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2025

ABLE Higher Degree by Research Conference Abstracts

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2025 Annual ABLE Higher Degree by Research Conference

About the Conference

The ABLE Higher Degree by Research Conference is a highlight in the Faculty of Arts, Business, Law and Economics calendar.

Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students are presented with this opportunity to discuss their research with fellow students, academics, industry partners and other major stakeholders of the University. Excellence in research will be recognised through the prizes and awards, supported by our highly regarded sponsors.

Attendees will also have an opportunity to hear from academics to explore HDR opportunities and hear from Matt Hyde on "Stand UP, Speak Out, Be Heard" during the professional development session.

This year, the conference will be held on Wednesday 30 April 2025 at the National Wine Centre, Adelaide.

Saadia Adnan

'I crave for that cup of tea which someone makes me': A case of women educational leaders working within gendered stereotypes

School of Education

Abstract

Despite rapid global change, Pakistan consistently ranks among the lowest in the World Gender Disparity Index, a reality encapsulated by a statement from a female school principal. This presentation draws on data from my research, *An Inquiry into Being in Educational Leadership Experiences: A Critical Phenomenology in the Pakistan Context*, to examine the complex meanings and experiences of leadership. Addressing a critical gap in contemporary research, this qualitative study employs policy analysis, open-ended surveys, and semi-structured interviews. The purposive sample includes school principals and executives in Pakistani education department with varying leadership experiences in diverse locations.

During the interviews, the rich accounts of female leaders expose deep-seated struggles with gender discrimination and power hierarchies. Their experiences illustrate the challenges of navigating leadership in a patriarchal society where men dominate senior positions. The study highlights how these women juggle cultural expectations around personal and domestic roles while meeting the performative demands of leadership alongside male colleagues. Within these professional spaces, they frequently face gaslighting, manipulation, and resistance when attempting to assert authority. The data reveals that challenging dominant gender norms often results in significant personal and professional repercussions. Many participants expressed that the interview provided a rare opportunity to voice their concerns, reflecting on struggles they had never previously articulated. This research underscores how studying subjugated leadership spaces can open new possibilities for transformation, offering critical insights into gendered power structures and fostering avenues for agency and resistance.

Supervisor: Professor Mathew White

John Al Khateeb

Towards Practical and Innovative Governance in Complex Projects

Business School

Abstract

Governance in complex projects encompasses the structures, processes, and mechanisms that facilitate decision-making, coordination, accountability, and stakeholder alignment throughout the project lifecycle. However, the inherent complexities of such projects—characterised by high uncertainty, interdependencies, and shifting stakeholder demands—make effective governance a continuous challenge. Traditional governance models often struggle to accommodate the dynamic nature of large-scale projects, leading to inefficiencies and governance failures. This study proposes the Integrated and Dynamic Complexity Governance Model (IDCGM), a multi-layered governance framework that integrates Paradox Theory, Complexity Theory, and Contingency Theory to enhance governance effectiveness. The research employs a systematic literature review (SLR) to identify key governance challenges and conduct a paradoxical analysis of governance tensions. The findings reveal four core governance themes: Adaptive and Flexible Governance, Structured and Integrated Governance, Hybrid and Multi-Layer Governance, and Knowledge and Learning-Centered Governance. These themes highlight multiple critical governance tensions, such as flexibility vs. structure, short-term vs. long-term focus, and accountability vs. trust. The proposed IDCGM framework offers a structured yet adaptive governance model that aligns governance mechanisms with project complexity factors. The model is demonstrated using a case study from the South Australian Health Sector. By addressing governance paradoxes and enabling dynamic decision-making, this study provides a practical governance approach for project managers, policymakers, and researchers. The findings contribute to improving governance resilience and strategic alignment in complex project environments.

Keywords: Complex Project Governance, Integrated and Dynamic Complexity Governance Model (IDCGM), Paradox Theory, Complexity Theory, Contingency Theory, Governance Tensions, Adaptive and Flexible Governance, Structured and Integrated Governance, Hybrid and Multi-Layer Governance, Knowledge and Learning-Centered Governance, Project Complexity, Governance Resilience, Strategic Alignment

Supervisor: Dr Richa Gulati

Ahmed Alharfi

Belonging to a University in the Gulf Countries Universities: A systematic review

School of Education

Abstract

This systematic review explores the sense of belonging in higher education, particularly within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. While numerous studies from various contexts worldwide highlight the significant positive academic and psychological outcomes Associate Professors with belonging, research on this topic in the GCC remains limited, with just 29 studies published in the last 15 years. This review evaluates how cultural, familial, and institutional factors—such as societal expectations and power distance—influence students' sense of belonging. It also looks into the differences between online and face-to-face learning environments, the experiences of students with special needs, and how belonging affects academic performance and well-being across diverse student populations. By synthesising the literature, the review addresses gaps in understanding the role of belonging in the GCC context and offers recommendations for institutional strategies to enhance students' connectedness. In accordance with PRISMA guidelines, a thematic synthesis approach was employed to analyse the data.

Supervisor: Professor Chris Boyle

Chamali Amarakoon Mudiyansele

Decoding the Inconsistencies: Navigating Towards Consistent Sustainable Behaviours

Business School

Abstract

While the literature has extensively explored ways for consumers to engage in sustainable behaviours, it has not prominently investigated the (in)consistency of these behaviours. Previous studies have provided foundational yet fragmented understandings of consistency in sustainable behaviours (e.g., related to cognitions, across time, contexts, behaviours, and lifestyles and habits). Yet, inconsistencies are prevalent in consumers' behaviour, such as choosing organic produce yet wasting uneaten food. Furthermore, the limited number of researchers who have noticed those inconsistencies have implicitly treated inconsistency as the absence of consistency, overlooking that the two behaviours are not necessarily straightforward opposites. Given this, identifying, understanding and addressing inconsistency is essential to fostering more sustainable consumer behaviour.

To address this, I first apply "neutralisation" as a theoretical lens, recognising that consumers rationalise unsustainable behaviours to alleviate negative cognitions and feelings about incongruent actions. This perspective positions inconsistency not as a mere inversion of consistency but rather as a distinct phenomenon shaped by complex psychological and contextual factors. Building on this and connecting fragmented elements of consistent sustainable behaviours that mask inconsistencies, a definition of "inconsistent sustainable behaviours" will be developed. Then, this definition will be refined using interview data gathered from consumers and consumer posts and comments on Reddit, an online forum. More importantly, the same data will be used in a qualitative analysis aimed at identifying how individuals justify inconsistent behaviours, uncovering drivers that enable and sustain these inconsistencies. By integrating these findings with existing knowledge on consistent sustainable behaviours, the study aims to develop an expanded framework that underscores the multifaceted nature of sustainable behaviours of consumers. Recognising consistency and inconsistency presents new avenues for policymakers, marketers, and consumers to reduce the occurrences of inconsistencies and thereby progress towards more consistent sustainable behaviours.

Keywords: Consistent sustainable behaviours, inconsistent sustainable behaviours, neutralisation

Supervisor: Associate Professor Sally Rao Hill

Saha Bajraktarevic

Readiness to teach: Early Career Teachers perception of their Emotional Intelligence

School of Education

Abstract

Teaching is often seen as an attractive profession, offering reasonable working hours and long holidays, which may contribute to unrealistic expectations and high attrition rates, particularly among early-career teachers. Nearly 40% of ECTs in Australia plan to leave the profession within a decade due to poor preparation for classroom challenges, lack of support, and low well-being. Emotional intelligence is identified as a critical skill that could help teachers navigate the complexities of their roles, improve classroom behaviour management, and foster emotional resilience. However, emotional intelligence is often overlooked in education despite its recognised benefits to job satisfaction, reduced attrition, and improved well-being. To address some of those questions, this research will explore early career teachers' perception of their emotional intelligence and its role in coping with the stresses of the profession. To what extent do they feel emotionally ready to enter the classroom, and does their perception of emotional intelligence help them manage challenging situations? How do teachers perceive their practice changing as their emotional intelligence develops?

This study integrates three theoretical frameworks: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, Fried's Teacher's Emotional Personal Characteristics Conceptual Model, and Gross's Process Model of Emotion Regulation. These frameworks provide valuable insights into emotional development, regulation, and behaviour. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory offers a framework for understanding how various environmental factors influence ECTs' emotional development and classroom experiences. Fried's Teacher's Emotional Personal Characteristics Conceptual Model provides insight into the role of emotional intelligence in teaching as a personal characteristic such as beliefs and values. Gross's Process Model of Emotion Regulation helps explain how ECTs regulate their emotions in response to classroom stressors, emphasising the importance of emotional regulation strategies in professional growth. This is particularly relevant for understanding how teachers use emotional regulation to navigate classroom challenges, manage stress, and maintain emotional well-being.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Joanna Anderson

Riyadh Banafa

Navigating the Ethical Landscape of Social Entrepreneurship

Business School

Abstract

This systematic review examines the intricate relationship between ethics, morality, and social entrepreneurship. Through an in-depth analysis of 56 high-quality empirical studies, the review identifies seven key ethical dimensions that influence the decision-making and actions of social entrepreneurs: ethical values and judgments, intrinsic and personal values, social and community consequences, altruism and sympathy, motives and commitments, accountability and responsibility, and transparency and legitimacy.

The conclusion challenges the common assumption that social entrepreneurship is inherently ethical, revealing the rich and complex moral landscape in which social entrepreneurs operate. The review highlights how individual values, organizational behaviors, and contextual factors—such as cultural norms and institutional settings—individually and collectively shape ethical concerns in social entrepreneurship.

A model is proposed that incorporates these multi-level factors, illustrating how ethical dimensions manifest at the micro, meso, and macro levels. It demonstrates how individual choices, organizational outcomes, and institutional transformations interact to mutually reinforce ethical development in a continuous and iterative process.

This work enriches the theory of social entrepreneurship by bringing together various theoretical frameworks to present a comprehensive view of its inherent ethical complexity. The implications of this study are significant for both scholars and practitioners, shaping future research and guiding social entrepreneurs in balancing social performance and financial viability with moral integrity.

Supervisor: Dr Jonathan Baker

Aaron Baseley

The normative constraints on recognizing logical validity

School of Humanities

Abstract

Logic as a field of study is generally taken to be normative for our reasoning practices. The strongest norms arise when we judge arguments to be valid. That is, if we judge an argument to be valid, and we also believe the premises to be true, then we err in failing to believe the conclusion. This raises an interesting question: if a rational agent apprehends the validity of an argument and believes its premises, are they obligated or merely permitted to believe its conclusion? In this talk, I want to consider the type, scope and polarity of these rules that govern our beliefs in matters of logical validity. Pursuing this thread offers a clarity and precision that is often found wanting in such debates and helps us to avoid appeals to brute 'intuition'.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Antony Eagle

Marie Beillevert

The concept of harm in Environmental Criminal Law

Law School

Abstract

Nature is in decline around the world. Australia's unique biodiversity faces cumulative pressures from climate change, invasive species, land clearing, and other unsustainable human activities. Harming the environment in violation of environmental laws constitutes an environmental crime in Australia but, these laws have been criticised as weak, and they fail to reflect the urgent need to take environmental harm seriously.

Environmental harm does not always lead to prosecution, let alone punishment. This is partly because the concept of harm in environmental criminal law does not account for harmful activities that are lawful (i.e., property developers obtain permits to clear native vegetation and destroy ecosystems to build new suburbs). Nevertheless, environmental crime is emerging as a significant legal tool around the world, making it timely to conduct a critical analysis of the concept of environmental harm in Australian law.

My research will investigate what harm means, how it is represented in law, and whether we can redefine the notion of harm in Australia's environmental criminal law to achieve better outcomes for the environment. My research questions include: How do we categorise and define environmental harm in Australia? How might a stronger concept of harm in criminal law affect outcomes for nature? Are there other places in the world that approach environmental harm differently, and how does that influence environmental outcomes?

Traditional criminal law theories about harm and public welfare will form the theoretical foundation for the research. I will adopt a mixed method approach to gathering and analysing data, combining legal research with qualitative methods to understand how environmental harm is defined and criminalized in law. The project will also draw insights from European laws about environmental crime, to guide recommendations for reform in Australia, to better protect Australia's rich biodiversity.

Supervisor: Dr Phillipa McCormack

I Putu Abdi Bhuwana

Demystifying Tri Hita Karana: Balinese Philosophical Concept of Well-being

School of Education

Abstract

This research employed reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) to scrutinize the cultural framework of Tri Hita Karana (THK), a Balinese philosophy that highlights the harmonious relationships between humans, nature, and the divine. The study aims to uncover the underlying themes and patterns within THK that influence how THK is seen as well-being concept and how it fits in with the existing well-being model. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 9 participants coming from diverse background, including lecturers, researchers, and Balinese council members. Using NVIVO, RTA was conducted to analyse the transcripts of the interviews. The results accentuate that THK as a well-being concept encompasses spiritual (Parhyangan), social (Pawongan), and environmental (Palemahan) dimensions that interlap. Moreover, although THK codification is unique to Balinese, it is essentially rooted in Hinduism and Indonesian indigenous culture and contains global values indicating its capacity to be integrated with other well-being concepts.

Supervisor: Associate Professor I Gusti Darmawan

Frankie Bray

Exposing the Roots of Animal Welfare Law in South Australia

Law School

Abstract

Animal Welfare Law in Australia urgently needs reform in order to provide better protection for nonhuman animals. This presentation examines the historical foundations of animal welfare law in South Australia, uncovering surprising findings about the evolution of animal protection measures.

My PhD project, “Legislating Better Outcomes for the Welfare of Animals in South Australia - How Delegated Legislation Erodes the Ability of Animal Welfare Law to Achieve its Purpose”, focusses on the Animal Welfare Act 1985 (SA). As part of this project, I have undertaken an investigation into the preceding legislation, including the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1908 and 1936 (SA).

By analysing Parliamentary discussions dating back to 1906, I have discovered striking similarities between current legislation and that which was introduced more than a century ago which challenge the assumption that animal welfare standards have improved over time. Using formal thematic analysis, I am comparing historic and current legislation to identify changes in priorities and underlying attitudes towards animal welfare. This methodological approach provides a rigorous framework for understanding the evolution of these laws.

This presentation will:

- Highlight key findings from the historical analysis of South Australia’s animal welfare laws;
- Demonstrate the similarities and differences between current laws and their 20th century counterparts;
- Discuss the proliferation of exemptions and their impact on animal protection; and
- Open a dialogue on the progress made and the crucial reforms still needed.

In summary, this presentation will provide a critical examination of the evolution of animal welfare law in South Australia, where we will explore how historical insights can inform and drive meaningful reform for the future.

Supervisor: Professor Peter Burdon

Hang Bui

The influence of certification schemes in agriculture on women's farmers. A systematic review

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

Agricultural certification schemes are becoming increasingly important in the agri-food value chain. Certified agricultural products carry verifiable assurance of adherence to specific environmental, economic and social standards. They often claim to promote gender equity, address discriminations through working condition, and the inclusion of the participation in price premiums and market access. However, there is limited empirical evidence evaluating whether these benefits actually reach women farmers or potentially exacerbate existing gender inequalities in agricultural systems. This systematic review help consolidate fragmented knowledge by bridging together 48 multiple studies from across qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods that examine women' socio-economic outcomes in certification schemes. This study strengthens the understanding a big picture of gender-specific challenges and benefits within certification schemes. This review follows PRISMA guidance synthesized the effects of certification schemes on women farmers using an impact evaluation framework categorised into short-term, medium-term, and long-term socio-economic outcomes.

In terms of social impacts, the short-term outcomes include improved in working conditions and increased participation in producer organizations. The medium-term social impacts include enhanced decision-making power within households (jointly with husbands) and cooperatives, increased social networking, and gradual shift in gender roles in farming. The long-term impact has been seen in increasing the representation of women farmers in leadership roles. In terms of economic impacts, the short-term outcomes improved in accessing financial services and market opportunities. The medium-term outcomes revealed the progress in asset ownership and expansion of economic opportunities, especially for female-headed households. Long-term economic impacts have indicated gradually reducing gender income disparities as women farmer accumulating savings and increasing financial stability or resilience. Overall, the impacts of certification schemes vary significantly depending on the country, crop type, and social context. While some findings indicate positive socio-economic benefits, others highlight negative or neutral effects, reflecting the complexity of these interventions.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Alexandra Peralta

Andrea Calilhanna

Ski-hill Graph Pedagogy Meter Fundamentals Meter Fundamentals - Preliminary Results

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Abstract

Any discussion of listening to music requires the details of listeners' responses to sound. Teachers typically tell students metre is a time signature despite research showing metre is through experiences of sound rather than a notation. Listeners respond to music with psychoacoustic mind and body experiences initiated by music's air molecules producing the individual's temporal information. Responses to music include temporal information of emotions, perception of pitch, harmony, rhythm, timbre, culturally specific content, structure, and metre. Why is metre taught as a time signature when contemporary metre theory (Cohn, 2020) provides opportunities to introduce metre listening skills to students' learning? This presentation provides the preliminary results of a phenomenological case study which adopts Cohn's metre theory for beginners and studies student interactions with Ski-hill Graph Pedagogy Metre Fundamentals through which to learn metre. The work provides insights for metre pedagogy with beginner students and suggests a conceptual framework to understand metre fundamentals with listening and visualisations of metre through ski-hill graphs to benefit students.

Supervisor: Mr Stephen Whittington

Nate Camatta

Defining a novel conceptual framework for climate-adaptive ecological restoration governance

Law School

Abstract

Private landholders have a vital role in helping Australia meet its biodiversity conservation and recovery goals, as the majority of the continent's land is owned or managed by nongovernment actors. Given significant past ecological damage and increasing future degradation due to climate change, suitable legal tools are needed to enable landholders to help address these challenges.

Conservation covenants (which are binding agreements between landholders and governments to conserve nature on their land) have become popular with environmentally concerned landholders. However, researchers are demonstrating that covenants are typically biased towards protecting existing conservation values rather than facilitating restoration or adaptation to climate change.

This presentation will speak to the early stages of a Masters' project. This project will synthesise key concepts and recent developments in scholarship about climate adaptation and ecological restoration science and theory. These concepts can be used to inform priorities for legal reform and the design of new legal instruments to better facilitate climate adaptation and ecological restoration on private land.

Supervisor: Dr Phillipa McCormack

Dannie Carr Quiros

Navigating Barriers to Internationalisation in Latin America: A Study of YLAI Entrepreneurs

Business School

Abstract

International business is a crucial aspect of the global economy. It creates entrepreneurial opportunities and challenges that are essential to consider for business strategies (Daniels et al., 2018). This dynamic influences companies of all sizes (Daniels et al., 2018; Guedhami et al., 2022), and SMEs are no exception.

The motives for companies considering internationalisation are diverse, spanning from profitability to diversification and expansion (Bolzani & Foo 2018). However, there are barriers to implementing internationalisation that are pivotal to overcome (Harrigan, 1981). Some of these barriers can be the threat of failure and adaptability to new markets (Prashantham & Floyd 2019), the firm's leader's personal values (Bolzani & Foo 2018), lack of networking (Hunt et al. 2022), knowledge or mindset orientation (Lin, Cao & Cottam 2019). On top of that, internationalisation can be time-consuming (Hennart, Majocchi & Hagen 2021) and be hindered by the domestic-focused approach or expertise (Bruneel, Clarysse & Autio 2017). Companies, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs), face significant barriers to internationalisation.

This research assesses the barriers to adopting internationalisation in SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) through a qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews that were conducted on 25 SME entrepreneurs from Latin America from the network YLAI (Young Leaders of the American Initiative) with the goal of answering the following research: (1) What are the barriers to internationalisation in Latin American SMEs? (2) What are the implications of adopting internationalisation in Latin American SMEs? (3) What are the solutions for Latin American SMEs to overcome these barriers?

This research is expected to be particularly relevant because its results may fill the gap in the literature regarding Latin American SMEs and provide input to entrepreneurs and policymakers to address these challenges.

Supervisor: Dr Rajeev Kamineni

Kahlia Clarke

Approaches to building food sovereignty in local communities: the role of local governments and civil society organisations.

School of Social Sciences

Abstract

The growing global population face interconnected crises of widening inequality, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and biodiversity loss, to which global food and agricultural systems are connected in both cause and effect. The weaknesses exposed by these challenges have increased discussions about the potential of local government and civil society groups to deliver approaches that bolster the resilience and wellbeing of both communities and natural environments. Food sovereignty, meanwhile, is a movement that opposes the centralisation of power and the privileging of powerful interests and promotes the right of access to food as well as the right to input into food system governance. The synergy between local government and civil society groups and the food sovereignty movement is therefore an extremely topical subject with enormous potential.

To develop an in-depth understanding of the approaches taken in local food systems to enhance food sovereignty and the role that local governments and civil society organisations can best play in their implementation, a systematic literature review assessed the research of 72 publications from throughout the Global North. Thirty-eight different approaches were identified and grouped into five categories: Emergency food access, community education and resourcing, alternative food networks, collective organising models and top-down policy approaches. By quantitatively measuring the popularity of each approach and identifying themes of discussion within the literature, clear trends were able to emerge. These provide insight into the key determinants of success and recurrent challenges faced in the implementation of local food sovereignty approaches that can be invaluable to future work.

Supervisor: Associate Professor John Tibby

Alan Cook

Sound, Sculpture, and the Abstraction of Anthropophonic Soundscapes

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Abstract

What if the most revealing human sounds are the ones we don't intend to make? This research investigates the electro-mechanical soundscapes of the Onkaparinga district, uncovering the unintentional sonic biproducts generated by human activity ecosystems. Using field recording, sculpture, mathematical sonification, and electro-acoustic composition, it develops new methods for analyzing, transforming, and reinterpreting the interactions within and between machines.

The project unfolds in three stages: documentation, transformation, and representation. It begins with field recordings of machinery from water management, agriculture, and construction sites, alongside an analysis of their acoustic properties and contextual significance. These sounds are then transformed through a sculptural intermediary, where statistical data from the site informs both the physical structure and the electronic manipulations applied to the recordings. Finally, the work is represented in compositions that integrate acoustic instruments with the transformed soundscapes, creating a dynamic interplay between two abstracted sonic realities.

This research expands the discourse on soundscape composition, sonification, and interdisciplinary sound art by positioning sculpture as a mediator between environment and sound, guiding the creation of a flexible compositional framework adaptable to various anthropophonic contexts. Drawing from Luigi Nono's site-specific electronic manipulation and Laurence English's deep listening methodologies, this project advances our understanding of the relationship between human industry, environmental change, and acoustic ecology.

Attendees of this presentation will experience an exploration of these ideas through visual documentation, offering insights into how sound art can reveal the hidden sonic traces of human infrastructure. Whether you are a composer, researcher, or sound artist, this presentation will provide new perspectives on transforming industrial soundscapes into aesthetic and conceptual forms.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Luke Harrald

Dinusha Costa

The Role of Individual Self-Concepts in the Entrepreneurial Journey: A Systematic Review and Research Agenda

Business School

Abstract

The psychological construct of self-concepts plays a significant role across a wide range of entrepreneurial behaviors, from entrepreneurial intentions, opportunity recognition to venture creation, growth, and social impact. Understanding how self-concepts have been synthesized in current entrepreneurship research is critical to deepening insights into entrepreneurial intentions and actions. However, the application of self-concepts in entrepreneurship literature is highly fragmented. This study aims to review the integration of self-concepts in entrepreneurship research and to examine the relationship between self-concept constructs and various entrepreneurial contexts. Through systematic analysis, this study highlights areas of consensus, inconsistencies, and existing gaps within the field. Using a systematic review methodology, this article analyzed 166 research articles and developed a typology-based categorization of the literature. The analysis reveals that entrepreneurial pre-venturing, entry, and venturing contexts are heavily researched, predominantly using two constructs—self-efficacy and identity—while exit, post-venturing, and re-entry contexts have received limited attention. The findings suggest the need to apply self-concepts beyond self-efficacy and identity to deepen the understanding of how self-concepts shape entrepreneurial behaviors, particularly in exit, post-venturing, and re-entry contexts following venture outcomes. Psychological research indicates that self-concepts such as self-esteem play an essential role in regulating behavior after various outcomes, underscoring the importance of broadening self-concept frameworks in entrepreneurship studies.

Supervisor: Professor Paul Steffens & Dr Scott Gordon

Katelyn Crawford

Demystifying Bel Canto: Synthesising Approaches to Bel Canto 'Classical Voice' Pedagogy

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Abstract

There are few terms in music that are more confusing, ambiguous or vague than 'bel canto'. Bel canto, literally 'beautiful singing' or 'beautiful song', is a ubiquitous Italian term which can be used to refer to an approach to vocal production heralded as "elite vocalism".

For students wishing to learn the bel canto approach to classical singing, the field of 'classical voice' performance and pedagogy can be difficult to navigate, as it is unfortunately filled with controversy and confusion. Singing pedagogy is primarily an oral tradition, in which much of the instrument is hidden. Written sources describing bel canto singing often lack specific instructions on vocal use, contain obscure language, or are "personal statements" of vocal teachers containing "colourful" or vague imagery.

This project aims to synthesise historical and twenty-first century sources on bel canto to define Bel Canto as an approach to 'classical voice' pedagogy and distil its elements. It will synthesise key sources by bel canto pedagogues and scholars, the knowledge of 'classical voice' teachers, and current understanding of vocal anatomy. It will investigate the terminology and approaches used when teaching Bel Canto elements, and propose a model of pedagogical analysis for indicating how they can be practised using 'classical voice' repertoire.

This presentation will provide an overview of the research project, explain the complex origins of the term bel canto, propose a new definition of Bel Canto as an approach to vocal production which has been developed from an extensive survey of the literature, and will explore the contemporary relevance of researching Bel Canto as an approach to 'classical voice' pedagogy.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Carl Crossin OAM

Bahare Dadgar

Predicting the Likelihood of Cyber Incidents

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

Cyber risk has become a paramount policy concern, given the significant expansion of firms' digital footprints, coupled with the accelerated adoption of artificial intelligence and the extensive storage of customer data. Cyber threats can lead to substantial financial loss and social costs. Despite advancements in cybersecurity measures, firms continue to suffer from an increasing number of severe cybersecurity failures and data breaches. This study focuses on identifying the determinants influencing firms' likelihood of experiencing a data breach, the most common and consistently reported type of cyber incident. By employing the Least

Absolute Shrinkage and Selection Operator (LASSO) on the panel of publicly listed firms in U.S. over the 2010 to 2021 period, we highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of cyber risk. The results suggest that data breaches are more likely to occur in firms with higher visibility (as measured by firm size and age), more intangible assets, higher valuations, and lower profitability. Additionally, firms in less competitive industries, those with less financial risk, risky compensation practices, and the presence of a Chief Information Officer (CIO) are also more susceptible to breaches. Conversely, the likelihood of data breaches is reduced in firms with highly cited and valuable patents, as well as by having a younger board and a CEO present on the board. While exposure to climate change slightly reduces this risk, firms facing higher political risks are more likely to experience data breaches. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and corporate leaders, advocating for a comprehensive approach that also considers measures beyond the technical realm to enhance cyber resilience and manage cyber risks more effectively.

Supervisor: Firmin Doko Tchatoka

Gergely Duh

Ego-driven fear overrides the rational managerial decision-making

Business School

Abstract

As businesses become more complex in an ever-changing business environment (Dugoin-Clément, 2024), it becomes challenging for them to manage ego-driven decision-makers (Hougaard & Carter, 2018). Several aspects of ego-driven decision-making are not fully understood in the literature (Byun & Al-Shammari, 2021). To explore ego-driven managerial decision-making, six participants were interviewed to investigate their individual lived experiences (Thompson, 2023). Open-ended questions were used to motivate the participants to answer freely and help the researchers identify a range of possible previously unknown factors (Mwita, 2022). Using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith & Fieldsend, 2021), the findings suggest that ego-rooted factors such as importance of public approval and fear play a more significant role in ego-driven, organisational decision-making than previously thought.

Supervisor: Dr Tiffany De Sousa Machado

Cathy Duncan

Satie, Cocteau, Picasso and the circus: a research field trip to France

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Abstract

My proposed conference presentation will describe my recent field trip experience in France, where I have investigated the usage of circus aesthetics. The presentation will be chronological and will include a short PowerPoint slide presentation to illustrate the field trip. The presentation will begin in the south of France, at the 47th Festival International du Cirque de Monte-Carlo, and will be followed by my meeting with circus historian Dr. Alain Frere, who founded the Monte-Carlo

Circus Festival in 1975.

This will be followed by my visit to the University Paul-Valery Montpellier 3, where an International Circus-Science research program has been established. While there, I was given the opportunity to consult relevant circus heritage documents and music manuscripts. The presentation will discuss my engagement with international circus researchers at the "Colloque Cirque" conference, organised by the 'Universite de Rennes', before moving to the 31st Festival International de Cirque de Massy, and to Cirque d'Hiver in Paris. This will be followed by a discussion of the process of consulting rare documents and manuscripts, preserved by the BnF, which were accessed at the Biblioteque Richelieu and the Biblioteque de l'Opera in Paris.

The field trip has offered an understanding of why the circus was important to the artists of Montmartre, and why it was a predominant source of inspiration for Satie, Cocteau and Picasso in their collaboration of the ballet 'Parade' in 1917. The presentation will conclude with an overview of my field trip experience, the enrichment of knowledge, and new perspectives that have resulted from my field trip experience, which will contribute to a vibrant, original study of the usage of circus aesthetics.

Supervisor: Stephen Whittington

Xuande Fan

Constructing One China: Paradiplomacy in cross-Strait Relations

School of Social Sciences

Abstract

Existing research on Chinese paradiplomacy has predominantly been inspired by neoliberalism, highlighting economic motivations and introducing the role of subnational actors in foreign activities within an economic framework. However, it largely overlooks high-political issues such as sovereignty and reunification. Currently, the political dimension of Chinese subnational engagement with Taiwan remains underexplored. This research addresses this gap by examining the role of Chinese subnational authorities in paradiplomacy as a means to support reunification, moving beyond economic rationales to explore how subnational efforts influence Taiwan's sovereignty, which is fundamentally an 'institutional fact.'

This study employs constructivism and sovereignty as its theoretical framework. Using qualitative methods, including discourse analysis and content analysis, it investigates how Chinese subnational actors, particularly provincial governments, develop their paradiplomatic patterns with Taiwan. The institutionalisation of paradiplomatic practices will be examined, with a comparative analysis across different provinces to assess regional variations in engagement.

Preliminary findings suggest that Chinese subnational governments do not merely act as economic agents but also play a role in shaping sovereignty discourse through their interactions with Taiwanese counterparts. This challenges the dominant neoliberal interpretation of Chinese paradiplomacy and contributes to a broader understanding of how sovereignty is constructed at multiple levels of governance. The study expands the field of paradiplomacy by integrating constructivist insights and has implications for policymakers and scholars analysing cross-Strait relations, Chinese foreign policy, and subnational diplomacy. By highlighting the influence of Chinese subnational governments on reunification through politically sensitive engagements, this research provides a new perspective on China's reunification strategy from a subnational level.

Supervisor: Dr Czesław Tubilewicz

Karina Galliford

Sovereign Interests and Electromagnetic Interference: Developing a Threat-Based Framework for International Law

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Abstract

The incidence of GPS jamming and laser dazzling by military forces against other States during peacetime has become increasingly common in recent years. Over the past three years, there have been instances of Russian jamming of GPS signals across the Nordic region, Russian interference with European television, radio, and GPS satellite signals, and Chinese lasing of Australian, United States, and Filipino military assets in international airspace and waters. These actions have negatively impacted aviation and maritime safety and disrupted the economies of other States. However, it is unclear whether such activities breach international law. With limited scholarly attention given to this type of harmful conduct, this thesis examines the nature of electromagnetic interferences between States and aims to clarify how international law is likely to apply, if done in a manner consistent with other forms of conduct.

By analysing established international law governing other military activities, this thesis identifies common themes related to sovereign interests, which may be explained using a threat theory imported from the cognitive sciences. Preliminary analysis suggests that various types of electromagnetic interference may be assessed through specific threat elements—capability, intention, and opportunity—in relation to identified sovereign interests. Incorporating these elements into the international law assessment suggests that such conduct will be both unlawful and intolerable when it presents a substantial threat to sovereign rights or results in actual, including indirect, harm to sovereign interests.

Although this threat-based framework is articulated within the context of international law for the first time here to aid in assessing jamming and dazzling activities, it is likely to have broader applicability to other forms of inter-State conduct. This framework may prove useful for States as they navigate new military capabilities and methods of warfare.

Supervisor: Professor Dale Stephens

Tamer Haj Ali

Para-Temporal Community: Existence Outside Space-Time

School of Humanities

Abstract

The most pressing issue for Palestinian authors is the erasure of Palestinian national identity through active disciplinary state structures or passive coercion as a byproduct of losing a physical connection to the land. Mahmoud Darwish describes the Palestinian condition as being pushed to become “redundant shadows exiled from space and time” (2001). While Darwish’s description is pessimistic, contemporary Palestinian authors have taken advantage of this conceptualization of the Palestinian identity to render time malleable in their works. I want to present my preliminary findings on the Anglophone Palestinian author Susan Abulhawa.

Susan Abulhawa incorporates this notion of exile from space and time in her magical realist novel, *The Blue between Sky and Water* (2015). The novel revolves around the strange story of the Baraka family in the ethnically cleansed village of Beit Daras in historic Palestine. My paper argues that, to combat erasure, Abulhawa creates pockets of decolonized time using Palestinian mythology and folklore, embodied by a djinn called Sulayman. Sulayman conjures a plane called The Blue. The Blue is a recreation of Beit Daras, the destroyed and depopulated Palestinian village, which all generations of the Baraka family have access to across space and time. The Warwick Research Collective describes this power of postcolonial magical realist literature to “peer back into the past, by way of recovering both the specific history of the present and the alternative histories that might have been but were not, yet that (paradoxically) still might be” (WReC 2015, 72). In the same vein, I argue that *The Blue* acts as a temporal ripple that allows the reclamation of a lost past and reification of identity in a distorted present while opening avenues to possible futures where Palestinians can exist without threat of disappearance.

Supervisor: Professor Andrew van der Viles

Vyta Hanifah

Women are empowered in dairy farming households in Indonesia. Really?

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

Research on women's empowerment in agriculture has focused primarily on crop farming in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, with some recent studies examining livestock systems. The dairy sector remains largely unexplored despite a significant number of households in developing countries relying on it as the primary source of income. This study examines gender roles and empowerment in dairy farming households in Indonesia, utilising a modified version of the Abbreviated Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index (A-WEAI). Recognising the unique structure of dairy production, we adapted the A-WEAI measure to include dairy-specific tasks across four domains: production, resources, income, and leadership. Our findings, in contrast with previous studies, show that women are more empowered than men in dairy farming households. Women have significant control over dairy income despite lower participation in dairy farming activities. Sensitivity analysis using different empowerment thresholds (80%, 70%, and 60%) revealed that empowerment levels vary slightly for women but substantially for men, highlighting the importance of context-specific metrics. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) indicated a high level of gender parity within these households. Key drivers of women's empowerment include joint decision-making in dairy production, participation in community groups, and shared asset ownership. However, barriers such as limited access to credit remain. Our study is limited in measuring women's empowerment at the household level; hence, the empowerment level for women should be interpreted cautiously because it does not represent a larger sphere beyond the household. Nevertheless, this study provides a replicable framework for analysing empowerment in dairy farming households, contributing to broader gender equality and empowerment initiatives for agriculture in developing countries.

Keywords: Dairy farming household, Gender roles, Women's empowerment, Indonesia

Supervisor: Associate Professor Alexandra Peralta

A B M Enamol Hassan

Climate-induced migration and collective efforts in building community resilience: Insights from urban informal settlements

School of Social Sciences

Abstract

Examining the nexus of climate change, rural-urban migration, and building community resilience through collaboration is a pressing need to understand adaptation of urban informal resettlers. Significant number of people have been relocated to cities due to affecting by climate change exposures. Recent literatures have focused on the urban migration as part of the adaptation processes in response to the effects of climate change. Bangladesh as one of the most climate vulnerable countries, has a significant records of climate migrants who have been displaced from home districts and moved to cities in search of livelihood opportunity. A large proportion of these migrants relocated in Dhaka City, Bangladesh to rebuild resilience living in informal settlement areas through collective actions with multi-stakeholders' engagement. To shed light on this engagement, this paper aims to explore the resilience process and its efficacy in reconstructing livelihoods undertaken by climate migrants, emphasizing on the integration of multi-stakeholder participation. The central research question is: how do climate migrants address the challenges of adaptation within their new urban settlement? Navigate answer to this query, the study used mixed-methods approach with utilizing triangulated data collection techniques. The study's findings focus on the key dimensions of livelihoods: physical, financial, health, and human capacity building services. Although these resettlers face various challenges in living areas, they demonstrate awareness and collective activities to meet basic livelihoods. Collaboration among the city council, non-governmental organizations, and community leaders contribute to improve physical environment and financial conditions. Facilitation of this stakeholders include access to credit markets and savings, upgrading infrastructures, promoting children's education, and installing community clinics for health services. However, concerns remain to grow particularly in social hazards such as drug use, communal conflicts, and uncertain land tenure system, all of which push the dwellers at constant risk of eviction in the future.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Yan Tan

Amanda Hayes

Policy Impacts on Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems: A South Australian Perspective

School of Social Sciences

Abstract

Background: Food systems are influenced by a complex web of interconnected and intersecting policies and activities from production and consumption to waste management. In high-income countries, like Australia, food systems contribute to poor health and degradation of the environment. This research examines South Australian government food-related strategic policies and analyses the extent to which they help or hinder the development of a healthy, sustainable and equitable food system. Methods: South Australian government department websites were searched to identify food-related strategic policies in the agriculture, environment, food processing, manufacturing, and marketing sectors. Agreed inclusion and exclusion criteria were followed resulting in a data set of 15 policy documents. We analysed these documents using NVivo 13 Software employing a pre-defined qualitative coding framework to determine the types of policy actions proposed and the outcomes these policy actions aimed to achieve. The extent to which the policies recognised evidence and proposed action on social and commercial determinants of health and health inequities was also identified. Results: Our preliminary findings indicate that food-related policy in South Australia does not prioritise health or environmental sustainability, nor does it recognise the disparate impacts on health within the population (health equity impacts). Environmental and agricultural policies favour adaptation and resilience over mitigation, and sustainability outcomes, when articulated, were predominantly non-specific. We also found a strong focus on economic outcomes, such as attracting investment into “climate smart” businesses. Several policies did mention equity, but often using weak language. Conclusions: Our research highlights the need for robust food policies in South Australia that act on evidence concerning the contribution of the food system to population health, environmental degradation and health inequities. While economic considerations are important, our study suggests they dominate over efforts to create a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system that benefits all South Australians.

Supervisor: Professor Fran Baum AO

Simon Headland

Breaking the Bias: Reforming Australia's Tax Concessions for Future Generations

Law School

Abstract

The Australian tax system exhibits a persistent bias in favour of asset holders over labour income earners, creating intergenerational inequities. My PhD examines how tax concessions disproportionately benefit those with accumulated wealth, exacerbating generational disparities. Given time constraints, this presentation focuses on one key manifestation of the issue: superannuation tax concessions. These concessions, designed to incentivise retirement savings, overwhelmingly favour older, wealthier individuals, widening the wealth gap and placing a disproportionate burden on younger and lower-income earners. This research aims to evaluate the fairness of these tax settings and explore potential policy reforms to ensure a more equitable distribution of tax benefits across generations. While this presentation provides a focused analysis of superannuation, my broader research will examine various tax policies contributing to intergenerational inequity in Australia.

Supervisor: Dr Sylvia Villios

Siqi Huang

Climate Factors and Adoption of Water Saving Technologies in North China

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

The intensification of climate change has exacerbated the imbalance between water supply and demand, directly affecting crop growth and increasing the vulnerability of agriculture. However, despite being a crucial adaptation strategy to climate change, the introduction and diffusion of water-saving technologies (WSTs) have achieved only limited success in developing countries. Moreover, few studies have examined the role of climate factors in WST adoption. Utilizing panel data from northern China, this study employs a multivariate probit model to analyse the impact of various climate factors on WST adoption at both the village and household levels. The findings indicate that the adoption rate of modern WSTs remains low in northern China, with evidence of a substitution relationship between channel seepage prevention and surface-level plastic irrigation pipes. Community-based WSTs appear to be largely unaffected by short-term climatic conditions. Farmers in warmer regions are more likely to adopt border irrigation; however, in response to rising temperatures, they tend to transition from border and intermittent irrigation methods to other WSTs.

Supervisor: Dr Di Zeng

Edgar Huk

5G, NBN, and Social Capital: Disrupting or Enhancing Social Connectedness?

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

Humans are becoming ever more connected, but does technological connectedness impact social connectedness? As broadband infrastructure expands across Australia, understanding the relationship between advanced mobile and fixed broadband and social capital becomes increasingly relevant. Research on broadband and social capital has largely focused on earlier fixed Internet technologies, with little attention to newer broadband infrastructure. In addition, few studies differentiate between mobile and fixed broadband, leaving an incomplete understanding of their distinct social effects. This study examines the impact of broadband expansion on social capital in Australia, focusing on the period before and after the 5G rollout and NBN availability. It explores whether these technologies strengthen or weaken different aspects of social capital, contributing to debates on digital infrastructure's societal effects. A difference-in-differences approach is used to assess changes in social capital between 2018 and 2022, leveraging variations in 5G and NBN availability. The analysis merges geo-coded longitudinal data from the HILDA survey with telecommunications coverage data at the postcode level. Initial results indicate that increased NBN access is linked to a significant decline in social capital, while 5G availability has a positive but mostly insignificant effect. By crowding out social engagement, findings suggest that fixed broadband may disrupt social connectedness more than mobile broadband. Policymakers should consider these unintended social consequences when planning and investing in digital infrastructure.

Supervisor: Dr Florian Ploeckl

Michail Ivanov

The Island Mentality of a Tall Poppy: Toward Coexistence, Confidence and Cooperation in the Regulation of Australia's Genetically Modified Crops

School of Humanities

Abstract

Ten years ago, Marsh, an organic farmer from Western Australia found swathes of genetically modified (GM) canola on his paddock after they had blown over from his neighbour's farm. Consequently, Marsh lost his organic certification and unsuccessfully sought compensation for having his organic crops 'contaminated' by the presence of GM material on his farm. The case was called Marsh v Baxter and, since the Supreme Court of Western Australia delivered its judgement in 2015, there has been a lingering uncertainty as to how GM crops can coexist with other crops, whether conventional, organic or otherwise. This presentation provides an overview of the case and considers the legal and regulatory impact it has had across Australia over the past ten years. It examines the regulatory space in light of Australia's increasing development and cultivation of GM and genome edited crops. It places a focus on South Australia and Tasmania as jurisdictions of interest, because of their unique agricultural identities and ongoing GM moratoria. Guided by the principles Associate Professor with Responsible Research and Inclusive Innovation (RRII), my research involves the use of filmed in-depth semi-structured walking interviews with key interested persons to inform the regulatory space – an innovative methodological approach which this presentation describes. Using law as its central tenet, my project aims to foster the creation of robust and representative regulation and contributes to the socio-legal scholarship on GM crop regulation in Australia, which is lacking in empirical data of interested persons.

Supervisor: Professor Rachel Ankeny

Dilini Jayasinghe

Effect of an Early Childhood Learning and Development Intervention on Student Performance

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

A limited number of studies have examined the long-term impacts of skill-based curricula on student performance during the early childhood. In addition, there is little empirical evidence for this in the Australian context. We contribute to this empirical and contextual gap by estimating the causal impact of a skill-based early childhood learning and development intervention in Victoria, Australia on primary and secondary school performance. Since this learning intervention also incorporates partnerships with families and multilingualism, which may positively affect disadvantaged children and culturally and linguistically diverse children, we are also able to examine its potential impact on these child subgroups. The study exploits variation across cohorts to program exposure caused by timing of the program and difference-in-differences strategy to identify the causal effects. Preliminary results show that the program has a positive impact on student performance.

Supervisor: Dr Raul Barreto

Nadia Jeffries

An Ecocritical Reading of Mary Shelley's Valperga: or, The Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca.

School of Humanities

Abstract

Throughout Mary Shelley's Valperga (1823) there are extended sections in which Shelley describes the seasonal changes of the northern Italian landscape. Although studies on Shelley's other novels, namely Frankenstein and The Last Man, have employed ecological frameworks, there is a lack of ecocritical work on Valperga while scholarship on the novel has neglected the importance of nature to Shelley's philosophical and political ideology. I will employ an ecocritical framework informed by Jonathan Bate and Karl Kroeber's work on Wordsworth's nature poetry to explore the significance of nature within Valperga, particularly the intersection of nature and politics in Romanticism. As Bate and Kroeber make evident, Romantic ecological thought is not individualistic or oppositional; instead nature fosters an interdependent relationship with the Romantic poet in which the poet, through harmonious connections with other individualities, becomes part of a web of relations. This commune with nature inspires political idealism as the poet's unity with nature collapses social institutions and hierarchies, and is incompatible with authoritarian political ideologies. With Valperga Shelley employs an ideology which normally appears in Romantic poetry to criticise the tyranny of feuding societies. My research examines the nature imagery throughout Valperga within the context of Shelley's interrogation of the politics and feud of 14th Century Italy. I intend to demonstrate that the seasonal changes described in Shelley's work provide a sense of security in their cyclicity that is contrary to the instability of volatile politics. This ecocritical framework highlights the similarities between Shelley's fiction and the ecological thought of first generation Romantics, suggesting that, just as in Wordsworth's nature poetry, Shelley indicates that a commune with nature promotes political idealism.

Supervisor: Dr Lucy Potter

Katharina Kretschmer

Understanding Intentional Informal Voting: Insights from the 2022 Victorian State Election

School of Social Sciences

Abstract

Informal voting remains a persistent challenge in Australian elections, with significant implications for democratic representation. This presentation explores preliminary findings from my PhD research, which seeks to better understand intentional informal voting in Victoria.

Informal voting is often assumed to result from voter error or confusion, but a significant proportion of informal ballots are cast deliberately. Drawing on data from a voter survey conducted during the 2022 Victorian state election, I analyse the key motivations behind voters' decisions to cast an informal ballot. The findings suggest that protest voting, dissatisfaction with candidates or parties, and disengagement with the political system all contribute to deliberate informality, as do socioeconomic factors. By identifying patterns in who chooses to vote informally and why, this research challenges common assumptions about electoral disengagement and highlights the complexities of voter behaviour.

Understanding intentional informal voting is crucial for policymakers, electoral commissions, and political parties seeking to address voter dissatisfaction and strengthen democratic participation. This presentation will discuss the survey methodology and key determinants of intentional informality.

Supervisor: Professor Lisa Hill

Vanessa Kreusch

Metaphorical language and linguistic diversity in academia

School of Humanities

Abstract

Researchers try to understand and solve complex problems, and a crucial but challenging aspect of every researcher's experience is to put their ideas and findings into words. Cognitive linguists have found that complex information is typically expressed by metaphorical language; not only by literary but so-called conceptual metaphors. Conceptual metaphors are cognitive mappings by which we explain complex phenomena by more concrete concepts. One of the most common examples of a conceptual metaphor is TIME IS SPACE. However, how metaphors are realised is highly culture- and language-specific. Take, for example, the dual concepts of science and humanities, versus the collective German concept of Wissenschaft (literally: knowledge creation). This paper will explore some conceptual metaphors in academic texts and explain how different languages provide different frameworks to arrive at new knowledge. The aim of this paper is to show how it is essential to uphold linguistic diversity in academia. While English is a great tool for global communication, a loss of other academic traditions and languages leads to a loss of indispensable perspectives in research. Moreover, I will offer some insights from my research, which specifically looks at the role spatial expressions play in construing academic spaces.

Supervisor: Dr Stefan Hajduk

Michael Lazarou

AI Agents, Accountability, and Explainability

School of Humanities

Abstract

There has been a recent proliferation of “AI Agents”: systems or programs that can operate in an increasingly autonomous manner. These systems raise an important question: do improvements in the capabilities of autonomous systems change the requirements for how we hold such systems – or their operators – accountable for their outputs? Accountability can be fruitfully connected to explainability – having the ability to explain an outcome helps in determining who, or what, should be held accountable. My talk will highlight how increasingly agentic systems pose challenges for pre-existing criteria for explainability. Specifically, I will examine how the increasing agentic features of algorithmic systems complicates the explanatory picture, and how different accounts of artificial agency can help to clarify these added complexities. I will conclude by briefly considering how we should better understand the role of explanation in relation to increasingly complex explanatory contexts.

Supervisor: Professor Philip Gerrans

Heather Lee

Journey's end, or just the beginning?

School of Humanities

Abstract

Attempting to define the HDR journey is a pointless task. Some may analogise the experience with riding a rollercoaster through high points and low, loops and turns. To a degree that analogy is true, though somewhat linear. In reality it can be more like a ride comprised of numerous intersecting rollercoaster tracks and being on it whilst blindfolded.

By juxtaposing what I had initially intended my research and thesis outcomes to be against what I have hopefully/actually achieved (see note), this paper will unpack the scholarly and personal impacts of my HDR journey through the realms of biography and art history.

NB: the date of the conference is a week after my thesis submission date.

Supervisor: Emerita Professor Catherine Speck

Yang Li

Secondary Student's Engagement in Online Classes

School of Education

Abstract

Student engagement has been studied for decades. The lack of a universal definition remains the most prominent issue, and academics suggest that any study on student engagement should clarify its conceptualisation first (S. Christenson et al., 2012; Kahu, 2013). Online education has become prevalent in the K-12 education community in recent years, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Lo & Hew, 2020; Xia, 2015). However, low engagement among secondary students in online lessons posed a significant challenge (Cui et al., 2021). To enhance their engagement, the definition for this context should be clarified beforehand (S. Christenson et al., 2012; Kahu, 2013). Following the two foundational works, this research first developed the conceptualisation of secondary Student Online Classroom Engagement (SOCE) and its corresponding measurement scale. This conceptualisation recognises that SOCE comprises three components: students' behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagements. Each element is suggested in a hierarchical structure indicated by two or three latent variables. Three online mathematics lessons were conducted to validate this conceptualisation. 602 Year 8 students from two public schools in the urban area of Zhuhai City, Guangdong Province, China, participated in this study. Data collected through the SOCE questionnaire were analysed using Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis in SPSS Statistics 29. This study first validated the structures of the three components. Results indicated that behavioural and cognitive engagement should form a one-factor construct, while student emotional engagement remains within the hierarchical structure indicated by two first-order latent variables: general emotional engagement towards schools and specific class emotional engagement. The aligned measurement scale was also revised. Subsequently, the overall engagement structure was validated. Three alternative models were employed. The results of the goodness-of-fit indices suggested that the 3-factor correlated model had good validity for the revised SOCE questionnaire.

Supervisor: Associate Professor I Gusti Darmawan

Sijia Liu

The impact of the FOGO bin service on recovery rate, diversion rate, and landfill

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

The introduction and evolution of FOGO (Food Organics and Garden Organics) services are attributable to significant challenges encountered in waste management within Australia. FOGO bin service is the kerbside waste collection service replacing the original green bin service by allowing not only garden organic waste but also food waste. It aims to improve the recovery rate and decrease landfill volume (total disposed). This paper use a unique dataset from NSW(New South Wales) and VIC (Victoria) including waste management and census data at the council level spanning nearly twenty years, by applying quantitative analysis methods, specifically estimating OLS and fixed effects models, it examines the impact of FOGO services on recovery rates, diversion rates, and landfill, thereby proving the effectiveness of FOGO services. The result shows that councils implementing FOGO services, whether in NSW or VIC, exhibit significantly higher recovery and diversion rates and lower landfill compared to those without FOGO services. In NSW, apart from FOGO, Advanced Waste Treatment (AWT) facilities are also an effective waste management strategy for reducing landfill. The AWT facility is a facility unique to NSW. It aims to process waste from red bins (residual waste) before it goes to landfill, transforming waste into organic outputs that benefit soil. In other states, red bin waste is directly sent to landfill. This paper is the first paper that uses quantitative method to provide strong data support for the effectiveness of FOGO as a waste management strategy. And it uses the latest and more comprehensive data from NSW and VIC, characterised by almost twenty years span and a greater variety of variables, to conduct an in-depth analysis. In addition, it examines the impact of other waste management strategies and demographic characteristics on recovery rates, diversion rates, and landfill, offering empirical evidence to further validate and complement existing hypotheses.

Supervisor: Dr Nadezhda Baryshnikova

Xinru Ma

Romantic Imagination and Cinematic Narrative in *Absalom, Absalom!*

School of Humanities

Abstract

In this presentation, I want to explore how one narrator's Romantic version of a complex story is transformed by two other narrators into a modernist narrative in William Faulkner's 1936 novel, *Absalom, Absalom!* The aim of my thesis overall is to demonstrate the intersection between Faulkner's longstanding Romantic predilections and his ongoing quest for modernist visual strategies.

Supervisor: Professor Julian Murphet

Samuel Madsen

On the Method and Merits of Computational Psychiatry

School of Humanities

Abstract

Historically, the field of psychiatry has taken a symptom-based approach to classification and diagnosis, defining illnesses largely in terms of clusters of observable markers (i.e. behaviour and subject self-report). This neglects another, deeper base of evidence on which most all other medical disciplines additionally rely; namely, aetiology, or the causative factors underlying clinical presentations. The reason can be squarely located in the relative complexity of the relevant biological mechanisms; where the body has proven more amenable to investigation, the brain remains in many ways mysterious. What is needed, then, is a method that can establish detailed and principled connections between behaviour and phenomenology on the one hand, and concrete neurophysiological processes on the other; building to the same level of control over mental states as has modern medicine over the body. The burgeoning new field of computational psychiatry stands to meet precisely this challenge. This talk will proceed from a motivation of the basic premise of a computational theory of brain and mind to its application in a mental health context. In so doing, I will illustrate how this may begin to resolve the problems faced by traditional psychiatry, finishing with a brief example from my own research on psychopathologies of traumatic exposure.

Supervisor: Philip Gerrans

Linda Magin

The Kaleidoscope Model of Life – Time to Re-Think Work and Life in Two Separate Domains

Business School

Abstract

This paper intends to broaden understanding the multifaceted nature of an individual's work and nonwork experiences and they key factors that shape life dynamics. Common work-life concepts, such as work-life conflict, balance and enrichment, are based on most accepted assumptions of work and life in two separate domains. This perspective limits the development of creative approaches to corporate work-nonwork policies. Most current work-life literature focuses predominantly on work, particularly paid work, which has led to research problems and gender inequities. There is a need to consider the synergies and connections between different aspects of life, to move beyond the traditional work and family models and consider a broader range of modern life domains. The aim of this paper is to introduce a new, holistic Kaleidoscope Model of Life, tailored to demonstrate individual life needs and changes to support better work-nonwork integration. This paper highlights the importance of considering both paid and unpaid work within the work domain to understand the full scope of an individual's work responsibilities and to address issues of equity, satisfaction, and sustainability in work-nonwork management. This paper concludes that life encapsulates work and other nonwork domains. Broadening the conceptualisation of work and life is essential to meet the needs of changed constituencies, family types, workforce, life changes, employment trends, environmental and societal factors.

Keywords: work-life; work-nonwork; Kaleidoscope Model of Life

Supervisor: Dr Peter Sandiford

Wai Maung

From questions to clarity: Enhancing teachers' AI adoption surveys through cognitive interviewing

School of Education

Abstract

This presentation concerns cognitive interviewing processes for improving survey instrument face validity, a methodology commonly used in health and medical science, but rare in educational contexts. The focus is on how the cognitive interviewing process can be applied to validate survey instruments' face validity and improve item clarity and interpretation. This process is an important consideration for survey design because it helps researchers identify and fix the issues with question clarity, comprehension, and response accuracy.

A study that adopted cognitive interviewing to validate and enhance a survey design will be presented to provide the audience with an understanding of the process and the outcomes of the approach. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with four PhD students and one PhD graduate research fellow with prior teaching experiences. Participants were asked in the interview to complete a survey about pre-service teachers' perceptions of AI use, developed through a synthesis of the literature, and comprising 7 demographic items, 19 Likert scale items, 3 closed-ended items and 1 open-ended question. Two strategies of cognitive interviewing, (1) think-aloud and (2) verbal probing, were applied in each interview to elicit the participants' deeper insights on each survey item. The final interview data were analysed item by item to explore and address identified issues with each item. Nine items were identified as unclear or subject to misinterpretation, and four items were recommended for further refinements to enhance specificity. Based on the results, the research team reviewed the identified issues in the survey and refined the identified items on the survey. The cognitive interviewing process provided insights into survey item phrasing in a way that statistically-oriented analyses could not and suggests that survey developers in educational contexts consider this approach to enhance survey instrument face validity.

Supervisor: Dr John Willison

Lauren McCormick

How Can We Study the Teaching of an Art That Resists Standardisation?

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Abstract

The pedagogies of music composition are inherently fluid, shaped for centuries by personal teaching philosophies, institutional values, cultural influences, and the increasing demands of a rapidly evolving industry. Unlike disciplines with clearly defined pedagogical models, the teaching of music composition often blends structured learning with traditional master-apprenticeship models as well as experiential knowledge. As both individual composition teachers and tertiary music institutions emphasise various practical skills and creative values in their teaching, the education of a new composer is highly individualised even amongst a single cohort. This makes it incredibly difficult to study the various teaching practices in music composition through conventional research frameworks.

This presentation examines the challenge presented when designing a study to examine the variety of teaching practices in the field of music composition at the institutional level and explores the role of exploratory research in addressing these challenges. From exploring theories of 'best practice' to methodological design, this presentation emphasises the necessity of methodological flexibility and the broader applications of this approach in artistic education.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Luke Harrald

James Minchinton

An Examination of the extent to which the authorisation and continuing supervision obligations under the Outer Space Treaty enable or require States to intervene or influence the terms of commercial space contracts

Law School

Abstract

Despite the significant growth of commercial activities and private actors operating in space, little space law research is directed towards these activities and actors, nor to the interface between States as regulators and the actions of private actors.

This paper will examine, with a commercial perspective, several aspects of Article VI of the Outer Space Treaty, including the unresolved scope of “national activities” and the extent of the obligation on States to “authorise and continually supervise” activities in space. An area of focus will be a State’s right to intervene in contracts of space participants and how those contracts can be regulated to ensure States comply with Article VI. The paper will also consider actual State practice around commercial contracts with reference to domestic legislation of space-faring nations.

This research is expected to assist national regulators in assessing how to approve and condition activities that private actors propose to undertake in space, particularly around contracts entered into by the private actor.

It will also assist commercial operators in planning missions, especially when negotiating and drafting contracts, to ensure that their arrangements will be palatable to regulators.

Supervisor: Professor Dale Stephens

Maria Neledva

A conceptual exploration of motivation as an antecedent to student learning outcomes

Business School

Abstract

Student motivation has seen a decline in educational programs, raising questions on how best to engage learners (Diwakar et al., 2023). While researchers recognise the roles of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in motivation, their interplay remains insufficiently explored. This leads to an incomplete understanding of how students sustain their motivation. Motivation as a psychological concept consists of two main factors: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic factors involve drivers such as enjoyment, interest and relevance to individual psychological needs (Augustyniak et al., 2016). Extrinsic motivation on the other hand, involves pursuing activities for separate outcomes, such as rewards, social approval, or academic performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Extrinsic motivators in education may include scholarships, exams, and career prospects, influenced by societal expectations, educators, and parental figures (Sun & Yang, 2009). This preliminary research seeks to address this lack of comprehensive exploration, through extending the Means-Ends-Fusion (MEF) model (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022), incorporating extrinsic motivators—such as rewards, social approval, and career prospects. The MEF model provides a solid theoretical foundation for the understanding of intrinsic factors and how they subsequently lead to increased student engagement. The framework links activities and goals through four key factors: repeated activity-goal pairing, uniqueness, perceived similarity, and temporal immediacy. Using the MEF model brings forward the opportunity to test and explore a comprehensive viewpoint of student motivation. Through exploring the interplay of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors, this leads to an "equipartite" approach to the current framework—whereby multiple means lead to a single goal—creating a broader model. From an educator perspective, this adapted model offers deeper clarity and insight into student motivation and learning. This can potentially pave a pathway toward curriculum design changes and the enhancement of student learning, through understanding how to foster sustained levels of motivation within learners.

Supervisor: Dr Dean Wilkie

Elmira Nouri

#MeToo Across Borders: A Global Comparative Study of Online Feminist Movements Against Sexual Violence

School of Humanities

Abstract

Online movements addressing sexual violence, particularly the MeToo movement, have been a part of recent feminist activism across the world. The MeToo movement, as a historically significant moment and a single-cause network, empowers women through knowing that every survivor who has suffered violence is not alone. While existing literature has examined various online movements, studies often focus on case-studies or regional contexts rather than offering a global comparative perspective. This research aims to understand the MeToo as a global movement by considering its key characteristics, including a focus on workplace and domestic violence, the role of celebrity activism, and the institutional, cultural, or/and individual targets of the MeToo movement. By comparing movements across different regions, this study demonstrates how movements can maintain global similarities while also reflecting their distinct cultural contexts. Based on feminist and social movement theories, this paper uses intersectionality and hashtag feminism frameworks to explore how race, class, and geographical location influence the reach and impact of the MeToo movement.

Supervisor: Dr Kim Barbour

Madeleine Perrett

Exploring Federalism as a Pathway to Realising Indigenous Aspirations in Australia

Law School

Abstract

Does federalism offer a pathway to realising Indigenous aspirations for political empowerment and structural reform in Australia? This paper addresses that question and contributes to broader conversations on how states governing Indigenous Peoples' traditional lands can respond to their distinct aspirations. Focusing on sovereignty, self-determination, and nationhood, the paper engages directly with Indigenous scholarship to identify and analyse these aspirations, considering both areas of agreement and divergence. Federalism is then used as a theoretical framework to evaluate whether treaty federalism, or a combination of treaties and federal structures, can provide a viable pathway for reform. Through this analysis, the paper assesses federalism's capacity to accommodate Indigenous governance systems and distinct identities. By developing culturally informed criteria grounded in Indigenous perspectives, it examines how federal principles align with these aspirations while addressing the complexities of settler-colonial governance. Preliminary findings suggest that while federalism holds potential as a framework for structural reform, significant challenges remain in aligning its principles with Indigenous aspirations. This work highlights the complexities of settler-colonial governance and contributes to broader discussions about reimagining state-Indigenous relations globally. Ultimately, this paper provides a critical evaluation of federalism's potential, highlighting both its opportunities and challenges in supporting Indigenous calls for structural reform.

Supervisor: Dr Anna Olijnyk

Thi Xuan Dieu Phan

Sustainable home-cooked food consumption behaviours: an empirical study of urban households in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

Promoting consumer behaviours toward sustainability is essential for minimising the environmental effects of food consumption. Despite previous studies emphasising the importance and benefits of home cooking, there is a lack of comprehensive research on behaviours throughout the home cooking process. This study uses a framework covering all food consumption stages, from purchasing ingredients to preparation, storage, cooking, eating, and disposal, to measure sustainable home cooking behaviours of households. We estimated a sustainable food consumption composite index and classified and characterised household behaviours in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Cluster analysis reveals four groups of households: (1) sustainable food management practice, (2) sustainable eating, (3) unsustainable food planning and leftover handling, and (4) unsustainable home-cooked food consumption. Multinomial logit regression analysis reveals that households showing greater awareness and attitudes toward sustainable food consumption tend to cook more sustainably. However, apartment-dwelling households, often young couples, and highly educated respondents tend to be less sustainable in home cooking. Our results provide valuable insight to policymakers and practitioners for analysing, designing and implementing targeted policies that promote sustainable food consumption behaviours focusing on home cooking.

Supervisor: Dr Di Zeng

Ranjani Ragotham

The commercialisation of happiness: the depiction of mental health in the consumer social media marketing strategies of global cosmetic brands

School of Humanities

Abstract

This paper presents the preliminary results of a study investigating how global cosmetic brands contribute to current and emerging discourses about mental health and wellness on social media. Existing research on online mental health discourses tends to focus on themes of mental health awareness and advocacy; personal experiences with mental health conditions and the Associate Professord stigma; and the effects of social media on the mental health of vulnerable audiences. While these types of mental health-related content are typically shared by medical experts, social media influencers or everyday users, there is an emerging contributor to the discourse – cosmetic retail brands seeking to promote their products online. The growing use of mental health-related content shared by these cosmetic brands has led to social media users facing the unique challenge of distinguishing authentic information from marketing material or misinformation (or both). However, there is limited awareness of the relationship between promotional social media content and mental health discourses within media, marketing and communication research. Hence, this project studies how frequently cosmetic brands engage in mental health discourse in their social media communications on Instagram and analyses the different mental health narratives they promote.

This paper presents the result of the quantitative content analysis of a large sample of firm-created Instagram highlighting the prevalence of mental health narratives in the social media communications of global cosmetic brands. This work contributes to a growing body of literature on online mental health discourse.

Supervisor: Dr Victoria Fielding

Mahsa Rahmani Dizgah

Gender Disparities in Australian Agriculture: Insights and Barriers

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

The paper investigates issues of gender inequalities in Australian agriculture concerning income, labour participation, household responsibilities, and access to resources. Using data from the HILDA Survey, this study tries to explain how factors Associate Professord with demographic, socio-economic, and household contributions are related to disparities in various outcomes between male and female farmers. Key findings are that income and work hours are highly unequal, with women carrying a high burden of unpaid domestic labour. Whereas men dominate the full-time farming positions, women report higher life satisfaction despite their economic disadvantages. Regression analyses underpin that education, childcare responsibility, and rural-urban differences are some of the critical determinants of income disparity. Interaction terms further present the fact that compounded barriers, including caregiving and resource limitation, uniquely affect women farmers. Evidence underlines the urgent need for targeted policies to unwind the structural inequities toward achieving gender inclusivity within Australian agriculture. Evidence-based contributions are provided toward policy interventions at an equitable level.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Duygu Yengin

Mubeen Rehman

Can sustainable assets withstand shocks from financial and commodity markets?

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

Sustainable investment has emerged as a pivotal frontier in global asset management, redefining success by integrating profitability with environmental and social responsibility. This study examines the volatility spillover connectedness among sustainable investment vehicles, such as water stocks, green energy, and green stocks, alongside financial assets and global commodities, using international data from LSEG (London Stock Exchange Group) DataStream covering the period from April 30, 2010, to October 11, 2024. Employing total and quantile connectedness methodologies, the analysis reveals distinct patterns of interdependence, particularly during crisis periods, where sustainable and financial stocks exhibit heightened connectedness. Spillover effects are notably more pronounced in the lower and upper quantiles, surpassing mean values and underscoring the importance of considering heterogeneous market dynamics. The findings highlight extreme volatility connectedness between water stocks and the equity indices, especially in the distribution tails, which may signify the transmission of upside risk from the water stock, suggesting that investors receive information from sustainable assets first, which are more strongly connected to the network, indicating the risk transmission. These results offer valuable insights for investors, policymakers, and market participants, emphasizing the dual imperative of environmental sustainability and economic resilience, contributing to the broader climate change agenda.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Duygu Yengin

Amy Robinson

What do they believe? Reconciling disbelief for Pre-Service Teachers perceptions and practices.

School of Education

Abstract

This presentation continues from previous HDR conferences providing an update on a current PhD project in the School of Education. Last year, it was discovered that a discrepancy can exist between pre-service teachers' (PST) beliefs of their own teaching and learning practices. While this has been acknowledged in previous literature (Turner, Christensen, & Meyer 2009), this current presentation shares preliminary findings of where these discrepancies exist in their teaching practices and how these are conceptualised in a Teaching Performance Assessment. Teaching Performance Assessments are a federally mandated assessment for teaching candidates to demonstrate a Graduate level of achieving accredited and assessed industry standards. While it was initially hypothesized that the malalignment existed between cultural demographic characteristics and perceptions of knowledge stability (Reading 2019; Tessema, Michael, & Areaya 2025), this presentation finds that while PSTs, regardless of residency status and teaching area, believe in the malleability of intelligence, with some preferences remaining regarding the role of clear-cut answers. This finding demonstrates males PSTs prefer transmissive approaches more than female PSTs. This presentation will therefore discuss the potential rationales behind this finding. The lack of variability between subject areas was surprising, as was international students' beliefs in ability being flexible suggesting either a change in the expectations made about specific PSTs' perceptions (Campbell et al 2009; Soong et al 2020; Xin, Ye & Zhang 2025) or that current ITE instruction is successful in bridging or reconciling culturally different approaches, thus better acculturating international students' epistemological perceptions to an Australian context. These findings can be applied in ITE programs to either continue to develop the intercultural appreciation of PSTs' perceptions of their own students' ability, or to consider the role of gender in approaches to transmissive and constructivist learning.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Nina Maadad

Katherine Roff

Sourcing Solutions: Evaluating the use of marginalised and underrepresented sources in Australian solutions journalism stories.

School of Humanities

Abstract

In the face of global high levels of news avoidance and increasing public mistrust, media professionals and scholars are re-examining media practices to seek better ways to engage with audiences, particularly those with high news avoidance rates. Marginalised groups, in particular, have been found to mistrust media practices, with journalists' traditional reliance on official, elite, and predominantly white and male sources, and exhibit some of the highest levels of news avoidance. One of the emerging styles of journalism being employed by major news outlets, such as the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), The New York Times, and The Guardian, to (re)-connect with audiences is a constructive approach called solutions journalism. This approach to reporting covers news with a focus on responses to society's problems, rather than just the problems and includes insights, evidence, and limitations of responses. Practitioners and researchers have asserted solutions journalism's positive benefits for audiences, journalists, and journalism students. However, it remains unknown if the practice encourages more inclusion of the perspectives of those historically neglected in mainstream media source selection. Through a quantitative content analysis of 125 Australian-based solutions journalism stories, this study examines whether the reporting style includes more non-white, non-elite, and non-male voices than its mainstream equivalent, and the mechanisms within the practice that might encourage more diverse sourcing. A second phase of research, featuring semi-structured qualitative interviews with 15 journalists practising solutions journalism in Australia allows researchers to fill a significant gap in the current literature. With limited research outside of a U.S. context, this study adds to an understanding of the practice and its impacts by exploring whether solutions journalism includes more diverse voices in an Australian context, and if Australian solutions reporters engage differently with their sources, as the profession attempts to mitigate news avoidance trends.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Kathryn Bowd

Utsha Roy

Listening through the Static: Analysis of 1946

School of Humanities

Abstract

This paper represents the second segment of the analysis section of my doctoral thesis and focuses on the communal situation in India in 1946. It utilizes archival data collected from various British archives to examine how the BBC Eastern Services portrayed religious violence in India during this period. This analysis is framed within the broader context of the evolving communal policies of the British administration and the increasing nationalist demands in India.

The paper challenges the conventional assumption that the British pursued a uniform "divide and rule" policy in India. Drawing on archival evidence, it counters popular nationalist narratives by demonstrating that the Labour Administration, rather than following a divisive approach, was in fact implementing an integrationist communal policy. The paper then explores how this shift in policy impacted the BBC's editorial stance in 1946. The examination of the BBC's editorial policy is contextualized within the changing cultural and political milieu of India, which was steadily moving toward decolonization.

Furthermore, the paper explores the relationship between the BBC and the British administration, highlighting how both were shaped by institutional factors such as the declining popularity of colonial rule, the imminent departure of the colonizers, and the challenges of framing content for a nation on the cusp of independence. By analyzing how the BBC's editorial policy was influenced by these factors, this paper offers new insights into the Corporation's handling of communal violence and its alignment with administrative policies.

Additionally, the paper contrasts the BBC's editorial policy in 1946 with that of 1945 to assess the evolution of its stance. It investigates the conditions that led to this change and examines the impact of the BBC Eastern Services' shifting approach on their coverage of communal issues in India.

Supervisor: Dr Saira Ali and Professor Michelle Philipov

Mimi Salminah

Formation of Biodiversity Restoration Preferences: A Review from A Social-Psychological Perspective

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

A socio-psychological perspective has been advocated to address an omission in an ecosystem service valuation, particularly to adjust the rational utility concept. While the perspective involves various variables, they have not been comprehensively identified including the mechanisms through which they interact with each other and with other factors, and ultimately shape preferences for environmental goods which have a complex relationship with human well-being. This paper explored the perspective in biodiversity restoration context, drawing on existing literature. Specifically, we reviewed studies on how socio-psychology drives public citizen and private landholder preferences for biodiversity restoration, which entails economic sacrifices. We expanded the terms to behavioural economics since we intended to understand how interaction between environmental, economic and socio-psychological factors influenced individual decision making, in which the understanding may be useful to inform required behaviour interventions for socially optimum biodiversity restoration outcomes. By synthesizing theoretical and empirical evidence, we established fundamental framework of preference formation for biodiversity restoration. It generally illustrates how socio-psychological, economic, stimulus, and socio-demographic factors interplay with cognitive processes to form preferences. This offers an expanded theoretical basis for the studies about behavioural intentions for environmental goods. In practical, it helps policy makers and practitioners understand the underlying drivers and mechanisms of biodiversity restoration preference formation, a key step to designing appropriate interventions to enhance participation rates and promote sustainability of biodiversity restoration efforts. At last, we proposed areas that need further exploration to properly predict how individuals would respond to stimuli and form thoughtful preferences in complex systems.

Supervisor: Professor Patrick O'Connor

Rubayat Sarwar

Why Are People Betting More Than Ever?

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

I conducted experiments to investigate the underlying behavioral factors that attract sports bettors' preference for innovative, trendy betting products (multi-bets) over traditional, non-innovative betting products (single bets). Each participant made ten investment decisions in a set of ten risky investment project games, with choices ranging from 0 to 8 dollars. I observe that individuals exposed to multi-bets without information on compound probability of success spent higher amounts compared to equivalent single bets. This behavior reflects a combined effect of misjudging the compound probability of success and the thrill for the multi-bets' innovative design. My findings suggest that innovation in betting products exerts a stronger influence on choice behavior than its absence.

Supervisor: Professor Ralph-Christopher Bayer

Harry Spurrier

How to define AI in your research projects.

Business School

Abstract

The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into research has created significant challenges for researchers in defining AI consistently. During my own research journey, I encountered confusion and inconsistency in how AI was defined and studied across disciplines. Many papers offered incomplete or contradictory definitions, making it difficult to navigate and apply AI effectively in research. To address this issue, I conducted a literature review, identifying key gaps in understanding and creating a novel framework to guide researchers. My framework distinguishes between studying AI as a subject and using AI as a research tool, organizing this distinction into three layers: 1) the research context, which considers disciplinary norms; 2) the understanding of AI, which defines what AI means in a given study; and 3) the approach, detailing how AI is used or studied. This structured approach not only resolves ambiguities but also promotes transparency and replicability in AI research. By highlighting edge cases and developing a taxonomy, my framework aims to reduce methodological inconsistencies and enable researchers to navigate the complexities of AI with greater clarity. This presentation will discuss the problem I faced, the process of creating the framework, and its potential to support researchers across disciplines in studying or applying AI with confidence.

Supervisor: Dr Rajeev Kamineni

Thomas Sulda

Encore or Swansong?: Market shaping a positive future for Performing Arts Organizations

Business School

Abstract

Globally, Performing Arts Organizations (PAOs), like symphony orchestras and opera companies, face ongoing challenges to survival, including attracting, engaging and retaining audience numbers and securing funding. In other words, their current markets are not viable. Although research has explored how these organizations attempt to adapt to changing environments, focus is placed on PAO managers' reactive strategies. But these approaches have proved ineffective at ensuring long-term sustainability, especially in an environment of financial uncertainty, shifting audience expectations, and declining ticket sales. Instead, this study draws on an approach to building viable markets, called 'market-shaping'. Market-shaping is a proactive strategy where organisations actively attempt to reshape the structure, dynamics, assumptions, norms and behaviours in their market, rather than passively reacting to changes. This study synthesises current research before theorising how PAOs could adopt a market-shaping approach to proactively transform their markets. The study suggests balancing tradition with innovation, even in resource-limited settings, could strengthen long-term viability and sustainability.

Supervisor: Dr Jonathan Baker

Rui Sun

Hot Under the Collar: The Impact of Extreme Heat on Financial Consumer Complaints

Business School

Abstract

This paper examines how extreme heat affects consumer sentiment in the banking sector. Analyzing data on complaints filed to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), we find that extreme heat in consumers' locations leads to an increase in complaints against banks operating in those locations. The increase in financial consumer complaints is Associate Professor with reduced market share and lower non-interest income for banks. The robustness of the results is confirmed through a difference-in-differences analysis using unexpected heat waves as exogenous shocks. The impact of extreme heat on financial consumer complaints varies based on the sensitivity of consumers to weather conditions and the potential operational deficiencies of banks. Overall, our study highlights the significant role of heat-induced sentiment in shaping consumer complaints and has important implications for banks.

Supervisor: Dr Limin Xu

Yuki Tanaka

How should a public opinion survey be designed to assess the outcome of a public diplomacy programme?: A case study of Cool Japan evaluation in Australia

School of Social Sciences

Abstract

Public diplomacy emerged as a pivotal diplomatic tool for many governments around the turn of the century, driven by the growing influence of public opinion on international politics, spurred by advancements in communication technologies and globalisation. Numerous nations have launched public diplomacy programmes, investing significant political and financial resources to enhance their national image and cultivate favourable reputations among foreign audiences.

However, the evaluation of public diplomacy remains in its infancy, with few comprehensive studies assessing the outcomes of such initiatives. Cool Japan is one such public diplomacy programme to which the Japanese government has devoted substantial political and financial resources, yet it lacks a systematic evaluation of its outcomes. Additionally, research has identified a gap in the study of the effective use of opinion surveys in public diplomacy outcomes evaluation.

In this context, the present study examines two ongoing surveys conducted in Australia: public opinion surveys conducted by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and annual polls conducted by the Lowy Institute, a local private think tank. It evaluates how well these two public opinion surveys measure Australians' perceptions of and trust level in Japan through the Total Survey Error framework and assesses their strengths and weaknesses to generate insights for the optimum design and application of public opinion surveys to evaluate Cool Japan outcomes.

Supervisor: Gerry Groot

Tadiwos Tiruneh

Rainfall extremes, variability, and climate-smart agriculture responses in Ethiopia

School of Economics and Public Policy

Abstract

The increasing frequency and severity of extreme rainfall events are significantly challenging agricultural systems worldwide, jeopardizing food security and rural livelihoods. Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) offers a vital solution, enhancing resilience through diverse practices in crop and livestock sectors. Understanding the influence of these climatic extremes and variabilities on CSA adoption is crucial. This paper examines how such factors drive CSA adoption in Ethiopia, revealing how farmers adapt their strategies in response to both short-term shocks and long-term changes.

Utilizing panel data from rural Ethiopian households for 2018/19 and 2021/22, alongside historical village-level precipitation data, we estimate econometric models to explore the impacts of long-term rainfall variability, short-term unexpected rainfall, and extreme rainfall events on CSA adoption. Our heterogeneity analysis further delineates these effects across different farming systems within the country.

The findings indicate that long-term rainfall variability has inconsistent effects on CSA adoption, whereas short-term unexpected rainfall and frequent extreme events generally increase adoption. However, these positive influences do not extend to asset-poor households, which face significant barriers.

This research highlights the importance of understanding farmers' behavioural responses to promoting inclusive CSA adoption policies. Insofar as extreme rainfall is likely to increase, developing targeted policies and initiatives that support both immediate and strategic long-term adaptation efforts becomes crucial.

Keywords: Extreme rainfall, Climate Smart Agricultural (CSA) practices, Adoption, Ethiopia

Supervisor: Associate Professor Alexandra Peralta

Cecilia Tournour

Become an Inclusive Leader: How Managers Can Enhance Support for Autistic Employees in Neurodiverse Teams

Business School

Abstract

"The world is going to need all of the different kinds of minds to work together." (Grandin, 2010)

Encouraging neurodiversity is an increasing priority for modern organisations, as neuro-minority individuals, such as autistic employees, often possess unique talents that can enhance workplace effectiveness. However, simply implementing pro-diversity policies is insufficient to generate meaningful outcomes; managers and organisations must actively practise inclusive leadership to fully leverage employees' diverse strengths. Yet, existing literature lacks consensus on what constitutes an inclusive leader. Without addressing this gap, organisations may struggle to create genuinely inclusive environments for autistic employees, potentially resulting in higher turnover rates, reduced team performance, and missed opportunities for innovation. My research first synthesises the broader literature on inclusive leadership beyond neurodiversity to establish a comprehensive foundation. Building on this, the study investigates the challenges managers face when leading autistic employees, the strategies they employ to foster inclusion, and the traits they consider essential for inclusive leadership. This study is the first of three projects in my thesis, examining the intersection of inclusive leadership and neurodiversity. Through qualitative, exploratory interviews with Australian managers across various industries, I aim to answer key questions: What barriers do managers encounter when leading autistic employees? What leadership strategies effectively promote inclusion? By capturing managers' experiences, my research contributes to refining inclusive leadership theory and offers practical insights to support managers in fostering workplace inclusion. These findings will inform organisational policies, leadership training, and broader inclusion strategies. Preliminary results will be presented at the conference.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Chia-Yen (Chad) Chiu, Ph.D.

Isabelle Watson

Masterclass in Expression: Active Embodiment of Joseph Joachim's and Marie Soldat-Roeger's Recordings

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Abstract

Early twentieth-century recordings by famous musicians trained in the nineteenth century have constituted a valuable source of romantic performance practice evidence for over forty years. These recordings, when corroborated with written evidence, revealed a flexible and sentimental approach to interpretation that differed markedly from the precise and text-literal twentieth-century performance style. So, armed with this knowledge, why is it that today's historically informed performances of nineteenth-century repertoire still largely resemble mainstream performance style? Certainly, it is difficult for twenty-first century performers immersed in modernist performance ideals to consider alternative forms of expression which challenge modern ideals of beauty and good taste.

Imitating early-twentieth century recordings was therefore advanced by Richard Taruskin in 1995 as a first step in bridging the much-discussed gap and performing more historically. Since then, many scholars have adopted this approach as a learning exercise in practice-led projects: Clive Brown, Neal Peres Da Costa, David Milsom, and Anna Scott, to name but a few. Despite varying levels of scientific rigour, each early recording emulation fundamentally aims to use 'close listening' (Daniel Leech-Wilkinson) and active embodiment of nineteenth-century performance features to add more expressive variety to a performer's toolkit.

In this paper, I discuss the role that emulating recordings by Joseph Joachim and pupil Marie Soldat-Roeger have played in my research project, which uses Robert Schumann's violin sonatas as a case study for experimenting with nineteenth-century performance style. I discuss challenges inherent in imitating an acoustic recording made in uncomfortable conditions and with limited takes and reduced frequencies. I argue that although a thorough approach to emulation is important to approaching Joachim's performance style and aesthetic, imagination and creative problem solving are required to bring the expression into my own body, instrument and technique. Finally, I evaluate the effectiveness of this process in preparation for creating original interpretations of the Schumann works which diverge from well-trodden interpretative paths.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Luke Dollman

Ying Zou

Giving at Checkout: Good for Charity but Does It Work for Retailers?

Business School

Abstract

Point-of-sale donation, also known as checkout donation, is a fundraising method in which retailers act as intermediaries, directly soliciting charitable contributions from consumers at the point of purchase. This approach is widely used in retail settings, where customers are often asked to make small donations at checkout. Given its growing prevalence, understanding the dynamics and implications of point-of-sale donation is crucial for both retailers and researchers.

Despite its benefits, point-of-sale donation may not always yield positive outcomes for retailers. This study reviews the existing literature on point-of-sale donation and identifies unresolved research questions. Specifically, it focuses on the potential backfire effects of point-of-sale donation requests on retailers, such as negative consumer reactions that impact retailer evaluations, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intentions. Additionally, it explores strategic approaches to enhance point-of-sale donation effectiveness, including the role of cause fit, time pressure, social pressure, and the impact of repeated donation solicitations.

By addressing these open questions, this research aims to provide practical recommendations for retailers to optimize their charitable initiatives while mitigating potential risks. The findings will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of point-of-sale donation and offer actionable insights for designing consumer-friendly and sustainable donation campaigns.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Sally Rao Hill

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Kaurna acknowledgement

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Kaurna people, the original custodians of the Adelaide Plains and the land on which the University of Adelaide's campuses at North Terrace, Waite, and Roseworthy are built. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of the Kaurna people to country and we respect and value their past, present and ongoing connection to the land and cultural beliefs. The University continues to develop respectful and reciprocal relationships with all Indigenous peoples in Australia, and with other Indigenous peoples throughout the world.

