal a paradox. While humour significantly increases attention, engagement, and perceived authenticity of influencers, it often shifts cognitive focus from the brand message to the comedic performance, producing what participants described as "remembering the joke but forgetting the product." This "vampire effect" was particularly pronounced when humour was highly entertaining but weakly integrated with brand attributes. However, when humour was contextually relevant and congruent with the product, message retention improved. The study contributes to African digital marketing scholarship by providing empirical evidence from a Sub-Saharan context, where influencer marketing is rapidly expanding yet under-researched. Practically, the findings offer strategic guidance to brands operating in entertainment-centric algorithmic environments: humour must be strategically embedded rather than appended to advertising content. The research advances understanding of advertising effectiveness in emerging digital ecosystems and informs influencer marketing strategy within Africa's evolving platform economy.

Digital Beats: Drivers of User Loyalty to Digital Music Streaming Platforms in South Africa

Authors

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Abstract
As digital music streaming platforms continue to reshape music consumption patterns, research shows that among audiences of traditional music genres it is still in its infancy stages. Although prior studies have emphasized mainstream digital adoption, limited research has examined the drivers of loyalty within traditional music segments in emerging markets. Drawing on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and experiential consumption theory, this study investigates how perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness influence user satisfaction and enjoyment, and how these experiential responses drive loyalty toward digital music streaming platforms from a traditional music genre perspective. Through survey questionnaire, this study collected and analysed 350 responses from South African users of digital music streaming platforms, the proposed model was tested using structural equation modelling (SEM) using AMOS version 30. The findings reveal that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness significantly enhance both satisfaction and enjoyment. In turn, satisfaction and enjoyment positively influence user loyalty, with satisfaction emerging as the stronger predictor. By integrating technology acceptance factors with experiential drivers in a culturally grounded context, this study extends existing digital loyalty research and provides novel insights into user loyalty within traditional music segments in an emerging market. The findings offer important managerial implications for streaming platforms seeking to strengthen engagement and loyalty among culturally anchored user groups.

Constructing Loyal Outfit Customers through Social Media Marketing in Tanzania

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Abstract

Social media has become a dominant space where outfit retailers and consumers in Tanzania meet, interact and co-create brand experiences, making it a critical arena for building and sustaining customer loyalty. This study investigates how specific social media marketing activities construct loyal outfit customers in Tanzania, using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to predict how customers behave after being exposed to these activities. Grounded in TPB, the research conceptualizes entertainment, interaction, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), trendiness and customization as marketing stimuli that shape customers' attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, which then influence intentions and repeat purchase behavior toward outfit retailers. An explanatory cross-sectional survey design was employed, drawing on data from 150 followers of outfit retail enterprises on social media platforms in Dar es Salaam, collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The findings show that while entertainment, interaction and customization significantly enhance customer satisfaction, they do not exert a statistically significant direct effect on brand loyalty. In contrast, eWOM and trendiness demonstrate significant positive effects on brand loyalty, underscoring their central role in strengthening customers' intentions to repurchase and remain committed to preferred outfit brands. The study contributes empirically by clarifying which social media marketing elements most effectively construct loyal outfit customers and practically by recommending that Tanzanian outfit retailers prioritize strategies that stimulate positive eWOM and maintain high levels of trendiness in their social media content.

Key words: Loyal outfit customers, social media marketing, Tanzania

Towards a Typology of Customer Centricity Marketing Values and Patterns of Loyalty Behavior: Evidence from an Emerging African Poverty Alleviation Program

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Abstract

Customer centricity, which means placing customers at the core of business activities, has recently attracted significant attention as an effective marketing strategy for attracting and retaining customers. However, implementing the customer-centricity concept is challenging because customers differ in the product/service attributes they value. To address this heterogeneity in customers' perceptions of product/service customer centricity, scholars have proposed a customer-centric marketing framework: product/service Affordability, Accessibility, Acceptability, and Awareness as the four attributes customers value most. However, there is little empirical research on how customers' perceptions of firm customer-centricity marketing activities vary as a function of customers' values/characteristics, as well as their associated loyalty behavior consequences. The authors suggest a behavioral reasoning theory (Westaby, 2007) based classification framework for grouping customers as a function of their social values (traditional and non-traditional) and their income status (cash-strapped and noncash-strapped). The conceptual framework generates four a priori-defined customer typologies: Type 1 (cash-strapped, non-traditionalists); Type 2 (non-cash-strapped, non-traditionalists); Type 3 (non-cash-strapped, traditionalists); and Type 4 (cash-strapped, traditionalists). They then evaluate their framework in a cross-sectional survey ($N= 245$) of customers of rural credit programs in Ghana. A contingency test of the typology (Chi-Square $= 2.7$, $p < .001$) confirmed the existence of three of the four proposed customer groups, with Type 1 Customers being the largest (44%), followed by Type 2 Customers (37%) and Type 3 Customers (19%). The Type 4 Customers did not exist in our sample of Ghanaian rural financial market customers ($N=0$). Further analysis using ANOVA/MANOVA showed significant differences in the perceptions of service availability and awareness, patronage intent, and usage frequency, and similarities in the perceptions of service Affordability and Accessibility, and patronage duration behavior. These findings have significant implications for the standardization of customer-centric marketing activities of poverty alleviation programs within the demand aggregation theoretical framework.

Digital Transformation of Airport Marketing in Africa: Enhancing Travelers' Well-Being and Organizational Resilience in Times of Global Disruptions: Case of Morocco

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Abstract

In Africa, airports are increasingly positioned at the crossroads of local and global disruptions, including health crises, accelerated digitalization, and rising territorial competition. Beyond their traditional transport function, airports are evolving into strategic infrastructures that require organizational and marketing transformation to enhance resilience, territorial attractiveness, and sustainable value creation. In Morocco, this transformation aligns with national strategies promoting digital transition and territorial competitiveness. Airport marketing has progressively shifted toward digital and experiential approaches aimed at improving passenger experience, well-being, and destination image. In this context, the airport of Dakhla, often referred to as the "Pearl of the South," represents a relevant case study. As an emerging regional hub, Dakhla Airport plays a critical role in supporting tourism development, halieutic value chains, and territorial connectivity, while facing the challenges of global disruptions. This study addresses the following research question: **How does the digital transformation of airport marketing contribute to travelers' well-being and organizational resilience in an emerging African airport context?** The research aims to analyze digital airport marketing practices from an experiential and organizational perspective, explore stakeholders' perceptions of their impact on travelers' well-being and perceived safety, and examine their contribution to territorial value creation. The study adopts a qualitative exploratory methodology based on semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders involved in airport management, digital marketing, and territorial development at Dakhla–Oued Eddahab Airport. Data are analyzed using thematic analysis. Preliminary findings suggest that digital airport marketing enhances passenger well-being by improving comfort, perceived safety, and overall experience, while simultaneously strengthening organizational resilience. These practices also contribute to territorial value creation by reinforcing the attractiveness and visibility of emerging African territories in times of global disruption.

Naming Bonds: How Ghanaian Brands' Use of Nicknames and Consumer Names Influence Trust, Perceptions, and Disposal Behaviors

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Abstract
The complexities of consumer-brand relationships in emerging markets constitute a relatively uncharted territory, with Ghanaian consumer behavior presenting an intriguing case study. This investigation examines the impact of Ghanaian brands' strategic use of nicknames and consumer names on trust, perceptions, and disposal behaviors. Employing a quantitative, cross-sectional design, the study surveyed 650 Ghanaian online consumers, leveraging established scales with robust psychometric properties. Findings reveal that nickname impression and personalized naming significantly influence trust and responsible disposal practices, underscoring the crucial role of cultural identity in shaping consumer behavior. Cultural identity is also found to moderate the relationship between personalized naming strategies and brand perceptions, highlighting the necessity of culturally tailored approaches. Extending Social Identity Theory to this context, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the naming bonds underpinning consumer-brand relationships, furnishing a foundation for future research and informing effective branding strategies in Ghana and beyond.

The Influence of Digitalization of Hotel Services on Marketing Performance: A Case of Dar Es Salaam Hotels

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Abstract
This study examines the influence of digitalization on marketing performance within the hotel industry, specifically, it focuses on hotels in Dar Es Salaam City Tanzania. The study examines the link between marketing performance and three key aspects of digitalization in hotels which are online booking systems, digital marketing strategies, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems. Through confirmation factor analysis approach, the study finds that all three studied digital components positively influence hotel marketing performance. Online booking systems enhance operational efficiency and customer convenience, leading to improved marketing outcomes. Digital marketing efforts, including social media and targeted online campaigns, significantly boosts hotel visibility and engagement with potential guests. CRM systems contribute to personalized customer interactions and loyalty, further driving marketing success. This study provides valuable insights for hotel managers and industry stakeholders, by highlighting the importance of digitalization in achieving marketing excellence. The results support a comprehensive marketing strategy that, in order to meet the demands of the modern hotel market, the advantages of digital tools and customer relationship management are vital.

Artificial Intelligence and The Patient–Doctor Relationship: A Professional Perspective

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Abstract

The rapid democratization of artificial intelligence (AI) is creating a new clinical reality: ordinary patients now use public tools (e.g., ChatGPT) to check symptoms, seek triage advice, and interpret health information before seeing a clinician. Yet the impact of this “patient-led” AI use on everyday clinical practice and on the patient–clinician relationship remains underexplored, especially in Tunisia, where institutional digital readiness is still uneven. Much healthcare AI research remains largely technical, focused on model performance, and rarely treats AI as a socio-technical system that reshapes interactions, expectations, and clinical responsibility. At the same time, so-called “patient-centred” AI research often under-represents the healthcare professional perspective, even though clinicians are central to interpretation, accountability, and patient safety. This study examines how healthcare professionals perceive patients’ AI use and how it transforms consultation dynamics (trust, authority, responsibility, and professional legitimacy). We conducted a qualitative study based on semi-structured interviews with eight healthcare professionals from diverse specialties, sectors, and experience levels. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Findings point to a conditional acceptance: AI is viewed as useful when it supports care under human oversight, but becomes problematic when it enters the consultation as a competing source of guidance. In practice, AI acts as an implicit third actor, contributing to misinterpretation, delayed care-seeking, increased test demand, and trust tensions, while requiring clinicians to spend more effort correcting, justifying, and regulating the clinical interaction.

Digital Disruption and Generational Divides: The Impact of Digital Transformation on Direct Sellers in South Africa

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Abstract

Digital transformation is a disruptive force reshaping direct selling in emerging markets, yet its benefits are unevenly distributed across generations. This study examines how digital disruption affects direct sellers in South Africa, focusing on generational adoption patterns, barriers and enablers, and implications for market participation and organisational transformation in the sector. Using a qualitative exploratory design grounded in an interpretivist philosophy, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 active direct sellers (ages 18–65). Guided by Diffusion of Innovation theory, thematic analysis reveals distinct generational patterns of digital adoption. Findings indicate that younger sellers (Generation Y and Z) show greater confidence and adaptability in using digital platforms for customer engagement and sales activity, reporting improved selling outcomes and a stronger sense of empowerment. In contrast, older sellers (Generation X and Baby Boomers) face more pronounced constraints linked to limited digital literacy and affordability of connectivity and devices. Across cohorts, self-empowerment, social capital, and digital connectivity emerge as key enablers, while financial constraints and limited digital competence remain the primary barriers. Most participants align with late-majority adoption, suggesting cautious uptake shaped by social proof and perceived risk. The study contributes to marketing management in African contexts by explaining how structural constraints and social resources shape digital participation in relationship-based selling, and it offers practical guidance for inclusive digital enablement strategies in direct selling organisations.

Examining Brand Love and Women's Consumption Behaviour in Africa: Critical Perspectives and Future Research Directions

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Abstract

B*rand love, as one of the key evolving constructs in branding refers to the* consumers' deep emotional attachment to brands. It has gained prominence in marketing due to its demonstrated influence on brand loyalty and brand equity (Batra et al., 2012). Positive brand attributes, such as quality, design, and functional benefits, are widely acknowledged as antecedents that may foster such emotional bonds. While empirical research on brand love and consumption behaviour has expanded considerably since Batra et al.'s foundational work, existing studies are predominantly situated within Western and Asian contexts. Consequently, critical perspectives on brand love and women's consumption behaviour in Africa remain underexplored. This research gap is the focus of this study and is particularly important given that global brands operating in African markets often reproduce Western ideals of femininity, raising concerns about cultural relevance, representation, and contextual appropriateness. Besides, drawing on United Nations population projections for 2025, women account for approximately 4.07 billion of the global population, with about 780 million residing in Africa. Hence, African women play a central role in household and societal consumption, frequently acting as primary decision-makers across diverse product categories. Moreover, till date, extant African literature has largely examined adjacent constructs—such as brand attitude, customer satisfaction, perceived quality, and brand loyalty—while offering limited explicit analysis of emotional brand attachments among women consumers. Accordingly, this conceptual paper addresses this omission by unpacking brand love as a key lens through which to understand women's consumption behaviour in Africa. Based on a synthesis of extant literature, this paper argues that African women's consumption dynamics are closely aligned with brand love, particularly for products intended for personal and household use. The study concludes by outlining avenues for future research, notably the need for empirical, context-sensitive investigations into brand love among African women consumers.

Building Connections in the Digital Age: How Credibility, Homophily, and Self-Disclosure Shape Parasocial Interaction with Fashion Bloggers on Instagram

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Abstract
In the digital age, fashion bloggers have emerged as powerful intermediaries between brands and consumers, yet our understanding of what drives followers to form deep connections with these bloggers remains fragmented. The current study addresses this gap by examining how blogger credibility, perceived similarity (homophily), and self-disclosure shape parasocial interaction (PSI) with fashion bloggers on Instagram in the Egyptian context, where digital influence intersects with unique cultural and economic dynamics. Using an online survey of 389 Egyptian Instagram users, the study captures the nuanced dimensions of these digital relationships. Through structural equation modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS, the findings reveal that all three factors significantly predict PSI, with blogger credibility emerging as the strongest driver, followed by homophily, while self-disclosure shows a modest yet significant effect. These findings provide empirical evidence on the relative importance of key PSI antecedents within the realm of Instagram fashion bloggers in Egypt, a context that remains underexplored in prior research. The results also offer insights for policymakers and marketers seeking to better leverage influencer partnerships in increasingly competitive digital environments.

Digital Transformation and Inbound Marketing in the Book Industry: Insights from a Qualitative and a Case Study in Tunisia

Author

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Abstract
This study aims to examine how inbound marketing strategies support the digital book industry. This research adopts an exploratory approach, combining a qualitative study and a Tunisian startup case study. The findings highlight the strategic role of inbound marketing in supporting customer acquisition and loyalty by offering immersive, user-centric digital reading experiences. This study contributes to the digital marketing literature in the creative and cultural industries by highlighting the strategic role of digital inbound marketing in creative and cultural industries, and particularly in e-book startups in emerging markets. Additionally, it offers insights for cultual startups aiming to enhance their positioning through content-driven and engagement-based strategies. It sheds light on the connection between technological innovation and cultural entrepreneurship, providing new perspectives on the digital transition in the publishing sector.

Implications of Adopting GSTC Certification by Tourism Businesses in South Africa

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Abstract

Despite the growing global emphasis on sustainable tourism and the recognized credibility of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Standards, adoption of the GSTC certification in South Africa's tourism sector remains remarkably low, with only two businesses reportedly certified as of early 2025. This study identified and analyzed the core principles, standards, criteria, assessment processes, benefits, and, critically, the challenges hindering the broader uptake of GSTC certification in the South African context. Through a systematic literature review, the findings illustrate the credibility of the GSTC framework and, that its core principles are grounded in Triple Bottom Line theory and the Sustainable Tourism Development Framework, and that it delivers measurable benefits for tourism businesses that choose to adopt the certification. However, the persistent low adoption rates are rooted in failures in the operating environment. The findings, synthesized from 19 peer-reviewed sources across diverse geographic contexts, demonstrate quantifiable environmental, economic and social benefits. Furthermore, the research suggests that for the benefits to be realized, tourism businesses require institutional support that includes financial access, capacity building, regulatory alignment and market channels. The recommendations put forward establish a roadmap for policymakers, industry leaders, and support organizations to collaborate in creating enabling conditions for enhanced sustainability practices in the tourism sector and for the broader adoption of the GSTC certification. The research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the specific challenges South African tourism businesses face in engaging with global sustainability standards. It provides a foundation for developing targeted strategies to promote the broader adoption of the GSTC certification, ultimately fostering internationally recognized sustainable practices in the South African tourism sector.

University Brand Evangelism: The Role of Brand Attachment and Administrative Service experience in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

Higher education has become increasingly marketised and brand-driven. Despite the growing interest in student-led brand advocacy as a critical asset for institutional sustainability, the literature remains theoretically underdeveloped, relying on fragmented and composite conceptualisations that obscure how distinct attachment dimensions drive brand evangelism in the context of higher education. Drawing on attachment theory, this study develops and tests a multidimensional model of student-institution brand attachment comprising identity-based, bonding-based, and emotion-based dimensions, and examines how administrative service experience (ASE) conditions their effects on university brand evangelism. A quantitative, cross-sectional survey was conducted among 871 past and present students of public and private universities in Ghana. Data were analysed using covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) to assess direct, mediating and moderating relationships within the proposed model. The findings indicate that identity-based and bonding-based attachments operate largely through emotion-based attachment to drive brand evangelism, with social interaction ties emerging as the strongest direct predictor. Brand trust exerts influence only indirectly, while ASE selectively strengthens attachment-evangelism relationships. This study contributes to the brand attachment and higher education branding literature by providing a more theoretically integrated understanding of the antecedent and intermediary effects of a tripartite model of student-institution attachment on the propensity to engage in brand evangelistic behaviours. It further extends understanding of everyday institutional touchpoints as contextual boundary conditions that strengthen the attachment–brand supportive behaviour relationship. This study is one of the first to comprehensively examine these issues in the context of higher education. Practically, the study highlights the strategic imperative for higher education institutions to align brand relationship management with administrative service design in fostering sustained student brand advocacy.

Keywords: Brand attachment, Brand evangelism, Higher education, Administrative service experience, student-institution relationships

The Specialization Resilience Paradox: When Export Concentration Protects African Economies from Global Shocks, 2005-2024

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Abstract

This paper investigates the existence of a specialization resilience paradox in African trade, challenging the established view that export diversification is the primary buffer against global shocks. Drawing from capabilities theory and transaction cost economics, the study employs a quasi-experimental research design using high-frequency data from the CEPII-BACI database (2005–2024), encompassing 1,006 country-year and 1.6 million product-year observations across 54 African economies. Methodologically, it identifies exogenous global demand shocks at the HS6 product level and estimates two-way and triple fixed-effects models to isolate causal effects. Findings robustly reveal the paradox: during shock years, higher product concentration is associated with significantly better export performance ($\beta = 1.106$, $p = 0.021$), while greater partner diversification correlates with worse outcomes ($\beta = -1.057$, $p = 0.040$). At the micro level, product-specific market diversification amplifies, rather than buffers, negative shock impacts ($\beta = -0.460$, $p < 0.001$). These effects are most pronounced among commodity-dependent economies, where deep specialization provides the strongest shock absorption. The results withstand multiple robustness checks, including alternative shock thresholds and two-way clustering. The interaction between pre-existing deep specialization and entrenched supply chains creates a reinforcing effect that confers resilience. The study concludes that in the African context, characterized by concentrated comparative advantages, strategic deepening of existing export sectors offers a more effective path to short-term resilience than broad horizontal diversification. Consequently, policy prescriptions for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) should prioritize building resilient regional value chains within core competitive advantages.

When Transparency Is Not Enough: How Perceived Organizational Integrity Shapes Consumer Trust in FMCG Markets

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Abstract

Purpose

This study examines whether organizational transparency directly builds consumer trust or whether its influence operates through consumers' perceptions of organizational integrity in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector.

Design/methodology/approach

A quantitative survey design was employed, drawing on data from 409 FMCG consumers in Ghana. Established measurement scales were used to assess organizational transparency, perceived organizational integrity, and consumer trust. Hypotheses were tested using mediation analysis with Hayes' PROCESS macro (Model 4).

Findings

The results reveal that organizational transparency does not have a significant direct effect on consumer trust. Instead, transparency influences trust indirectly through perceived organizational integrity, which fully mediates the relationship. This suggests that transparency contributes to trust only when it reinforces perceptions of ethical consistency and moral credibility.

Originality/value

This study challenges the dominant assumption that transparency is inherently trust-building and advances consumer marketing theory by identifying perceived organizational integrity as a key mechanism linking transparency and trust. By focusing on an emerging market FMCG context, the findings highlight the importance of integrity-driven transparency in environments characterized by consumer scepticism and information asymmetry.

Social Media Influencers and Youth Identity in Africa: Marketing Implications in a Disruptive Era

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Abstract

Introduction

Social media is reshaping identity construction and business marketing. The recent proliferation of social media influencers has significantly reshaped perceptions and identities among young Africans regarding consumption choices (Kankam, 2024; Hussain et al., 2025). This study investigates how influencers shape African youth's identity construction and the resulting marketing implications for organisations.

Background and Theoretical Orientation

This study applied Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), which highlights how young people consume to create meaning, belonging, and social distinction (Arnould & Thompson, 2018; Arnould et al., 2020). Social media enables African youth to explore and negotiate their identities through glocalisation, which blends global cultural products with local identities and lived experiences (Kjeldgaard & Askegaard, 2006; Hussain et al., 2025).

The study's objective

1. How do social media influencers impact youth in Africa in their sense of self-identity with culture?
2. What are the psychological and social determinants of influence over African youth?

Methodology

We used an exploratory qualitative approach, drawing on secondary data from peer-reviewed articles (2015–2025), industry reports (GSMA, Deloitte), and case studies from Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana. A thematic synthesis approach was used to determine dominant trends in identity formation, digital behaviour and influencer-brand-consumer dynamics.

Key Findings and Implications

The main contribution of this research’s preliminary findings indicates that redefining social media influencers as identity intermediaries rather than promotional agents offers fresh perspectives. It offers new insights into glocalisation in African digital cultures and thus simultaneously broadens our understanding of globalisation and identity studies.

Conclusion

Influencers play a significant role in the social construction of African youth's identities in various aspects of consumption, aspiration, and meaning-making. Culturally intelligent, multi-platform engagement is crucial for remaining relevant in Africa's rapidly evolving digital marketplace, where youth are major drivers.

Keywords: Social media influencers; Youth identity construction; Influencer marketing; African digital cultures; Glocalisation; Cultural intelligence.

Understanding Indigenous Language Communication at Home: A Social Marketing Integrative Theory Approach to Parents' Indigenous Language Use Intention in Ghana

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Abstract

The decline of indigenous languages in Ghana poses significant risks to cultural identity and intergenerational linguistic transmission. Despite policy efforts such as the mother-tongue education initiative, behavioral shifts toward using indigenous languages at home remain limited. This study applies an integrative social marketing framework, combining the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), to examine the factors influencing parents' intention to use indigenous languages when communicating with children at home in Ghana. A quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was employed, with data collected from 399 parents across community settings, including schools, churches, and residential neighborhoods. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using AMOS was applied to test hypothesized direct and mediated relationships among attitude, subjective norms, self-efficacy, reinforcements, behavioral capacity, environmental factors, and indigenous language use intention. The findings reveal that attitude ($\beta = 0.260$, $p < .001$) and subjective norms ($\beta = 0.404$, $p < .001$) significantly and positively predicted parents' intention to use indigenous languages, with subjective norms emerging as the strongest predictor. Self-efficacy, however, did not directly influence intention. Reinforcements partially mediated the attitude–intention and subjective norms–intention relationships, indicating that social feedback mechanisms amplify the effects of cognitive and normative beliefs on behavioral intention. Behavioral capacity and environmental factors did not mediate any of the hypothesized pathways. This suggests that the dominant English-speaking environment in Ghana may constrain the operationalization of these constructs. The study contributes an integrative theoretical model to indigenous language use studies and underscores the importance of attitudinal and normative factors in shaping language-use intention. In practice, it advocates community-centered social marketing campaigns that leverage social norms, cultural pride, and positive reinforcement to encourage parents to use indigenous languages at home.

Keywords: Indigenous languages, social marketing, Theory of Planned Behavior, Social Cognitive Theory, indigenous language use intention, Ghana

The Mediating Role of Satisfaction between Functional Housing Attributes and Student Loyalty to Private Housing

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Abstract
This study investigates the mediating role of student satisfaction in the relationship between functional housing attributes and student loyalty in the context of private student housing in South Africa. Drawing from the functional congruity model, the study examines students' evaluation of the fit between their expectations and actual performance of key functional housing attributes —building quality, monthly rental, and support facilities— and their impact on tenant satisfaction and loyalty. Using quantitative, cross-sectional design, a total of 274 valid responses from students living in private student housing in Gauteng Province (South Africa) were gathered and analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM) to test the direct and indirect relationships between constructs. Literature was used to source and adapt measurement items, which were then assessed on a five-point Likert scale. Preliminary findings reveal that functional housing attributes influence student satisfaction, which ultimately influences student loyalty to student housing. while functional housing attributes' direct influence on loyalty is positive, satisfaction enhances the relationship between the predictors (functional housing attributes) and loyalty. Thus, satisfaction shows its mediating power, as hypothesized. The results provide theoretical and practical implications for real estate marketing and housing providers in the higher education sector. Satisfaction emerges as an important link between housing attributes and loyalty in student accommodation. Practically, property managers and policymakers should prioritize factors that influence satisfaction, including competitive pricing, quality building and supporting facilities.

The Impact of Digital Transformation on Customer Experience in the Mining Industry. The Mediating Role of Service Innovation

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to explore the impact of digital transformation on customer experience in the mining industry of Ghana, with a specific focus on the mediating role of service innovation.

Methodology: Utilizing a quantitative research design, the study analysed data from a sample of 218 customer-facing respondents using structured questionnaires. Statistical analyses were conducted through SPSS and SmartPLS to assess the causal relationships among the key variables.

Findings: The results reveal that a data-driven culture positively influences customer experience, while the impacts of business model innovation, technology integration, and digital intelligence are negligible. Importantly, service innovation acts as a significant mediator between these factors and customer experience, though it does not mediate the effect of a data-driven culture. This suggests that while digital transformation strategies are essential, their successful implementation relies heavily on effective service innovation to enhance customer interactions.

Practical Implications: Mining firms are encouraged to prioritize developing innovative service offerings to leverage their digital transformation efforts effectively. As findings illustrate that direct digital strategies may fail to improve customer experiences without underpinning service innovations, organizations should strategically align their technological investments with service innovation practices to maximize customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Originality/Value: This research provides novel insights into the dynamics of digital transformation and customer experience within the mining sector, elucidating the critical role of service innovation in leveraging digital capabilities for improved customer relations.

Beyond Awareness: A Value-Beliefs Model of Hepatitis B Vaccination Adoption in Ghana

Authors

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Abstract

Despite the availability of an effective vaccine, the adoption of Hepatitis B (HB) preventive behaviours remains persistently low in many developing economies. In Ghana, HB interventions have primarily relied on awareness creation and health-related risk messaging, with limited attention to how individuals evaluate prevention as a behavioural offer within a value exchange. Drawing on social marketing's exchange logic and Consumer Value Theory (CVT), this study reconceptualises HB prevention as a value-based adoption decision, and integrates belief-based antecedents of preventive behaviour with multidimensional perceived consumer value to explain vaccination adoption. The study proposes that perceived vulnerability, severity, benefits, barriers, and self-efficacy will influence HB preventive behaviour. The study further argues that perceived consumer value, conceptualised as functional, emotional, and social value, will mediate the relationships between these belief-based factors and preventive behaviour. To test the proposed model, data will be collected from the youth in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Data will be analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM-AMOS). The study is expected to contribute to social marketing scholarship by demonstrating the explanatory power of value-exchange mechanisms in preventive health adoption in developing country contexts, with practical implications for segmentation, value-based positioning, and friction reduction strategies that strengthen the functional, emotional, and social value of vaccination.

Keywords: social marketing; consumer value theory; preventive behaviour adoption; value exchange; Hepatitis B; Ghana.

Building Cultural Brand Equity in Football: Fan Digital Engagement and Perceived Authenticity in Global Clubs' AFCON Communication

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Abstract

Global football clubs increasingly recognise that their brand equity is not only built on performance but also on cultural narratives that resonate with diverse fan bases. This study investigates how clubs in the English Premier League, La Liga, Serie A, and other major leagues build cultural brand equity by acknowledging and posting Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON)–related content on their social media channels, particularly content tied to their African players. The project begins from the observation that AFCON has become a global cultural event, with European clubs actively amplifying their players' participation and achievements. Such digital practices including: celebratory posts, behind-the-scenes stories, and symbolic gestures of solidarity, signal authenticity and inclusivity, while also strengthening emotional connections with fans across Africa and the diaspora. By foregrounding AFCON narratives, clubs position themselves as culturally attuned brands that extend beyond local markets to global communities. Data collection will involve content analysis of club social media posts during AFCON 2025, complemented by fan surveys to capture perceptions of authenticity and engagement. Structural equation modelling will be used to test hypothesised relationships between AFCON-related digital communication, perceived authenticity, and cultural brand equity. The anticipated contribution of this research lies in bridging sport branding, digital engagement, and cultural studies. For scholars, it offers a lens into how global clubs strategically embed African narratives into their brand equity strategies. For practitioners, it highlights the value of authentic, culturally sensitive communication in strengthening both local pride and global visibility.

Nation Brand Pride as a Catalyst for Digital Engagement: Evidence from iShowSpeed's African Tour in the Disruption Economy

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Abstract

In Africa's disruption economy, nation brand pride has emerged as a powerful emotional driver of digital engagement, reshaping how citizens participate in branding processes and assert digital sovereignty. This study examines iShowSpeed's African tour as a case to investigate how pride in national identity catalyses digital amplification and sovereignty claims through influencer-mediated content. Drawing on emotional contagion theory, which explains the diffusion of affective states across digital networks, and social role theory, which positions citizens as active agents of nation branding, the research develops and tests a mediation model. A quantitative survey was conducted among Ghanaian social media users exposed to iShowSpeed's tour content on platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter/X. The model specifies Nation Brand Pride as the independent variable, Digital Amplification and Digital Sovereignty Assertion as dependent variables, and Influencer Content Engagement as the mediator. Data were analysed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling to validate constructs and assess mediation pathways. Findings reveal that nation brand pride significantly predicts influencer content engagement, which in turn mediates its impact on both digital amplification and sovereignty assertion. These results demonstrate how influencer-driven narratives mobilise citizens to act as digital ambassadors and assert ownership of national identity in online spaces. The study contributes to nation branding scholarship by theorising the affective and behavioural pathways through which pride translates into participatory digital practices. It extends emotional contagion theory into influencer-mediated tourism narratives and enriches social role theory by conceptualising citizens as co-producers of branding and sovereignty in Africa's disruption economy.

Sustainability and Repositioning of an Emerging Economy

Authors

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Abstract

Even though the concepts of positioning and sustainability continue to receive attention from international business and marketing scholars, scholarship on country repositioning and sustainability remains underdeveloped. Repositioning frequently involves complex decisions and investments to overcome marketplace challenges and educate consumers about the new positioning the organization will take going forward. This is important in the case of a nation seeking to promote business formation, nurture consumer well-being and welfare, and sustain a liberalized, market-based economy and a market-based consumption system. Sustainability and positioning in international business continue to attract the interest of scholars who envisage the need for more scholarly activities in the context of business and societal interface. We investigate sustainability and country repositioning as an important aspect of this interface. This research attempts to answer two key research questions: what policies and strategies are employed by policymakers and business executives to position a country to achieve a sustained, liberalized market environment, consumer well-being and welfare, and a market-based consumption system? Additionally, how do multinational enterprises (MNEs) and other state institutions in emerging economies pursue marketing strategies that align with sustainable government policies supporting a nation's repositioning efforts to grow businesses? To answer these research questions, we theorize that a nation's moral obligation to promote the well-being and welfare of its population resides in sustained government policies that reflect its position in the community of nations (Kolk, 2016). In a major quasi-longitudinal survey involving observations and in-depth interviews with senior policymakers, executives of state institutions, and senior executives of multinational enterprises in an emerging African economy, this research examines the relationship between sustainability and country repositioning. The findings show sustainability and, in particular, good governance are the driving engines that bring together policies and strategies to realize country repositioning.

A study on adapting the consumer awareness scale to Arabic

Author

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Abstract

Purpose: Builds on the concept of consumer awareness and its conceptualization and operationalization in previous studies, this study aims to translate, adapt, and assess the reliability and validity of Arabic version of the consumer awareness scale.

Study design/methodology/approach:

Sample and data: The study was conducted with a sample of 390 consumer from four Arab countries. The consumer awareness scale validity of was tested by exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis methods, using SPSS-20 and Amos-24.

Results: A five factorials structure of consumer awareness scale was obtained, as was proposed by previous studies. Our confirmatory factor analysis supported the acceptable level of validity and reliability of the consumer awareness scale with five factors in Arab countries.

Originality/value: This study is, to the best of the authors' knowledge, the first to adapt, translate and validate a consumer awareness scale in Arabic. The present study opens new and previously under-investigated interdisciplinary research streams, especially comparative studies among Arab countries.

Research limitations/implications: Future studies should examine its validity of the Arabic version among more diverse consumers in different Arabic-speaking countries, in order to compare the results and see whether these are generalizable.

Perceived AI Characteristics impact on User Experience: The Mediating Role of Credibility

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Abstract
The aim of this research is to understand the mechanisms through which the cognitive experience (informativeness) and the affective experience (entertainment) of AI can be enhanced by the perceived characteristics of AI, namely anthropomorphism and Justice, through credibility, while providing both theoretical contributions to the literature on AI experience and practical recommendations to improve user experience. The data were gathered from a sample of 204 people drawn from the North African context and analyzed using SEM. The results showed that anthropomorphism and fairness have a positive influence on the perceived AI experience through credibility, suggesting that systems perceived as more human and fairer are considered more reliable and trustworthy by users. Credibility plays a central role in the relationship between AI features and user experience attributes, and it constitutes a key psychological mechanism for transforming the technical characteristics of AI into rich and engaging experiences.

Keywords: Generative IA, AI Anthropomorphism, Justice, Credibility, User Experience.

Track 7:

Operations, Supply Chain and Project Management

Trend of Air Cargo and Customs Revenue and Supply Chain System at Airports in Nigeria

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Abstract
The air cargo industry requires a seamless supply chain system to move goods from manufacturers to final consumers located in very distant locations. Efforts in the air cargo industry have focused on improving supply chain efficiency, without recognising that cargo volume and revenue trends are critical to the seamless delivery of goods by air. This study examines trends in air cargo volume and customs revenue in Nigeria's air cargo supply chain industry. Data on air cargo volume and customs revenue required for the study were collected from the records of the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS), Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Lagos, Nigeria. The data were analysed using a line chart and least-squares regression. The study found a growing but fluctuating trend of air cargo volume and customs revenue from 2015 to 2025. The regression analysis quantifies how changes in cargo throughput contribute to revenue generation, which in turn affects the financial capacity and operational sustainability of air cargo supply chain systems. The finding has significant implications for the effectiveness of the air cargo supply chain, seamless delivery, and customer satisfaction in the air cargo industry. The study recommends that airport authorities and customs agencies should institutionalise continuous monitoring of cargo throughput and revenue trends as part of efforts to improve the air cargo supply chain system.

Managing Organisational Cultural Differences in Multi-Organisational ICT Projects: An Integrated Cultural Management Model

Authors

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Abstract
Multi-organisational Information and Communication Technology (ICT) projects in South Africa increasingly rely on collaboration between culturally diverse partner organisations, yet the impact of organisational cultural differences on project outcomes remains empirically inconclusive. Meta-analytic effect sizes spanning −0.60 to +0.48 leave practitioners without clear guidance, while existing cultural frameworks remain predominantly diagnostic rather than prescriptive. This study addressed the research question: *to what extent do organisational cultural differences of project teams impact the outcome of multi-organisational ICT projects in South Africa?* The objectives were to identify measurable cultural dimensions, examine their associations with team dynamics and project success, evaluate the role of formal cultural management processes, and develop a context-appropriate management framework. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design with an embedded qualitative component, notated QUAN(qual)→QUAL, was employed. The quantitative phase surveyed 93 ICT professionals across eight organisations spanning fixed-line, mobile, and Internet Service Provider sub-sectors, accessed through a fourteen-year industry network. Exploratory Factor Analysis, Spearman's correlation, and chi-square testing were applied. The qualitative phase comprised eleven semi-structured interviews with strategically selected senior practitioners, analysed using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic approach. Five cultural dimensions explaining 68.9% of variance were identified (KMO = 0.849), with three hypotheses fully supported and one partially supported. Leadership effectiveness emerged as the strongest correlate of project success ($\rho = 0.773$), followed by collaborative communication ($\rho = 0.608$). A recognition-implementation gap was confirmed - formal cultural processes were widely endorsed yet weakly associated with success ($\rho = 0.140$). Three context-specific dimensions emerged: transformation imperatives, multilingual complexity, and generational evolution. The Integrated Cultural Management (ICM) Model translates these findings into a three-level architecture (Strategic, Operational, Individual) with five implementation phases and dual cross-cutting mechanisms (Leadership Moderation and Communication Integration), providing actionable guidance for practitioners and policy contribution toward PMBoK enhancement.

Construction risks in confined heritage urban setting: empirical evidence from Stone Town, Zanzibar, Tanzania

Author

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Abstract
Construction in confined heritage urban areas poses significant risks due to spatial constraints, aging infrastructure and the need to preserve cultural heritage. While construction risk management frameworks are widely applied, they are largely generic, providing limited guidance for projects undertaken within dense historic urban environments where heritage sensitivity and urban confinement coexist. The study critically assesses construction-related risks in Stone Town, Zanzibar, a UNESCO Heritage Site characterised by narrow streets and historically significant buildings, presenting distinct operational challenges. The study aimed at identifying predominant construction risks, examine their impacts and propose context-specific mitigation strategies appropriate to confined heritage settings. A mixed method approach was employed, combining quantitative data from 64 structured questionnaires with qualitative insights from 9 semi-structured interviews and systematic field observations. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and relative importance measures to prioritise risks, while qualitative data were used to contexualise risk mechanisms and existing management practices. Findings indicate that workers' fatigue, restricted emergency access, delayed material delivery and pedestrian obstruction are among the critical risks affecting construction activities in Stone Town. Additional risks include noise pollution, theft, environmental degradation and unintended damage to adjacent historical structure, resulting in unplanned restoration costs and schedule disruption. These risks are exacerbated by limited site spaces, high pedestrian activity and inadequate coordination among construction stakeholders and heritage authorities. To address these challenges, the study recommends adoption of just-in-time material delivery system, mandatory safety and heritage awareness training for site personnel, and improved coordination with heritage management institutions such as the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority. Strengthening regulatory enforcement and public awareness, and incorporating real-time risk monitoring mechanisms are also proposed to improve site safety and accountability. This study contributes an empirically grounded framework for managing contractors, planners, policy makers, and conservation bodies in historically sensitive urban contexts.

Analysis of the M&E Factors Influencing Performance of Public Construction Projects in Dar es Salaam City, Tanzania

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Abstract

The focus of this paper was to analyze the monitoring and evaluation factors influencing performance of construction projects in Dar es Salaam City, Tanzania. A case study research approach along with qualitative research design was adopted. The sample comprised 10 large public construction projects which were in implementation stage in the research area. Interview guide was designed and deployed to interview Project Managers from each of 10 projects; however, seven (7) Managers were successfully interviewed before reaching data saturation point. The obtained data were analyzed using contents analysis and presented by means of explanation and logical comparisons. The findings revealed that the M&E factors which influenced performance of public construction projects included frequent M&E activities, timely reporting and prompt action on M&E findings, as well as presence of highly dedicated staff in the project teams. Building from the stated finding, this paper gives useful recommends to the Government and public construction companies in a bid to enhance performance of public construction projects. That is, they should ensure high focus and emphases on frequent M&E activities, timely reporting and prompt action on M&E findings, as well as presence of highly dedicated staff in the project teams to enhance project performance. Other factors that should be given equal consideration include adequate budget allocation and mobilization, skillful planning of M&E activities, management support, a participatory approach in M&E, and gender and competence considerations in M&E staff throughout the project cycle.

Keywords: M&E factors, Performance of Public Construction Projects

Factors Influencing the Funding of Sustainable Construction Projects in Tanzania

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Abstract

Access to adequate finance is one of the principal barriers to scaling sustainable construction in Tanzania. This paper focuses on identifying the factors that affect funding of sustainable construction projects, drawing on a qualitative, exploratory study of key stakeholders in Tanzania and comparative insights from South Africa. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 respondents, i.e. funders, implementing agents, and industry experts supplemented by an extensive review of academic and policy literature on sustainable construction finance. The findings show that funding for sustainable construction is constrained by intertwined financial, regulatory, institutional, and knowledge-related factors. Financial constraints include high upfront costs, strict collateral requirements, limited long-term instruments, and risk-averse lending practices that prioritize short-term profitability over lifecycle benefits. Regulatory and policy misalignment further weaken incentives, as environmental compliance is not linked to preferential finance, tax benefits, or streamlined approval processes, and there is no dedicated green finance taxonomy to guide market actors. Institutional barriers encompass weak public financial management systems, fragmented governance, and bureaucratic inefficiencies that delay project approvals and increase transaction costs. Knowledge and technical capacity gaps among lenders, developers, and regulators reinforce perceptions that sustainable construction is costly and risky, while the absence of standardized ESG metrics hampers project appraisal and the development of tailored green products. The paper synthesizes these constraints into four overarching categories and presents a table mapping each factor to its implications for funding decisions. It concludes that addressing these factors requires an integrated response combining policy reform, risk-sharing mechanisms, capacity-building, and improved coordination across the construction and finance sectors should Tanzania unlock finance at the scale required for a sustainable and resilient built environment.

Navigating Value Creation in Public-Private Partnerships: Barriers, Drivers and Best Practices From Uganda's Project Landscape

Authors

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Abstract

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects have become critical mechanisms for governments to deliver public infrastructure and services amidst fiscal constraints. Yet the value creation process within PPPs remains inconsistent: some projects deliver durable stakeholder value while others fail spectacularly, resulting in public unrest, project termination, and substantial financial losses. This paper examines value creation across Uganda's PPP landscape, identifying the barriers that hinder it, the drivers that enable it, and the relationship between current and best practices across the PPP Project Lifecycle (PPP-PLC). Drawing on qualitative research involving sixteen key informants from diverse PPP projects in Uganda, and underpinned by Public Value Theory, the study identifies eight core value-creation elements — commitment (16%), sustainability (22%), engagement (14%), collaboration (13%), efficiency (12%), communication (9%), dispute resolution (8%), and risk management (6%) — and presents a validated best-practice value creation framework organised across five PPP-PLC phases: Identification, Procurement, Design and Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Transfer. The paper contributes to the conference theme of organisational transformation for Africa's future by demonstrating how deliberate, lifecycle-anchored practice improvement can elevate public value outcomes in emerging economy contexts.

Keywords: public-private partnerships, value creation, barriers, drivers, best practices, PPP project lifecycle, public value theory, Uganda, emerging economies, organisational transformation.

A Dynamic, Behaviorally Informed MADM Framework for Mental Health App Evaluation: Fusing Multimodal User Feedback, Temporal Dynamics, and Objective Weighting

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital mental health applications has generated large volumes of user-generated reviews. However, existing evaluation approaches often rely on either ratings or textual feedback in isolation. They also assume static user preferences and overlook behavioral decision factors, reducing reliability and practical relevance. To address these issues, this study proposes a probabilistic reliable linguistic regret-based dynamic linear assignment method (PRL–RD–LAM) for evaluating mental health applications. A dataset of 110,335 valid reviews from five applications (2022–2024) is analyzed. Using topic modeling and hierarchical clustering, six key evaluation attributes are identified: sleep and relaxation, app functionality and updates, mindfulness and personal growth, subscription and payment, value and service quality, and stress and anxiety management. Sentiment scores are combined with ratings to construct the evaluation structure. The proposed method advances decision-making in three ways. First, it incorporates regret theory to capture sensitivity to relative performance differences. Second, it introduces a dynamic weighting scheme that combines entropy-based time-weighting with data-driven objective weighting. Third, it develops a dynamic linear assignment method for ranking alternatives. The model is subsequently applied to rank the five applications. Its performance is evaluated using comparative and statistical analyses. The results show strong agreement with established methods, with Spearman correlation coefficients exceeding 0.80. The dynamic framework produces meaningful rank changes compared to static evaluation by improving discrimination among closely ranked alternatives. Unlike traditional static models, the proposed framework integrates multimodal data, temporal dynamics, and behavioral mechanisms. It complements existing approaches and enables adaptive evaluation. Theoretically, it embeds behavioral decision theory into a dynamic data-driven framework. In practice, it supports platform operators, developers, and users in making informed application choices and has the potential to improve mental health decision-making.

Can Disruptive Technologies Mitigate Environmental Risks in Selected Ports in Sub Saharan Africa?

Author

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Abstract

This research focuses on the process by which disruptive technologies, such as Digital Twin Technology (DTT), can enhance port operations, especially in mitigating environmental risks. The port is a beehive of activity, with several processes contributing to GHG emissions. However, several African Ports have not been able to harness the potential of DTT in mitigating environmental risk. This exploratory research examines how selected Ports in Selected Developed Nations and Africa have been mitigating environmental risks and discusses the implications for African ports. The selected ports in developed nations that have adopted DTT include the Port of Singapore, the Port of Rotterdam (Netherlands), the Port of Antwerp-Bruges (Belgium), Busan Port (South Korea), the Port of Valencia (Spain): Port of Hamburg (Germany). The research examines the following selected ports in developing countries to ascertain what strategies were used to mitigate GHG emissions. The Ports are: Port of Durban in South Africa, Port of Kenya in Mombasa, Port of Tema in Ghana, West Africa, Lagos Port Complex in West Africa, Walvis Bay, Namibia, Port of Port Louis in Mauritius, and the Port of Tangermed in Morocco. This is a case study research design that adopts an in-depth, qualitative investigation of many cases, in this case, ports in Africa and Developed nations within their real-world context. The findings of the research show that only Tangermed ports is making use of DTT; all other African ports have not been able to harness the benefits of disruptive technologies. Therefore, it is recommended that maritime stakeholders collaborate to develop sustainable strategies to enhance the adoption of smart technologies, more so because these emissions affect lives, ports in Africa. The implication of this research is to harness the potential of disruptive technologies to enhance sustainability.

Investigating the Level of Youth Engagement in Smart Township Transition: A Bottom-Up Approach in eThekwini Municipality

Author

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Abstract
The increasing global interest in smart cities has intensified efforts to develop inclusive, technology-enabled urban environments, yet research on youth engagement in smart township transitions in the Global South remains limited. This study will investigate youth engagement in the transition toward smart township development in eThekwini Municipality, South Africa, framing this transition as an urban transformation project in which youth stakeholder participation is a critical determinant of project performance and operational effectiveness. Young people are central to the success of such initiatives; however, their participation is often constrained by structural, technological, and psychological barriers that limit their capacity to influence project outcomes. A mixed-methods approach will be adopted, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative focus group discussions to examine three primary variables: the digital divide as a structural barrier to operational inclusion; technology adoption drivers informed by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) as a link to operational efficiency, governance, and coordination; and task–technology alignment as a measure of fit between youth capabilities and smart township systems. The study will further explore the mediating effects of perceived feasibility and empowerment, as well as the moderating influence of shortcut culture and fear of starting big. Structural Equation Modelling will be applied to test the hypothesised relationships and validate the proposed conceptual framework. Theoretically, this study extends existing adoption models by integrating digital divide (structural), UTAUT (behavioural), and fear of starting big (psychological) dimensions into a unified framework applicable to township contexts. Empirically, it will offer one of the first youth-focused examinations of smart township adoption in South Africa, with youth engagement positioned as a stakeholder management factor that shapes project performance. Practically, the study will provide actionable recommendations for municipalities to design participatory frameworks that position youth as active co-creators of smart township solutions.

Industrial Sector and Energy Access in Nigeria: The Need for Technological and Policy Innovations

Author

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Abstract
The study investigates promising technological innovations like renewable energy integration, energy-efficient manufacturing systems, smart grid applications, and decentralized power generation that could revolutionize industrial energy usage. It further examines Nigeria's energy policy environment, including the National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policy (NREEEP), the Electricity Act 2023, and other incentives aimed at enhancing industrial energy access. These frameworks are critically assessed for their effectiveness, implementation challenges, and potential for driving inclusive industrial growth. Using a combination of policy review and industry data, the paper identifies gaps in governance and infrastructure that hinder progress. It offers practical recommendations such as stronger regulatory enforcement, increased private investment, support for green technologies, and improved coordination between industry stakeholders and government bodies. Nigeria's industrial sector is central to the country's economic development, job creation, and technological progress. However, inadequate and unreliable energy access continues to pose a major challenge to industrial productivity and global competitiveness. This paper explores the vital link between industrial performance and energy access in Nigeria, emphasizing the role of technology and policy in delivering long-term, sustainable solutions. The current energy landscape is characterized by a heavy reliance on fossil fuels, erratic grid supply, and the high cost of alternative energy sources such as diesel and off-grid solutions — all of which constrain efficient industrial operations. In conclusion, the paper argues that achieving sustainable industrialization in Nigeria hinges on aligning technological innovation with decisive policy reform. Addressing the energy access deficit is not only essential for unlocking Nigeria's industrial potential but also for meeting national development goals and global sustainability commitments.

Keywords: Energy Access, Industrial Sector, Nigeria, Renewable Energy, Technological Innovation, Policy Reform, Energy Efficiency, Sustainable Development, Industrialization, Energy Governance.

Balancing Speed and Quality In Building Projects: Positioning Their Relationship

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Abstract

Construction speed and quality are two critical aspects of project management that must be carefully balanced to ensure successful outcomes. The adversarial or supportive relationship between construction speed and quality has an upshot on the performance of the project which is the quest of this paper. The main purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between construction speed and quality and determine whether accelerating project delivery necessarily compromises quality outcomes. A quantitative research approach was adopted to collect data for the study. Using questionnaires, 70 responses were obtained from contractors registered by Contractors Registration Board (CRB) of Tanzania in Class I and II out of 93 distributed. Data was analyzed using correlation analysis in IBM SPSS Statistics 20, focusing on key factors influencing construction speed and quality. The findings reveal that several quality-related factors including tools for assessing efficiency and quality outcomes, quality of materials, consistency in quality standards, and, minimization of rework are positively correlated with speed-enhancing practices such as effective planning, stakeholder coordination efficiency, labour productivity and prioritizing speed over quality. These results challenge the traditional assumption of a trade-off, demonstrating instead, that construction speed can reinforce, rather than compromise quality when supported by integrated project management practices. It is therefore concluded that achieving an optimal balance between speed and quality requires an integrated approach that considers the interdependence of these factors with their relationship mediated by management practices, coordination mechanisms, and process control systems. These findings contribute to construction management knowledge by providing empirical evidence from Tanzania and offer practical insights for contractors, project managers, and clients to improve project delivery without sacrificing long-term performance or safety.

Keywords: Construction projects, Contractors, Project management, Quality, Tanzania

Construction risks in confined heritage urban setting: empirical evidence from a Case Study of Stone Town, Zanzibar, Tanzania

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Abstract
Construction in confined heritage urban areas poses significant risks due to spatial constraints, aging infrastructure and heritage preservation. While construction risk management frameworks are widely applied, they are largely generic and provide limited guidance for the projects in dense historic urban environments where heritage sensitivity and urban confinement coexist. The study aims to identify predominant construction risks, examine their impacts, and propose context-specific mitigation strategies appropriate for confined heritage settings. This study adopted a mixed method, single case study design, combining quantitative data from 64 structured questionnaires with qualitative insights from 9 semi-structured interviews and systematic field observations. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and relative importance measures to prioritize risks, while qualitative data were used to contextualize risk mechanisms and existing management practices. Findings indicate that workers' fatigue, restricted emergency access, delayed material delivery, and pedestrian obstruction are among the critical risks affecting construction activities in Stone Town. Additional risks include noise pollution, theft, environmental degradation, and unintended damage to adjacent historic structures, resulting in unplanned restoration costs and schedule disruptions. These risks are exacerbated by limited site space, high pedestrian activity, and inadequate coordination among construction stakeholders and heritage authorities. To address these challenges, the study recommends implementing regular safety training programs, developing site-specific emergency response plans, and strengthening coordination between contractors and regulatory authorities to improve site safety and accountability in confined heritage urban areas.

Key words: *Construction risk management, Heritage urban environments, Confined construction sites, Stone Town-Zanzibar, Risk mitigation strategies, Construction safety*

Track 8:

Education Management

Quality Assurance in African Higher Education: Structural Challenges and Paths to Continental Harmonization

Author

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Abstract

Quality assurance in African higher education is an important issue, particularly due to the increasing number of students and the rapid development of private institutions. Despite the existence of continental frameworks such as the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA) and the Pan-African Quality Assurance Framework (PAQAF), evaluation mechanisms remain limited, including in Tunisia. This research aims to better understand the levers and barriers to the development of Quality Assurance in African Higher Education (QAAHE). The results of the exploratory study reveal that QAAHE is primarily hampered by insufficient financial and human resources, as well as organizational resistance to change and a frequent lack of awareness of the continental ASG-QA framework. The operational challenges for external evaluators are compounded by the complexity of procedures and the linguistic diversity of the continent, which complicates the development of standardized training and tools. To successfully navigate this transition, the study recommends a complementary approach that aligns national standards with ASG-QA, supported by dedicated funding integrated into national budgets, targeted awareness campaigns, and priority investment in capacity building for all institutional stakeholders. Thus, the development of robust quality assurance appears essential to aligning African higher education with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), thereby contributing to a more competitive and inclusive educational landscape.

Keywords: Quality Assurance; Evaluation; Pan-African Mobility; Sustainable Development Goal 4

Enhancing Students' Employability Skills through Challenge-Based Virtual Exchange: An Industry-Integrated Cross-Border Model

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of an industry-partnered Virtual Exchange (VE) structured around a Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) approach in enhancing students' employability skills within a cross-border higher education collaboration. In an increasingly global, complex, and interconnected world, the job market demands graduates who can operate effectively in multicultural and virtual workplaces while solving complex problems. This project explores how engagement in real-world startup challenges influences students' perceived career readiness and transferable skills. Eighteen engineering students from Tunisia, Palestine, and the United States participated in a two-month Virtual Exchange, partnering with two startups that proposed industry challenges. Working in multidisciplinary and multicultural teams, students identified problems, developed innovative solutions, created prototypes, and pitched their projects to an academic–industry jury. Using an exploratory case study design, data were collected through a post-VE survey comprising Likert-scale items and open-ended questions measuring perceived development across seven competency areas: problem-solving, teamwork, intercultural competence, digital collaboration, communication skills, creativity, and workplace preparedness. Findings reveal high overall satisfaction ($M = 4.39/5$, $SD = 0.61$) and strong perceived gains in public speaking confidence ($M = 4.28$), intercultural competence ($M = 4.22$), teamwork in multicultural settings ($M = 4.17$), and problem-solving abilities ($M = 4.11$). Students also reported improvements in creativity ($M = 4.06$) and digital tool proficiency ($M = 4.06$), supporting development of key employability skills. Career readiness showed moderately strong agreement ($M = 3.89$). However, instructional clarity ($M = 3.50$) and perceived balance of team contribution ($M = 3.56$) emerged as areas requiring attention. These findings suggest that industry-partnered Challenge-Based Virtual Exchange can serve as an effective pedagogical model for strengthening employability skills in globally connected learning environments. The study contributes to understanding how authentic industry engagement within virtual international collaborations prepares students for 21st-century workplaces.

Can E-learning Minimize the Gender Gap in Engineering? A Case in Tanzania

Author

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Abstract
The under-representation of female engineers in Tanzania, amidst national goals of the Development Vision 2050, is a concern. Female participation in engineering is linked to increased performance and innovation. However, a ‘chilly ‘classroom environment, including sexual harassment, leads to feelings of inadequacy and low academic self-efficacy, which in turn hinders females from pursuing engineering careers. This study proposes the use of e-learning to help eliminate these barriers experienced by female engineering students in engineering classrooms. Qualitative research was conducted involving 30 university female and male engineering students to investigate their experiences of gender bias classrooms, as well as perceptions and intentions towards the adoption of online engineering. The findings reveal that the perceptions of online engineering as not conducive to lab work negatively affected intention to use online engineering programmes. Implications to both research and practice were elaborated, and recommendations were shared with practitioners to position online engineering as a viable platform.

Artificial Intelligence as a Strategic Tool for Higher Education Management: Implications for University Governance and Academic Programs

Author

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Abstract

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) is profoundly transforming higher education institutions, not only in teaching and learning processes but also in their management and governance. While existing research largely focuses on the pedagogical use of AI, its role as a strategic tool for higher education management remains underexplored, particularly in the African context. This paper examines how artificial intelligence can support the management of higher education institutions by enhancing decision-making, academic program management, and institutional governance. Drawing on a conceptual analysis supported by observations from university practice, the study explores the potential of AI-driven tools in areas such as student performance monitoring, academic planning, quality assurance, and resource allocation. Particular attention is given to the challenges faced by university administrators, including resistance to change, ethical concerns, data governance, and the need for capacity building among academic staff. The paper argues that the strategic integration of AI into higher education management can contribute to improved institutional performance and academic quality when aligned with clear governance frameworks and contextual realities. The study concludes with practical recommendations for university leaders and policymakers seeking to leverage artificial intelligence as a driver of sustainable transformation in higher education institutions in Africa.

University Social Responsibility: A Bibliometric Overview (2000-2025) and Research Agenda

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Abstract

The current work highlights the evolution in university social responsibility research by analyzing the key trends and major concepts. Additionally, the knowledge structures of such research themes were analyzed and mapped. Moreover, this paper seeks to present a research agenda concerning the study subject. It employed a bibliometric approach USR. A total of 832 documents were obtained from Scopus and Web of Science datasets and analyzed using both R 4.1.2 and VOSviewer software. The findings revealed that the field is strongly driven by research into University Social Responsibility, particularly its implementation within Higher Education and through Service Learning. Furthermore, core ideas around the University's Social Responsibility and its relationship with various Stakeholders underpin the entire field, providing a broad conceptual framework. Regarding the relevant areas of development, the analysis reveals that themes like Social Participation, Accountability, and Knowledge Management are showing signs of emergence, with new publications attempting to define their interrelations. In addition, the explicit linkage between Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Communication appears less integrated currently. Whereas Sustainable Development Goals, Sustainable Development, and Environmental Education represent a potentially re-emerging or developing area, with foundational work and new research connecting these vital concepts. The findings of the current work also offer a solid understanding and insights into the potential directions for the research agenda in these disciplines.

Keywords: University social responsibility, Stakeholders, SDG, Bibliometrics, Research agenda

Track 9:

Special Sessions

Exploring the presence and role of adhocracy culture in nonprofit organizations

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Abstract

Despite the recognised role of adhocracy culture in enhancing organisational adaptability and responsiveness in dynamic environments, the literature consistently suggests that nonprofit organisations (NPOs) are predominantly characterised by a clan-oriented culture. As NPOs face increasing performance pressures alongside growing demand for their services, and given the limited research attention devoted to adhocracy culture within the nonprofit context, this study seeks to explore how adhocracy culture is perceived and understood in NPOs and how it is viewed in relation to organisational practices and performance. To address this aim, semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives from five nonprofit organisations in Saudi Arabia. The findings indicate that adhocracy culture is perceived as a potentially important driver of organisational effectiveness across multiple dimensions and levels. Participants associated adhocracy-related practices with enhanced responsiveness to stakeholder needs, stronger organisational positioning within their communities, increased attractiveness to donors and funders, and higher levels of employee fulfilment and engagement. However, the findings also suggest that adhocracy culture remains limited in practice, is not consistently understood at senior management levels, and is not fully embedded in organisational policies, structures, or everyday activities. These insights highlight the potential value of adhocracy-oriented cultural attributes for NPOs while underscoring the challenges associated with their adoption. The study offers context-specific insights that may inform future research and practice and suggests that further studies could examine adhocracy culture in relation to organisational performance, social impact, and employee engagement across diverse nonprofit settings.

Determinants of the Adoption of Connected Health Devices

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Abstract
Despite the potential of connected health devices, their adoption remains slow. This qualitative study, based on individual interviews, aims to understand the intentions of both users and non-users, as well as the barriers to adoption. The results show that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and the device's characteristics strengthen the intention to adopt. In contrast, certain risks hinder adoption. Three main types of risks were identified: financial risk, related to the cost of devices; performance risk; and privacy risk, related to the security and confidentiality of personal data. These risks reduce users' intention to adopt these technologies.
Keywords: Connected health, Connected devices, adoption intention, Adoption resistance.

Track 10:

Submissions in French

Chocs climatiques, insécurité alimentaire et pauvreté en Afrique de l'Ouest: une analyse microéconomique

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Abstract

Cet article examine les déterminants de l'insécurité alimentaire des ménages dans l'UEMOA à partir des données de l'Enquête harmonisée sur les conditions de vie des ménages (EHCVM-2022), couvrant 24 899 ménages dans huit pays. Un modèle logit identifie les facteurs influençant la probabilité d'une insécurité alimentaire, définie par une part des dépenses alimentaires supérieure à 60 %.

Les résultats montrent que les catastrophes naturelles accroissent fortement la vulnérabilité, tandis qu'un revenu par tête élevé et une taille de ménage importante réduisent le risque. Les ménages ruraux présentent plus du double de probabilité d'insécurité alimentaire, révélant des disparités spatiales, et des différences significatives entre pays confirment l'influence des contextes nationaux.

Ces constats appellent à des politiques ciblées intégrant résilience climatique, protection sociale et réduction des inégalités territoriales pour atténuer durablement l'insécurité alimentaire.

Normes sociales et insertion des femmes dans les métiers traditionnellement masculins: analyse du cas de Ouagadougou

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Abstract

Cet article analyse les obstacles à l'intégration des femmes dans des métiers traditionnellement masculins à Ouagadougou, malgré les avancées en matière de technologies, d'éducation et d'émancipation. Bien que les femmes disposent aujourd'hui de niveaux de qualification et de compétences comparables à ceux des hommes, elles demeurent confrontées à des normes sociales rigides, à des discriminations salariales et à une exigence constante de légitimation professionnelle. En Afrique, le poids des normes patriarcales rend l'accès à des professions telles que la mécanique, le transport, le bâtiment ou la direction d'entreprise particulièrement difficile. À partir d'entretiens qualitatifs, cette étude explore les défis socioculturels rencontrés par ces femmes et les stratégies qu'elles mobilisent pour s'affirmer. Fondée sur la théorie du genre et les approches féministes, l'analyse révèle que les institutions et pratiques professionnelles restent largement structurées selon des standards masculins, perpétuant les inégalités économiques et sociales.

Au carrefour des disruptions: L'interaction réflexive entre agence individuelle et structures organisationnelles dans la dynamique des carrières informatiques en Tunisie

Authors

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Abstract

This paper examines how, in a context of accelerated digital transformation, the reflexive interaction between the individual agency of Tunisian IT engineers and local organizational structures produces new career scripts within a globalized ecosystem. Drawing on structuration theory (Giddens, 1987) and career script theory (Barley, 1989; Cappellen & Janssens, 2010), we conduct an embedded multiple-case study across seven organizations in Tunisia (Yin, 2014). Forty-four semi-structured interviews (2,387 minutes) were analysed through iterative thematic analysis using NVivo 12. Our findings corroborate three research propositions and yield four conceptual contributions: structural double-articulation as a context-specific extension of structuration theory; ascendant scriptation as a directional institutionalization mechanism; the bridging organizational career script; and the institutional rupture career script. These contributions extend career theory to African emerging contexts and potentially prefigure the technological talent retention challenges the continent will face in the coming decades.

Les Createurs De Contenu Social Et La Conscience De Sante A L'ere Des Transformations Numeriques: Une Etude Exploratoire

Authors

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Abstract

Résumé: À l'ère des perturbations numériques et sociales, les réseaux sociaux sont devenus un canal majeur de diffusion des messages de santé, où émergent de nouveaux acteurs non institutionnels : les créateurs de contenu à vocation sociale, dont la mission est avant tout de sensibiliser plutôt que de promouvoir des produits. Cette communication vise à analyser le rôle des créateurs de contenu à vocation social dans la conscience de santé des utilisateurs. À cet effet, nous avons étudié les caractéristiques des créateurs ainsi que celles de leurs contenus. Une étude qualitative a été menée à partir d'entretiens semi directifs réalisés auprès de 25 utilisateurs des réseaux sociaux. Les résultats ont été structurés selon le modèle ELM (route centrale, route périphérique). Les caractéristiques des influenceurs (crédibilité ; expertise ; altruisme ; spontanéité et similarité avec la cible) et de leurs contenus (informatif ; inspirant/motivant et créatif/original) apportent de nouveaux éclairages sur les déterminants de leur pouvoir à influencer l'adoption de comportements sains.

Mots clés: Plateformes sociales ; Créateurs de contenus sociaux ; Santé ; Comportements sains.

La dénonciation de la corruption en ligne en Tunisie : Effets de la perception des efforts de transparence du gouvernement et de la prédisposition des citoyens à la transparence

Authors

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Abstract

Dans le cadre des travaux sur la lutte contre la corruption, le principe transparence se présente comme une prescription universelle pour combattre ce phénomène. Cette recherche porte un intérêt particulier au comportement de dénonciation de la corruption en ligne et à ses déterminants. Elle vise, principalement, à examiner l'effet de la perception de la transparence du gouvernement par les citoyens ainsi que la prédisposition de ces derniers à la transparence (révélation de soi) sur le comportement de dénonciation de la corruption en ligne. Ce travail s'intéresse également aux déterminants de la transparence perçue du gouvernement. Par ailleurs, il vise à étudier l'effet de la réputation du gouvernement en transparence ainsi que la prédisposition des citoyens à la transparence (révélation de soi), sur la transparence perçue du gouvernement. Pour ce faire, une étude quantitative, au moyen d'un questionnaire administré en ligne auprès de 407 participants, a été conduite dans le contexte tunisien. Les résultats montrent que les citoyens se basent sur la réputation du gouvernement en transparence pour juger les efforts de transparence de ce dernier. L'impact de la prédisposition des citoyens à la transparence (révélation de soi) s'avère nuancé dans le sens que les réticences individuelles à la transparence façonnent la perception des efforts de transparence du gouvernement. Les résultats montrent aussi que cette inclinaison des citoyens à la non transparence limite la dénonciation de la corruption en ligne. Les efforts de transparence perçus sont réduits à la perception du caractère réservé du gouvernement qui constitue un obstacle à la dénonciation en ligne. Cette recherche permet de déduire que l'inclinaison du citoyen tunisien à la non transparence ainsi que sa perception négative de la transparence du gouvernement, l'emportent sur les opportunités d'engagement offertes par les médias sociaux.

L'effet de la communication interne sur le bien-être social des employés: une étude empirique dans le secteur public

Authors

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Abstract

Dans un contexte de transformations profondes des administrations publiques, la question du bien être des agents devient centrale. Si le bien-être au travail est abondamment étudié, cette recherche porte un intérêt particulier à une dimension peu abordée : le bien-être social. Ce travail vise, donc, à examiner l'effet de la perception de la communication interne par les employés sur leur bien-être social. Pour ce faire, une enquête par questionnaire a été menée auprès de 108 agents publics. Les résultats de l'étude empirique confirment l'existence d'un impact positif mais nuancé. L'étude révèle que la communication avec le supérieur hiérarchique est le déterminant le plus puissant du bien-être social, soulignant le rôle pivot du management de proximité. En revanche, bien que les dimensions relatives à la qualité et à la fiabilité d'information ainsi qu'à l'encouragement du supérieur hiérarchique, affichent un effet positif, ce dernier reste modeste. Ces résultats invitent, ainsi, à repenser les stratégies de communication dans les organisations publiques, non seulement comme moyens de diffusion d'information mais plutôt comme leviers de lien social.

Évolutions générationnelles et attractivité des établissements d'enseignement supérieur: vers une reconfiguration de la proposition de valeur académique – Le cas de Vatel Tunisie

Author

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Abstract
L'enseignement supérieur connaît une transmutation structurelle intense depuis deux décennies. Elle s'illustre dans la massification de l'accès aux études, l'ouverture à l'international croissante des parcours académiques et la flambée des classements mondiaux. Ces facteurs ont promu une logique concurrentielle accrue entre établissements. En l'occurrence, les universités ne peuvent plus se contenter et de s'accommoder d'une légitimité académique historique ; elles sont amenées à développer des stratégies d'attractivité similaires à celles des organisations de services. L'attractivité de leurs offres s'inscrit désormais dans une vision systémique de proposition de valeur globale, intégrant : expérience étudiante, employabilité, innovation pédagogique et environnement technologique. Dans ce contexte, la compréhension des attentes des nouvelles générations devient un enjeu stratégique majeur. L'avènement des générations Z et Alpha remanie en profondeur le rapport au savoir, à l'institution et à la consommation éducative. Leur évaluation d'une institution d'enseignement supérieur dépasse la simple dimension académique pour intégrer des critères expérientiels, relationnels et professionnels. Dès lors, les établissements sont contraints de repenser leur attractivité non seulement en termes de communication, mais aussi en termes de structuration même de leur offre académique.
Cette étude s'inscrit dans cette dynamique et examine la manière dont les évolutions générationnelles contribuent à une reconfiguration de la proposition de valeur académique. La problématique peut être formulée ainsi : Comment les évolutions générationnelles influencent-elles les déterminants de l'attractivité d'un établissement d'enseignement supérieur et conduisent-elles à une reconfiguration de sa proposition de valeur académique ?
Cette recherche présente une étude de cas qui s'inscrit dans une démarche exploratoire à visée compréhensive. En s'appuyant sur une méthodologie qualitative, notre recherche empirique débute avec un diagnostic organisationnel mobilisant le modèle des 7S de McKinsey de (Peters & Waterman), ensuite 23 entretiens semi directifs ont été conduits, en plus de l'observation participante et d'une série de focus groupe.

Impact de l'innovation technologique lié à la gestion des risques dans les banques commerciales canadiennes

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Abstract

La transformation numérique est une modification qui au fil du temps s'impose à toutes les organisations. Les banques ne restent pas en marge et doivent faire face en plus de leurs défis inhérents aux défis imposés par cette numérisation. À cet effet, il est important de souligner que la transformation numérique induite par les nouvelles technologies permet aux banques de disposer d'outils adaptés dans la gestion de leurs différents risques tout en se conformant aux normes internationales. Cette étude met en lumière les effets de l'adoption des nouvelles technologies sur la gestion des risques bancaires et permet de savoir si la maitrise de la gestion des risques permet de contribuer grandement à sur la performance financière de ces institutions. En nous appuyant sur une diversité de banques exerçant sur le territoire canadien sur une échelle de temps commune, nous avons pu recenser des observations permettant de s'assurer qu'un niveau élevé d'investissements technologiques est associé à une réduction des pertes sur prêts, donc une meilleure gestion du risque. Cette étude adopte une approche quantitative fondée sur l'analyse de données secondaires de 10 banques commerciales canadiennes observées de 2015 à 2023. L'analyse utilise des corrélations de Pearson et des régressions linéaires multiples via le logiciel SPSS pour examiner les liens entre l'innovation (IA, RegTech, Blockchain) et la performance (ROE, NPL). Les résultats montrent que l'innovation technologique agit comme un catalyseur structurel plutôt que comme un déterminant immédiat de la rentabilité et renforce la robustesse et la résilience des institutions.

Communication Marketing et promotion de comportements responsables: une analyse sémiotique

Author

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Abstract

L'Afrique est très touchée par les effets du changement climatique. Bien que ce continent contribue le moins aux émissions mondiales de gaz à effet de serre, il fait face à de nombreux défis environnementaux, tels que la multiplication des sécheresses et l'intensification des phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes aux conséquences parfois désastreuses sur la population. Dans ce contexte BANI (Fragile, Anxieux, Non-linéaire, Incompréhensible), le citoyen africain est confronté à un double défi : d'une part, il a intérêt à rattraper le retard du développement en se mettant au diapason de l'évolution numérique. D'autre part, il est appelé à adopter un comportement responsable vis-à-vis de son environnement social et environnemental. La présente recherche a pour objectif d'analyser l'impact du marketing sur le consommateur et pose la question suivante : quel rôle doit jouer la communication marketing dans la promotion d'une consommation responsable ?

La revue de la littérature montre que l'étude du comportement des consommateurs dans un contexte de marketing durable présente certaines lacunes, notamment l'absence d'approches interdisciplinaires et une dépendance excessive aux observations empiriques en l'absence d'ancrages théoriques solides. Pour combler ces lacunes, nous mobilisons une approche sémiotique de l'École de Paris, discipline dédiée à l'analyse des systèmes de signification. Nous avons réuni les instances énonçantes de Jean-Claude Coquet dont l'apport principal permet de détecter dans le discours la trace des formes de pouvoir qui peuvent conditionner le comportement du consommateur. En effet, ce modèle théorique permet de définir le statut d'un consommateur. Il peut être mû par la capacité de jugement lié à la logique, auquel cas il est « Sujet », comme il peut être manipulé par ces formes de pouvoir, il est alors « Non-Sujet ». Souvent, il bascule entre les deux positions selon le contexte.

Le reporting de durabilité comme levier de réputation et de légitimité : une revue critique de la littérature dans le contexte des universités africaines

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Abstract

Les classements internationaux et la pression croissante des parties prenantes ont marqué l'environnement des universités. Les actifs immatériels tels que la réputation, la légitimité constituent des leviers stratégiques essentiels pour les universités . La littérature montre que la réputation influence positivement la légitimité organisationnelle, laquelle conditionne la performance académique, sociale et financière. Les universités bénéficiant d'une forte visibilité internationale tendent ainsi à bénéficier d'une légitimité accrue, notamment lorsque les indicateurs de durabilité sont intégrés dans leur stratégie .

Dans le contexte africain, ces dynamiques s'inscrivent dans des réalités spécifiques marquées par des contraintes structurelles, des héritages postcoloniaux et des exigences croissantes en matière de transformation et de pertinence sociale. Les rapports de durabilité apparaissent comme un instrument central de communication stratégique permettant de démontrer l'engagement des universités envers le développement durable et de renforcer leur légitimité. Dés lors, se pose la question suivante: Comment les rapports de durabilité contribuent-ils à la construction conjointe de la réputation organisationnelle et de la légitimité institutionnelle des universités africaines, dans un contexte marqué par des contraintes de mesurabilité et de comparabilité de l'impact social et environnemental ?

La littérature souligne des incohérences dans la mesure de l'impact social et environnemental des établissements africains. Par ailleurs, les stratégies d'internationalisation diffèrent selon le positionnement institutionnel : les universités bien classées recherchent une réputation globale, tandis que d'autres privilégient une légitimité locale afin de répondre aux attentes communautaires et de réduire les asymétries d'information. Au niveau micro, la réputation institutionnelle influence la satisfaction et la rétention des étudiants, parfois davantage que la qualité perçue de l'enseignement.

La littérature confirme l'interdépendance entre la réputation et la légitimité et souligne la nécessité d'une gestion intégrée du reporting de durabilité pour renforcer l'avantage concurrentiel et la transformation des universités africaines.

Mots clés: Réputation, légitimité, université, reporting, contexte africain

Pourquoi l'université entrepreneuriale ne produit-elle pas davantage d'étudiants entrepreneurs ? Retour d'expérience des enseignants-chercheurs en Tunisie, en Suisse et au Maroc

Authors

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Abstract

Pourquoi les dispositifs de l'université entrepreneuriale ne produisent pas les résultats escomptés en termes de création entrepreneuriale ? La présente recherche a pour objet d'étudier l'expérience vécue par les enseignants-chercheurs impliqués dans les dispositifs de promotion de l'entrepreneuriat à l'université, en Tunisie, en Suisse et au Maroc, afin de comprendre le décalage entre les ambitions affichées et les réalités du terrain. Cette recherche s'inscrit dans une approche qualitative visant à comprendre comment les enseignants-chercheurs de trois pays différents vivent, perçoivent et s'engagent dans la dynamique entrepreneuriale de l'université. Des entretiens semi directifs sont menés auprès de 20 enseignants-chercheurs impliqués dans les dispositifs d'appui à l'entrepreneuriat en Tunisie, en Suisse et au Maroc, afin d'étudier leur appropriation des dispositifs, les motivations et tensions vécues, ainsi que leur rôle dans la mise en œuvre de l'université entrepreneuriale. L'étude a permis de constater que les enseignants-chercheurs, au-delà de la diversité des parcours et des modes d'appropriation, se réfèrent à une vocation commune d'université entrepreneuriale. Néanmoins, les enseignants-chercheurs éprouvent de fortes tensions identitaires et institutionnelles, liées à leur rôle d'intrapreneur académique dans le cadre de l'université entrepreneuriale. Cette recherche enrichit les travaux sur l'université entrepreneuriale et offre une meilleure compréhension des besoins et des attentes des enseignants chercheurs impliqués dans les dispositifs d'appui à l'entrepreneuriat.

Inclusion et enseignement supérieur en Afrique: Analyse bibliométrique et perspectives de recherche

Authors

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Abstract

Résumé : Face à la transformation profonde que subit l'enseignement supérieur à l'échelle internationale, d'une manière générale, et en Afrique, en particulier, l'évolution vers une éducation plus inclusive constitue aujourd'hui un impératif pour les universités africaines. De ce fait, le présent travail de recherche propose une analyse bibliométrique de 395 publications (Scopus, 1985-2026) sur l'inclusion dans l'enseignement supérieur africain, combinant revue de littérature et cartographie scientifique via Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny. Les résultats révèlent un champ structuré autour de quatre quadrants : thèmes moteurs géographico-institutionnels (Afrique du Sud, enseignement supérieur), thèmes de base où diversité-équité-inclusion restent centraux mais conceptuellement fragiles, thèmes de niche reflétant une fragmentation Nord-Sud (études afro-américaines vs. Africaines), et thèmes émergents liés à la digitalisation. Cette analyse bibliométrique met en évidence un décalage significatif entre la robustesse des recherches sur le développement économique inclusif et la faiblesse conceptuelle des travaux sur l'inclusion dans l'ES africain. Elle souligne également l'écart existant entre discours institutionnels et réalités pratiques dans ce contexte spécifique.

Mots clés : Inclusion, Enseignement Supérieur, Afrique et ODD 4

Les Nouveaux Codes De La Consommation : Une Analyse Par Les Recits De Visite De La Generation Z En Magasin

Authors

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Abstract

Proposer des expériences mémorables en magasin constitue un levier stratégique majeur pour les praticiens. Le présent travail examine la mémorisation de l'expérience de visite chez la génération Z. Une approche qualitative narrative a été réalisée dans l'objectif d'identifier les facteurs qui construisent le souvenir de l'expérience de visite. Les résultats remettent en cause le paradigme de l'expérience « extraordinaire ». L'expérience ordinaires et routinières du quotidien construisent le souvenir de la visite chez la génération Z, notamment en grande distribution. Des points d'ancrage forment le souvenir : les stimuli sensoriels et l'intégration du digital, les interactions sociales authentiques, les défaillances opérationnelles et les dimensions éthiques (santé, boycott). Sur le plan managérial, les résultats incitent les praticiens à revaloriser l'expérience ordinaire et à insister sur la qualité des interactions avec le personnel. Les voies futures de recherche suggèrent de pallier les biais narratifs par des études comparatives intergénérationnelles ou interculturelles.

Facteurs influençant les attitudes et le comportement d'achat des consommateurs tunisiens à l'égard des produits labellisés « Made in Tunisia » : une étude qualitative dans le secteur du textile et de l'habillement

Author

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Abstract

Les tendances disruptives auxquelles on assiste depuis quelques années déstabilisent les acteurs économiques et le comportement des consommateurs. Pour ces derniers, le repli identitaire représente une évolution observable, et se traduit généralement par un changement dans les modes de consommation, privilégiant les produits locaux, authentiques et éthiques.

En 2024, l'Etat tunisien, a mis en place un projet stratégique de création d'un label « Made in Tunisia », visant la valorisation des produits locaux. Bien que ce changement constitue un levier essentiel pour soutenir la production nationale et le développement socio-économique du pays, les comportements d'achat des consommateurs tunisiens à l'égard des produits locaux demeurent ambivalents et contrastées. D'un côté, certains consommateurs manifestent une attitude favorable aux produits tunisiens, motivée par des considérations patriotiques et économiques. De l'autre côté, une partie du marché continue d'associer les produits importés à une meilleure qualité, à un prestige social plus élevé ou à une plus grande fiabilité technologique. Cette contradiction soulève une question centrale : quels sont les facteurs qui influencent les attitudes et les comportements des consommateurs tunisiens envers les produits labellisés « Made in Tunisia » ?

Afin d'apporter une réponse à cette question, la présente recherche adopte une approche qualitative complétée par une analyse thématique de contenu. Nous souhaiterions donc identifier ces facteurs qui influence le comportement d'achat des consommateurs tunisiens envers les produits labellisés « *Made in Tunisia* » dans le domaine du Textile et de l'Habillement. Les implications managériales et institutionnelles seront discutées afin de mieux comprendre comment renforcer l'attractivité des produits labellisés « *Made in Tunisia* » sur le marché local.

La Transformation Digitale Du Secteur Public Marocain, Une Reponse Structurelle Au Defi Des Delais De Paiement: Cas De La Plateforme Adae

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Abstract

La transformation digitale constitue aujourd'hui un axe stratégique dans la réforme de l'administration publique, particulièrement dans les pays en voie de développement. Cet article examine le lien entre cette transition numérique et la problématique structurelle des délais de paiement dans le secteur public marocain. À partir d'une revue de littérature sur la gouvernance numérique, complétée par l'analyse du cas de la plateforme ADAE (Application de Déclaration des Administrations et Établissements publics), développée par la Direction des Entreprises Publiques et de la Privatisation (DEPP), l'étude montre comment les TICs peuvent contribuer à améliorer la transparence, la coordination administrative et la discipline budgétaire. L'analyse révèle que la plateforme ADAE, en fluidifiant les interactions entre ordonnateurs et comptables publics, constitue une réponse structurelle aux lenteurs de traitement des créances, tout en s'inscrivant dans une logique plus large de digitalisation de la chaîne de dépense publique. Cependant, son efficacité reste conditionnée par des facteurs institutionnels et humains, soulignant que la transformation digitale ne saurait être réduite à une simple solution technologique, mais relève d'un véritable changement organisationnel.

Digitalisation du marketing halieutique : enjeux de santé publique, de durabilité des pêches et de performance des marchés. L'expérience de la région de Dakhla Oued-Eddahab-Maroc

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Abstract

Ce travail a pour objectif d'analyser le rôle de la transformation digitale du marketing halieutique dans l'amélioration de la commercialisation des produits de la mer, en tenant compte simultanément des enjeux de santé publique, de durabilité des ressources marines et de performance des marchés. Il s'inscrit dans une perspective intégrée visant à dépasser une approche strictement technologique de la digitalisation afin d'en examiner les conditions d'efficacité réelle, tant sur le plan économique que social et environnemental.
Sur le plan méthodologique, la recherche adopte une approche qualitative et exploratoire, fondée sur des entretiens semi-structurés menés auprès d'acteurs clés de la filière halieutique, notamment des pêcheurs, mareyeurs, transformateurs, distributeurs et décideurs publics, sélectionnés en raison de leur implication directe dans les pratiques de marketing et de leur expérience des outils numériques. Les données recueillies ont été analysées à travers une analyse thématique assistée par des logiciels d'analyse qualitative, permettant d'identifier les dynamiques émergentes, les leviers de création de valeur ainsi que les tensions associées à la transformation digitale.
Les résultats montrent que les technologies numériques constituent un levier important pour renforcer la transparence, la traçabilité et la confiance des consommateurs, notamment à travers les plateformes digitales, les dispositifs de traçabilité et les outils de communication en ligne. Toutefois, l'étude révèle une appropriation inégale des outils numériques, marquée par des asymétries d'accès, de compétences et de ressources financières, affectant particulièrement les petits pêcheurs artisanaux. Par ailleurs, des tensions persistent entre innovation digitale, durabilité des pêches et performance économique, soulignant que les bénéfices de la digitalisation ne sont ni automatiques ni homogènes. Les implications sont à la fois théoriques et managériales, mettant en évidence la nécessité de politiques publiques ciblées et de dispositifs d'accompagnement adaptés.

La responsabilité sincère comme alternative aux découplages RSE dans le secteur textile tunisien

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Abstract
This research analyzes the decouplings inherent in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within three Tunisian textile companies. Grounded in an interpretivist paradigm and Southern epistemology (Santos, 2017), this qualitative study unfolds in two phases. The exploratory phase involved six comprehensive interviews and one life-narrative, the main phase mobilized 22 semi-structured interviews, seven months of observation, and analysis of 110 pages of internal documents. The conceptual framework combines neo-institutional decoupling theory (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Bromley & Powell, 2012) and the emerging concept of Sincere Corporate Social Responsibility (SCSR). Three configurations are identified: genuine non-decoupling rooted in pre-existing cultural values and embodied ethical leadership; policy-practice decoupling driven by external symbolic conformity; and means-ends decoupling characterized by authentic but structurally constrained managerial intentions. Five constitutive dimensions of GCR emerge inductively: ethical leadership, trust, transparency, recognition, and value-action coherence. These findings enrich neo-institutional theory by integrating intentionality, organizational culture, and leadership as critical analytical variables.

Keywords: CSR – Genuine Corporate Responsibility – Decoupling – Neo-institutional Theory – Textile – Tunisia

Repenser la gouvernance RSO en Afrique à travers les réseaux: Etude de cas du réseau panafricain Inspiring Leaders for Africa [ILA Network]

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Abstract
In the African context, characterized by complex social, environmental, and institutional challenges, impact-driven networks are emerging as key actors in sustainable governance. This article explores how responsible information and communication practices support CSR-based governance within the pan-African network Inspiring Leaders for Africa (ILA Network). Based on a qualitative study (case study) conducted during the Tunisia International Climate Change Forum, combining semi-structured interviews and participant observation, the findings reveal that transparent information and participatory communication foster inclusion, recognition of expertise, and organizational legitimacy. The study highlights responsible communication as a strategic governance lever and a driver of collective intelligence in African impact networks.

De la conscience écologique au positionnement stratégique durable : le rôle du comportement pro-environnemental dans le marketing hôtelier Tunisien

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Abstract

Le bien-être que l'humanité a atteint grâce à la science et à la technologie s'est transformé en mal-être croissant, la succession des dommages écologiques a eu pour corollaire une prise de conscience mondiale de la dégradation grandissante de la qualité environnementale actuelle. Le sommet « Rio+20 » qui s'est tenue au Brésil pour célébrer le 20 ème anniversaire du sommet de la terre de 1992 précédé par celui de Stockholm en 1972 a marqué un tournant majeur illustrant un consensus sur l'urgence et la nécessité d'entreprendre des actions de développement durable dans tous les secteurs et à travers le monde entier. Toutefois, malgré cette prise de conscience, nos actions ne suivent pas et tardent à se montrer effectives (Langevin-Boucher, 2025). Cette étude tente d'enrichir et contribuer à la compréhension de cette orientation sociale et cet engagement mondiale essentiellement dans le secteur du tourisme, car en soi l'environnement est un facteur d'attraction touristique fondamental. Notre recherche qualitative menée avec 16 entretiens semi directifs effectuées avec des directeurs d'hôtels vise à explorer leurs processus de conscience écologique, de comprendre comment les comportements pro-environnementaux des dirigeants hôteliers se construisent à l'intersection des facteurs internes et externes. Pour ce faire, nous allons puiser dans une littérature diversifiée portant en premier lieu sur le concept de conscience écologique et en second lieu on va examiner le concept de comportement pro-environnemental à la lumière de la théorie « Valeur-Croyance-Norme » (VBN) de Stern (2000) afin de d'analyser les motivations internes. Parallèlement la « Stakeholder Theory » de Freeman (1984) a été mobiliser afin d'examiner l'influence des pressions externes exercées par les parties prenantes sur l'orientation stratégique et marketing des établissements hôteliers.

Légitimité successorale et résilience dans les entreprises familiales tunisiennes

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Abstract
Dans les économies émergentes, la succession constitue un moment critique pour la pérennité des entreprises familiales. En Tunisie, ce défi est amplifié par une reprise économique fragile, des contraintes de financement persistantes et une incertitude institutionnelle durable. Cet article examine comment la relation fondateur-successeur conditionne la construction de la légitimité du successeur et, par ce biais, la résilience organisationnelle. À partir d'une étude qualitative multi-cas conduite auprès d'entreprises familiales tunisiennes à différents stades du processus successoral, nous montrons que la transmission s'effectue fréquemment sous la forme d'un transfert progressif de responsabilités sans transfert équivalent d'autorité. La légitimité du successeur dépend alors de la reconnaissance symbolique accordée par le fondateur et de la visibilité organisationnelle de la délégation. Les résultats permettent de proposer une typologie en trois configurations relationnelles (contrôle défensif, accompagnement conditionnel, copilotage structurant) et d'en analyser les effets différenciés sur la cohésion interne et la continuité décisionnelle.

« اليد الواحدة ما تصفقش » : la médiation familière comme infrastructure invisible de l'inclusion dans les services publics digitalisés en Tunisie

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Abstract

L'innovation inclusive dans les services publics vise à élargir l'accès aux droits et aux services pour les populations vulnérables, notamment les femmes analphabètes. Cependant, la recherche souligne un décalage entre l'inclusion affichée par les institutions et l'inclusion réelle vécue par ces publics. Cette communication propose de déplacer le regard de l'innovation centrée sur le dispositif vers l'innovation de médiation, dans laquelle la médiation familiale joue un rôle central, et souvent invisible. Nous mobilisons trois cadres théoriques complémentaires : l'approche par les capabilités (Sen, 2005 ; Nussbaum, 2000), permettant d'évaluer l'accès effectif aux services comme liberté réelle d'action ; la théorie du découplage institutionnel (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), qui éclaire l'écart entre inclusion institutionnelle et inclusion vécue ; et la littérature sur l'innovation inclusive dans les services publics (Foster et Heeks, 2013 ; George and al., 2019), qui met en avant les dispositifs officiels d'accessibilité. L'étude repose sur une approche qualitative par entretiens, complétée par des observations de terrain dans les services publics digitalisés. Les résultats montrent que l'accès effectif aux services publics dépend largement de la présence d'un médiateur « familier », qui traduit, guide et exécute les démarches à la place et/ou avec la bénéficiaire. Ce mécanisme, bien que facilitateur, introduit une dépendance structurelle et révèle le découplage entre inclusion affichée et inclusion réelle. Les médiateurs familiers constituent ainsi une infrastructure invisible de l'inclusion. En ce sens, leur présence invite à déplacer la focale d'une innovation dite « centrée sur le service », trop souvent réduite à un répertoire procédural (design, parcours, indicateurs de satisfaction) et faiblement située, vers une innovation relationnelle ou *de médiation*, qui produit l'accès en « réparant » les asymétries (langage, normes, statuts, affects), en reconfigurant les rapports de pouvoir au guichet, et en fabriquant concrètement les conditions de la capacité d'agir.

Déterminants de la performance des PME tunisiennes: Rôle du capital humain des dirigeants et de l'environnement institutionnel

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Abstract

Les PME tunisiennes jouent un rôle essentiel dans l'économie nationale, en tant que principaux pourvoyeurs d'emplois, moteurs de l'innovation et acteurs clés de la croissance et de la stabilité socio-économique du pays. Cette recherche vise à identifier et analyser les déterminants de la performance des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises (PME) tunisiennes, en se focalisant sur l'influence du capital humain des dirigeants et des facteurs institutionnels. À travers une revue de littérature approfondie, quatre hypothèses principales sont formulées concernant l'impact de l'instabilité politique (H1), de la corruption (H2), de l'expérience des dirigeants (H3) et de leur formation (H4) sur le succès des PME.

La méthodologie adoptée est mixte (quantitative et qualitative), s'appuyant sur un questionnaire administré à un échantillon de 300 PME tunisiennes et complétée par des entretiens. Les données collectées ont été analysées à l'aide de régressions linéaires multiples via le logiciel SPSS. Les conclusions valident trois hypothèses : l'instabilité politique (H1), l'expérience (H3) et la formation (H4) des dirigeants ont un effet positif et statistiquement significatif sur la performance. En revanche, l'hypothèse liée à la corruption (H2) et l'effet de la taille de l'entreprise (variable de contrôle) ne sont pas validés, n'étant pas significatifs au seuil de 10%. L'étude confirme ainsi le rôle primordial du capital humain (expérience et formation) et l'impact négatif majeur de l'instabilité politique sur le succès des PME en Tunisie, offrant des pistes de réflexion pour les décideurs politiques et les praticiens.

L'innovation sociale comme levier de développement de l'entrepreneuriat inclusif dans le secteur informel au maroc

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Abstract

Au Maroc, les très petites entreprises (TPE) et le secteur informel représentent plus de 90 % du tissu entrepreneurial et constituent une source majeure d'emplois, en particulier pour les populations vulnérables. Selon les estimations nationales, le secteur informel contribue à environ 30 % de l'emploi non agricole, tout en restant caractérisé par une faible productivité, un accès limité au financement et une couverture sociale insuffisante. Face à ces contraintes structurelles, l'innovation sociale apparaît comme une réponse stratégique pour promouvoir un entrepreneuriat plus inclusif et durable.

Cette recherche a pour objectif d'analyser le rôle de l'innovation sociale dans le développement de l'entrepreneuriat inclusif au sein des petites entreprises et du secteur informel au Maroc. Elle vise à comprendre comment des initiatives socialement innovantes contribuent à l'autonomisation économique, à l'amélioration des conditions de travail et à la formalisation progressive des activités informelles.

La méthodologie repose sur une approche qualitative combinant l'analyse de cas d'initiatives marocaines d'innovation sociale et des entretiens semi-directifs menés auprès d'entrepreneurs sociaux, de responsables associatifs et d'acteurs institutionnels. Cette démarche permet d'identifier les mécanismes par lesquels l'innovation sociale génère simultanément de la valeur économique et un impact social.

Les résultats indiquent que l'innovation sociale renforce la résilience des TPE, favorise l'inclusion financière et améliore l'accès aux opportunités économiques pour les groupes marginalisés. L'étude met également en évidence le rôle déterminant des politiques publiques et des dispositifs d'accompagnement dans la structuration d'un écosystème favorable à l'entrepreneuriat inclusif au Maroc.

Vers une nouvelle comptabilité face aux objectifs de développement en Afrique

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Abstract
L'opérationnalisation des ODD et leurs déclinaisons dans les plans continentaux (Afrique notamment), régionaux et nationaux de développement semblent poser plusieurs défis aux professionnels comptables et financiers (PCF) qui tiennent à leurs capacités à créer une ingénierie technique et opérationnelle pour accompagner les organisations à intégrer des logiques nouvelles dans leurs modèles d'affaires actuels. L'objectif de cet article est de construire une problématisation de la relation entre comptabilité et développement en Afrique tenant compte des réalités africaines. Pour ce faire, nous examinons, d'abord, l'état actuel de la réflexion au sein de la profession comptable internationale sur les ODD. Ensuite, nous conduisons une analyse comparée des ODD et des deux programmes continentaux de développement (l'Agenda 2063 et The High 5s). Enfin, nous menons des entretiens avec 26 professionnels comptables et financiers de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, et Sénégal) pour avoir la perception des PCF de cet espace économique de la relation entre la comptabilité et les objectifs de développement. D'une part, nous montrons que l'émergence des ODD alimente les débats sur leurs opérationnalisations et évaluations et sur le développement d'autres formes de comptabilité notamment dans le contexte africain. En effet, nous observons une méconnaissance des objectifs de développement de l'UA qui pourtant intègrent l'ensemble des ODD, par la plupart des PCF de l'espace OHADA, ainsi qu'une absence de retranscription claire de ces objectifs dans le système comptable sous-régional (SYSCOHADA). Néanmoins, les PCF restent profondément sensibles à ces objectifs lorsqu'on le leur présente et militent pour une implication accrue des décideurs politiques africains à l'initiative de ces objectifs de développement. Ceci permettrait de favoriser la mise en œuvre d'une opérationnalisation, une normalisation et de véritables contrôles sur les questions liées aux objectifs de l'UA par le biais d'une implication des organismes comptables du continent africain.

Les Déterminants de l'Intention d'Achat de la Mode Circulaire dans un Contexte de Disruptions Environnementales et Economiques : une approche intégrative TPB-PMTs

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Abstract
L'industrie de la mode fait face à des perturbations environnementales et économiques qui fragilisent les modèles de production et de consommation actuels. La mode circulaire constitue une alternative prometteuse, mais son adoption reste limitée. Cet article analyse les déterminants de l'intention d'achat de mode circulaire en combinant la Théorie du Comportement Planifié (TPB) et la Théorie de la Motivation à la Protection (PMT), enrichies par la confiance verte envers la marque et l'efficacité perçue du consommateur. Sur la base d'une enquête menée auprès de 432 consommateurs, les données ont été traitées par analyse factorielle confirmatoire, régressions et tests de modération. Les résultats montrent que l'attitude, le contrôle comportemental perçu, la confiance verte et l'efficacité perçue influencent positivement l'intention d'achat. La vulnérabilité perçue aux perturbations exerce également un effet direct et modère la relation entre confiance verte et intention, renforçant cette dernière lorsque la menace perçue est élevée.

L'impact des food vloggers sur l'attitude et l'intention de commerce social de la génération Z tunisienne

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Abstract

Comme les autres pays du monde, la Tunisie a connu, récemment, une évolution rapide de sa consommation médiatique engageant ainsi un changement de son expression de culture culinaire. Un nouveau contexte s'installe où les influenceurs jouent un rôle de plus en plus central dans le marketing digital. Notre problématique est de comprendre comment la crédibilité des food vloggers et le contenu qu'ils partagent sur les réseaux sociaux influencent-ils l'attitude de la génération Z tunisienne et leur intention de commerce social ?
L'objectif principal est d'analyser l'influence des vloggers culinaires sur les attitudes et intentions des jeunes Tunisiens vis-à-vis du commerce social.
Une étude quantitative via un questionnaire administré en ligne, à 237 répondants de la Génération Z tunisienne, nous a permis de valider les hypothèses proposées. Les résultats principaux sont les suivants :

- La crédibilité des vloggers, notamment leur expertise et leur fiabilité, influencent significativement l'attitude envers la vidéo et la marque.
- La valeur informative du contenu publicitaire a un impact plus marqué que la valeur de divertissement sur l'attitude des utilisateurs.
- L'attitude positive envers les vidéos et les marques conduit à une intention d'accroître de commerce social, incluant l'achat et le partage sur les réseaux sociaux.
- **Crédibilité des vlogueurs** :
  - L'expertise et la fiabilité n'ont pas d'impact significatif sur l'attitude envers les vidéos.
- L'attractivité physique et la similarité influencent positivement cette attitude.
- **Contenu publicitaire** :
  - La valeur informative et le divertissement ont un impact significatif sur l'attitude envers les vidéos.
- **Attitude et intention** :
  - L'attitude envers les vidéos impacte fortement l'attitude envers la marque.
- L'attitude envers la marque influence à la fois l'intention d'achat et l'intention de partage social.