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4–5 February 2026 | Online



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The 1st International Online Conference on Administrative Sciences

4–5 February 2026 | Online



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Welcome from the Chair

Dear colleagues,

It is our pleasure to invite you to join the 1st International Online Conference on Administrative Sciences. The conference is organized by the MDPI open access journal *Administrative Sciences* (ISSN 2076-3387, Impact Factor: 3.1) and will be held **online** from **4–5 February 2026**.

The agenda of the conference includes, but is not limited to, the following topics:

- S1. Public Management;
- S2. Leadership;
- S3. Strategic Management;
- S4. Entrepreneurship.

IOCAS 2026 will enable you to share and discuss your most recent research findings, with the active engagement of the audience in question-and-answer sessions that will take place online without any registration fee.

The conference committee will review the submitted abstracts. The authors of accepted contributions will have their work displayed in an abstract collection. Following the conference, outstanding contributions will be invited to be submitted as a full-length paper for publication in *Administrative Sciences* with a 20% discount on the publication fee.

We hope you will join us, present your work at IOCAS 2026, and be part of this exciting online event.



Prof. Dr. Isabel María García Sánchez
Conference Chair

Department of Economics and Economic
History, University of Salamanca,
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Administrative Sciences (ISSN 2076-3387) is an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal (free for readers), which publishes original theoretical and empirical work on organization studies. *Administrative Sciences* aims to advance and communicate knowledge concerning management theory and practice both in public administration and in profit organizations; it encourages submissions that build on interdisciplinary research in related fields, such as business, economics, political science, gender studies, psychology, sociology, physiology, communication theory or artificial intelligence and their implications on management, organizations and the society. *Administrative Sciences* aims to provide a rapid refereeing and editorial processes, following standard publication practices.

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Session Chairs



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Keynote Speakers



Prof. Dr. Isabel María García Sánchez

Department of Economics and Economic History, University of Salamanca, Salamanca, Spain



Prof. Dr. Armando Papa

Department of Economics and Statistics, University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy,
Gnosis: Mediterranean Institute for Management Science, School of Business, University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus



Prof. Dr. Hans Van Kranenburg

Nijmegen School of Management, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands



Assoc. Prof. Mirko Perano

Department of Business Sciences – Management & Innovation Systems, University of Salerno, Fisciano, Italy

Invited Speakers



Assoc. Prof. Manuela Lucchese

Department of Economics,
University of Campania Luigi
Vanvitelli, Caserta, Italy



Prof. Dr. Ivo Hristov

Department of Industrial and
Information Engineering and
Economics, University of
L'Aquila, Rome, Italy



Prof. Dr. Amalendu Bhunia

Department of Commerce,
University of Kalyani, West
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Assoc. Prof. Eriona Shtembari

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University of New York Tirana,
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Assoc. Prof. Miha Marič

Faculty of Organizational
Sciences, University of
Maribor, Kranj, Slovenia

Program Overview

	4 February 2026	5 February 2026
Morning	Session 1. Public Management	Session 3. Strategic Management
Afternoon	Session 2. Leadership	Session 4. Entrepreneurship

IOCAS 2026 Program

4 February 2026 (Wednesday)

Session 1. Public Management

Time: 9:00 (CET, Basel) | 03:00 (EST, New York) | 16:00 (CST Asia, Beijing)

CET Time	Speaker	Title
9:00–9:10	<i>Opening Speech</i> Prof. Dr. Isabel María García Sánchez <i>Chair</i>	
9:10–9:20	<i>Welcome from the session chair</i> Prof. Dr. Natalia Aversano <i>Session Chair</i>	
9:20–9:40	Assoc. Prof. Manuela Lucchese Invited Speaker	Digital Transformation and Public Administration: governance, sustainability policies and processes as drivers of change
9:40–10:00	Prof. Dr. Amalendu Bhunia Invited Speaker	Determinants of Public Sector Digital Readiness in ASEAN Economies
10:00–10:15	Olaolu Peter Oluwasanmi Selected Oral Speaker	Beyond Legal Autonomy: A Public Value Framework for Evaluating Local Government Reform in Nigeria
10:15–10:30	Lungile Penxa Selected Oral Speaker	CSO efforts to enhance citizen participation through social accountability monitoring and advocacy at the local government level, South Africa in winemaking
10:30–10:45	Diana Ferullo Selected Oral Speaker	The (Mis)alignment between Strategic Priorities and Public Value Creation: Evidence from Italian Healthcare Organisations
10:45–11:00	Muhammad Sadil Ali Selected Oral Speaker	Administrative Sciences in Practice: Governance, HRM, and Institutional Performance in Pakistan's Higher Education Sector
11:00–11:15	Jorge Alberto Romero-Hidalgo Selected Oral Speaker	The Mexican Agricultural Policy Observatory (MAPO): A Digital Governance Tool for Evidence-Based Public Policy
11:15–11:30	Mark Romanelli Selected Oral Speaker	Operationalizing Inclusion: Applying Six Sigma Principles to DEIB Implementation in Cultural Organizations
11:30–11:45	Joan Simó Esteve Selected Oral Speaker	Smart citizen participation for public management: transforming collective data into tangible actions through Artificial Intelligence (AI)
11:45–12:00	Fundiswa T. Khaile Selected Oral Speaker	Reimagining Parliamentary Oversight: Lessons from the Zondo Commission on Strengthening Portfolio Committees in South Africa

BREAK

Session 2. Leadership

Time: 14:00 (CET, Basel) | 08:00 (EST, New York) | 21:00 (CST Asia, Beijing)

CET Time	Speaker	Title
14:00–14:20	Prof. Dr. Isabel María García Sánchez Keynote Speaker	From Awareness to Action: CEOs and the Climate Agenda
14:20–14:50	Assoc. Prof. Miha Marič Invited Speaker	Interpersonal Intelligence as a Foundational Capability for High-Quality Leader-Member Exchange
14:50–15:05	Kristina Kampfer Selected Oral speaker	From Potential to Progress: Exploring the Development of Female Leadership Competencies
15:10–15:20	Hao Chen Selected Oral Speaker	Research on Human Resource Strategy under the Background of Self-media Convergence
15:20–15:35	Ijeoma Ukeni Selected Oral Speaker	Leadership in Organisations, what has authenticity got to do with it?

15:35–15:50	Adetutu Ogundipe Selected Oral Speaker	Emotional Intelligence and Female Leadership: How Immigrant Women Leaders Integrate into Organisations Using Emotional Intelligence
15:50–16:05	Shefali Vinod Ramteke Selected Oral Speaker	Invisible Leadership in Innovation Ecosystems: Lessons from Scaling UAV and AI Startups in Rural India
16:05–16:20	Dona Thamaraprabha Anuradhi Wahalathanthree Selected Oral Speaker	Decision making for corporate sustainability: Managerial Sensemaking of Competing Goals in UK B Corps
16:20–16:35	Maria De Lurdes Gomes Neves Selected Oral Speaker	Ethical Leadership as a Catalyst for Sustainability: Motivating Employee Engagement in Angola's Mining Sector
16:35–16:50	Corné J. Bekker Selected Oral Speaker	The Seven Deadly Sins and Ethical Leadership

5 February 2026 (Thursday)

Session 3. Strategic Management

Time: 9:00 (CET, Basel) | 03:00 (EST, New York) | 16:00 (CST Asia, Beijing)

CET Time	Speaker	Title
9:00–9:10		<i>Welcome from the session chair</i> Dr. Giorgia Masili <i>Co-Session Chair</i>
9:10–9:40	Prof. Dr. Hans Van Kranenburg Keynote Speaker	Market and Non-Market Strategies for Transitions
9:40–10:00	Prof. Dr. Ivo Hristov Invited Speaker	Integrating Conventional Management Control Systems and Sustainability Control Systems: Emerging Architectures and Dynamics
10:00–10:15	John Michael Geringer Selected Oral Speaker	Lineage, Mobility, and Influence in Global Academic Networks
10:15–10:30	Alexandros Koliopoulos Selected Oral Speaker	Banking Mediation as a Strategic Management Tool for Performance Enhancement: The Greek Experience
10:30–10:45	Swarnankita Chatterjee Selected Oral Speaker	Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) as a Catalyst for Sustainable Development: A Managerial Perspective
10:45–11:00	Ioannis Zervas Selected Oral Speaker	Disruptive Technologies and Workforce Transformation: The Mediating Role of HR Strategy
11:00–11:15	Irena Xhaferri Selected Oral Speaker	Strategic Curriculum Management and Governance in Higher Education: Toward Adaptive and Quality-Oriented University Systems
11:15–11:30	Iryna Iryna Tonkonoh Selected Oral Speaker	The Role of Digital Tourism in Strategic Crisis Management of Tourist Destinations During Wartime
11:30–11:45	Ionut Bogdan Berceanu Selected Oral Speaker	Strategic agility as a bridge between multilevel governance and organizational performance: evidence from Romanian public administration
11:45–12:00	Abigail Dada Selected Oral Speaker	Adapting to Algorithmic Workplaces: Enhancing Task Performance, Psychological Wellbeing and Digital Capabilities Through Human–machine Collaboration and Job Redesign

BREAK

Session 4. Entrepreneurship

Time: 14:00 (CET, Basel) | 08:00 (EST, New York) | 21:00 (CST Asia, Beijing)

CET Time	Speaker	Title
14:00–14:30	Prof. Dr. Armando Papa Keynote Speaker	The Evolution of Real-Time Entrepreneurship among AI, Business Intelligence, and Knowledge Management
14:30–15:00	Assoc. Prof. Mirko Perano Keynote Speaker	From Knowledge and Risk to Intelligence: Emerging Technologies as Drivers of Strategic Effectiveness
15:00–15:20	Assoc. Prof. Eriona Shtembari Invited speaker	Digitalization and competitiveness of SMS, evidence from Albania
15:20–15:35	Noura Samadi Selected Oral Speaker	The Role of Learning by Doing in Fostering Social Entrepreneurial Competence and Intention: A Case Study of Enactus Morocco
15:35–15:50	Yuhuan Zhang Selected Oral Speaker	Artificial Intelligence and Corporate ESG Performance
15:50–16:05	Hadia Safeer Choudhry Selected Oral Speaker	From Infrastructure Investment to Inclusive Growth: The Role of the Belt and Road Initiative for Sustainable Development in Pakistan's Development Agenda
16:05–16:15		<i>Closing remark from the session chair</i> Dr. Matteo Chistofaro <i>Session Chair</i>

Session 1. Public Management

sciforum-153770: Barriers to Citizen Participation: Social, Cultural, and Institutional Factors in Public Service Co-Production

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Citizen participation in public service co-production is essential for enhancing service delivery and fostering democratic governance. However, various barriers hinder effective citizen engagement, particularly in developing countries like Pakistan. This study aims to identify and analyze the social, cultural, and institutional factors that impede citizen involvement in co-producing public services. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the research draws upon secondary data sources such as academic articles, government reports, and case studies to explore these barriers comprehensively. The analysis is guided by a three-pillar framework encompassing social, cultural, and institutional dimensions. The social pillar highlights how low civic awareness, weak social capital, and limited community networks undermine collective participation and trust in public institutions. The cultural pillar reveals that entrenched traditional norms, hierarchical power structures, and language barriers restrict inclusive participation, especially among women and marginalized groups. The institutional pillar underscores how bureaucratic rigidity, complex administrative procedures, and a lack of political will discourage citizen engagement in decision-making processes. Addressing these intertwined challenges requires multi-level interventions, including civic education programs to strengthen social participation, cultural sensitivity initiatives to foster inclusivity, and institutional reforms to enhance transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in public service delivery. This three-pillar framework provides a structured understanding of the barriers to citizen participation and offers a roadmap for fostering more collaborative and democratic public service systems in Pakistan.



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sciforum-156325: A Decade into the 2030 Agenda: Understanding what drives the quality of SDG reporting in Portuguese Municipalities

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This study investigates the factors that influence the quality of SDG reporting among Portuguese municipalities. It focuses on municipal characteristics (size, location, financial efficiency, gender of the mayor, and participation in local SDG initiatives such as CESOP_Local), as well as report-specific factors (type of report and reporting framework). A mixed-methods design combining content analysis with panel data regression was employed. An SDG disclosure index was used to analyse commitment and reporting quality on a four-point scale, ranging from no reference to full integration with quantitative indicators and strategic alignment.

The initial sample covered all 308 Portuguese municipalities and targeted sustainability reports (SR) from 2015 to 2024. However, only 29 municipalities had published SRs, providing 67 reports for analysis in the decade following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

The results show an overall improvement in the quality of SDG reporting over time, although there were declines during economic downturns. The average SDG disclosure level was 2, reflecting mainly qualitative disclosures with limited quantitative data. Of the municipal characteristics examined, only size had a statistically significant positive effect, with larger municipalities providing more comprehensive reports. At the reporting level, adherence to GRI standards and participation in CESOP_Local initiatives were strongly associated with higher-quality reporting.

These findings contribute to the limited research on SDG reporting by local governments, emphasising the need for standardised frameworks to improve comparability and accountability. As the latest SDSN report indicates that many SDGs are off track, attention should now turn to the post-2030 framework and forward-looking new strategies built on lessons learnt, as suggested by the Pact for the Future. Future research should examine how municipalities prepare for this transition and integrate revised metrics into their reporting. It should also expand analyses to other countries and additional political or institutional factors affecting reporting quality.



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sciforum-151029: Administrative Sciences in Practice: Governance, HRM, and Institutional Performance in Pakistan's Higher Education Sector

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Introduction

Universities are established to educate undergraduate and graduate students who can think independently and uphold ethics and values. They also aim to support students in conducting purposeful research and contributing to societal well-being. Achieving these objectives requires the coordinated efforts of both academic and non-academic staff. Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of university governance and human resource practices and their effect on the performance of public sector universities.

Methodology

This study examines the impact of governance and HR practices on the performance of public sector universities in Pakistan. A non-probability convenience sampling method was employed due to limited access to respondents across geographically dispersed universities. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to academics and administrative staff of selected universities. The sample included five old universities (≥ 25 years) and five new universities (10–25 years). A total of 208 valid responses were obtained, comprising 106 from old universities and 102 from newly established universities. The data were analyzed using SPSS software. In addition to regression analysis, independent sample t-tests were conducted to examine performance differences between old and new universities.

Results

The study results indicate that both governance and HR practices are significant predictors of university performance, irrespective of whether the universities are old or new. The analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between HR practices, governance, and university performance. Good governance motivates faculty and staff to contribute more effectively toward achieving university goals. Effective HRM practices enable universities to attract, develop, and retain qualified employees, thereby enhancing teaching quality and research productivity.

Conclusions

The study findings highlight the important role of effective governance and HR practices in improving institutional performance in Pakistan's higher education sector. These findings are important for policymakers and university administrators in designing effective governance and HR strategies to improve the performance of academic institutions.



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sciforum-158468: Alignment between institutional integrity indicators and the Sustainable Development Goals. Case study: Romania

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Institutional integrity has become an important pillar for achieving sustainable governance and implementing UN 2030 Agenda. The relationship between the indicators of integrity and the SDGs is insufficiently studied in Romania, so this paper provides an analysis of the alignment between the indicators of institutional integrity and SDGs with reference to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). The paper is set to formulate a mapping matrix between ethical, transparency and digital integrity mechanisms to SDG targets based on web-based data to support how the local public institutions consider the incorporation of integrity mechanisms into the wider sustainability agenda. The research is based on mixed methodology with a content analysis of the institutional reports and the statistical correlation between the scores of integrity and the corresponding SDG targets that are currently set. The analysis gives empirical insight into the contribution of data-driven policymaking in institutional integrity to larger EU strategies of inclusive and sustainable governance. Early results indicate a moderate-to-high degree of institutional adherence to integrity norms and municipalities, which are more ethically oriented in terms of integrity levels, are also more advanced in digital governance or citizen participation practices. Good procurement ethics, information openness and governance that is citizen-facing are found to be the drivers of policy coherence for sustainable development. Geographic inequalities contribute towards performance, but the performance is in relation to administrative capacity and a proactive model of governance. In contrast, the weak integrity is positively associated with fragmented implementation of the SDGs and lower public trust. The results highlight the increased correspondence between integrity-based governance and SDG framework. The conclusions can be used as an evidence base as by policymakers to share the strategies of enhancing digital integrity platforms (e-integrity), conflicts of interest and digitization of administrative processes.



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sciforum-153793: Beyond Legal Autonomy: A Public Value Framework for Evaluating Local Government Reform in Nigeria

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Legalistic and structural debates like constitutional provisions, revenue allocation, and judicial interventions continue to dominate the discourse on Nigeria's local government autonomy. The July 2024 Supreme Court judgement granting financial autonomy to local government councils exemplifies this approach. Yet a fundamental question persists: autonomy for what purpose? This paper challenges the prevailing framework by arguing that autonomy must be evaluated through a citizen-centric, outcome-focused lens grounded in Mark Moore's public value theory. This paper employs critical analysis of Nigeria's local government autonomy literature and policy documents, juxtaposed against public value theory's interdependent triangular framework. We examine the theoretical and practical implications of reframing autonomy debates from structural-legal concerns to public value creation outcomes. Drawing on Moore's three core dimensions, authoritative environments, public value creation, and operational capacity, we develop an analytical framework for evaluating whether local government autonomy translates to improved citizen welfare. Our analysis reveals three critical blind spots in current autonomy discourse. First, it assumes autonomy automatically equals better governance, ignoring evidence that decentralisation without capacity can worsen service delivery. Second, it treats citizens as passive beneficiaries rather than active definers of public value. Third, it overlooks whether local governments possess the organisational capabilities to effectively leverage autonomy. The paper demonstrates how public value theory addresses these gaps by asking: Do autonomous LGAs deliver services citizens want? Do they operate with democratic legitimacy? Can they execute given capacity constraints? Achieving legal autonomy is necessary but insufficient for public value creation. This conceptual reorientation suggests that sustainable reform requires simultaneous investment in capacity building, democratic strengthening, and citizen engagement mechanisms. This paper provides a robust analytical framework for evaluating local government autonomy and proposes a citizen-centred research agenda for Nigerian public administration scholarships.



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sciforum-153985: CSO efforts to enhance citizen participation through social accountability monitoring and advocacy at the local government level, South Africa

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Social accountability is a means to achieve good governance, increased public participation for improved public service delivery (Ahmad, 2008), and one of the strategies for deepening decentralised development administration (King, Owusi, Braimah, 2013). The literature on social accountability reveals that there is a relationship between social accountability and public participation. Most Literature on social accountability and participation focuses on ward committees and the functioning of IDP prioritisation processes, and pays little attention to how social accountability is implemented and by whom. Civil Society Organisations are often the alternative actors that demand accountability in government or train citizens to hold duty bearers accountable. However, there is little research that analyses the effectiveness of CSOs in doing this work. This paper analyses the applicability of social accountability by three CSOs in four communities based in two provinces in South Africa. The paper is theoretically guided by the participatory democratic and principal-agent theories. In this paper, the principal-agent theory analyses the relationship between citizens and duty bearers in service delivery and accountability, while participatory democratic theory analyses the participation of the selected active citizens within Makana Local Municipality and the City of Johannesburg. The paper draws from a qualitative explorative case study. A qualitative purposive sampling method was used to select key active citizens who were trained by three CSOs in four communities. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and secondary data. The thematic analysis method was used to analyse data. The findings reveal how active citizens acquired knowledge and skills from the CSOs to apply social accountability in their municipalities. The paper makes recommendations to improve efforts to enhance citizen participation through CSOs and efforts to improve active citizenry through social accountability monitoring and advocacy.



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sciforum-153727: Digital Transformation as a Paradigm Shift: Reconceptualizing Innovation in Public Administration

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Digital transformation in the public sector is no longer limited to technological upgrades or online service delivery; it represents a profound **paradigm shift** in how governance, innovation, and public value are understood. This study explores **digital transformation as a conceptual reorientation** in public administration theory, moving beyond the traditional bureaucratic and managerial logics that have historically shaped public institutions. Using the **Digital Era Governance (DEG) framework** proposed by Patrick Dunleavy and colleagues, the paper examines how digitalization reshapes the principles of **efficiency, accountability, transparency, and citizen engagement** within governance systems. Adopting a **qualitative research approach** based on **secondary data**, the study draws upon academic literature, theoretical writings, and policy documents to interpret how digital transformation redefines administrative processes and innovation practices. It investigates how governments transition from rigid hierarchies to more networked, agile, and data-driven models of governance. The paper highlights that digital transformation is not merely a tool for service improvement but a **catalyst for conceptual innovation**, altering how public institutions learn, adapt, and interact with citizens. By framing digital transformation through the DEG lens, the research underscores a theoretical evolution in public administration—one that shifts from control and compliance toward **collaboration, co-creation, and public value generation**. Ultimately, this study argues that digital transformation represents both a structural and theoretical transformation, redefining governance as an open, adaptive, and citizen-centered process in the digital age.



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sciforum-153935: Enhancing governance capacity through Civil Society Organisations and novel networks: insights from Food Security governance during Covid-19, in the City of Cape Town, South Africa

Guswin de Wee

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Introduction

Many South African households suffer with food insecurity; however, the Covid-19 pandemic could have pushed more people into a food crisis due to the increase in food prices, the loss of jobs, and various essential services and food programmes. Additionally, the need for food relief increased, and state-led intervention with limited state capacity were inadequate. The case of the City of Cape Town is selected due to its unique insights as, prior to the lockdowns, Civil Society Organisations [1] were excluded through regulation to deliver food relief, presenting a distinctive scenario to study the evolution and impact of CSO involvement and the emergence of novel networks in crisis response.

Methodology

This paper employs a case study approach, focusing on the CoCT to explore the role CSOs and emerging novel networks in food governance during the Covid-19 pandemic, and how they contributed to governance capacity [2]. To this end, this study adopted a qualitative research methodology through desktop study of secondary sources such as the existing literature, official reports, government policies, and the grey literature (third-sector reports), for a descriptive analysis.

Results

The paper finds that CSOs and novel networks during the pandemic demonstrated adaptive capacity through novel governance arrangements which contributed to enhanced governance capacity in the CoCT. This is achieved through collective action, coordination, social learning and resource mobilisation towards resilience.

Conclusions

Understanding the role of CSOs and novel networks in enhancing governance capacity is critical not only for addressing immediate crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic but also for informing long-term strategies to achieve SDGs in South Africa and beyond.



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sciforum-124062: Ethical AI Governance in Public Administration: A Strategic Framework for Responsible Implementation

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Introduction

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into public administration offers substantial benefits, including enhanced operational efficiency, personalized citizen services, and evidence-based policymaking. However, these innovations also bring profound ethical challenges, particularly concerning transparency, accountability, data privacy, and algorithmic fairness. As AI systems increasingly influence public sector decisions, it is essential to ensure that such technologies are implemented in ways that align with democratic values and public trust. This study examines how public sector institutions can responsibly adopt AI by embedding ethical principles into strategic governance processes.

Methods

A qualitative multi-case study was conducted across five municipal governments in Europe that have adopted AI technologies in administrative operations or policy evaluation. The research involved semi-structured interviews with public sector leaders, data scientists, and IT managers, supported by documentary analysis and ethical audits. Cases were selected to reflect variation in geographic, organizational, and technological contexts.

Results

The analysis revealed significant differences in the level of ethical readiness and strategic oversight. Successful implementations shared common practices: proactive stakeholder consultation, cross-disciplinary AI ethics committees, transparent communication of AI decision logic, and built-in mechanisms for algorithmic auditability. Conversely, institutions lacking these features faced issues such as diminished public confidence, legal ambiguities, and poor alignment between technical teams and executive leadership. These findings informed the development of a strategic framework for ethical AI governance based on three pillars: (1) Transparent Decision-Making Processes; (2) Inclusive Governance Structures; and (3) Continuous Ethical Risk Assessment and Adaptation.

Conclusions

Ethical AI integration in the public sector requires more than technical safeguards—it demands strategic leadership and institutional commitment. The proposed framework provides a practical roadmap for public managers seeking to balance innovation with integrity, fostering trust and accountability in AI-enabled governance.



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sciforum-153724: Evaluating the Impact of Pakistan's "Digital Pakistan" Initiative on Public Service Delivery

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The "Digital Pakistan" initiative represents a national effort to modernize public administration by transitioning from paper-based processes to digital platforms. This study critically evaluates the initiative's impact on public service delivery, focusing on efficiency, accessibility, transparency, and citizen trust. Despite its transformative potential, challenges in infrastructure, digital literacy, and internet accessibility continue to limit its effectiveness.

Using a qualitative research methodology, the study draws on secondary sources, including academic journals, government reports, policy documents, and books, selected based on relevance. To systematically assess the initiative's progress, a **SWOT framework** is applied, highlighting Strengths such as improved administrative efficiency, transparency, and broader service outreach; Weaknesses including infrastructural limitations and uneven digital literacy; Opportunities presented by e-services expansion, youth-driven innovation, and international collaborations; and Threats like cybersecurity risks, inconsistent policy implementation, and bureaucratic inertia.

The findings indicate that "Digital Pakistan" has enhanced service responsiveness and reduced bureaucratic barriers. However, measurable indicators such as the number of e-services implemented, levels of citizen engagement, and observed improvements in service delivery suggest that the initiative has yet to reach its full potential. The study concludes that sustainable digital transformation requires not only technological investment but also inclusive policymaking, leadership continuity, and citizen empowerment. By strengthening the link between digital tools and public participation, the initiative has the potential to redefine governance and foster greater trust between the state and its citizens.



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sciforum-152635: Faith and public value: religious organisations in transition

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The United Nations 2030 Agenda has elevated the eradication of poverty to a central priority of global governance, urging societies to mobilize all relevant actors. Religious organisations (ROs) play an indispensable role in addressing social needs of public relevance (e.g., education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation). Their mission, historically centred on pastoral and spiritual care, has progressively expanded to encompass social services, positioning them as key players within collaborative governance networks (Koku & Acquaye, 2011). As Benedict XVI stated in *Deus Caritas Est* (2005), the Church's charitable action is not ancillary but constitutive of its identity, directly linked to the pursuit of the common good.

Poverty has been reconceptualised as a multidimensional condition, transcending income deprivation and encompassing cultural exclusion, health inequalities, and lack of access to education and essential services (Bradshaw, 2007; Ayiemba et al., 2015). This multidimensionality has raised expectations on ROs, compelling them to adapt structures and practices to remain effective contributors to public value creation (Moore, 1995). Their ability to generate trust, foster inclusion, and provide essential services situates them as non-state actors co-producing (public) value.

These external pressures raise crucial questions of organisational change. As Hadaway (2011) and Moyer et al. (2012) note, ROs face growing challenges of innovation, stakeholder pressure, and managerial adaptation (Torry, 2017).

This study addresses a central research question: how do societal transformations associated with the UN 2030 Agenda and contemporary governance challenges reshape the internal organisation of religious entities? Methodologically, it employs an exploratory case study analysis (Yin, 2003) to examine the organisational implications of religious involvement in collaborative governance. The expected outcome is that ROs, rather than retreating behind spirituality, will gradually shift toward managerial practices, becoming hybrid organisations where managerial logics provide new momentum to spirituality, ensuring continued social relevance in modern times.



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sciforum-152668: From Drone Fields to Policy Frameworks: Integrating UAV-Based Agriculture into Public Management and Sustainability Governance

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The rapid diffusion of drone-based precision agriculture in India has exposed both opportunities and governance gaps in public management systems. This study presents a systems-level evaluation of UAV spraying for crop protection, linking technical efficiency metrics with administrative decision-making frameworks. A mixed-methods approach was adopted: (i) quantitative life cycle assessment (LCA) of UAV spraying versus conventional methods in three crop systems (mango, rice, sugarcane), (ii) stakeholder interviews with farmer cooperatives and extension officials, and (iii) scenario modeling for policy integration. Results showed input reductions of 30–45% in water and pesticide usage, while highlighting administrative bottlenecks in regulatory clearances, subsidy pathways, and adoption incentives. The findings illustrate how public managers can integrate emerging agri-technologies into sustainability governance through adaptive regulations, farmer engagement models, and performance benchmarking. In addition, the research underscores the necessity of aligning innovation with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to ensure long-term acceptance and legitimacy. Beyond agriculture, UAV policy integration has potential spillover benefits in climate monitoring, disaster response, and rural development, suggesting a broader administrative role for technology-enabled governance. This study therefore provides actionable pathways for ministries, local governments, and farmer cooperatives to systematically incorporate UAVs into agricultural policy while balancing efficiency gains with equity concerns. By aligning technical evidence with administrative reforms, it demonstrates a structured framework for technology adoption in agriculture that bridges engineering innovation and governance practice.



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sciforum-155329: Operationalizing Inclusion: Applying Six Sigma Principles to DEIB Implementation in Cultural Organizations

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This study examines how inclusive leadership theory can be aligned with process design principles to strengthen the implementation of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) initiatives within arts and cultural organizations. Although DEI has become a critical priority across different sectors, progress toward actual inclusion and representation remain inconsistent. Research shows that many diversity practices are ineffective, despite significant awareness and investment. Recent political shifts have intensified resistance, threatening to reverse past gains. Within the arts and cultural sectors, the mission to create spaces of belonging and visibility for all highlights the need for more structured, sustainable approaches to DEIB work, as institutional needs and operational realities diverge from those in other fields.

Method

This study adopts a conceptual research design supported by a narrative literature review. This approach connects the literature on DEIB, inclusive leadership theory, and process-improvement methodologies to explore their connections. Through interpretive analysis, the review will examine how principles associated with inclusive leadership align with the structural stages of the Six Sigma DMAIC framework with the objective of identifying how process design concepts can support systematic DEIB implementation within the cultural sector.

Results

The structured progression of the DMAIC model offers a systematic method for defining inclusion objectives, measuring organizational progress, analyzing barriers, improving practices, and controlling for long-term sustainability. These parallels suggest that integrating Six Sigma principles may provide cultural organizations with ways to operationalize inclusion more consistently and effectively. In applying the DMAIC model in this sector, we expect to identify new insights as to its applicability in both diversity and the cultural sector.

Conclusions

The findings propose that combining process improvement methodologies with DEIB goals can create a pathway for embedding equity and belonging into everyday organizational activity. This conceptual integration offers a potential model for institutions seeking to transform aspirational intentions into measurable progress.



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sciforum-153714: Public Trust and Administrative Burdens: A Case Study of E-Governance Reforms in Pakistan

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E-governance in Pakistan has become a cornerstone of administrative modernization, reflecting the national ambition outlined in Pakistan Vision 2050—particularly its second “E,” E-Pakistan, which envisions a digitally empowered, transparent, and citizen-centered society. Through platforms such as online portals, biometric verification systems, and digital grievance redressal mechanisms, the government aims to enhance service efficiency, curb corruption, and rebuild public trust. Yet, these reforms have also generated new administrative burdens that risk excluding vulnerable citizens and diminishing trust in public institutions. This study adopts a qualitative research design, relying on secondary data from government reports, academic studies, World Bank and UNDP publications, and credible media analyses. Guided by Administrative Burden Theory and structured around the **Three Pillars of Good Governance—Efficiency, Transparency, and Accountability**, the paper assesses how Pakistan’s e-governance initiatives perform across these dimensions. Findings reveal a dual reality: while digital reforms have improved efficiency and reduced bureaucratic discretion in urban areas, persistent gaps in infrastructure, digital literacy, and procedural complexity continue to limit transparency and accountability in rural and marginalized communities. Pakistan’s e-governance experience thus illustrates both progress and paradox. To realize the vision of E-Pakistan, policymakers must pair technological innovation with investments in inclusive digital infrastructure, citizen capacity building, and procedural simplification. Without mitigating these administrative burdens, digital reforms risk widening inequality and undermining the very principles of efficiency, transparency, and accountability that underpin effective and trusted governance.



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sciforum-153986: Reimagining Parliamentary Oversight: Lessons from the Zondo Commission on Strengthening Portfolio Committees in South Africa

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Parliamentary oversight is a cornerstone of democratic accountability, intended to ensure that the executive remains answerable to the legislature and, by extension, to the public (Calland, 2019). In South Africa, portfolio committees serve as key instruments for this oversight function. However, the *Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture*—commonly known as the Zondo Commission — revealed that these committees largely failed to prevent or detect the systemic corruption that characterized the era of state capture (Zondo Commission, 2022). A qualitative document analysis will be used to examine the structural, political, and institutional factors that contributed to the weakness of parliamentary oversight. Therefore, this study aims to critically examine the weaknesses of parliamentary portfolio committees in exercising effective oversight and accountability in South Africa, as revealed by the Zondo Commission, and to propose strategies for strengthening their institutional capacity, independence, and effectiveness in promoting democratic governance. Drawing on findings from the Zondo Commission and comparative governance literature, the paper argues for a reimagining of the oversight role of portfolio committees to strengthen their effectiveness and autonomy. It proposes reforms including enhanced research support, depoliticization of committee leadership, and institutional mechanisms for public participation and transparency. These recommendations aim to restore confidence in Parliament's watchdog role and reinforce democratic governance. Ultimately, the study highlights that rebuilding South Africa's accountability framework requires not only institutional redesign but also a renewed culture of ethical leadership and constitutional fidelity (Madonsela, 2022).



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sciforum-157579: Smart citizen participation for public management: transforming collective data into tangible actions through Artificial Intelligence (AI)

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The accelerated technological transformation that public administrations are undergoing presents new opportunities to connect with citizens, but it also highlights the limitations of traditional models of citizen participation, which are often symbolic and have little impact on public decision-making. This study proposes evolving towards participatory procedures based on citizen science, utilising open data and hybrid intelligence that combines collective and artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities to generate public value.

The aim of this research is to define and validate a framework for citizen co-governance, supported by digital platforms and learning algorithms, that can automatically transform the data generated by citizens into concrete public actions. To this end, we conduct a systematic analysis of the literature on participation and citizen science, from the classic vision of Arnstein (1969) to the current proposals of Fung (2006), OECD (2018) and Ataman (2025), which integrate inclusion and democratic legitimacy, identifying a gap in the operational mechanisms that translate citizen participation into tangible decisions. This analysis is complemented by the study of the *CitizenBack* pilot, developed in the Urban Sandbox of Valencia, which acts as a transversal government infrastructure and citizen digital twin. The pilot has been used to empirically evaluate data flows, citizen interactions, and the response mechanisms of AI algorithms, generating qualitative data, such as user perceptions, and quantitative data, including usage metrics, participation patterns and assessments of public management. Additionally, it is complemented by interviews with public managers to gain a deeper understanding of the institutional challenges involved in adopting such systems.

The results propose a new organisational model that automates public collection, analysis, prioritisation and response in real-time. Although there are challenges, such as the digital divide, algorithmic ethics, and change management within institutions, the study provides an operational framework for achieving data-driven, people-centred and AI-driven public co-management, thereby strengthening citizen democracy.



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sciforum-158257: The (Mis)alignment Between Strategic Priorities and Public Value Creation: Evidence from Italian Healthcare Organisations

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In recent years, growing scholarly attention has been devoted to the concept of Public Value (PV), which has emerged as a new paradigm for public administration. Creating PV requires defining a strategy that aligns public sector organisations' priorities with the achievement of a citizen-centric value. However, while a large body of literature has focused on defining and operationalising PV, empirical research on the extent to which PV is prioritised within formal strategic planning processes remains limited. This study aims to fill this research gap by examining the (mis)alignment between strategic planning processes and the imperative of creating PV. In particular, the study focuses on Italian public healthcare organisations (HCOs), which have undergone several changes aimed at orienting their strategies towards the creation of PV. Drawing on PV theory, this study conducts a manual content analysis of core strategic documents from Italian public HCOs. The analysis pursues a two-fold objective: to assess the extent to which strategy is formulated in terms of PV creation, and to delineate the overarching thematic dimensions of PV being prioritised. Preliminary findings indicate a notably high level of PV disclosure, suggesting that PV is gaining significant traction as a strategic objective for HCOs. The analysis also reveals a broad and nuanced articulation of PV. Notably, themes such as digitalisation and transparency towards stakeholders emerge as highly recurrent strategic priorities for value creation, while traditional notions of internal efficiency appear to be de-emphasised in these strategic narratives. The study contributes to expanding the literature on PV by investigating an under-researched area, such as the healthcare sector. Moreover, by providing empirical evidence on PV disclosure within strategic planning processes, it sheds light on the thematic dimensions deemed most relevant in healthcare for creating PV.



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sciforum-153510: The Mexican Agricultural Policy Observatory (MAPO): A Digital Governance Tool for Evidence-Based Public Policy

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Introduction

Agricultural public policy analysis in Mexico is severely limited by fragmented data and a lack of transparency. Information about state-level support programs is dispersed across 32 decentralized agencies with no unified repository, hindering national comparisons and evidence-based decision-making. This fragmentation restricts policymakers' ability to identify regional disparities, overlapping initiatives, and investment priorities. The **Mexican Agricultural Policy Observatory (MAPO)** was developed to address this gap by providing an interactive digital governance platform that centralizes, classifies, and visualizes agricultural policies nationwide.

Methods

A systematic audit of official websites from all 32 state agricultural secretariats was conducted. Data was manually curated to compile information on program objectives, beneficiaries, and support mechanisms. A functional classification scheme adapted from World Bank frameworks was applied, encompassing *Financing, Supplies and Equipment Acquisition, Technification and Digital Transformation, Water Management, and Training*. These categories are policy-relevant because they reflect key dimensions of public intervention in productivity, sustainability, and digital inclusion.

Results

Preliminary analysis reveals that financing initiatives dominate, accounting for 42% of all programs, while Technification and Commercialization remain underrepresented. The platform's dashboard enables robust comparative policy analysis by cross-referencing policy data with national production statistics and visualizing program classifications by state through interactive tools such as treemaps of investment patterns, choropleth maps of regional priorities, and statistical charts comparing production value, land-use efficiency, and harvest loss rates across states.

Conclusions

MAPO enhances transparency and fosters digital transformation in public management. It empowers policymakers to identify inefficiencies, gaps, and redundancies, thereby improving strategic planning and resource allocation. Beyond serving as a repository, MAPO functions as a governance instrument that strengthens accountability and supports **evidence-based, transparent, and regionally balanced agricultural policymaking** laying the groundwork for a more coordinated and inclusive rural development strategy in Mexico.



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sciforum-153722: When Technology Fails the Poor: Administrative Exclusion in the Digital Delivery of Pakistan's Social Safety Nets

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Pakistan's digitally-driven Social Safety Nets (SSNs), notably BISP and Ehsaas, have been instrumental in decreasing poverty rates by 7 to 9% and promoted greater gender inclusion. However, this study identifies a critical paradox: **the very technological tools designed to include often systematically exclude the most vulnerable**. In practice, these programs suffer from serious flaws with 22% of the exclusion rate for those who qualify and 15% leakage of funds going to ineligible recipients, revealing a systemic failure in reaching the most vulnerable.

This study investigates this paradox by shifting the analytical lens from state-level efficiency to citizen-level experience. By using the theoretical framework of "**administrative exclusion**", we contended how the mechanisms intended for efficiency often inherently encode barriers that sideline the most disadvantaged. Using a qualitative case study, we examined how exclusion operates, categorizing it into three costs: **learning costs** of digital literacy, **compliance costs** from biometric failures and travel to distant payment points, and **psychological costs** stemming from opaque and non-responsive grievance mechanisms.

Initial results reveal that the burden of administrative exclusion falls disproportionately on marginalized groups including women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and residents of conflict-affected or hard to reach regions, effectively cementing existing inequities under the facade of digital innovation. Furthermore, the short-term, relief-oriented design of programs, often influenced by political cycles, compound these digital barriers, limiting their ability to break intergenerational poverty cycles.

The study concludes that technocratic efficiency alone is insufficient. It calls for a fundamental, citizen-centric redesign of delivery mechanisms, including more robust digitized targeting, inflation-indexed benefits, and institutional reforms for greater coordination. By integrating these reforms into broader development agendas, Pakistan's SSNs can evolve from temporary aid into a system of genuine empowerment and equitable public value creation.



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Session 2. Leadership

sciforum-157406: From Potential to Progress: Exploring the Development of Female Leadership Competencies

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Introduction

Although female participation in leadership has increased globally, women remain significantly underrepresented in executive roles across Europe (Hanna et al., 2023). Research shows that women's advancement into leadership continues to be constrained by structural, cultural, and social barriers, including gender norms (Kiamba, 2008), exclusion from professional networks (Fairfax, 2006; Kiamba, 2008), and disproportionate caregiving responsibilities (ILO, 2018; UN Women, 2020). This study investigates the factors and competencies that enable women to take leadership roles.

Methods

This mixed-methods study combines a secondary synthesis of more than 50 leadership training frameworks from German-speaking countries with primary data collection. Building on these general theoretical findings, six semi-structured interviews with experienced leaders who also work as leadership trainers explored success factors, best practices, and competencies relevant to female leadership development.

Results

The analyses revealed three key competencies for female leadership: self-leadership, communication and visibility, and strategic leadership. Self-leadership involves self-awareness, goal orientation, and effective resource management. Communication and visibility focus on assertive and authentic communication, self-presentation, and the ability to gain professional visibility. Strategic leadership centers on reflective thinking, prioritization, and stakeholder management. Those essential competencies are perceived as still needing further development, especially among women. Based on the results, a leadership training program will be developed to specifically advance these competencies.

Conclusions

Progress in women's leadership requires a dual strategy: strengthening individual competencies while transforming organizational systems and cultures (Purnamawati & Utama, 2019; Tushabe et al., 2025). Our results suggest that focusing on self-leadership, communication and visibility, and strategic leadership is key to fostering both individual empowerment and greater female participation in leadership.



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sciforum-124076: The Seven Deadly Sins and Ethical Leadership

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The fourth-century Christian Church experienced substantial inner and outer conflict. The Edicts of Toleration promulgated by Emperor Constantine changed the fortune of the Christian community from having little power, prestige, and privilege due to state-sponsored persecution to becoming the state Church at the center of temporal and economic power. In no short order, the Christian community fell prey to leadership corruption and ethical breaches. This state of moral and spiritual anomie brought forth a spiritual renewal movement in the Church, the Desert Fathers and Mothers Revival. Thousands of Christians, desiring to imitate the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, were driven by the Holy Spirit to the deserts of Egypt and Israel to confront their sins and to be renewed by the Spirit of God. The Desert Fathers of the fourth century developed an ethical diagnostic tool to facilitate moral and ethical renewal, a list of seven deadly sins. The writings of these Fathers and Mothers, the Philokalia, not only describe these sins but also provide clear guidance on combating these vices. This presentation explores the teachings on the seven deadly sins in the Philokalia as they relate to the ethical formation of leaders and what promise these ancient Biblical and theological truths hold for contemporary moral and ethical leadership.



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sciforum-156054: Decision making for corporate sustainability: Managerial Sensemaking of Competing Goals in UK B Corps

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In the contemporary business world, leaders and managers are increasingly confronted with paradoxical environments in their decision-making process. Specifically, the decision making for corporate sustainability entails conflicting yet interdependent priorities like profitability and sustainability, which are challenging to reconcile and harder to balance. B Corporations (B Corps) exemplify this duality by embedding both commercial viability and stakeholder pluralism at the core of their business model. While prior research has examined the duality of corporate sustainability at the macro level with a focus on institutional logics and strategic positioning, scholarly understanding of the micro-foundations of paradox management in corporate sustainability remains underdeveloped. Particularly, limited attention has been paid to the tensions at the individual level, how individual managers perceive, interpret, and act upon these competing goals in their decision-making process.

This study investigates how managers in UK certified B Corporations engage in paradoxical sensemaking when confronted with corporate sustainability challenges in decision making. By adopting a qualitative, interpretivist research design, semi-structured interviews are carried out with sustainability managers in UK B Corps to uncover how latent tensions—such as purpose versus profit, innovation versus operational efficiency, and personal values versus organizational expectations—become cognitively salient for organizational actors within their decision-making process. Subsequently, it demonstrates how the paradoxical sensemaking is manifested with the influence of diverse multilevel factors by encapsulating cognitive, emotional, and behavioural processes which underpin the ultimate managerial responses for corporate sustainability in B Corps.

By focusing on micro-level decision making processes, the research extends the comprehension of paradoxical sensemaking and contributes to the development of paradox theory and sensemaking perspective. Practically, it offers insights into how managers can embrace competing demands as drivers of creativity, resilience, and strategic alignment within purpose-driven organizations. The findings have implications for effective leadership, governance, and the cultivation of paradox mindsets in organizations pursuing sustainable transformation.



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sciforum-158132: Emotional Intelligence and Female Leadership: How Immigrant Women Leaders Integrate into Organisations Using Emotional Intelligence

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In today's globalised and fast-changing work environment, leadership goes beyond strategy or authority: it requires emotional awareness, adaptability and connection. This proposed study seeks to explore how immigrant women leaders in the United Kingdom use emotional intelligence (EI) to find belonging, build credibility and lead effectively in diverse and often hybrid organisational settings. Leadership for these women is not only about performance, but also about navigating cultural expectations and maintaining authenticity within systems that may not have been designed with them in mind.

The study will use a qualitative narrative approach to explore the lived experiences of immigrant women holding senior leadership roles across public, private and third-sector organisations. It will be guided by three key frameworks: Goleman's (1995) emotional intelligence theory, which focuses on empathy, self-awareness and social skill; intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), which highlights the overlapping influences of gender, race and migration; and the identity work framework (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003), which examines how leaders construct and sustain their professional identities. Through in-depth narrative interviews, the research will examine how emotional intelligence helps these leaders manage cultural and emotional tensions, foster trust and adapt to hybrid or remote leadership environments.

It is expected that the study will reveal how empathy, resilience and authenticity support immigrant women's leadership journeys. The findings aim to provide both theoretical and practical insights into how emotional intelligence can promote inclusive, adaptive and human-centred leadership in multicultural organisation.



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sciforum-154914: A Burgeoning approach towards a unified holistic framework of Leadership

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Leadership is experienced in every sphere of human life and is a crucial tool for people management. This study could contribute to the proliferation of leadership studies, with extensive research focused on how effective leadership positively benefits people and organisations. Arguably, leadership is one of the most important phenomena that determines the direction of any organisation. Notwithstanding, there are contentions about the definition of leadership and a lack of consensus on a holistic perspective. Echoing some scholars' contentions, it seems much of the field is tending towards creating more appealing or high-sounding theories that may be less practicable. A case in point is the undying nature of debunked and outdated ideas or zombie leadership and the '*distinct similarities*' proposed by different studies.

Despite the discrepancies in the field, there is a widespread agreement that the dyadic nature of leadership supposes some form of influence in leaders on others. This hinges the relevance of leadership on the existence of followers, who are direct recipients of leadership and shapers of the leader–follower relationship. Yet most theories do not include followers as a core component. The status quo makes one wonder whether leadership scholarship has yielded diminishing returns. This is why a broader conceptualisation of leadership is required as a practical reference for leaders and relevant stakeholders.

Hence, following a semi-structured review and theme-based approach, this study covers noteworthy issues in the field of leadership and makes a compelling case for advancing a holistic view of leadership with a recommended *burgeoning* approach that converges the core scopes of leadership, including learning, tasks and processes, leaders' traits/behaviours, followership, ethical decision-making, the role of stakeholders, influence, and context. The argument is that existing theories are fragmented at best and can be unified to create an aspirational peak that inspires leaders to become lifelong learners.



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sciforum-159577: Emotional Intelligence Revisited: Leadership Adaptation in Environments Mediated by Intelligent Technologies

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This study presents a systematic and bibliometric review of the evolving conceptualization of emotional intelligence as leadership increasingly unfolds within intelligent, technology-mediated environments. Through co-citation mapping, co-occurrence analysis, and thematic structure identification, this research traces the trajectory of scholarship concerned with leaders' socio-emotional competencies in contexts shaped by algorithmic systems, automated communication tools, and digitally mediated collaboration. The literature suggests that the integration of intelligent technologies reconfigures the channels through which leaders perceive, interpret, and express emotion, thereby necessitating novel strategies for rapport-building, conflict resolution, and interpersonal sensemaking. Studies into AI-enabled communication platforms reveal shifts in how affective cues are decoded and enacted. At the same time, research on data-driven decision infrastructures highlights the imperative of aligning relational sensitivity with computational guidance. By synthesizing methodological patterns across these strands, the review elucidates key challenges in studying emotional intelligence within technologically saturated leadership contexts, including the adaptation of measurement frameworks, the analysis of leader-technology interactional dynamics, and the assessment of distributed socio-emotional processes. It advances a conceptualization of emotional intelligence as a dynamic and context-contingent leadership capability, increasingly shaped by digital interfaces and central to the coordination, motivation, and relational coherence of hybrid human-machine organizational systems. Ultimately, the review establishes a conceptual foundation for reinterpreting socio-emotional leadership capabilities as intelligent technologies that become embedded within core organizational processes.



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sciforum-124322: Ethical Leadership as a Catalyst for Sustainability: Motivating Employee Engagement in Angola's Mining Sector

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This study examines the impact of ethical leadership on employee motivation for sustainable practices in Angola's mining sector, a critical industry facing environmental and social challenges. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected, with the collection being extended, and 120 employees answered in various mining companies through validated instruments: the Ethical Leadership Scale (QLE), the Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale (MWMS), and the Sustainable Behavior Scale (ECOS).

Statistical analyses, including linear regressions and Pearson correlations, revealed that ethical leadership—characterized by transparency, fairness, and integrity—significantly fosters intrinsic motivation among employees, thereby encouraging the adoption of sustainable behaviors. The results highlight that ethical leadership acts as a key mediator between sustainability perception and employee engagement in responsible practices. Employees perceiving higher levels of ethical leadership demonstrated stronger intrinsic motivation to integrate sustainability into their daily operations.

This study's findings have important practical implications for the mining sector. Companies are urged to embed sustainability as a core organizational value and prioritize investment in ethical leadership training programs. Ethical leadership emerges not only as a driver of sustainable business practices but also as a catalyst for strengthening corporate social responsibility initiatives, ultimately enhancing organizational performance and contributing to the socio-economic development of local communities.

Given Angola's heavy dependence on extractive industries and persistent governance challenges, fostering ethical leadership is crucial for aligning mining operations with international sustainability standards. Future research should extend the investigation through qualitative methods to capture deeper cultural and organizational nuances affecting leadership dynamics and sustainability outcomes.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge demonstrating that ethical leadership is essential for promoting sustainability in resource-dependent economies, providing actionable insights for both practitioners and policymakers seeking to balance economic growth with social and environmental stewardship.



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sciforum-152669: Invisible Leadership in Innovation Ecosystems: Lessons from Scaling UAV and AI Startups in Rural India

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Entrepreneurial leadership in frontier technologies often occurs behind the scenes, shaping ecosystems rather than spotlighting individuals. This paper explores the concept of “invisible leadership” through the author’s experience leading multi-venture agritech and healthtech initiatives, including UAV-based precision agriculture platforms, rural IoT systems, and AI-driven marketplaces. A case study methodology was adopted, triangulating venture-level data (funding, team growth, patents filed), user adoption metrics, and leadership practices across five startups. Key results demonstrate that decentralized team structures, systems-first processes, and cross-sector collaborations can enable rapid scaling without operational chaos. For instance, CHIRAG CONNECT, a drone-based spraying platform, expanded farmer engagement 4x within two years under an invisible leadership model that emphasized ecosystem trust over top-down directives. While the leader held formal responsibility as Managing Director, the leadership remained “invisible” because processes and collaborations, not personal visibility, drove adoption. Similarly, ventures such as BID.ai and Mushroom Kothi scaled by embedding accountability systems, compliance protocols, and training mechanisms that empowered interns, partners, and rural entrepreneurs to lead execution independently. The findings further highlight that invisible leadership is not passive—it is a deliberate choice to build structures that make leadership less visible yet more impactful. The study concludes that leadership in high-uncertainty environments requires a shift from charismatic centrality to invisible systems-building—empowering teams, embedding accountability, and designing processes that scale sustainably. These insights contribute to leadership theory by framing entrepreneurial growth as a collective system rather than an individual journey.



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sciforum-154921: Leadership in Organisations: what has authenticity got to do with it?

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Authentic leadership theory (ALT) is viewed as a value-based, positive concept that promotes openness and transparency at work. While being true to yourself has its merits, combining authenticity—a self-referent concept—with leadership—a dyadic concept—has been critiqued as paradoxical and complex at best. Since most scholars agree that there are multiple selves, it is unclear if the authentic self at work is the true self, the best self, the current self, the future self, or the prescribed self that must conform to organisational roles. Scholars also claim that practising authenticity is difficult, since organisations do not focus on individuals' true selves but rather on the outcomes of their practices and behaviours. In addition, there are codes of conduct and regulations which individuals and leaders alike are required to adhere to. The root of ALT is also debated, with some basing it on positive psychology and others on existential philosophy. This critical piece, therefore, highlights the lack of consensus on the definition and measurement of ALT and how its prescription of subjective morality allows for varied interpretations of moral conduct. ALT's prescribed attributes leave some pending questions about how individuals can be purely authentic in the presence of contextual influences that lead to adherence or conformity to organisational norms. This paper, therefore, calls for a theoretical reconceptualisation, and some recommendations are offered for reimagining ALT, to emphasise its focus on values and positive outlook on life.



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sciforum-124875: Research on Human Resource Strategy under the Background of Self-media Convergence

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With the rapid development of self-media and the deepening integration of traditional and digital communication platforms, enterprises are facing new challenges and opportunities in human resource (HR) management. This paper explores strategic responses to the evolving media environment by proposing an adaptive HR strategy framework that includes three essential components: cultivating core organizational values, strengthening psychological support for employees, and enhancing loyalty management through media tools.

In the context of media convergence, organizational members increasingly engage with diversified information channels and form individualized value judgments, which may lead to fragmented interests and diminished coherence within teams. To address this, organizations need to reinforce value alignment by promoting transparent performance evaluation systems, encouraging peer communication within departments, and establishing official digital feedback channels. Psychological well-being is also critical; the paper suggests implementing mobile-based assessments, targeted counseling for high-risk individuals, and delivering positive organizational messaging across platforms. Furthermore, the strategy emphasizes loyalty management by distinguishing between emotional and cognitive commitment. Digital communication tools can foster a sense of belonging and provide platforms for employees to contribute feedback, enhancing mutual trust and participation in decision-making processes.

By aligning human resource practices with the mechanisms of media interaction and digital engagement, enterprises can improve management efficiency, foster employee development, and build resilient, adaptive organizations. The integration of modern media into HR systems is not only a technological adjustment but also a strategic transformation that reshapes internal communication, motivation, and cohesion in the workplace.



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sciforum-131842: When Perfect Isn't Good Enough: Designing for Imperfection in Resilient System Leadership

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Conventional system design frameworks emphasize perfection—maximizing efficiency, minimizing error, and ensuring full compliance. Yet in high-stakes environments marked by uncertainty, limited resources, and evolving demands, this perfection-driven mindset often results in systemic rigidity and stalls progress. Similarly, while traditional leadership models prioritize control and predefined outcomes, adaptive approaches—such as complexity or agile leadership—highlight the importance of iterative progress under uncertainty. This study proposes a strategic alternative: embracing imperfection as a measurable and manageable design variable.

By modeling imperfection through quality-related dimensions, such as functional deviation, recoverability, detectability, and system stability thresholds, the framework enables more realistic, adaptive, and resilient decision-making. In contrast to binary notions of success and failure, it offers a nuanced view that accounts for partial operability and graceful degradation.

Crucially, in scenarios where project requirements are incomplete or “what perfect looks like” is undefined, the framework supports continued progress by assigning value to imperfect but functional outcomes. Instead of halting for missing specifications or ideal solutions, systems can evolve with imperfect clarity, prioritizing momentum over paralysis.

This perspective has practical relevance in automation, fault-tolerant design, and strategic leadership during crises, where overengineering and rigid planning often increase failure risk. By reframing imperfection not as a flaw, but as a design factor, this work contributes a novel lens for navigating complexity in resilient system leadership.



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Session 3. Strategic Management

sciforum-150801: The Role of Digital Tourism in Strategic Crisis Management of Tourist Destinations During Wartime

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In the context of global political uncertainties, as well as environmental and economic crises, tourism business entities need innovative security strategies. In particular, aspects of optimizing resource use and developing customer-oriented experiences that respond to changes in security and behavioural modifications are becoming key. This is facilitated by digital technologies that can overcome multi-system barriers. At the same time, the ongoing war in Ukraine has created unprecedented challenges for tourism entities, requiring the integration of strategic approaches to crisis management that ensure both resilience and future recovery. This study explores the role of digital tourism as a tool for adaptive transformation and value creation in wartime conditions. The emphasis is on how digital platforms, virtual experiences, CRM systems, and AI-based personalization contribute to maintaining the visibility of tourist destinations, supporting customer engagement, and creating alternative economic activities. To address these aspects, a qualitative approach was applied, including the development of a Matrix of Creative Value of a Tourist Destination, the identification of key components of a destination's Digital-Resilience and an Innovation Model (D-RIM) to systematically evaluate strategic crisis management and the adaptability of tourist destinations during wartime. The study highlights the strategic importance of creating digital assets to preserve cultural assets, create VR tours and tours of tourist attractions and locations that are physically destroyed or inaccessible for specific reasons. Drawing on empirical research on Ukrainian tourism initiatives, the article identifies key digital innovation practices that support the strategic repositioning of tourism destinations. The results offer insights for policymakers, tourism professionals, and local communities seeking to sustain tourism activities and prepare for revival.



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sciforum-158403: Adapting to Algorithmic Workplaces: Human–Automation Collaboration and Job Redesign for Improved Employee Task Performance

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Algorithmic management (AM) automated systems for monitoring, scheduling and decision-making have quickly altered banking workplaces using AI-driven platforms and data-driven performance tools. While productivity improvements have been well established, the human-centered consequences of AM remain unknown, specifically how employees adapt, interact with automation and maintain their performance. This study bridges the gap by looking into human-automation collaboration and job redesign in algorithmically managed banking environments. The study asks: How can algorithmic systems influence work structure, experience, outcomes and how can collaboration increase productivity while protecting employee well-being? The analysis is based on three sub-questions: How do employees interact with AM systems in their daily tasks? What digital, data and socio-emotional competencies promote autonomy and engagement? How can HR managers adapt work and training to strike a balance between efficiency and human values? The study uses a quantitative methodology in Nigerian banking sectors where algorithmic decision tools are critical for credit evaluation, compliance and performance analytics. The sample will comprise relationship officers, credit analyzers and digital operations personnel. Data will be gathered using validated survey tools that measure AM functions (monitoring, scheduling, evaluation), job demands/resources (workload, autonomy, technostress) and outcome (engagement and performance). Analytical techniques will include confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling to test relationships within the proposed framework. The paper makes a new contribution by providing a multidimensional sociotechnical framework for human-automation collaboration in banking. This approach combines job design principles, competency development methodologies and algorithmic transparency rules, providing HR practitioners and policymakers with actionable insights to improve AM systems while fostering autonomy, capability growth and organizational resilience.



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sciforum-152670: AI-Driven Strategic Management for Technology Diffusion: A Case Study of UAV Adoption in Indian Agriculture

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Emerging technologies face adoption barriers that require not only technical optimization but also strategic alignment with local ecosystems. This study investigates UAV adoption in Indian agriculture through a hybrid strategic management model integrating forecasting, structural equation modeling (SEM), and stakeholder engagement. Data were collected from 180 farmers, service providers, and policymakers across Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, combined with AI-based diffusion forecasting models. Results reveal that adoption intention was significantly influenced by perceived cost savings ($p < 0.01$), regulatory clarity ($p < 0.05$), and trust in service providers ($p < 0.01$). AI-based forecasting aligned closely with SEM outputs, validating the role of hybrid approaches for strategic planning. Furthermore, scenario analyses demonstrated that early policy interventions such as subsidies or community spraying collectives can accelerate adoption by up to 35% in certain regions. By integrating computational forecasting with qualitative ecosystem mapping, this framework provides a more holistic lens to design diffusion strategies for disruptive technologies. The research also emphasizes feedback loops between field-level outcomes (yield gain, input reduction) and strategic adoption models, showing how empirical evidence can refine management decisions. The study demonstrates that strategic management of emerging technologies benefits from combining quantitative adoption modeling with ecosystem-level strategies. For agritech entrepreneurs and administrators, this research offers a replicable framework to accelerate diffusion of disruptive technologies while mitigating socio-regulatory resistance. Beyond UAVs, the approach is transferable to other emerging domains such as healthtech and fintech, where innovation often outpaces regulation.



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sciforum-153891: Banking Mediation as a Strategic Management Tool for Performance Enhancement: The Greek Experience

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Background

The increasing complexity of the Greek financial environment has emphasized the need for effective, trust-based, and non-judicial mechanisms for resolving disputes between banks and clients. While mediation has been traditionally viewed as a legal procedure, contemporary approaches in Strategic Management and relational governance suggest that conflict-resolution mechanisms can operate as strategic assets that build trust, reduce uncertainty, and sustain long-term cooperation. Guided by this perspective, the present study examines banking mediation as a multidimensional strategic management tool that contributes to performance through conflict avoidance, operational efficiency, customer relationship continuity, and business sustainability. The purpose is to assess whether mediation can function not only as a legal framework but as an integrated governance mechanism that enhances long-term organizational outcomes.

Methods

A quantitative survey was conducted with 407 employees of Greek banks between January and May 2025. The conceptual model proposes that banking mediation strengthens conflict avoidance and operational efficiency—two mechanisms widely recognized in organizational theory as drivers of trust, coordination, and stability. These factors are expected to enhance customer relationship continuity and business sustainability, ultimately leading to improved strategic performance. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares through SmartPLS 4 to test both direct and mediated effects across constructs.

Results

Findings show that mediation significantly improves conflict avoidance and organizational efficiency, which in turn reinforces customer trust and business sustainability. The combined influence of these dimensions strengthens the strategic performance of banking institutions, highlighting mediation as a governance mechanism that supports coordination, relational stability, and long-term value.

Conclusions

The study concludes that banking mediation serves as a strategic pillar of modern financial management, enhancing resilience, credibility, and sustainability in the Greek banking sector. Beyond its procedural role, mediation should be recognized as a governance practice that fosters enduring value creation and reinforces institutional legitimacy in an evolving financial ecosystem.



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sciforum-153756: Digital Maturity as a Strategic Advantage: A Systematic Literature Synthesis

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Disruptive technologies from Industry 4.0 have transformed sectors worldwide, making digital transformation essential for maintaining competitive advantage and increasing productivity. Despite the importance of digital transformation on a global scale, little is known about digital maturity models and how they specifically relate to the retail industry.

Purpose

This study aims to pinpoint the essential elements of current Digital Maturity Models across a variety of industries. In addition, the study attempts to fill in the research gap in the context of retail businesses by comparing and contrasting the SLR's findings with their actual use in the retail industry.

Methodology

The study is based on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) which identifies important aspects of digital maturity models from research studies published between 2011 and 2024. Relevant studies were gathered using databases like Science Direct, EBSCO, Google Scholar, and consulting reports from companies like McKinsey and Deloitte. According to predetermined inclusion criteria, a total of 20 studies were chosen, and Rossmann's (2018) Digital Maturity Model turned out to be the best framework for the retail industry. To ensure data rigor, PRISMA protocol is being used. While, the empirical study is still ongoing.

Findings

SLR findings indicate that strategy, culture, and technology, are the three main digital transformation dimensions. These are highly aligned with preliminary findings from the empirical study. The identified dimensions serve as a theoretical framework for future studies in the same topic.

Practical Implications

This study sets the ground for a theoretical framework to measure the level of digital maturity in the retail sector. Dimensions such as strategy and technology in particular are considered as key forces behind digital transformation. Other dimensions like governance and leadership point to areas that still need improvement. These revelations advance our knowledge of the practical applications of digital maturity models in emerging markets such as Albania.



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sciforum-141459: Disruptive Technologies and Workforce Transformation: The Mediating Role of HR Strategy

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Background

The rapid diffusion of disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, Blockchain platforms, Extended Reality, and Cloud infrastructures is reshaping the digital competence needs of the workforce. While existing frameworks provide useful foundations, they no longer capture the evolving requirements generated by these disruptive forces. This study investigates how exposure to disruptive technologies influences perceived skill gaps, organizational readiness, strategic HR alignment, and employees' intention to update their skills.

Methods

A quantitative survey was completed by 622 employees from Greece, Spain, and Italy, across both public and private sectors. The questionnaire comprised five reflective constructs measured by 24 Likert items: Disruptive Technology Exposure (DTE), Perceived Skill Gaps (PSGs), Organizational Readiness (OR), Strategic HR Alignment (SHRA), and Skill Update Intention (SUI). The proposed model was examined using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS, including assessment of reliability, validity, and predictive power following international guidelines.

Results

All four research questions were empirically confirmed. Findings show that exposure to disruptive technologies significantly increases perceived skill gaps (RQ1). These gaps affect organizational readiness to support reskilling (RQ2). Strategic HR alignment mediates the relationship between skill gaps and skill update intention (RQ3). Finally, both perceived skill gaps and organizational readiness have a strong direct impact on employees' intention to update their skills (RQ4). The structural model demonstrates substantial explanatory and predictive ability, reinforcing the strategic importance of HR in digital transformation.

Conclusions

This study concludes that disruptive technologies demand not incremental but strategic reconfiguration of human resource practices. Organizations that align HR policies with technological priorities and invest in readiness for skill updating foster workforces that not only adapt but also create sustained strategic advantage in disruptive contexts.



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sciforum-153170: Lineage, Mobility, and Influence in Global Academic Networks

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Introduction

In an era of growing geopolitical uncertainty and institutional fragmentation, scholars in international business (IB) must increasingly think strategically about how they manage global academic networks. This paper develops a framework to explain long-term variation in scholarly productivity, showing how network evolution, not just pedigree, shapes academic influence over time.

Our theory highlights four strategic dimensions of network positioning. We first examine Genealogical Network Centrality (GNC), the structural prominence of a scholar's PhD institution in academic lineage networks. GNC institutions not only offer initial prestige but also provide embedded access to opportunity-rich collaborative pipelines. Next, we theorize Network Mobility Evolution (NME) as a dynamic capability: scholars who extend their institutional reach over time gain exposure to new evaluative audiences and novel research paradigms, especially vital when geopolitical frictions limit traditional mobility. We then introduce Longitudinal Brokerage Trajectory (LBT), which reflects a scholar's increasing ability to bridge disconnected clusters and disseminate ideas across domains. Together, NME and LBT form the basis for *strategic exploration*, the joint pursuit of boundary expansion and integrative influence. Finally, we propose Alma Mater Influence Reuse (AMIR) as a constraint mechanism, where continued reliance on genealogical ties may hinder adaptability and suppress long-run impact.

Methods

Using panel data on IB scholars from 1974 to 2024, we test our hypotheses with longitudinal network metrics and fixed-effects models.

Results

Our analysis reveals support for the hypotheses, along with indications of trends shaping the evolution of networks, including variations on national, regional, and global bases.

Conclusions

The findings contribute to IB strategy by identifying how individuals and institutions can cultivate influence amid rising global uncertainty and reduced cross-border academic fluidity.



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sciforum-149182: Multi-stakeholder networking: a processual perspective

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This paper presents a processual perspective on stakeholder modelling, developed through a systematic review of the stakeholder networking literature. The review followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) protocol and included searches across Scopus, Web of Science, and Business Source Complete, applying inclusion criteria focused on studies addressing stakeholder networks and their dynamics. This rigorous approach enabled the identification and synthesis of diverse theoretical insights, which informed the development of a processual viewpoint that moves beyond traditional static network models. By synthetically drawing on insights from different stakeholder networking perspectives, this paper concludes four characteristics inherent to the stakeholder networking process. The first characteristic is the temporal stakeholder-stakeholder relationship, indicating that the connection between two stakeholders is not enduring but exists within a specific timeframe. The second characteristic highlights the directional aspect of stakeholder interaction, where the interaction between two stakeholders can fluctuate in strength, being either weaker or stronger according to situational dynamics. The third characteristic pertains to stakeholder power multiplicity, suggesting that the collective power of the network surpasses the sum of the individual powers of its stakeholders. Lastly, the fourth characteristic is the issue-specific network lifecycle, which divides the network into different stages, from inception to maturity, and ultimately to expiration or stabilization. In light of the procedural perspective, this paper explores the practical implications for stakeholder management strategies in addressing the complexities of multi-stakeholder dynamics.



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sciforum-147570: Nano-Vision: Startups as Catalytic Architectures for Scientific Frontier Expansion

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In nano-technology, characterised by means of convergent technology and exponential growth know-how, startups have transitioned from mere business vehicles to vital catalytic architectures for scientific frontier expansion. This study posits that the unique structural agility, risk tolerance, and undertaking-driven consciousness of startups allow them to operate as de-risking dealers for excessive-uncertainty clinical exploration, bridging the critical gap between essential research and industrialized innovation. We introduce the idea of translational plasticity, a startup's ability to concurrently navigate the abstract good judgment of scientific discovery and the concrete constraints of market application, as the vital determinant of its impact. This dynamism is operationalized by three dynamic capabilities: epistemic arbitrage (interpreting and synthesizing fragmented scientific knowledge), infrastructural symbiosis (using open-source and institutional R&D platforms), and ethical foresight (pre-emptively governing the societal aspects of nano-scale innovations). Based on a comparative study of startups of quantum computing and synthetic biology, this paper shows that startups are no longer outputs of the research establishment but have become generators of input and are actively reshaping scientific questions through designed artifacts and data-driven knowledge. It introduces a new paradigm of science policy and posits that supporting high-science startups is not an economic development policy but a first-order imperative of sustaining the vitality, relevance, and velocity of the very scientific enterprise of the 21st century.



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sciforum-132657: Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) as a Catalyst for Sustainable Development: A Managerial Perspective

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Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) approaches have developed as vital catalysts fostering sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly in industrial, energy, and social sectors. These partnerships act as a boost for both sectors: integrating advanced and efficient practices used in the private sector with the effective and powerful outreach of the public sector. However, the management dynamics required to support this partnership often remain unexplored. Therefore, this paper intends to explore the managerial challenges related to PPPs, mainly focusing on how the governing roles, strategic timelines, and stakeholder information exchanges come together to create successful and sustainable results in the long run.

This study demonstrates a comparative case among three Indian PPP projects, such as smart city infrastructure, renewable energy parks, and urban transport systems. Vital entities like government officers, project managers, and private sector executives were interviewed (semi-structurally). The data were then examined using managerial process mapping and thematic coding.

Finally, this analysis explored the effectiveness of PPPs, and it depends on public sector roles, detailed agreements based on performance, mutual bonding and trust, and adaptable–dynamic project management. Significant issues like governmental delays, political influences, and disproportionate responsibilities in risk management are identified. However, it was observed that projects involving voluntary planning, digital monitoring, and transparent processes expedited better performance with higher sustainability.

Therefore, carefully governed PPPs can become vital tools for sustainable development. The managerial responsibilities, like better cross-sector communication, reliability, flexibility, and transparency, play a major role in overcoming traditional inequalities and producing effective and sustainable solutions. The case study effectively contributes to the development of better PPPs closely aligned with ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) priorities.



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sciforum-153671: Strategic agility as a bridge between multilevel governance and organizational performance: evidence from Romanian public administration

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In the contemporary societal context, characterized by its complexity and turbulence, strategic management has emerged as a catalyst for organizational sustainability and the achievement of enduring outcomes. The present study is founded on a previous investigation by the authors (Berceanu & Nicolescu 2024), which analyzed the relationship between sustainable development and organizational sustainability—the collaborative dimension. This investigation demonstrated, amongst other things, that at the micro (organizational) level, strategic management creates the framework in which organizational collaboration (as a dimension of organizational intelligence) manifests itself consistently and leads to sustainable results. The present paper extends the analysis from the system level (public administration) using the theoretical framework of multilevel governance (MLG) to test the hypothesis that multilevel alignment (vertical and horizontal) is associated with organizational performance, and that this relationship is mediated by two strategic management capabilities: intelligence (OI) and organizational agility.

The present paper is based on data obtained by applying a national questionnaire to a representative sample of civil servants in Romania. The methodological approach adopted is quantitative, with a non-experimental cross-sectional design of an explanatory–correlational type.

The anticipated results aim to identify a positive effect of MLG alignment on OI, which in turn positively influences strategic agility. It is hypothesized that the latter acts as a form of organizational micro-resilience that translates organizational collaboration into performance.

This article employs an integrated analysis that connects the macro context created by GML with the micro organizational context (internal OI capabilities and strategic agility) and institutional performance. It is thus expected to provide empirical evidence for improving results-oriented organizational policies.

The conclusions of this research contribute to the current state of knowledge regarding the contribution of strategic agility as a bridge between multilevel governance and organizational performance.



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sciforum-158407: Strategic Curriculum Management and Governance in Higher Education: Toward Adaptive and Quality-Oriented University Systems

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University of Elbasan "Aleksander Xhuvani"

In the dynamically changing world of higher education, the administration and structuring of curricula have become significant aspects in fostering institutional efficiency, academic transparency, and student performance. This study explores strategic approaches to university curriculum governance, emphasizing adaptability, stakeholder involvement, and quality assurance mechanisms. By drawing on contemporary European and international frameworks, this paper examines the methodologies employed by higher education institutions to align their curricular structures with societal expectations, labor market exigencies, and accreditation benchmarks. It highlights the complexities involved in reconciling autonomy with accountability, ensuring that curricular determinations are reflective of both scholarly principles and practical outcomes. The investigation employs a mixed-methods methodology, amalgamating document analysis with semi-structured interviews conducted with curriculum managers and academic leaders across European universities. The findings suggest that effective curriculum management is contingent upon participatory governance, transparent communication, and ongoing evaluation, all facilitated by digital technologies. The article posits that strategic curriculum management ought to incorporate a long-term vision, inclusivity, and innovation in order to maintain institutional resilience and relevance amidst a period characterized by rapid educational transformations. This research contributes to the ongoing discourse surrounding leadership, strategic management, and quality enhancement within university administration, proffering practical recommendations for academic policymakers and administrators.



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sciforum-141411: Strategic Governance and Crisis Readiness: A Longitudinal Assessment of AI and Balanced Scorecard Integration in Healthcare Institutions

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Introduction

In the wake of increasing health crises and systemic challenges, hospitals must enhance their strategic governance and crisis readiness. This study investigates how the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) framework can contribute to the long-term resilience and performance of healthcare institutions. The research focuses on strategic alignment, sustainability goals, and digital transformation as central pillars of hospital governance.

Methods

A longitudinal multiple-case study was conducted across three Portuguese public hospitals between 2019 and 2024. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with top management and analysis of institutional strategic plans, key performance indicators, and AI integration initiatives. The BSC was adapted to incorporate ESG metrics and predictive analytics capabilities powered by AI tools.

Results

Findings reveal that hospitals leveraging AI-enhanced BSC systems demonstrate improved strategic responsiveness, transparency in performance monitoring, and proactive decision-making. AI contributed to identifying patterns in patient care demand, resource allocation efficiency, and risk anticipation. However, challenges related to data governance, digital competencies, and institutional resistance were also identified.

Conclusions

Integrating AI into BSC frameworks fosters a more resilient and adaptive governance model in the healthcare sector. This approach supports strategic decision-making in crisis contexts, aligning institutional objectives with sustainability, efficiency, and public value creation. Future research should explore scalable digital strategies and cross-sectoral applicability in public administration.



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Session 4. Entrepreneurship

sciforum-156551: Digital Twin Readiness as a Catalyst for Green Entrepreneurship: Evidence from the Baltic States

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Introduction: Many small EU economies pursue a “twin transition,” yet the micro-meso channel linking digital twin capabilities to green entrepreneurship remains underexplored. This study investigates whether higher digital twin readiness strengthens the emergence of green start-ups and innovation in Baltic innovation ecosystems. **Methods:** We build an industry-country-year panel for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (2015–2024) and construct a Digital Twin Readiness Index (DTRI) from five ICT indicators (AI, IoT, cloud, big data, ICT specialists) using principal component analysis. Green entrepreneurial output is captured by (i) green/cleantech start-up formation, (ii) green VC/PE inflows, and (iii) environmental patents (CPC Y02). Identification relies on two-way fixed effects, a staggered difference-in-differences design exploiting 2020–2021 national digitalization strategies, and a Bartik-style IV. **Results:** A higher DTRI significantly increases green entrepreneurial activity: a one-unit rise in DTRI is associated with roughly 30% higher green VC investment and about 25% more environmental patenting, while effects on start-up counts are positive but smaller. The impact is stronger in Lithuania’s energy-related activities and Estonia’s manufacturing, indicating that absorptive capacity and smart specialization conditions return to twin transition. **Conclusion:** Digital twin readiness is not only a technological enabler but also an entrepreneurial enabler for green markets. Coordinating digital and green policy instruments can increase private capital and accelerate cleantech scaling.



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sciforum-156441: Artificial Intelligence and Corporate ESG Performance

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This study investigates the causal relationship between artificial intelligence development and corporate ESG performance. We compiled data from 1,774 A-share listed companies in China between 2012 and 2023. Through text analysis of corporate financial statements, we identified whether companies underwent AI transformation and constructed a difference-in-differences model to assess the impact of AI transformation on corporate ESG performance. We find that AI transformation significantly enhances ESG performance, a conclusion that holds up after a series of robustness tests. Mechanism analysis indicates that green effects and governance effects are key pathways for enhancing corporate ESG performance. On one hand, AI transformation promotes green innovation and green production, and increases green total factor productivity, thereby improving ESG outcomes. On the other hand, it enhances regulatory compliance, mitigates managerial myopia, and reduces corporate risks, further boosting ESG performance. This study also reveals that AI technology exerts a more favorable ESG impact on state-owned enterprises, non-high-tech firms, and heavily polluting companies. Our text-based identification strategy and comprehensive research design contribute new firm-level evidence on how AI reshapes sustainability outcomes. The findings offer practical implications for managers and regulators seeking to align digital transformation with ESG objectives and to target supportive policies where the returns to AI-enabled sustainability is likely to be largest. Overall, this study highlights AI as a practical lever for corporate sustainability in emerging markets.



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sciforum-153716: From Infrastructure Investment to Inclusive Growth: The Role of the Belt and Road Initiative for Sustainable Development in Pakistan's Development Agenda

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The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which has already accumulated global investments of over one trillion dollars, provides not only transformation prospects but also considerable challenges to the participating countries. In the case of Pakistan, one of the major beneficiaries due to the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) worth around sixty two billion dollars, it is important to capitalize on the initiative to realize the long-term development goals of Vision 2050. The rationale behind the writing of this research article is the creation of an analytical model of how BRI inspired investments can be aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) so that the growth of infrastructure can be converted into sustainable national development. The main idea of the given study is to present a 5E framework-Export-led growth, E-Pakistan digitalization, Environmental resilience, Energy security, and Equity and social empowerment- a way of governance and an evaluation mechanism. Based on a review of policies, project analysis, and the literature, the paper concludes that Pakistan has achieved significant gains in energy production and physical connectivity yet has severe shortages in the areas of environmental sustainability, digital transformation, and socio-economic inclusivity. Such lapses threaten to condense the wider developmental gain of the BRI unless they are overcome proactively and in concerted effort. It will be highlighted in the analysis that by implementing the 5E framework, Pakistan can shift its role as a mere recipient of BRI projects to an active participant in the Belt and road Initiative of Sustainable Development (BRISD). Such an approach will ensure that BRI engagement supports inclusive growth, strengthens resilience against climate and technological challenges, and delivers tangible benefits to all segments of society. Ultimately, a 5E-driven strategy positions Pakistan to harness the BRI not just as an infrastructure program but as a catalyst for sustainable and equitable development.



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sciforum-155983: Challenges and opportunities of SMEs digitalization: the case of Albania

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This study explores the role of digitalization on Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Albania, evaluating how the factors that enhance adoption of digital tools by SMEs. In a rapidly changing economic and technological landscape, digital transformation has become a key factor for business competitiveness and sustainability. Hence, the study aims to investigate the impact of digitalization on the performance of SMEs, focusing on how digital adoption, skills, institutional support, and training influence competitiveness and operational transformation. Using a quantitative research approach, data were collected from SMEs through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

The findings reveal that the adoption of digital tools has a significant positive relationship with market expansion and business performance, confirming that digital engagement enhances competitiveness and customer reach. However, no significant link was found between the number of digital tools used and the level of operational digitalization, suggesting that Albanian SMEs often implement technology in fragmented ways. High costs and a lack of digital skills were identified as the main barriers to digital transformation, while institutional support showed minimal influence on adoption levels. Interestingly, training initiatives displayed a reversed effect, indicating that existing programs may lack practical, implementation-oriented content.

The study concludes that although awareness of digitalization among Albanian SMEs is increasing, progress remains limited by financial constraints, skill shortages, and weak institutional coordination. The research contributes to the broader literature by providing empirical evidence from a developing economy context and by emphasizing the need for integrated policies, targeted financial assistance, and hands-on training to strengthen SME digital maturity in Albania.



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sciforum-159579: Cognitive Extensions in Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Review of Artificial Intelligence as a Support System for Entrepreneurial Thinking

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This study undertakes a systematic and a bibliometric review of the literature on artificial intelligence as a cognitive extension within the domain of entrepreneurship, with particular emphasis on how computational systems interact with and enhance key dimensions of entrepreneurial cognition. Employing co-citation, co-occurrence, and thematic network analyses, the review maps the intellectual evolution of research that links AI capabilities to opportunity recognition, analytical reasoning, and early-stage decision-making. Prior scholarship suggests that generative and predictive models broaden the scope of entrepreneurs' informational searches, enabling the discernment of patterns that typically elude unaided human judgment. Studies on problem-solving underscore the role of language-based and reasoning-oriented systems in fostering structured ideation and refining cognitive strategies. Concurrently, research in decision support highlights the utility of machine learning in forecasting, facilitating more systematic evaluations under conditions of uncertainty. Drawing insights from these intersecting literatures, the review delineates methodological imperatives for investigating AI-augmented cognition, including considerations of model interpretability, alignment between task and technological affordances, and the appraisal of human-AI reasoning dynamics. The resulting conceptual framework positions AI not as a replacement for entrepreneurial judgment but as an auxiliary cognitive apparatus that reshapes how entrepreneurs acquire information, construct alternative courses of action, and appraise nascent opportunities.



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sciforum-153649: The Digital-Age Woman Entrepreneur as a Role Model: A Content Analysis of Media Representation and Leadership Framing in Pakistani Online News

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Pakistani online media is shaping the public image and perceived leadership of women entrepreneurs, particularly in the digital-age startup ecosystem. Despite a surge in women-led enterprises, a significant gender gap persists in funding and senior visibility. This study aims to investigate the professional and strategic framing of female founders, assessing whether media narratives position them as disruptive business minds or primarily focus on socio-cultural achievements. Employing a qualitative content analysis approach, this research collected a stratified random sample of 50 articles from the business and technology sections of major English-language online news sources. Articles were coded across three key categories: Framing Type, Leadership Attributes, and Visual Representation. This systematic methodology allowed for an objective assessment of media's role in defining Entrepreneurship leadership. The analysis reveals a distinct strategic narrative imbalance in the portrayal of Pakistani women entrepreneurs. While the prevalent use of the "Success Story" framing is supportive and encourages Entrepreneurship participation, a consistent pattern emerges where the attributes emphasized are rooted in the personal or socio-cultural context of the founder. This imbalance suggests a journalistic tendency to focus on the inspirational "journey", highlighting the struggle and overcoming of non-business obstacles rather than the core professional expertise and strategic rigor necessary for business success. The study concludes that Pakistani media is effectively boosting the visibility of women in Entrepreneurship but employs a narrative strategy that frames their success through a predominantly socio-cultural lens, rather than a pure Strategic Leadership one. This emphasis risks downplaying the professional rigor and strategic contribution of women founders in the eyes of investors and the broader business community. To foster a truly equitable ecosystem, a deliberate, collaborative shift in media and public institutional narratives is required to highlight the professional and strategic decision-making process of these women, solidifying their image as credible industry leaders.



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sciforum-158470: The Role of Learning by Doing in Fostering Social Entrepreneurial Competence and Intention: A Case Study of Enactus Morocco

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Social entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized as a transformative force, given its dual capacity to address societal challenges and foster sustainable development. Higher education institutions have sought to strengthen social entrepreneurship education to cultivate the next generation of changemakers. Learning by Doing (LBD) has emerged as one of the most effective experiential approaches for developing entrepreneurial competencies (EC) and social entrepreneurial intention (SEI). Despite its growing importance, limited research has examined how LBD operates within structured, practice-based environments in the Global South. In response to this gap, our study examines Enactus Morocco the country's leading organization applying LBD to foster social entrepreneurship, SEI, and EC among university students while also considering prior knowledge and supportive learning environments as secondary moderating factors within an integrated theoretical framework.

Adopting a qualitative exploratory design, covering two complementary perspectives: the perspective of the organization Enactus Morocco and that of its student members. Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants, ensuring ethical compliance and methodological rigor. The data were analyzed thematically using NVivo15.

The findings validated the proposed theoretical model, confirming that LBD effectively fosters EC and SEI, with the supportive environment emerging as a critical catalyst. Prior knowledge facilitated adaptation; however, students without such experience were able to compensate through the experiential nature of LBD, which accelerated skill acquisition. The results showed additional influencing factors, such as emotional support, a clear learning path, and Networking. Data saturation was achieved in the ninth interview.

Our study provides the first context-based framework linking LBD, SEI, and EC in a non-Western setting. It enhances theoretical understanding, guides educators, practitioners, and policymakers in designing transformative educational ecosystems, and underscores the potential of LBD to empower the next generation of socially responsible leaders. Our future research will expand this work through quantitative validation of the proposed model.



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