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STAR SCHOLARS NETWORK

ADVANCING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

SELECTED ABSTRACTS FROM THE STAR GLOBAL CONFERENCE 2025



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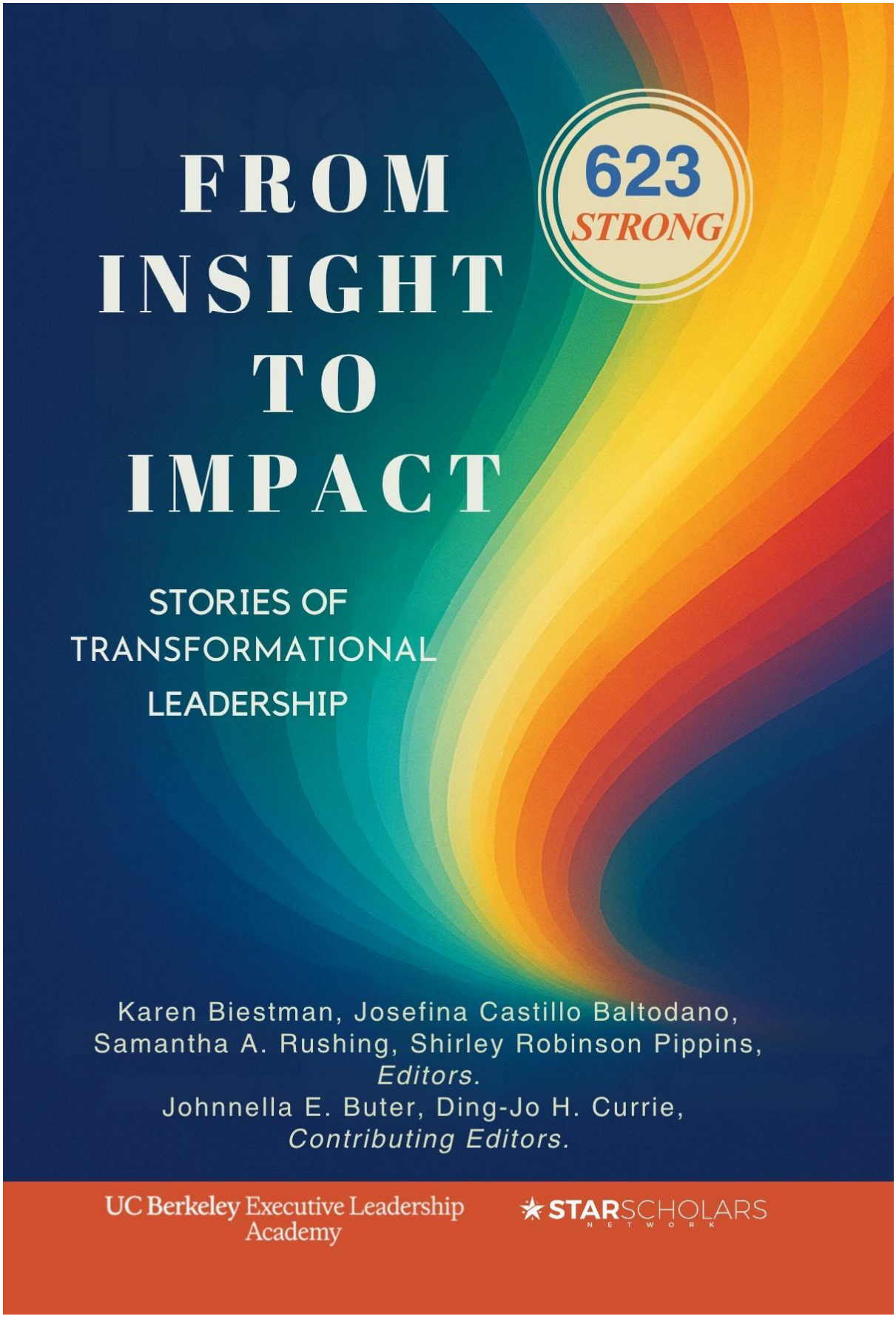
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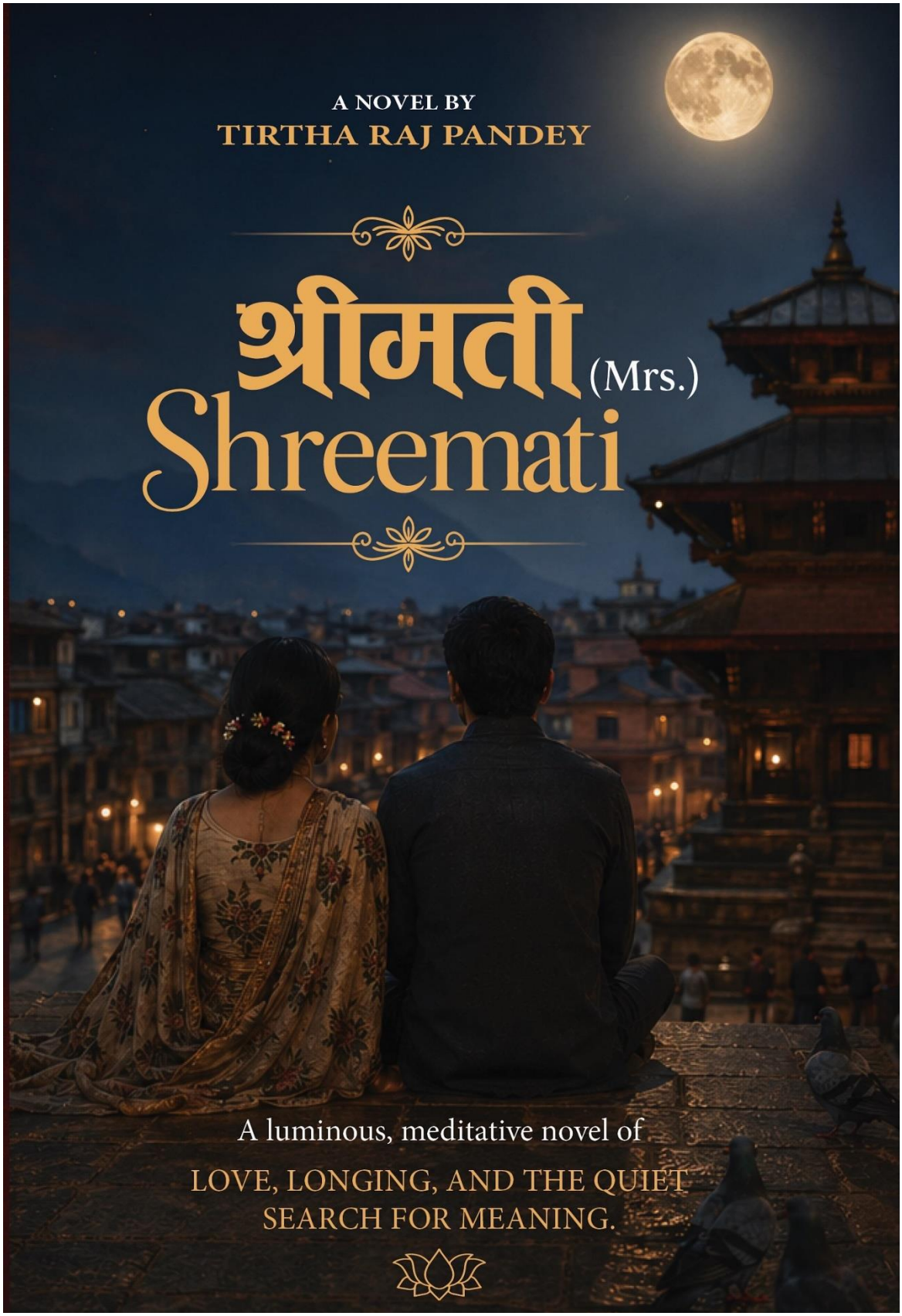
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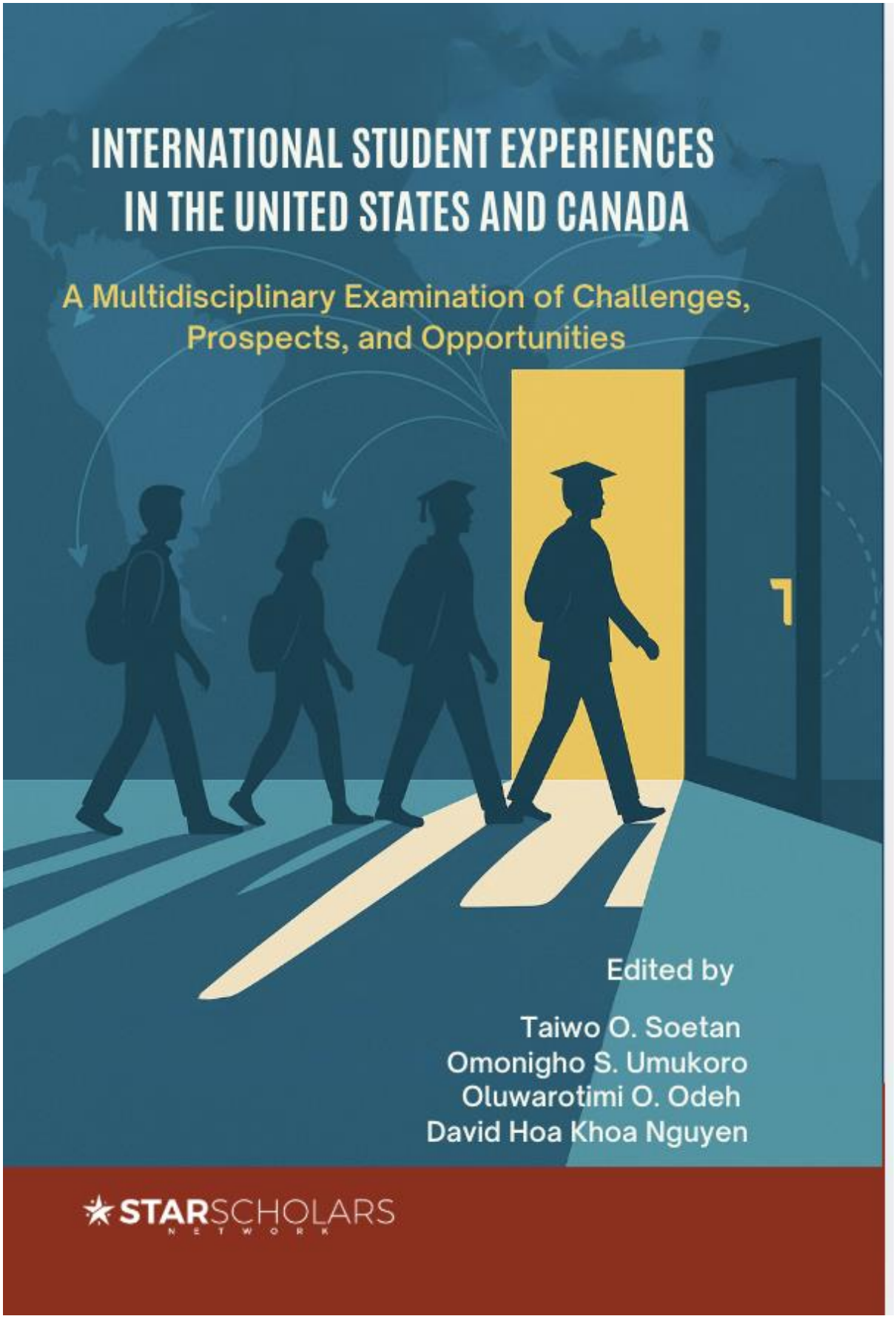
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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This volume is presented by the UNESCO Chair on Cultural Diplomacy, Governance, and Education, building upon the rich intellectual exchange fostered during the STAR Global Conference 2025, held in Istanbul, Türkiye. Hosted by Istanbul Aydın University in collaboration with the STAR Scholars Network, the conference brought together a vibrant and diverse international community of scholars, researchers, and cultural leaders. Under the theme "Advancing Local Knowledge for a Brighter and Sustainable Future," the conference provided a truly global platform for interdisciplinary dialogue across fields including education, sustainability, cultural studies, communication, technology, and leadership.

Central to the conference was an emphasis on a critical yet often underrepresented dimension of knowledge production: the value of local knowledge and its visibility within global academic discourse. While locally grounded knowledge offers contextually rich and meaningful insights, its broader impact depends on its ability to circulate beyond its immediate setting. Knowledge that remains confined to local boundaries risks being underutilized, regardless of its intrinsic significance. In response, the conference adopted a deliberately multilingual and interdisciplinary framework, bridging the divide between local knowledge production and global dissemination. By fostering an inclusive platform that transcends linguistic and disciplinary boundaries, the conference sought to amplify diverse scholarly voices and enhance the accessibility of knowledge worldwide.

This volume reflects that commitment by bringing together the abstracts of the research presented at the conference, thereby contributing to the wider circulation and recognition of scholarship that is deeply rooted in local contexts yet globally relevant.

As the UNESCO Chair on Cultural Diplomacy, Governance, and Education, we are honored to contribute to this collective scholarly endeavor and to support initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue, knowledge exchange, and sustainable development through academic collaboration. We extend our sincere gratitude to the President of the STAR Scholars Network, Prof. Dr. Uttam Gaulee, and to Prof. Dr. Krishna Bista for their leadership and vision in convening this global gathering. Our deepest appreciation goes to the members of the scientific and organizing committees, whose dedication ensured the academic rigor and success of both the conference and this publication. We are equally grateful to all presenters and participants from around the world, whose research, insights, and engagement—both in person and virtually—form the foundation of this volume.

We further acknowledge the efforts of the organizing team, volunteers, and the staff of Istanbul Aydın University, whose professionalism and commitment made possible the successful implementation of the conference in a hybrid format. Special thanks are also due to the technical teams and collaborators who supported both the virtual and on-site components.

Beyond its academic scope, the conference offered participants the opportunity to experience Türkiye's rich cultural heritage through workshops, city tours, and cultural activities, fostering meaningful intercultural exchange. These experiences further reinforced the spirit of cultural diplomacy that lies at the heart of this initiative.

Finally, we express our sincere gratitude to all contributors to this volume. This publication stands as a testament to the shared commitment of the global academic community to advancing knowledge, strengthening international collaboration, and promoting a more inclusive and sustainable future.

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Editors
Dr. Osman GÜLTEKİN
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FOREWORD

There is a story I want to tell before I say anything else about this volume.

The STAR Global Conference 2025 was held in Istanbul — one of the world's great crossroads cities, a place where continents, civilizations, and centuries converge. It was held at Istanbul Aydın University, under the distinguished leadership of Honorary Chair Prof. Dr. Mustafa Aydın, and made possible by the exceptional dedication of Conference Chair Dr. Osman Gültekin — STAR's Country Director for Türkiye, a scholar of cultural diplomacy and international relations whose commitment to this community has been nothing short of exemplary. The conference was co-organized with Prof. Dr. Shyam Sharma of Stony Brook University, whose editorial partnership across this and so many STAR endeavors I am deeply grateful for.

The theme we chose — Advancing Local Knowledge for a Brighter and Sustainable Future — was not an accident of committee deliberation. It was a conviction. A statement of what STAR Scholars Network believes scholarship, at its most important, must do.

Global academic discourse has long suffered from a gravitational pull toward the center — toward a small number of elite institutions, a handful of dominant languages, and a narrow set of epistemological traditions that have, over centuries, been granted the authority to define what counts as knowledge, what counts as rigorous method, and whose questions count as the important ones. The result is a global academy that is simultaneously vast and narrow: vast in the number of researchers it employs, and narrow in the range of voices it amplifies.

STAR was founded on the conviction that this must change. Not through rejection of rigor, but through expansion of it. Not by abandoning standards, but by questioning who has been allowed to set them — and whose locally grounded, contextually rich, deeply meaningful knowledge has been systematically excluded from the conversation.

> ***The most important scholarship of the next generation will not come from the institutions that have always dominated global rankings. It will come from the margins — from researchers who know their communities from the inside, who ask questions that only proximity makes visible.***

The abstracts collected in this volume are proof of that conviction. They arrive from Kazakhstan and Ukraine, from Iraq and Ireland, from Austria and Argentina, from Nepal and Nigeria, from South Africa and the Philippines, from Japan and Mauritius, from Spain and Turkey, and from across the United States — a genuinely global gathering of scholarly inquiry that reflects the breadth of human experience and the diversity of questions that experience generates.

The thematic range is equally remarkable. These pages contain scholarship on intercultural communicative competence and micro-credential innovation, on AI-mediated learning and sustainable pedagogy, on teacher education under wartime conditions in Ukraine, on

employment and internationalization in North Iraq, on the architectural heritage of Ottoman Istanbul, on the fashion industry's intersection with artificial intelligence, on surrogacy law in Spain, on spiritual values in classical Turkish-Islamic literature, and on the experiences of international students navigating the complex terrain of inclusion in higher education. This is not a narrow collection. It is a panorama of human intellectual life — multidisciplinary, multilingual, locally grounded, and globally relevant.

The multilingual character of this volume deserves particular acknowledgment. Abstracts are presented here in English, Turkish, Spanish, and French. That editorial choice was deliberate and principled. It embodies the very argument the conference was making: that knowledge production is not the exclusive domain of any single language, and that the richness of global scholarship can only be accessed when we commit to genuine linguistic inclusion. I commend the editors — Dr. Osman Gültekin and Prof. Dr. Shyam Sharma — for holding firmly to this principle.

> ***Language is not merely a vehicle for ideas. It is a carrier of epistemology — of ways of knowing that are inseparable from the linguistic traditions in which they were born. A truly global academy must be, in the deepest sense, multilingual.***

The institutional home of this conference — Istanbul Aydın University, and specifically its UNESCO Chair on Cultural Diplomacy, Governance and Education — provided a setting whose symbolic resonance matched the intellectual ambitions of the gathering. Istanbul is, after all, a city that has spent millennia at the intersection of cultures, faiths, languages, and civilizations. It is a city that knows, better than most, what it means to hold multiple identities simultaneously — to be neither purely East nor purely West, but something more complex, more interesting, and ultimately more instructive than either category alone. For a conference dedicated to local knowledge and global dialogue, there could have been no more fitting location.

I want to express my profound personal gratitude to Dr. Osman Gültekin for making this possible. His energy, his organizational dedication, his institutional vision, and his personal warmth as both a host and a colleague are written into every page of this volume — not in text, but in the quality and diversity of the scholarship it contains. The conference was his achievement as much as anyone's, and it is a testament to what committed local leadership can produce in the service of global academic community.

I am also deeply grateful to the entire advisory and scientific committee — colleagues from the United States, Canada, Germany, India, Austria, Argentina, Spain, Japan, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa, Nepal, Malaysia, and beyond — whose review and guidance ensured that the scholarship presented here meets the standards of rigor and integrity that STAR is committed to upholding. Their voluntary contribution of time and expertise is the invisible infrastructure on which every conference of this kind depends.

To every presenter whose work appears in these pages: this volume is yours. The abstracts you submitted represent months or years of intellectual investment — questions pursued with

patience, data gathered with care, arguments built and rebuilt until they could bear the weight of scrutiny. That work matters. It matters to your fields, it matters to your communities, and it matters to the collective project of building a more equitable and intellectually honest global academy.

> ***An abstract is not a summary of what has been discovered. It is an invitation — to dialogue, to debate, to the kind of productive intellectual friction from which knowledge grows.***

The full-text proceedings volume, which accompanies this abstract collection, will carry those invitations further. Together, the two volumes constitute a record not only of what was presented at the STAR Global Conference 2025, but of what the global scholarly community is thinking about at this moment — what questions it is asking, what methods it is bringing to bear, and what futures it is imagining.

This conference was not the end of a conversation. Neither was it the beginning. It was the continuation of one carried forward from Mauritious (2022), Spain (2023), and Nepal (2024), and will continue to India in 2026. And that, ultimately, is what STAR Scholars Network exists to make possible: continuation and new beginnings of conversations that the world needs to have, among scholars who have the courage, the preparation, and the passion to have them. I am deeply grateful to Dr. Krishna Bista, the CEO of the STAR Scholars Press for facilitating the publication of these proceedings.

I look forward to continuing those conversations — in our journals, at our next global conference in India in December 2026, and in the ongoing daily work of a community that refuses to accept that scholarship and justice are separate enterprises.

With deep gratitude, enduring admiration, and every confidence in the generations of scholars whose work is represented in these pages,

Uttam Gaulee, Ph.D.
President, STAR Scholars Network
Professor of Higher Education, Morgan State University
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

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NAVIGATING INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE: CENTERING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VOICE FOR A MORE EQUITABLE CAMPUS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of cultural differences and inclusion on international students and proposes strategies to enhance their integration within higher education. Using the Inclusive Excellence (IE) Framework as an analytical lens, the study conceptualizes inclusion as a comprehensive, institution-wide approach to fostering equitable and supportive learning environments.

Adopting a qualitative methodology, the research draws on reflective notes from seven international graduate students in the Midwestern United States to gain in-depth insights into their experiences, challenges, and needs. The findings highlight the complexity of navigating cultural differences, academic expectations, and social integration, as well as the varied levels of institutional support available through university initiatives, programs, and policies.

Results indicate that while some institutional practices support inclusion, gaps remain in addressing students' holistic needs, particularly in terms of cultural adaptation, academic guidance, and social belonging. Participants emphasized the importance of culturally responsive support systems, clear communication, and opportunities for meaningful engagement in the campus community.

The study provides valuable insights for higher education institutions seeking to strengthen inclusive practices. It underscores the need for intentional policy design, targeted support programs, and sustained institutional commitment to inclusive excellence. By addressing structural and cultural barriers, universities can better support international students' academic success and well-being.

Keywords: international students, inclusive excellence, collective autoethnography, knowledge decolonization, global inclusion, higher education, cultural differences, student integration, diversity and inclusion

PSYCHOMETRIC TOOLS FOR ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: A CASE STUDY IN KAZAKHSTAN

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) within higher education settings in Kazakhstan, with particular attention to the relationship between language proficiency and intercultural development. ICC levels were measured using a psychometric questionnaire adapted from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), and participants were positioned in accordance with Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), which conceptualizes intercultural growth across six developmental stages. A mixed-methods research design was employed, incorporating a Likert-type survey instrument, scenario-based analyses, and an ICC knowledge assessment.

The resulting classification enabled a comparative analysis of how varying levels of English language proficiency correspond to patterns of ICC progression. The findings underscore the necessity of systematically integrating ICC criteria into language assessment frameworks and curricular design in Kazakhstan's higher education institutions, thereby supporting the development of globally competent graduates.

Keywords: intercultural communicative competence, ICC, language proficiency, higher education, Kazakhstan, DMIS, intercultural sensitivity, English language learning, curriculum design

LEARNING BY DOING: USING ROLE-PLAY SIMULATIONS TO ENHANCE PROJECT MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces an openly licensed role-play toolkit that integrates international project management (PM) standards with Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) competencies. Designed as a modular and adaptable learning resource, the toolkit enables students to engage in practical simulations by assuming roles such as project manager, sponsor, and external auditor. Through these activities, learners apply core PM tools, including SMART criteria, project planning, and evaluation processes, while simultaneously reflecting on ethical considerations, inclusivity, and environmental impact.

Aligned with global frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the toolkit promotes a holistic approach to project management education. It is specifically designed for cross-disciplinary use, allowing educators to adapt it to diverse learning contexts and institutional needs.

The paper outlines the development process, structure, and key components of the toolkit, emphasizing its potential to foster interactive, learner-centered pedagogies. By incorporating experiential learning and reflective practice, the toolkit supports the development of critical competencies required for sustainable and responsible project management.

Released as an Open Educational Resource (OER), the toolkit aims to reduce barriers to access and encourage broader adoption of innovative teaching approaches. The study concludes that integrating sustainability and reflective practices into PM education is essential for preparing students to address complex global challenges.

Keywords: project management education, role-play simulation, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Open Educational Resources (OER), sustainable development goals (SDGs), experiential learning, learner-centered pedagogy, learning by doing

REINFORCING INTEGRATION OF SKILLS FOR EMPLOYABILITY AND INTERNATIONALISATION IN NORTH IRAQ

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of governance and internationalization in addressing employability challenges within higher education in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, with a specific focus on North Iraq. Despite ongoing reforms, high youth unemployment—particularly among graduates—highlights persistent gaps between higher education outcomes and labor market needs. These challenges are intensified by political instability, financial limitations, and increasing student populations in the region.

The paper analyzes the EU-funded RISE (Reinforcement of Internationalisation and Employability) project, launched in 2025, which aims to strengthen institutional capacity and promote sustainable socio-economic development through higher education. Adopting a participatory, bottom-up approach, the project emphasizes the roles of International Relations Offices and Career Development Centres in enhancing both internationalization and employability.

RISE is structured around three core pillars: strategic integration, capacity building, and operational implementation. These include the development of institutional roadmaps, targeted training programs, and practical initiatives such as mobility events and entrepreneurial competitions. The project highlights the importance of integrating global perspectives and entrepreneurial skills into university systems.

The findings suggest that strengthening governance structures and fostering international collaboration can significantly improve graduate employability and institutional effectiveness. The study concludes that higher education can act as a driver of sustainable development when aligned with labor market demands and supported by inclusive, innovation-driven strategies.

Keywords: higher education, internationalization, employability, governance, North Iraq, MENA, capacity building, entrepreneurship

LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF AI

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into human communication, with a focus on the interpretation of linguistic gestures such as facial expressions, body movements, and nonverbal cues. Moving beyond text-based interaction, advances in natural language processing, computer vision, and machine learning have enabled AI systems to increasingly recognize and interpret embodied communication with greater accuracy.

The paper explores how this technological convergence is transforming human–computer interaction, particularly in areas such as accessibility, education, and social robotics. It reviews theoretical perspectives on gesture and communication, while also addressing the cultural variability inherent in nonverbal expression. In doing so, the study emphasizes the need for culturally sensitive AI systems capable of interpreting gestures within diverse social contexts.

Furthermore, the research highlights key ethical challenges associated with gesture recognition technologies, including algorithmic bias, privacy concerns, and issues of inclusivity. Drawing on both global perspectives and examples from Nepal, the study argues that effective AI innovation must extend beyond technical efficiency to incorporate empathy, cultural awareness, and ethical responsibility.

The findings suggest that for AI systems to function as meaningful communicative partners, they must not only decode human gestures but also respect their cultural and emotional significance. This approach is essential for developing inclusive, context-aware, and human-centered AI technologies.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, human–computer interaction, gesture recognition, nonverbal communication, cultural diversity, computer vision, ethical AI, social robotics

DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES: AN EVALUATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT-LED COLLABORATIVE ONLINE PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the evolving concept of internationalisation in higher education, critically addressing the limitations of traditional mobility-based approaches. While internationalisation has long been associated with student and staff mobility, research collaboration, and institutional prestige, reliance on mobility alone often excludes a significant proportion of students from developing intercultural competencies.

Building on foundational definitions by Knight (2008) and de Wit (2015), the study emphasizes the need to reconceptualize internationalisation as an inclusive, quality-enhancing process that benefits all learners. In response to globalisation and changing societal demands, approaches such as Internationalisation at Home (IaH) and Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC) have gained prominence. However, these approaches often remain institutionally inward-looking.

This research addresses these gaps through the analysis of the "Crossing Borders" Project, an online collaborative module developed at Georgia Southern University. The initiative facilitates structured intercultural dialogue among students from Ireland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and the United States, leveraging digital tools to foster intercultural competence and curriculum integration.

The findings highlight the effectiveness of guided online interactions in promoting intercultural awareness and democratizing access to global learning experiences for students who are unable to participate in physical mobility programs. The study contributes to IaH and IoC scholarship by demonstrating how digital collaboration can serve as a scalable and inclusive model for internationalisation.

It concludes that embedding internationalisation within the curriculum through accessible, technology-supported methods is essential for achieving equity and preparing students for a globalized world.

Keywords: internationalisation, higher education, Internationalisation at Home, intercultural competence, online collaboration, curriculum internationalisation, global learning

FROM SURFACE TO DEPTH: DEFINING INTERPRETIVE DEPTH AND MEANING CONSTRUCTION IN THE AI-MEDIATED LEARNING ERA

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ABSTRACT

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into educational environments has transformed how learners access, process, and produce knowledge. While AI enables personalization, immediacy, and scalability, it also risks promoting surface learning characterized by limited conceptual integration and reduced cognitive engagement. This paper addresses this concern by conceptualizing interpretive depth as both a pedagogical objective and a cognitively grounded process. Drawing on insights from cognitive science, neuroscience, and educational theory, it proposes a four-dimensional framework—temporal immersion, contextual embedding, relational resonance, and reflexive positioning—to support meaningful and durable learning in AI-mediated contexts.

The framework is grounded in neural processes involving the prefrontal cortex, hippocampus, temporal lobes, and the Default Mode Network, which collectively facilitate integration, contextualization, and reflective thinking. Through comparative examples across disciplines, the study demonstrates that learning outcomes vary significantly depending on the depth of engagement with these dimensions. AI can either accelerate superficial processing or, when intentionally designed, promote deeper inquiry, contextual understanding, and reflective evaluation.

The paper further outlines pedagogical strategies to sustain interpretive depth, including slowing cognitive processes, embedding contextual information, fostering interdisciplinary connections, and enhancing learner agency. It argues that positioning AI as an interpretive partner rather than a mere information provider is essential for preserving deep learning. Beyond academic outcomes, interpretive depth is framed as a critical competency for navigating complex information landscapes, thereby supporting informed, ethical, and creative decision-making in contemporary society.

Keywords: artificial intelligence in education, interpretive depth, surface learning, cognitive engagement, meaning-making

PILOTING MICRO-CREDENTIALS IN UKRAINE: STRENGTHENING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of micro-credentials has emerged as a significant trend in global higher education, offering flexible, competency-based learning pathways that complement traditional degree structures. In Ukraine, this approach has gained strategic relevance amid ongoing educational reforms and wartime challenges, enabling universities to address urgent societal demands while aligning with European Higher Education Area standards. This study examines the Ukrainian experience of piloting micro-credentials in teacher education within the Erasmus+ CBHE CRED4TEACH project, focusing on the development of short, modular programs delivered through MOOCs and blended learning environments.

These initiatives aim to equip teachers with practical competencies in digital pedagogy, inclusive education, resilience, and innovative teaching methods, supporting both immediate professional needs and long-term lifelong learning. Findings indicate that micro-credentials enhance accessibility and inclusivity, particularly for educators affected by displacement or crisis conditions, while also promoting context-specific knowledge and fostering international collaboration with European partners.

However, several challenges persist, including the absence of a nationally standardized recognition framework, the need for comprehensive quality assurance mechanisms, and limited institutional capacity for large-scale implementation. Strengthening alignment with the Ukrainian National Qualifications Framework is essential for ensuring sustainability and broader recognition. Overall, micro-credentials contribute to the modernization of higher education and reinforce societal resilience by providing adaptive, scalable tools for teacher professional development in times of crisis.

Keywords: micro-credentials, higher education, teacher education, lifelong learning, digital pedagogy, Ukraine, educational reform, resilience, Erasmus+ CBHE

MODELLING INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY: EMOTIONAL, LINGUISTIC, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL PREDICTORS IN INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors influencing intercultural sensitivity among international students in higher education, emphasizing its importance for academic success, personal development, and effective cross-cultural interaction. The primary aim is to identify and quantify experiential, linguistic, emotional, and educational predictors of intercultural sensitivity, thereby providing a comprehensive model of the adaptation process.

Data were collected from 368 participants representing 20 countries, and multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS). The model was statistically significant ($F(13, 352) = 38.81$, $p < .001$), explaining 58.5% of the variance in intercultural sensitivity. Positive predictors included foreign language proficiency, intercultural interactions, prior international experience, participation in global activities, and perceived personal growth. In contrast, emotional challenges—such as isolation, low well-being, and difficulties in cross-cultural collaboration—emerged as significant negative predictors.

The findings highlight the complex interplay between experiential exposure and emotional well-being in shaping intercultural sensitivity. While linguistic competence and diverse experiences enhance adaptability, emotional barriers and insufficient support can hinder meaningful engagement. These results underscore the need for higher education institutions to adopt inclusive and supportive strategies.

The study concludes that intercultural sensitivity is a multidimensional construct shaped by both opportunities and constraints within the learning environment. Institutions should promote language development, foster intercultural engagement, and provide structured emotional support to facilitate students' successful adaptation in multicultural contexts.

Keywords: intercultural sensitivity, international students, higher education, language proficiency, cross-cultural adaptation, emotional well-being, multicultural experience, regression analysis

VIRTUAL EXCHANGE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ATTITUDES (KSAS)

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ABSTRACT

This presentation reports findings from a virtual exchange (VE) program in which students from diverse cultural and academic backgrounds collaborated on topics related to Artificial Intelligence (AI). Using structured focus group activities, the study examined how participants developed Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs) through intercultural interaction.

Data collected from focus groups provided rich insights into participants' learning experiences. The analysis revealed that students expanded their understanding of AI concepts and applications while becoming more aware of how cultural contexts shape perspectives and problem-solving approaches. The VE program also facilitated the development of essential skills, particularly in communication, collaboration, and digital teamwork, as participants engaged in cross-cultural interaction and joint project work.

Importantly, the study identified notable shifts in attitudes, including increased openness, empathy, perspective-taking, self-confidence, and appreciation for cultural diversity. Exposure to diverse viewpoints encouraged critical reflection and enhanced intercultural sensitivity.

These findings demonstrate that virtual exchange programs offer a dual benefit by advancing technical knowledge while fostering intercultural competence. The study also illustrates how focus group methodologies can effectively capture the nuanced development of KSAs in intercultural learning environments. Overall, the research contributes to the field of innovative pedagogy by highlighting the potential of virtual exchange as a tool for integrating technical education with intercultural skill and attitude development.

Keywords: virtual exchange, intercultural competence, diversity artificial intelligence education, knowledge skills attitudes (KSA), collaborative learning, digital teamwork

TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION IN IBERO-AMERICA: EMPOWERING GLOBAL CHANGE AGENTS THROUGH COIL AND THE SDGS

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the transformative impact of "COIL en Clave ODS para la Educación Superior en Iberoamérica," a five-week online program developed by STAR Argentina to empower higher education professionals from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain to integrate global citizenship and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiatives. The program applied active learning methodologies—such as the flipped classroom, project-based learning, and intercultural synchronous sessions—to foster collaboration, critical reflection, and sustainability-oriented teaching.

A distinctive feature of this initiative was the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), specifically Natural Language Processing (NLP), to systematize and classify projects according to relevant SDGs and to design an interactive online gallery that enhanced the program's international visibility. Quantitative and qualitative analyses of pre- and post-program surveys, along with project submissions, revealed significant growth in participants' confidence and competence in designing intercultural, SDG-aligned COIL experiences.

Educators also reported improved skills in intercultural communication, curriculum internationalization, and critical global awareness (UNESCO, 2017, 2024; United Nations, 2015). These findings position COIL as both a professional development tool and a transformative strategy for advancing sustainability, inclusion, and global citizenship in higher education (SUNY COIL Center, 2015).

Keywords: active learning, artificial intelligence in education, collaborative online international learning (COIL), global citizenship education, higher education internationalization, intercultural competence, sustainable development goals (SDGs)

FROM FIRST CONTACT TO CULTURAL COMPETENCE – RETHINKING RECRUITMENT THROUGH AN INTERCULTURAL LENS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines international student recruitment as a critical component of intercultural communication and global competence development in higher education. It argues that recruitment processes extend beyond information delivery and often represent prospective students' first point of intercultural engagement with an institution. Elements such as language use, visual representation, and cultural framing play a significant role in shaping students' perceptions, expectations, and sense of belonging prior to arrival.

Drawing on practical experience from international education fairs, particularly within the context of Türkiye, the study highlights how recruitment practices can be redefined through a culturally responsive lens. It emphasizes that effective recruitment should not only focus on increasing enrollment but also on fostering inclusivity and supporting students' intercultural adjustment.

The analysis further explores the importance of aligning recruitment strategies with onboarding processes to ensure continuity in students' experiences and to promote the development of global competencies over time. By integrating recruitment and transition support mechanisms, institutions can better address the diverse needs of international students and enhance their academic and social integration.

The study concludes that a holistic, human-centered approach to student recruitment is essential for meaningful internationalisation. Such an approach positions recruitment as a foundational stage in intercultural engagement rather than a purely administrative function.

Keywords: international student recruitment, international education, international marketing, intercultural communication, global competence, internationalisation, student experience

FOSTERING GLOBAL DREAMS: THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONALIZATION ON LANGUAGE STUDENTS AT ECCI UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of internationalization initiatives on undergraduate students in the Modern Languages program at ECCI University in Bogotá, Colombia, with a focus on access, equity, and student transformation. Although the institution is private, most students come from low-income backgrounds, making access to international opportunities particularly significant.

Between the first semester of 2023 and 2025, a coordinated effort by a team of language professors expanded mobility opportunities, enabling over 1,000 students to participate in academic exchanges, short-term programs, virtual mobility, cultural projects, and language immersion experiences. These initiatives contributed to the development of linguistic competence, intercultural awareness, and professional readiness while also facilitating access to scholarships and postgraduate opportunities.

Using a qualitative approach, the study draws on semi-structured interviews with students and faculty, alongside institutional mobility data. The findings reveal multidimensional impacts, including academic growth, personal empowerment, and increased motivation for further global engagement. Importantly, internationalization is identified as a tool for social mobility and inclusion when designed intentionally and accessibly.

The study demonstrates that even institutions with limited resources can achieve meaningful internationalization outcomes through strategic planning, collaboration, and a student-centered approach. It concludes by offering practical insights for universities seeking to expand equitable access to global learning opportunities for underrepresented populations.

Keywords: internationalization, student mobility, higher education, equity and inclusion, intercultural competence, language education, Colombia, qualitative research

INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ACTORS' INTERACTIONS IN SHAPING INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES AND STRATEGIES IN TUNISIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the interaction between domestic and international actors in shaping the internationalization of higher education (IoHE) in Tunisia, focusing on policy development, implementation, and institutional dynamics. Although existing research acknowledges the influence of both actor groups, limited attention has been given to their specific roles, interactions, and impact on policy outcomes. Grounded in policy borrowing and decolonial theoretical frameworks, the study compares public and private higher education sectors.

Adopting a social constructivist paradigm and historical approach, the research draws on document analysis—such as donor reports and institutional strategies—and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including ministry officials, international donors, organizations, and representatives of higher education institutions. The analysis traces developments from Tunisia's post-independence period to the post-2011 era.

Preliminary findings highlight the significant role of international actors in shaping national strategies, particularly through funding and policy influence, alongside the growing agency of domestic actors. Notably, the recruitment of international students has emerged as a central policy priority, while alumni networks play an active role in institutional internationalization efforts. The study also reveals discrepancies between formal policy discourse and stakeholder perspectives, with internationalization narratives gaining prominence in practice.

The research contributes to a nuanced understanding of IoHE in a postcolonial context, emphasizing the need for more balanced and collaborative engagement between domestic and international stakeholders. It offers policy recommendations to support more context-sensitive and inclusive internationalization strategies in Tunisia.

Keywords: internationalization of higher education, Tunisia, policy borrowing, decolonial theory, higher education policy, international actors, educational governance, qualitative research

CHALLENGES IN THE CATEGORIZATION OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN GOVERNMENTAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF ARAB COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

Higher education institutions worldwide are undergoing significant transformations in both operations and curricula, facing a range of emerging challenges. These changes are driven by multiple factors, including digital transformation, the expansion of online education, the rise of digitally native students, increasing operational costs, and the emergence of micro- and nano-credentials. In Arab countries, digital transformation represents a major strategic opportunity. While several Gulf nations have implemented substantial reforms to integrate digital technologies into their economies, regions such as North Africa and the Levant continue to face structural barriers that hinder their digital transition.

The adoption of digital technologies has the potential to enhance economic competitiveness, diversify income sources, and facilitate integration into the global economy. Consequently, students increasingly utilize digital tools and applications to support their learning, contributing to the integration of technology within higher education curricula. This study employs a systematic literature review to identify and analyze the challenges associated with digital transformation in higher education, particularly in developing countries within the Arab region. It examines both internal and external barriers and provides a comprehensive understanding of these constraints to inform effective strategies and solutions.

Given the uneven pace and intensity of digitalization across regions, it is essential to examine how this process evolves within different contexts in order to better support sustainable and inclusive educational development.

Keywords: digital transformation, higher education, economic competitiveness, education for development, Arab countries, online learning, educational reform, systematic literature review, developing countries

DIGITAL PEDAGOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: REDEFINING TEACHING AND LEARNING PARADIGMS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of digital pedagogy on teaching practices and student engagement in higher education, focusing on how faculty conceptualize and adapt to digitally mediated instruction. Guided by a qualitative, inductive approach within a constructivist paradigm, the research draws on semi-structured interviews and document analysis involving faculty from diverse institutional and technological contexts. The study is informed by the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework and Transformative Learning Theory, which together explain how educators integrate technology into pedagogy and reshape their teaching beliefs.

The findings reveal five key themes: evolving instructor roles, increased personalization of learning, challenges related to digital equity, innovation in assessment practices, and the need for continuous professional development. Faculty reported a shift toward student-centered teaching, greater use of interactive tools, and more flexible learning environments. However, persistent barriers—including limited digital infrastructure and uneven institutional support—continue to constrain effective implementation.

The study highlights that digital pedagogy is not merely a technological shift but a transformative process that reshapes educational practices and institutional dynamics. It underscores the importance of strategic investment in infrastructure, faculty training, and inclusive policies to ensure equitable and sustainable integration of digital tools.

Overall, the research contributes to the understanding of digital transformation in higher education by offering insights into faculty experiences and practical recommendations for enhancing teaching innovation and student engagement.

Keywords: digital pedagogy, higher education, TPACK, transformative learning, faculty development, student engagement, educational technology, digital transformation, qualitative research, technology-enhanced learning

E-GOVERNANCE PRACTICE IN TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY, NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

University governance through the use of ICT-based e-governance tools plays a critical role in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery in higher education institutions. This study examines e-governance practices and capacity development for service delivery at Tribhuvan University (TU), Nepal, and evaluates their contribution to governance reform. A sequential mixed-methods design was employed, combining quantitative survey data from 277 participants with qualitative insights from Key Informant Interviews (n=9) and Focus Group Discussions with major stakeholder organizations (TUTA, TUEA, and FSU).

The findings indicate that multiple ICT-based tools are utilized across administrative, financial, library, and examination services. Positive perceptions of e-governance are significantly associated with improvements in governance reform, particularly in relation to employees' gender and educational attainment. Institutional efforts, including the establishment of ITIC and the development of ICT and digitalization strategies, have supported infrastructure development. Regular budget allocations and training initiatives further enhance human resource capacity.

However, the persistence of dual record-keeping systems (manual and digital) highlights ongoing transitional challenges. While e-governance contributes to reducing corruption and improving accountability and transparency, key constraints include inadequate software quality, limited technical expertise, unclear policy frameworks, and underutilization of existing infrastructure. Overall, the study underscores the transformative potential of e-governance in strengthening university service delivery and governance, while emphasizing the need for strategic investment and policy clarity for sustainable implementation.

Keywords: e-governance, digitalization, higher education, ICT, service delivery, university governance, digital transformation, Tribhuvan University, Nepal, capacity development

PILOTING MICRO-CREDENTIALS IN UKRAINE: STRENGTHENING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of micro-credentials has emerged as a significant trend in global higher education, offering flexible, competency-based learning pathways that complement traditional degree structures. In Ukraine, this approach has gained strategic relevance amid ongoing educational reforms and wartime challenges, enabling universities to address urgent societal demands while aligning with European Higher Education Area standards. This study examines the Ukrainian experience of piloting micro-credentials in teacher education within the Erasmus+ CBHE CRED4TEACH project, focusing on the development of short, modular programs delivered through MOOCs and blended learning environments.

These initiatives aim to equip teachers with practical competencies in digital pedagogy, inclusive education, resilience, and innovative teaching methods, supporting both immediate professional needs and long-term lifelong learning. Findings indicate that micro-credentials enhance accessibility and inclusivity, particularly for educators affected by displacement or crisis conditions, while also promoting context-specific knowledge and fostering international collaboration with European partners.

However, several challenges persist, including the absence of a nationally standardized recognition framework, the need for comprehensive quality assurance mechanisms, and limited institutional capacity for large-scale implementation. Strengthening alignment with the Ukrainian National Qualifications Framework is essential for ensuring sustainability and broader recognition. Overall, micro-credentials contribute to the modernization of higher education and reinforce societal resilience by providing adaptive, scalable tools for teacher professional development in times of crisis.

Keywords: micro-credentials, higher education, teacher education, lifelong learning, digital pedagogy, Ukraine, educational reform, resilience, Erasmus+ CBHE

BRIDGES AND WALLS: EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES AND COPING RESOURCES OF ARAB STUDENTS IN ISRAELI ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the experiences and coping mechanisms of Arab-Bedouin female students in higher education institutions in southern Israel during the aftermath of the October 7, 2023 attacks and the subsequent "Swords of Iron" war. Although Arab student participation in Israeli higher education has increased in recent decades, persistent integration gaps remain, particularly for Bedouin women who face intersecting socio-cultural and systemic challenges.

Grounded in Antonovsky's salutogenic model of resilience, the study adopts a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews with 28 senior undergraduate students. Data were analyzed thematically according to the dimensions of comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness. Findings reveal a significant disruption in students' sense of comprehensibility, as academic environments became spaces of fear, alienation, and heightened identity-based scrutiny.

Despite these challenges, students demonstrated strong resilience through networks of support, including peers, families, and institutional actors. These resources enhanced their sense of manageability by providing emotional stability and practical assistance. Most notably, meaningfulness emerged as a central coping dimension, as participants framed higher education as a pathway to empowerment, leadership, and community representation.

The study concludes that higher education institutions must adopt culturally responsive policies and targeted support systems to address the needs of marginalized groups, particularly during periods of crisis. Promoting inclusive and psychologically safe learning environments is essential for strengthening resilience and ensuring equitable participation in higher education.

Keywords: Arab-Bedouin students, higher education, resilience, salutogenic model, inclusion, conflict impact, qualitative research, educational equity

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY AMIDST THE GENOCIDE IN GAZA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the global and academic responses to the events following the October 7, 2023 attacks in southern Israel and the subsequent military escalation in Gaza. It focuses on how these developments have reshaped political discourse, academic engagement, and civil society mobilization. The research explores the growing international debate surrounding allegations of severe human rights violations and the resulting humanitarian consequences, including displacement and loss of life.

The study also analyzes the responses of governments, particularly in Western contexts, where expressions of solidarity and activism have, in some cases, been restricted or reframed through legal and political mechanisms. It highlights tensions between freedom of expression, academic responsibility, and political accountability.

Originally centered on global resistance movements and solidarity actions, the study expands to consider developments following the October 2025 ceasefire. It examines the evolving role of academics and students in addressing issues such as accountability, justice, and long-term conflict resolution. Particular attention is given to the role of scholarship in informing public debate and sustaining awareness of humanitarian concerns.

The findings emphasize the importance of critical engagement, academic freedom, and ethical responsibility in addressing contemporary conflicts. The study concludes that sustained dialogue, evidence-based inquiry, and institutional commitment are essential for advancing accountability and promoting informed global discourse on complex geopolitical issues.

Keywords: conflict studies, Middle East, academic responsibility, human rights, political discourse, civil society, higher education, global activism

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH AI WRITING TOOLS: BENEFITS, CHALLENGES, AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY, NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in academic writing among students in a Rural Development program at Tribhuvan University, Nepal, highlighting both opportunities and challenges in a resource-constrained context. Using a structured questionnaire with 79 students and input from 6 faculty members, the research explores patterns of AI usage, perceived benefits, limitations, and the need for institutional guidance.

Findings indicate a high prevalence of AI adoption, with 89.9% of students reporting use—primarily for idea generation (58.2%), grammar improvement (55.7%), and time efficiency (50.6%). ChatGPT emerged as the most widely used tool, followed by Google Gemini and Grammarly. Students generally perceived AI positively, noting improvements in writing quality, coherence, and creativity, with 59.5% describing it as highly beneficial.

However, concerns were also identified, particularly regarding originality (46.8%) and difficulties in verifying AI-generated content (36.7%). Although 67% of students considered AI use ethical when combined with revision and proper citation, only 43% reported receiving clear guidance from instructors. These findings highlight a gap in institutional support and the need for structured policies and training.

The study concludes that while AI can democratize access to academic support—especially for students in rural contexts—effective integration requires ethical frameworks, digital literacy development, and faculty engagement. It calls for further research on long-term impacts and broader applications across disciplines.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, academic writing, student perception, Nepal, ChatGPT, digital literacy, educational technology, research ethics, institutional guidance

UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING AI TOOLS IN THEIR LEARNING: A SURVEY OF SELECTED TWO COLLEGES OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING IN NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education is transforming how students learn and engage with academic content. While its application has been widely explored in more economically developed nations, a significant gap remains in understanding AI adoption in developing countries such as Nepal. This study examines undergraduate students' perceptions of AI tools in learning, focusing on two colleges in Lalitpur that offer Computer Science and Computer Engineering programs.

Adopting a positivist paradigm, the research employed a quantitative descriptive survey design and drew on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with extended constructs: awareness and usefulness, ease of use and continuity, trust and integrity, and attitudes toward AI. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 150 students selected via random sampling. The analysis involved descriptive statistics and comparative methods using SPSS.

The findings reveal a generally positive attitude toward AI tools, particularly regarding perceived usefulness and ease of use. However, concerns emerged related to ethical use, academic integrity, and trust, indicating a need for deeper engagement and institutional guidance. The results highlight that while students are receptive to integrating AI tools into their academic practices, they require stronger institutional support in the form of digital infrastructure, ethical frameworks, and awareness initiatives.

By identifying both opportunities and challenges, this study provides valuable insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers seeking to align Nepal's higher education system with global trends in AI-enhanced learning.

Keywords: artificial intelligence in education, technology acceptance model, student perceptions, higher education, ethical use of AI

EXPLORING CHATBOTS, ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS, AND BEYOND: AI IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a narrative review of the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in foreign language education, focusing on emerging tools such as chatbots and adaptive learning systems. AI technologies are increasingly transforming language learning by enabling scalable opportunities for individualized practice, feedback, and learner-centered instruction.

Drawing on recent empirical and conceptual research, the study evaluates the effectiveness of AI applications in developing language competencies. Findings indicate that AI-supported learning yields measurable improvements in micro-skills, including vocabulary acquisition, grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation. Additionally, when integrated within structured pedagogical frameworks and supported by teacher mediation, AI tools contribute to broader communicative competencies such as fluency and pragmatic language use.

However, the study also identifies critical challenges related to assessment validity, equity in access, and pedagogical alignment. Concerns regarding transparency, ethical use, and overreliance on automated systems underscore the need for careful implementation.

The paper argues for the development of hybrid human–AI learning ecosystems that balance technological innovation with pedagogical integrity. Such frameworks should prioritize explainability, inclusivity, and alignment with curricular goals to ensure effective and equitable language learning outcomes.

Overall, the study highlights the potential of AI to enhance foreign language education while emphasizing the importance of responsible, context-sensitive integration.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, language learning, chatbots, adaptive learning, digital pedagogy, foreign language education, personalized learning, educational technology

EFL INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS OF AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHING WORLD ENGLISHES AND CULTURES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN TÜRKİYE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines EFL instructors' perceptions and attitudes toward the integration of World Englishes (WEs) and cultural diversity in higher education in Türkiye. In the context of the global spread of English—where non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers—awareness of linguistic variety and intercultural competence is essential for preparing learners for effective global communication.

A mixed-methods design was employed, involving 100 English language instructors working in university preparatory programs. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, complemented by qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews. The findings indicate that instructors generally hold positive attitudes toward incorporating diverse English varieties and cultural elements into the curriculum. They emphasize the importance of fostering intercultural communicative competence and express willingness to expose learners to different forms of English.

However, the study also reveals key challenges, including insufficient instructional materials, limited institutional support, and a lack of targeted professional development opportunities. These barriers constrain instructors' readiness to effectively implement WEs-informed teaching practices.

The study concludes that successful integration of World Englishes requires enhanced teacher training, inclusive curriculum development, and stronger stakeholder engagement. Supporting instructors in this process is crucial for aligning English language education with the realities of global linguistic diversity.

Keywords: World Englishes, varieties of English, EFL, culture, intercultural communicative competence, Türkiye, language diversity, teacher attitudes, curriculum development

AI AND CREATIVITY IN TEACHER TRAINING: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY IN ENS FEZ STUDENTS' USE OF AI TOOLS AND THEIR PERCEIVED IMPACT ON COGNITIVE INTELLIGENCE AND TEACHING CREATIVITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools on the creativity of pre-service teachers in Moroccan higher education. Conducted at the Higher Normal School of Fez (ENS-Fez), it focuses on the use of tools such as ChatGPT-3 and AI-based writing and planning applications, which are increasingly adopted to support instructional design and learning processes. While these technologies may reduce cognitive load and facilitate idea generation, their effects on creative thinking remain uncertain.

An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed. The quantitative phase used a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design with 56 English department students, measuring divergent thinking skills through the Reisman Diagnostic Creativity Assessment (RDCA). Statistical analysis indicated slight improvements across creativity dimensions; however, these changes were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Reliability results confirmed high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.839$).

The qualitative phase, based on interviews and classroom observations, provided deeper insight into student experiences. Participants reported that AI tools enhanced idea generation, organization, and elaboration, yet also expressed concerns about reduced originality, diminished risk-taking, and decreased tolerance for ambiguity due to overreliance on AI.

The study concludes that short-term exposure to AI tools does not significantly enhance creativity, although subtle qualitative benefits are evident. It highlights the need for balanced and pedagogically informed integration of AI in teacher education to support both efficiency and creative autonomy.

Keywords: artificial intelligence in education, creativity, divergent thinking, teacher education, ChatGPT, mixed-methods research, higher education, Morocco

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BALTIMORE'S UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the META Zone NTIA digital literacy initiative, implemented in two Baltimore community schools in 2024-2025. Using an embedded single-case study design, we triangulated 18 digital navigators' case notes, surveys from 48 families, and parent–student focus group interviews to examine access, engagement, and learning outcomes. Program implementation paired equitable infrastructure—distribution of 200 laptops and two years of free home internet—with navigator-led, culturally responsive instruction that integrated AI-enabled tools (e.g., Khan Academy, ChatGPT) and adaptive apps.

Findings indicate substantial gains in students' digital confidence, online safety awareness, and application of digital skills to reading and mathematics; 96% of responding families reported overall satisfaction. Laptop distribution improved access, though barriers such as attendance conflicts, unstable internet, and limited program duration constrained outcomes. Parents reported high satisfaction and observed meaningful learning gains.

The study emphasizes the importance of community-based digital literacy interventions and provides recommendations for extending program duration , enhancing technical support, and promoting equitable technology adoption.

Keywords: digital literacy, digital divide, underserved communities, educational equity, AI in education, Baltimore schools, student engagement, technology access, digital navigators

AI IN ACADEMIC WRITING AND PUBLISHING

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Morgan State University, USA

ABSTRACT

This presentation examines the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on academic writing and publishing, focusing on its dual role as both an enabler and a challenge for scholarly practice. AI tools have significantly enhanced research productivity, language accuracy, and the dissemination of knowledge, offering new opportunities for scholars to engage with global academic communities more efficiently.

However, the increasing reliance on AI also raises concerns regarding the erosion of academic rigor, reliability, and accountability, particularly when users lack a clear understanding of how AI-generated content is produced. Drawing on practical experiences from higher education institutions, the study highlights critical issues related to authorship integrity, ethical responsibility, and the potential risks of overreliance on automated tools.

The analysis emphasizes the importance of responsible AI integration in academic work, underscoring best practices such as transparency, critical evaluation, and adherence to ethical standards. Special attention is given to the opportunities and challenges faced by scholars in developing countries, where access to AI tools may accelerate academic inclusion but also amplify inequalities if not properly managed.

The study concludes that balancing innovation with ethical responsibility is essential for sustaining the credibility of academic research. It advocates for collaborative, transparent, and informed approaches to AI use in order to ensure the integrity and advancement of scholarship in the digital age.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, academic writing, scholarly publishing, research ethics, authorship integrity, digital scholarship, higher education, AI tools

FROM PAGE TO PLATFORM TO PROMPT: YOUTH, AI, AND THE NEW PUBLIC HUMANITIES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the transformation of literary engagement within contemporary global youth culture, with particular attention to the role of digital platforms and artificial intelligence (AI). While traditional reading assessments suggest a decline in sustained reading practices, current publishing trends and online communities indicate a reconfiguration rather than a reduction in literary engagement. Platforms such as BookTok have expanded readership by promoting both contemporary and canonical works through digital mediation and participatory cultures.

The analysis highlights how literature increasingly functions as a symbolic and cultural resource embedded in digital discourse. Contemporary examples demonstrate how literary works are reinterpreted through memes, adaptations, and online narratives, reframing themes such as social inequality, gender resistance, and youth agency. These practices shift literature from a text-based activity to a multimodal and socially embedded phenomenon.

Artificial intelligence further accelerates this transformation by enabling new forms of interaction with texts. Students and readers use generative AI tools to summarize, reinterpret, and creatively extend literary works, challenging traditional notions of authorship while enhancing accessibility and engagement. AI thus acts as a mediator that enables literature to circulate in formats that are more adaptable to digital environments.

Situated within the framework of public humanities, the study identifies three key dynamics: a shift from reading to remixing, from author to algorithm, and from book to public sphere. It concludes that literature remains culturally significant but has evolved into new, digitally mediated forms of expression and participation.

Keywords: digital culture, youth culture, literature, literary engagement, artificial intelligence, public humanities, BookTok, media transformation, authorship

FROM CHALKBOARDS TO VISUAL MAPS: TEACHER-LED INNOVATION FOR DEEPER LEARNING IN RURAL NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of a teacher-driven Continuous Professional Development (CPD) model on classroom innovation and deeper learning in a resource-constrained educational context in rural Nepal. Conducted as a qualitative case study in a semi-urban school in Dhangadhi, the research focuses on the use of low-cost visual practices—such as graphic organizers, concept sketches, and other visual mapping tools—to enhance teaching and learning in multilingual environments.

Data were collected through classroom observations, teacher reflections, focus group discussions with students, and ongoing interactions within a Community of Practice (CoP). This CPD forum functioned as a dynamic and collaborative platform where teachers exchanged ideas, reflected on classroom practices, and addressed instructional challenges through both in-person and virtual engagement.

Findings reveal that participation in the CPD forum facilitated a shift in teachers' professional identities, transforming them from content transmitters into learning designers. Teachers reported increased confidence in employing visual strategies that supported cognitive engagement, fostered dialogue, and enabled interdisciplinary connections. Students, in turn, demonstrated improved engagement, creativity, and conceptual understanding as learning became more interactive and visually oriented.

The study highlights the potential of locally developed, teacher-led innovations to bridge global pedagogical frameworks and local classroom realities. It emphasizes that sustainable educational innovation can be achieved through collaboration, trust, and shared professional growth rather than reliance on advanced technologies.

Keywords: continuous professional development, visual learning, community of practice, teacher innovation, rural education, Nepal, low-resource contexts, student engagement

TRANSNATIONAL EFL TEACHERS' EMOTIONS AND CREATIVITY IN TÜRKİYE: BRONFENBRENNER'S NESTED ECOSYSTEM MODEL

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between emotional experiences and professional creativity among expatriate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers working in universities in Türkiye. Teaching is inherently an emotionally demanding profession, and expatriate teachers face unique challenges arising from cross-cultural contexts, which shape their emotional experiences and influence their pedagogical practices.

Adopting a qualitative approach, the study draws on data collected through online interviews with EFL teachers to capture the complexity of teaching a foreign language in an unfamiliar environment. Thematic analysis of the data reveals that key ecological factors significantly affect teachers' well-being and creativity. In particular, the microsystem—especially student engagement—and the mesosystem—most notably institutional support—emerge as critical contributors to positive emotional experiences.

The findings highlight that supportive institutional environments and active student interaction foster positive emotions, which in turn enhance teachers' professional creativity and instructional effectiveness. Conversely, limited support and engagement may hinder both emotional well-being and creative teaching practices.

The study underscores the interconnected nature of emotional well-being and pedagogical innovation, demonstrating that positive emotions and creativity are mutually reinforcing in expatriate teaching contexts. It also emphasizes the need for institutional policies that support the well-being of transnational educators.

The research offers important implications for policymakers and educational administrators, particularly in designing supportive environments that enable expatriate teachers to thrive and contribute effectively to higher education.

Keywords: expatriate teachers, emotional well-being, professional creativity, EFL teaching, higher education, Türkiye, qualitative research, institutional support, ecological system theory

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF NONVERBAL STATE SYMBOLS OF THE TURKISH WORLD IN HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL CONTEXT: THE CASE OF THE TURKISH REPUBLICS OF THE USSR

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how the core symbols of the USSR state emblem were localized and re-signified in the state arms of the former Soviet Turkish republics. It shows that a single ideological template was transformed into distinct visual discourses through the incorporation of each republic's local products, geographical features, ordering of languages, and representations of economic structures—thus preserving ideological unity while producing regional diversity. The findings emphasize that these symbols should be read not in isolation but as an interacting morphemic chain that mutually generates meaning. The scope of the study is limited to the final (definitive) arms of the Soviet-era Turkish republics.

Keywords: Soviet heraldry, iconography, nonverbal signs, cultural memory, Socialist Turkish Republics, Turkish World.

THE EXPERIENCES OF RESEARCH ASSISTANTS IN TÜRKİYE THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF EIGHT DIMENSIONS OF WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the well-being of Research Assistants (RAs) in Türkiye within the framework of the Eight Dimensions of Well-Being: emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual. RAs occupy a distinctive yet often unstable position within the academic hierarchy, facing systemic challenges and personal aspirations. Adopting a phenomenological approach, the study draws on semi-structured interviews with 20 RAs from both public and foundation universities to explore their lived experiences.

The findings reveal that occupational and financial well-being are significantly constrained by excessive workloads, limited career progression opportunities, and economic instability. Emotional and intellectual dimensions are characterized by heightened anxiety, imposter syndrome, and insufficient mentorship, alongside strong academic motivation and engagement. Social and environmental experiences vary, with some participants benefiting from supportive and collaborative environments, while others report isolation, competition, and inadequate institutional infrastructure. Physical and spiritual well-being emerge as important sources of resilience, supported by cultural practices and community ties.

The study underscores that academic well-being is multidimensional, context-dependent, and shaped by sociocultural factors. It highlights the need for comprehensive institutional and policy-level interventions, including integrated well-being frameworks, strengthened mentorship systems, transparent workload management, and the incorporation of well-being indicators into academic quality assurance processes. The case of Türkiye illustrates that fostering sustainable academic environments requires context-sensitive approaches that address both structural and individual dimensions of well-being.

Keywords: research assistants, well-being, higher education, Türkiye, phenomenology, academic labor, mentorship, occupational stress, resilience

BEYOND DEFICIT NARRATIVES – TRAUMA AND COGNITION: EXAMINING AND UNPACKING ACES' INFLUENCE ON MATHEMATICAL LEARNING PROCESSES

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ABSTRACT

This presentation explores how trauma, particularly Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), disrupts the cognitive processes necessary for mathematical learning. Grounded in a trauma-informed conceptual framework and qualitative methodology, the study centers on African American community college students, examining how experiences of abuse, neglect, and chronic stress affect their academic engagement.

Findings indicate that trauma significantly impairs key cognitive functions, including attention, emotional regulation, and memory, particularly within the context of secondary mathematics education. These disruptions are not solely cognitive but also deeply emotional, often leading to avoidance behaviors, disengagement, and diminished self-efficacy.

Importantly, the study challenges deficit-based narratives surrounding academic underperformance in mathematics by highlighting the often-invisible cognitive and emotional impacts of trauma. It also emphasizes students' resilience and agency, demonstrating how participants draw on ecological assets—such as supportive peers, educators, and adaptive coping strategies—to sustain academic engagement.

The findings contribute to advancing equity in STEM education by advocating for trauma-informed and culturally responsive pedagogical practices. The study further offers actionable insights for educators and institutions seeking to create inclusive, healing-centered learning environments that support the academic success and well-being of all students.

Keywords: trauma-informed education, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), mathematics learning, cognitive processes, STEM education, educational equity, student resilience, community college students

ADDRESSING STEM TEACHER SHORTAGES AND RACIAL DISPARITIES: THE PROMISE OF AAMU TEACH AND HBCU EDUCATOR PREPARATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the AAMUTeach program at Alabama A\&M University, the largest Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in the state, as an innovative approach to addressing STEM teacher shortages and racial disparities in education. Supported by a $2 million grant and modeled after the national UTeach framework, the program enables undergraduate students to earn both a STEM degree and a teaching certification within four years.

Building on the university's strong legacy of producing Black STEM graduates, AAMUTeach incorporates targeted strategies such as financial support, dedicated advising, and culturally responsive pedagogy to attract and retain underrepresented students in teaching careers. Despite initial implementation challenges, the program demonstrated early success, enrolling 39 students in its first semester, of whom 84% identify as Black.

The findings suggest that integrated degree-certification pathways, combined with supportive institutional structures, can effectively promote participation in STEM teaching among historically underrepresented groups. The program not only addresses workforce shortages but also contributes to diversifying the teaching profession, which is critical for improving educational equity and student outcomes.

The study concludes that AAMUTeach represents a scalable and impactful model for strengthening the STEM teacher pipeline and advancing inclusive educational practices across the United States.

Keywords: STEM education, teacher shortages, HBCU, diversity in education, teacher preparation programs, AAMUTeach, educational equity, culturally responsive teaching

INTERROGATING THE SACRED: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF DISABILITY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the representation of disability in Hindu myths and scriptures and how these narratives shape social attitudes and cultural practices that marginalize individuals with disabilities. It argues that religious and mythological discourses have historically contributed to stigmatizing perceptions, influencing contemporary societal behaviors in Nepal and across South Asia.

Grounded in an autoethnographic framework, the research integrates personal lived experiences with broader cultural analysis to explore the intersection of self, society, and social justice. Complemented by the photovoice methodology, the study captures both visual and narrative dimensions of exclusion. The author's lived experiences—ranging from navigating physical barriers in education to pursuing academic and professional aspirations—serve as a lens for examining resistance against entrenched cultural and religious norms.

The findings reveal a dual dynamic: first, certain sacred texts and mythological narratives depict disability in demeaning or negative terms; second, these representations continue to shape exclusionary cultural practices in contemporary society. Through this perspective, the study emphasizes how deeply embedded belief systems influence attitudes toward disability and reinforce systemic inequality.

Situated within the field of cultural and disability studies, the research highlights the role of power, ideology, and religious discourse in constructing social realities. It advocates for critical engagement with traditional narratives and calls for a more inclusive reinterpretation of cultural texts to support social justice and equity for people with disabilities.

Keywords: disability studies, autoethnography, Hindu mythology, social justice, cultural practices, Nepal, marginalization, photovoice, inclusive discourse

ASSESSING PERIOD POVERTY AND MENSTRUAL ISSUES: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS FROM AN ONLINE SURVEY OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines period poverty as a critical global public health and social equity issue. Period poverty refers not only to the inability to afford menstrual hygiene products but also to limited access to menstrual health education and inadequate sanitation facilities. Affecting more than two billion menstruating individuals worldwide, it represents a significant barrier to health, dignity, and full participation in education and work.

The problem is particularly pronounced in low- and middle-income countries, where a lack of affordable products, social stigma, and insufficient infrastructure contribute to school absenteeism and reduced economic participation. However, period poverty is not confined to these contexts. In high-income countries, including the United States, socioeconomic inequalities continue to limit access to menstrual resources and education.

Recent research has begun to address period poverty among college students, yet significant gaps remain, particularly regarding minority groups. Students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) may face distinct challenges, including limited institutional support, financial constraints, and persistent cultural stigma surrounding menstruation. These barriers can negatively affect their educational experience, well-being, and academic success.

The study highlights the need for targeted interventions that address both material access and social perceptions of menstruation. It emphasizes the importance of inclusive policies, campus-based support systems, and education initiatives aimed at reducing stigma and improving menstrual health literacy.

Keywords: period poverty, menstrual health, public health, social equity, HBCUs, higher education, menstrual hygiene, health disparities, menstrual equity, student well-being, global health

BRIDGING THE GAP: COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED CONTEXTS OF NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

This study examines community-led educational approaches in Nepal as transformative responses to persistent inequalities faced by marginalized communities, particularly in remote and ethnolinguistically diverse regions. Despite policy reforms promoting inclusion, formal education systems often fail to reflect local cultural practices, linguistic identities, and contextual realities.

Drawing on qualitative case studies from Karnali and Madhesh provinces, the research utilizes in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participatory observations involving educators, community leaders, parents, and students. The findings demonstrate that grassroots initiatives—such as locally managed schools, mother-tongue instruction, and culturally responsive curricula—enable communities to actively shape educational practices and reclaim ownership of learning processes.

These community-led models promote participation, accountability, and the integration of indigenous knowledge, gender sensitivity, and social justice perspectives. By fostering dialogic and contextually grounded pedagogies, they challenge the limitations of standardized education systems. However, such initiatives face constraints, including limited institutional recognition, resource scarcity, and misalignment with national education frameworks.

Framed within critical pedagogy and postcolonial theory, the study advocates for a shift toward decentralized and participatory education systems that recognize marginalized communities as co-creators of knowledge. It concludes with policy recommendations for integrating community-led practices into national education planning, curriculum development, and teacher training. These efforts are essential for achieving meaningful learning outcomes and advancing inclusive and equitable education in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4.

Keywords: community-led education, marginalized communities, transformative pedagogy, Nepal, inclusive education, indigenous knowledge, educational equity, SDG 4

EXPLORING DISCRIMINATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS: PERSPECTIVES OF SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS IN NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

This study examines experiences of discrimination in English language classrooms from the perspectives of secondary-level students. Adopting a narrative inquiry approach, the research explores students' personal experiences through in-depth, face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Four students from two government schools in Kathmandu were purposively selected. The interviews allowed participants to share detailed accounts, while follow-up probes provided deeper insight into their perceptions and observations. Data were analyzed thematically, identifying recurring patterns and key issues related to discrimination.

The findings reveal multiple forms of unequal treatment in English classrooms. Participants reported perceived teacher favoritism based on gender, academic performance, and subjective biases, which negatively affected their motivation and classroom engagement. Discrimination linked to physical appearance, skin color, and English language proficiency emerged as a significant concern, contributing to reduced self-esteem and a weakened sense of belonging. Peer interactions also reflected social hierarchies, leading to exclusion and marginalization, particularly for students from less privileged backgrounds.

The study highlights the need to foster inclusive and supportive classroom environments where all learners are valued equally. It underscores the importance of teacher training programs that promote cultural sensitivity, awareness of implicit bias, and inclusive pedagogical practices. Additionally, the integration of gender-inclusive curricula and the encouragement of positive gender socialization are recommended. By centering students' voices, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of discrimination in English language teaching (ELT) contexts. The findings offer practical insights for policymakers and educators seeking to reduce inequality and promote more equitable and inclusive English language classrooms.

Keywords: discrimination in education, English language teaching (ELT), student perspectives, inclusive classrooms, teacher bias, educational equity, Nepal, narrative inquiry

MOVING AGAINST NEO-LIBERAL MENTALITY IN EDUCATION: ELT TEACHERS' CONTRIBUTION TO BUILDING A MORE HUMANE WORLD

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ABSTRACT

Recent global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing conflicts, have raised critical questions about the role of education in fostering morally responsible and socially caring citizens, particularly in contrast to neoliberal and market-driven educational paradigms. This narrative inquiry explores how English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers integrate character-building elements into their instructional practices. Grounded in non-affirmative educational theory, the study examines how educators balance competency-based approaches with the incorporation of artistic, ethical, and caring dimensions in language teaching.

A total of thirty ELT teachers participated in the study. Using narrative frames as a data collection tool, participants reflected on how they embed moral and artistic components into their teaching to influence students' personal development, critical thinking, and intercultural awareness. The data were analyzed through thematic analysis, revealing that teachers employ diverse strategies to promote empathy, creativity, and ethical reflection alongside linguistic competence.

The findings highlight the potential of ELT to contribute to the development of culturally sensitive and socially responsible individuals. The study underscores the importance of viewing teaching content not merely as a means of knowledge transmission but as a tool for holistic student development. It offers implications for educators and policymakers, emphasizing the need to integrate values-based education into language teaching practices.

Keywords: English Language Teaching (ELT), ELT teachers, character education, moral development, narrative inquiry, non-affirmative theory, critical thinking

BEYOND HUMOR: ANALYZING CODE-SWITCHING AS A REFLECTION OF EGYPTIAN MODERNISM IN 'EL KEBEER AWY'

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ABSTRACT

This research provides a critical sociolinguistic analysis of code-switching, defined as the purposeful alternation between two or more language varieties within a single discourse. As a core linguistic practice, code-switching serves as a powerful indicator of speakers' personal identities and their dynamic relationships with culture. For university staff, understanding this phenomenon is essential; the presentation synthesizes research exploring the effects of code-switching on teaching, learning, and cultural integration within diverse higher education environments.

The case study then shifts to the Egyptian television series ElKebeer Awy, where code-switching is employed as an artistic tool to negotiate social identity. This media analysis demonstrates how different segments of Egyptian society use code-switching to engage with global culture, highlighting tensions between tradition and modernity as well as their reconciliation.

The analysis draws on Poplack's (1980) categorization and Giles' (1979) Accommodation Theory to explain the functions of linguistic shifts, while incongruity theory accounts for the humor generated. Findings reveal the frequent use of intra-sentential switching and challenge the reductive view that code-switching merely reflects bilingual fluency.

Ultimately, the study positions code-switching as a crucial indicator of cultural development and identity formation. It offers practical implications for higher education by encouraging educators to reconsider linguistic competence beyond monolingual norms, adopt inclusive pedagogical practices that validate multilingual identities, and strategically employ code-switching to enhance comprehension in diverse learning environments.

Keywords: Code-switching, sociolinguistics, linguistic identity, inclusive pedagogy, Egyptian media; Accommodation Theory, intra-sentential switching, cultural integration

THE INTERPLAY OF LEARNING AND FORGETTING CURVES: IMPLICATIONS FOR LONG-TERM KNOWLEDGE RETENTION

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ABSTRACT

Learning and forgetting constitute interdependent processes that shape how knowledge is acquired, consolidated, and applied. While learning curves demonstrate progressive improvement through repeated practice, forgetting curves reveal the decline of memory when reinforcement is absent. This study examines their interaction and highlights implications for optimizing educational and training practices. It emphasizes that structured revision, reinforcement mechanisms, and spaced repetition play a critical role in strengthening long-term memory retention. Moreover, active learning approaches—such as retrieval practice and problem-based engagement—enhance not only knowledge retention but also adaptability and transferable skills.

The research adopts a review-based framework supported by both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data, including experimental designs, surveys, and recall assessments, evaluate retention outcomes and intervention effectiveness. Qualitative insights from interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations provide a deeper understanding of learners' experiences, perceptions, and challenges in applying evidence-based memory strategies. Together, these approaches offer comprehensive evidence for reducing forgetting and promoting sustainable learning.

In the Nepali educational context, rote memorization remains prevalent, with limited adoption of cognitive science principles or systematic instructional interventions. Despite strong international evidence supporting spaced repetition and active recall, Nepal lacks sufficient empirical research, digital tools, and policy support. Addressing these gaps can significantly enhance academic performance, vocational training outcomes, and lifelong learning capacities. The findings underscore the importance of curriculum reform, structured revision cycles, and technological integration to align the education system with global standards of effective and sustainable learning.

Keywords: learning curve, forgetting curve, spaced repetition, active recall, skill development, memory retention, sustainable learning, Nepal education system

DRIVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN UKRAINE: THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY – SMART CITY PARTNERSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

Strategic collaboration between academic institutions and municipal authorities plays a critical role in addressing complex urban challenges related to public health and environmental safety. This study examines a 15-year partnership between Drohobych Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University and the Drohobych City Institute, situated within the framework of Drohobych's Smart City strategy and its 2021 sustainable development agenda. The collaboration demonstrates a model in which community needs drive scientific research, and evidence-based findings directly inform local governance.

Between 2014 and 2024, the partnership implemented applied research initiatives, including systematic monitoring of private well water across more than 40 rural settlements. The findings revealed significant environmental risks, particularly nitrate pollution exceeding permissible levels and recurring bacteriological contamination. These results provided a scientific foundation for targeted public health interventions and awareness campaigns. The collaboration has also fostered academic exchange through numerous international conferences and strengthened the role of the university as a "living laboratory" for student engagement and community-oriented research.

Building on this foundation, a 2025 grant-funded project introduces AI-enhanced biosensors for real-time water quality monitoring, marking a shift from periodic sampling to automated systems. Integrated into the city's digital governance infrastructure, this system enables rapid response, data-driven decision-making, and public transparency through accessible water quality information. Overall, the Drohobych model illustrates how academic–municipal partnerships, supported by innovative technologies, can advance resilient, sustainable, and human-centered urban development.

Keywords: academic–municipal collaboration, smart city, water quality monitoring, public health, environmental safety, biosensors, artificial intelligence, sustainable urban development, Ukraine

THE ROLE OF HUMANITIES IN SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY: INSIGHTS FROM THE LINGUISTIC ENCODING OF WEATHER IN THE TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF UAE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of intangible cultural heritage, particularly traditional knowledge embedded in language, in supporting climate change mitigation and resilience. While global frameworks such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the COP28 Emirates Declaration recognize the value of traditional knowledge, research within the humanities remains limited, particularly in providing empirical, context-specific examples.

This paper contributes to this emerging field by analyzing the linguistic encoding of weather perceptions in Emirati Arabic, where cloudy and rainy conditions are positively evaluated as "good weather," in contrast to their negative connotations in languages such as English. Drawing on linguistic and philological evidence, the study argues that these evaluations reflect adaptive cultural knowledge shaped by generations living in arid desert environments.

The findings highlight how language functions as a medium for transmitting environmentally grounded knowledge and shaping perceptions of climate-related phenomena. This perspective underscores the importance of integrating intangible knowledge systems into broader sustainability discussions, as they influence both attitudes and behaviors toward environmental conditions. By situating linguistic practices within a wider interdisciplinary framework, the study demonstrates their relevance to contemporary climate challenges and intercultural dialogue.

The paper concludes that incorporating insights from the humanities, particularly linguistics, is essential for developing a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability. Such approaches can enrich global climate discourse by foregrounding culturally embedded ways of knowing and fostering adaptive strategies informed by long-term human–environment interactions.

Keywords: traditional knowledge, intangible cultural heritage, climate change, sustainability, Emirati Arabic, linguistic anthropology, environmental perception

EXPLORING NEPALESE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PTE TEST IN IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The Pearson Test of English (PTE) is a globally recognized, high-standard assessment of English language proficiency, widely used for university admissions and migration purposes. In recent years, it has emerged as a standardized tool for evaluating English language skills. In this context, the present study seeks to address the following research questions: How can the PTE test contribute to improving English language learning? In what ways does the PTE assess students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills within a single integrated test?

The study aims to explore teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the PTE test in enhancing English language proficiency. It adopts a phenomenological research design, which focuses on understanding individuals' lived experiences of a particular phenomenon. This qualitative study involves language instructors who teach PTE preparation courses at various language institutions in the Rupandehi district. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews to capture participants' perspectives.

The findings suggest that the PTE test provides students with a comprehensive understanding of their language proficiency. It supports learners in improving their overall English competence by emphasizing key linguistic components such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, thereby facilitating progression toward higher levels of proficiency.

Keywords: Pearson Test of English (PTE), language proficiency assessment, English language learning, standardized testing, teacher perceptions, integrated language skills

IMPACT OF INTEGRATING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS (LKS) INTO THE BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM AS A STRATEGY FOR DECOLONIZING EDUCATION AND ENHANCING STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines senior secondary school students' awareness, engagement, and perceptions of Local Knowledge Systems (LKS) integrated into the basic education curriculum as a strategy for decolonizing education and strengthening cultural identity in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Employing a descriptive survey design, the study sampled 243 students from three purposively selected education zones and twelve schools that incorporate indigenous knowledge into subjects such as social studies, cultural and creative arts, and civic education.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from relevant literature and validated by experts in curriculum studies and educational measurement. The instrument demonstrated strong reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86). It assessed students' understanding of LKS, participation in culturally grounded learning activities, sense of cultural identity, and perceptions of learning relevance and motivation. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were used for analysis.

Findings indicate that students exhibit moderate to high awareness of LKS and actively engage in culturally relevant classroom and community-based activities. Participants reported enhanced cultural identity and pride, as well as increased motivation and perceived relevance of their learning experiences. The results underscore the importance of systematically integrating LKS into the curriculum to promote culturally responsive pedagogy, support decolonization efforts, and improve student engagement.

The study concludes that LKS integration significantly enhances students' cultural identity, engagement, and the relevance of education. It recommends that policymakers and school administrators support this integration through targeted teacher training, resource provision, and curriculum reform.

Keywords: Local Knowledge Systems, culturally responsive pedagogy, decolonizing education, cultural identity, student engagement, Nigeria, curriculum integration

PRESERVATION OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE IN COMMUNITY LIBRARIES: LESSONS FROM LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Indigenous Knowledge (IK) as a form of locally embedded, culturally practiced knowledge acquired through lived experience, informal experimentation, and observation. As an oral and largely uncodified system, IK remains dynamic but is also vulnerable to erosion and loss over time. Consequently, libraries, as key custodians of knowledge, are positioned to play a crucial role in the preservation and dissemination of IK for future generations. The study further highlights the influence of gender stratification on IK, noting that knowledge domains are often differentiated, with women and men possessing distinct areas of expertise.

The research aims to identify strategies for the collection, preservation, and authentication of IK within libraries, as well as to explore indigenous communities' perspectives on these practices. A qualitative research approach was adopted, with data collected from indigenous knowledge holders and librarians in community libraries in Limpopo Province.

The findings reveal that although librarians recognize the importance of preserving IK, they face significant challenges, particularly the lack of clear policies and institutional frameworks. Indigenous participants expressed conditional support for preservation, emphasizing that certain knowledge should be restricted or classified due to cultural sensitivities. The study underscores the need for culturally responsive and ethically grounded preservation strategies. It recommends the development of explicit IK collection policies and stronger collaboration between libraries and indigenous communities to ensure sustainable and respectful knowledge management.

Keywords: Indigenous knowledge, knowledge preservation, libraries, cultural heritage, indigenous people, Limpopo Province, knowledge management

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AS A TOOL FOR ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE (RAPE) IN HOUSE ROBBERIES: PATHWAYS TO SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

The intersection of sexual violence and property crime poses profound challenges to community safety and social stability in South Africa, particularly in rural areas where house robberies often escalate into rape. This qualitative study applies criminological theory and locally grounded evidence to examine the socio-environmental factors that facilitate such offenses. Drawing on community narratives, crime statistics, and lived experiences, the research reveals how patterns of guardianship, environmental vulnerability, and offender motivation converge in the commission of rape during house robberies.

By foregrounding local knowledge, the study underscores the need for prevention strategies that are responsive to cultural contexts, community structures, and indigenous safety practices. Strengthening local capacity to identify risks, protect vulnerable populations, and collaborate effectively with law enforcement is presented as a critical pathway toward enhancing social resilience. Ultimately, the paper argues that advancing locally grounded knowledge is essential not only for reducing sexual violence in the context of property crime but also for fostering safer, more equitable, and sustainable communities.

Keywords: sexual violence, property crime, house robbery, South Africa, rural communities, criminological theory, community safety, local knowledge, social resilience

PRACTICE OF KAILASH CIVILIZATION EXPLORING INNER LANDSCAPE OF WOMEN EDUCATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN KAMALI

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the lived experiences of female educators in higher education institutions across Karnali Province, Nepal, through the symbolic and cultural lens of the Kailash Civilization. Drawing on the rich spiritual and philosophical traditions of the Himalayas, the metaphor of Mount Kailash is employed as a conceptual framework for understanding resilience, transformation, and pedagogical innovation. The research investigates how cultural identity, spirituality, and gender dynamics intersect in the personal and professional lives of women working in geographically remote and socially marginalized contexts.

Adopting a qualitative narrative inquiry approach combined with indigenous storytelling methods, the study captures both individual and collective experiences. These narratives reveal educators not only as knowledge providers but also as custodians of culture, agents of social transformation, and sources of hope. The symbolic "pilgrimage" toward Mount Kailash represents their journeys of empowerment, healing, and professional growth.

Findings indicate that participants face multifaceted challenges, including institutional patriarchy, restrictive social norms, and limited access to professional development. Despite these constraints, cultural and spiritual heritage emerge as significant sources of resilience and strength. Teaching is thus redefined as a holistic, value-based practice rooted in compassion, purpose, and community knowledge systems.

By integrating local epistemologies with global feminist and decolonial perspectives, the study proposes a culturally grounded model of transformative professional development. It highlights the need for inclusive, context-sensitive, and spirituality-informed approaches in teacher education and leadership.

Keywords: Kailash civilization, transformative professional development, indigenous knowledge, feminist pedagogy, spirituality in education, female educators, narrative inquiry, cultural identity, decolonial theory, Nepal

COMPROMISE AND CONSENSUS: FOSTERING CIVIC ATTITUDES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of teaching Political Science in fostering civic values through the development of compromise and consensus as core political processes. While classroom instruction often prioritizes theoretical knowledge, this paper argues for a stronger emphasis on classroom dynamics to cultivate civic attitudes and democratic virtues among students.

Recognizing that disagreement and conflict are inherent in political life across all societies, the study positions compromise and consensus as essential mechanisms for resolving disputes, not only in democratic contexts but also across diverse political systems. Drawing on normative political theory, the paper highlights the importance of equipping students with the skills necessary to navigate complex political interactions and reach constructive agreements.

The study proposes a pedagogical framework that integrates both theoretical understanding and practical application. Specifically, it identifies teaching strategies such as simulated debates, case studies, and collaborative learning methods as effective tools for enabling students to engage with real-world scenarios involving conflict resolution. These approaches encourage critical reflection, negotiation, and the ability to balance competing perspectives.

The findings suggest that actively practicing compromise and consensus-building enhances students' civic competencies and prepares them to contribute to more inclusive and cooperative societies. The study emphasizes that developing such skills is essential for strengthening civic culture and aligns with broader global goals, including the promotion of peace, justice, and strong institutions.

Keywords: political education, civic skills, compromise, consensus, diversity, pluralism, tolerance, conflict resolution, higher education, political science, teaching methods

INTEGRATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGIES INTO THE PROCESS OF TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the application of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in teaching Russian as a foreign language (RFL), with a particular focus on the development of intercultural communicative competence. It analyzes the potential of modern AI platforms to simulate authentic communicative contexts, adapt instructional materials, and personalize the learning process.

Drawing on experimental implementation in RFL courses, the findings demonstrate that AI tools enhance both teaching effectiveness and learner engagement. AI-supported systems facilitate the modeling of real-life communication scenarios, enable individualized learning pathways, and promote active intercultural interaction. Statistical results indicate significant improvements in students' intercultural competence, confirming the effectiveness of AI integration in language education.

In addition to pedagogical benefits, the study highlights how AI technologies support instructors by simplifying lesson preparation and increasing instructional flexibility. However, it also emphasizes the importance of ethical considerations and the need for a critical approach to AI use in intercultural education, particularly in terms of authenticity, bias, and data usage.

The study concludes that AI holds substantial potential for advancing foreign language education by making it more accessible, adaptive, and engaging. Nevertheless, effective implementation requires the development of robust methodological frameworks tailored to the specific goals of RFL teaching and intercultural competence development.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, Russian as a foreign language, intercultural communicative competence, language education, personalized learning, digital pedagogy, AI in education, adaptive learning

AI-DRIVEN STORYTELLING IN NEW MEDIA EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in media and communication practices, with particular emphasis on its pedagogical implications in higher education. It explores how AI-driven storytelling reshapes learning environments by fostering co-creative processes in which students and algorithms collaboratively construct narratives. Drawing on practical experiences from a third-year undergraduate course, *Film Practices in New Media*, the study highlights how tools such as ChatGPT and DALL·E support idea generation, visualization, and narrative development.

The findings indicate that AI integration enhances creativity, personalized learning, and critical reflection while promoting media literacy and cross-cultural awareness. However, the use of AI in storytelling also reveals important challenges, including issues of cultural misrepresentation, algorithmic bias, authorship, and unequal access to digital technologies. These challenges underscore the need for critical engagement with AI tools rather than their unreflective adoption.

The study argues that the effective integration of AI in education requires a balanced approach that combines innovation with ethical responsibility. Students should be equipped not only with the skills to use AI technologies but also with the ability to critically evaluate their underlying assumptions and societal implications.

Overall, the research contributes to ongoing discussions on the role of AI in education and media, emphasizing the importance of ethical, inclusive, and reflective practices in preparing future media professionals for an increasingly algorithm-driven communication landscape.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, AI storytelling, higher education, media studies, digital pedagogy, algorithmic bias, media literacy, creative learning, new media education

THE ROLE OF AI AND THE METAVERSE IN REVOLUTIONIZING HEALTHCARE AND MEDICAL TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Metaverse technologies to transform healthcare and medical education, with a particular focus on medical imaging. It evaluates and compares AI-based, Metaverse-based, and hybrid models to identify the most reliable and effective techniques for improving diagnostic accuracy and healthcare delivery. By integrating advanced computational methods, the research aims to enhance model robustness and support high-quality decision-making in clinical contexts.

The study highlights the role of computer vision algorithms in analyzing large-scale medical imaging datasets to detect diseases and predict future health conditions. Such models can uncover complex patterns and facilitate early diagnosis, including the identification of cancer risks years in advance. Evaluation metrics such as accuracy, reliability, and precision are emphasized as essential for ensuring safe deployment in clinical environments.

Furthermore, the research examines the integration of AI with Metaverse technologies, including augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), to enhance medical education. These immersive tools enable interactive learning environments, improving training outcomes and bridging the gap between theory and practice.

The findings suggest that combining AI and extended reality technologies can significantly improve both healthcare delivery and medical training. This integrated approach has the potential to reduce diagnostic errors, enhance predictive capabilities, and support innovation in healthcare systems.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, metaverse, medical imaging, image processing, healthcare innovation, computer vision, deep learning, virtual reality, augmented reality

MACHINE OR HUMAN? THE QUESTION OF BIOPOLITICS IN FOUCAULT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the transformation of power, control, and surveillance systems in the context of new media and emerging digital technologies. Drawing on theoretical frameworks from Foucault, Baudrillard, and later thinkers such as Agamben, Esposito, and Hardt and Negri, the research explores how modern mechanisms of governance have evolved into more transparent and pervasive forms through digital infrastructures. While control systems historically operated within institutions such as prisons, the military, and factories, new media technologies have extended surveillance into all aspects of everyday life.

Central to the analysis is Foucault's concept of biopolitics, which highlights how power regulates populations through the management of bodies, health, and life processes. In this framework, individuals are often conceptualized as "biological machines," governed through data-driven mechanisms. However, the study also emphasizes the potential for resistance inherent in human subjectivity, challenging the notion that individuals are fully subsumed by technological systems.

Empirically, the research incorporates qualitative data from focus group interviews with five software experts working in different sectors. Their perspectives are analyzed in relation to the human–machine and body–subject dichotomies. The findings indicate that, rather than becoming passive or mechanized entities, individuals continue to develop adaptive and collective forms of resistance against dominant technological and surveillance systems.

The study concludes that although digital technologies intensify control mechanisms, they simultaneously enable new forms of agency and resistance, reinforcing the dynamic relationship between power and subjectivity in contemporary society.

Keywords: biopolitics, surveillance, power systems, new media, Foucault, digital control, resistance, human–machine relations

WHOSE CREATION? WHOSE FAULT?" : AN EXAMINATION OF THE COPYRIGHT AND LEGAL LIABILITY LANDSCAPE IN AI-GENERATED TRANSLATED CONTENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TRANSLATION PROFESSION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the legal, ethical, and professional implications of artificial intelligence (AI)–driven translation systems integrated into digital communication platforms. With the widespread use of Large Language Models (LLMs) in automated translation, these technologies have enhanced accessibility and facilitated global interaction; however, they have also introduced significant challenges.

Focusing on key legal dilemmas—particularly copyright and liability—the study analyzes how AI-generated translation errors raise complex issues of responsibility. The absence of clear legal frameworks assigning accountability for AI outputs creates critical gaps in governance and ethical oversight. Additionally, the research highlights the impact of AI on the translation profession, including the devaluation of human expertise, ambiguity in liability, and increased ethical pressure on translators.

The findings emphasize that while AI systems offer efficiency and scalability, their limitations require careful regulation and oversight. Ensuring linguistic accuracy, intellectual property protection, and professional integrity necessitates a balanced approach that integrates human expertise with technological capabilities.

The study concludes by calling for comprehensive legal frameworks and collaborative models that address the challenges of AI translation while safeguarding quality and accountability in digital communication.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, machine translation, legal liability, copyright, digital communication, translation studies, translation ethics, AI-generated translation

AI-POWERED TRANSLATION: BRIDGING LANGUAGES WITH TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in language translation and communication, particularly for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). As AI-driven tools increasingly facilitate global communication, they offer significant potential to enhance accessibility and civic engagement by reducing language barriers in sectors such as healthcare, education, and public services. However, these technologies also present critical risks related to accuracy, reliability, and equitable access.

The paper explores the role of AI in translation, language learning, and natural language processing (NLP), highlighting its capacity to enable real-time, cross-cultural communication and personalized learning experiences. Special attention is given to the application of AI translation tools in government services, where they can improve access to information and participation for LEP populations. At the same time, the study identifies key limitations, including translation inaccuracies, ethical concerns, and implementation challenges within institutional settings.

Drawing on stakeholder perspectives, the study evaluates both the benefits and drawbacks of AI-driven language solutions, emphasizing the need for careful integration and continuous improvement. It argues that while AI technologies have transformative potential, their effectiveness depends on addressing existing limitations and ensuring equitable access.

The study concludes that AI can become a powerful tool for enhancing communication and inclusion if supported by responsible implementation, policy development, and ongoing evaluation.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, language translation, limited English proficiency, NLP, accessibility, public services, digital inclusion, communication technology

SUSTAINABLE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the use of urban furniture located on the Halit Aydın Campus of Istanbul Aydın University. The scope of the research includes entrance gates, seating units, shading systems, litter bins, lighting elements, signage, paving surfaces, handrails, planters, sculptures, and other artistic features across the campus. The study employed on-site identification, direct observation, and photographic documentation as its primary methodology.

The findings indicate that the design and functionality of urban furniture across the campus require significant improvement. Several functional and physical issues were identified, including non-ergonomic seating, insufficient shading, inadequate directional signage and nighttime lighting, and slippery paving surfaces. These shortcomings suggest that the existing arrangements do not adequately meet user needs and fall short of established principles of comfort, usability, quality, and sustainability in campus design.

The study underscores the importance of user-centered and sustainable design approaches in enhancing the effectiveness of urban furniture within higher education environments.

Keywords: urban furniture, campus design, ergonomics, sustainability, user experience, public space design, university campus, environmental design

INTEGRATION OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, ECOSYSTEM AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE IN SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of local knowledge in promoting sustainable landscape design by integrating ecological, cultural, and social dimensions. Sustainability in landscape architecture extends beyond environmental considerations to include the knowledge and practices developed by local communities over generations, such as water management, plant selection, and traditional spatial arrangements.

From an ecological perspective, incorporating native plant species, seasonal dynamics, and site-specific soil conditions enhances resilience and resource efficiency, particularly in rapidly urbanizing regions facing environmental stress. Local knowledge offers practical strategies for maintaining ecological balance without depleting natural resources.

Culturally, landscapes serve as carriers of identity and collective memory. Traditional garden forms, symbolic plant usage, and spatial patterns contribute to a sense of belonging and continuity, reflecting everyday practices and deeper cultural narratives.

Socially, locally informed landscape designs foster community engagement and strengthen social cohesion. Public spaces shaped by local values not only provide recreational functions but also support interaction, dialogue, and inclusivity.

The study concludes that integrating local knowledge into landscape design broadens the concept of sustainability by combining environmental stewardship with cultural preservation and social well-being. Such an approach enables the creation of resilient, meaningful, and adaptable environments capable of addressing contemporary challenges.

Keywords: sustainable landscape design, local knowledge, ecological resilience, cultural identity, social sustainability, urban environments, environmental design

THE ROLE OF ADOPTING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN IN PROMOTING URBAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the potential role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in advancing sustainable urban development, particularly in relation to Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11), which focuses on inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities. Addressing global challenges such as urbanization, environmental degradation, and socio-economic inequality requires innovative approaches in architectural design and urban planning.

The research explores how AI can enhance architectural design processes by improving efficiency, supporting sustainable housing solutions, and enabling data-driven decision-making. Using a grounded theory approach, supported by a semi-structured questionnaire and a descriptive analysis of existing literature, the study evaluates the contribution of AI to sustainable urban development.

Findings indicate that AI can significantly accelerate design processes, optimize resource use, and support the development of affordable and environmentally sustainable housing and transportation systems. Additionally, AI tools can facilitate the virtual reconstruction and preservation of cultural heritage, as well as the analysis and mitigation of environmental impacts in urban areas. These capabilities contribute directly to achieving the objectives of SDG 11.

The study concludes that integrating AI into architectural design and education can enhance sustainability-oriented practices and prepare future professionals to address complex urban challenges. It recommends embedding AI technologies into both theoretical and practical aspects of architectural education to support innovation and sustainable development.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, architectural design, sustainable urban development, architecture, SDG 11, smart cities, urban planning, environmental sustainability

EVALUATION FOR CHILDREN HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN CRITERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate spatial design criteria that are important in the design of children's hospital environments. Drawing on the work of Cooper Marcus and Francis on child-centered healthcare design, the study identifies key considerations for effective spatial planning. In this context, criteria such as accessibility, safety, ease of orientation, availability of play areas, and the integration of natural elements are emphasized, as they address the physical, psychological, and social needs of child users.

The identified criteria were applied to case studies including Respublika Clinic No. 9 Children's Hospital and Karayev Children's Hospital in Azerbaijan, as well as international examples such as Lurie Children's Hospital, Pittsburgh Children's Hospital, Rady Children's Hospital, Randall Children's Hospital, Boston Children's Hospital, and Gold Coast hospitals. The evaluation was conducted using on-site identification, observation, and photographic documentation.

The findings indicate that fundamental criteria such as accessibility, wayfinding, and safety are largely overlooked in the outdoor design of children's hospitals in Azerbaijan. While green and shaded areas are present, they are often unstructured and insufficiently planned. Additionally, dedicated play and recreation areas for children are largely absent.

The study concludes that user-centered and child-focused design principles should be more systematically integrated into the planning and landscaping of children's hospital environments.

Keywords: children's hospitals, environmental design, spatial design, healthcare architecture, child-centered design, healing, accessibility, wayfinding, play areas, landscape design

BEYOND TECHNOLOGY: LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AS A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

This study critiques the dominant technocentric approach to sustainability in contemporary architectural research, arguing that reliance on measurable criteria—such as energy performance and standardized systems—fails to capture the complex relationship between design, culture, and community. It proposes local knowledge as a critical framework for advancing more holistic and context-sensitive sustainable architecture.

The analysis is structured around three interconnected dimensions. First, ecological adaptation highlights how vernacular practices—such as passive cooling, courtyard configurations, and the use of locally available materials—demonstrate historically resilient and resource-efficient responses to environmental conditions. These strategies remain relevant for addressing current climate challenges. Second, cultural continuity emphasizes that traditional architectural forms and spatial practices function as carriers of collective memory and identity, reinforcing a sense of belonging across generations. Third, social resilience focuses on participatory design processes that incorporate community voices, fostering inclusivity, strengthening social ties, and enhancing long-term sustainability.

The study concludes that sustainability should be understood not merely as a technical goal but as an ongoing dialogue between global innovations and local wisdom. By integrating ecological intelligence, cultural identity, and social agency, architectural practice can produce environments that are resilient, contextually responsive, and meaningful to their users.

Keywords: sustainable architectural design, local knowledge, vernacular design, climate-responsive architecture, ecological adaptation, cultural continuity, social resilience, contextual design, built environment

THE RIGHT TO A CLEAN AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT IN LITHUANIA: GUARANTEES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of ecotourism in promoting the right to a clean and safe environment through the perspectives of key stakeholders. Adopting a qualitative approach, the research draws on semi-structured interviews with 30 legal experts, including lawyers from ecotourism associations, policymakers, environmental advocates, and community-based practitioners. Data collected over a three-month period were analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to environmental rights and sustainability practices.

The findings indicate that ecotourism activities significantly enhance environmental awareness and conservation efforts. Recreational practices such as guided nature walks, wildlife observation, and eco-friendly accommodation were found to foster both environmental knowledge and a sense of responsibility among tourists. The study highlights three central themes: the educational impact of ecotourism in promoting sustainable behavior; the critical role of community engagement in aligning tourism with local ecological and cultural contexts; and the importance of integrating policy and practice through regulatory frameworks and certification systems to strengthen sustainability outcomes.

Furthermore, the involvement of local communities emerged as essential for ensuring equitable benefit distribution and long-term environmental stewardship. The study concludes that ecotourism can serve as a practical mechanism for advancing environmental rights by linking education, community participation, and policy implementation. It recommends the development of standardized guidelines and best practices to maximize ecological and social benefits.

Keywords: ecotourism, environmental rights, right to a clean and safe environment, sustainability, community engagement, environmental awareness, recreational activities

INTEGRATING WILDLIFE INTO FOREST EUROPE PROCESS: A CRITICAL GAP IN FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the challenges of incorporating wildlife considerations into Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) frameworks. Contemporary SFM approaches extend beyond timber production, aiming to balance ecological, economic, and social functions while preserving ecosystem integrity. However, current evaluation systems, particularly the Forest Europe framework, remain limited in explicitly addressing wildlife as a central component.

Although existing criteria indirectly relate to wildlife through various indicators, none directly target wildlife conservation, health, or diversity. Even within the biodiversity criterion, wildlife is insufficiently and indirectly represented, revealing a significant gap in current SFM practices. This limitation weakens the effectiveness of forest management strategies in maintaining ecological balance and long-term sustainability.

The study argues that wildlife should be recognized as a primary dimension of SFM rather than a subsidiary aspect. Given that human activities significantly influence wildlife populations, their inclusion is essential for evaluating forest ecosystem resilience. Furthermore, integrating the economic value of both living and non-living wildlife components is crucial for aligning SFM with broader sustainability policies.

The paper concludes by proposing the inclusion of "wildlife health and diversity" as a distinct indicator or sub-criterion within the Forest Europe framework. Such integration would strengthen policy-making processes and promote more comprehensive, balanced, and sustainable forest management decisions at the international level.

Keywords: sustainable forest management, wildlife conservation, Forest Europe, biodiversity, ecosystem integrity, environmental policy, sustainability indicators

THE EFFECTS OF THE NEW METROPOLITAN LAW NO. 6360 ON FOREST VILLAGES AND VILLAGERS: THE EXAMPLE OF AYDIN PROVINCE IN TÜRKİYE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the socio-economic and administrative impacts of Law No. 6360, which transformed villages into neighborhoods, focusing on forest villages in Aydın Province. The research combines a literature review of the legal and administrative framework with empirical data collected through a survey of local residents. The survey assessed participants' demographic characteristics, their awareness of the law, and perceived changes in village life following its implementation.

The findings indicate that the law has positively influenced access to public services and infrastructure. However, it has also generated challenges, particularly in administrative processes and the loss of villages' legal identity. While improvements in social and economic conditions were observed overall, limitations persist in administrative efficiency and local economic autonomy.

Additionally, the results reveal that villagers faced difficulties in adapting to the new system, mainly due to insufficient information and limited awareness of the legal changes. These challenges highlight the need for more inclusive transition strategies and effective communication between authorities and local communities.

The study concludes that Law No. 6360 has produced multifaceted impacts—both beneficial and problematic—on rural life. It contributes to a deeper understanding of how legal and administrative reforms affect rural communities and underscores the importance of balancing service provision with local governance needs.

Keywords: Law No. 6360, forest villages, rural transformation, village-to-neighborhood transition, local governance, Aydın Province, socio-economic impact, local administration

ECOTOURISM AND TERRITORIAL RESILIENCE: INSIGHTS FROM ESSAOUIRA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of ecotourism in strengthening territorial resilience in the context of climate change, social vulnerability, and economic uncertainty. Focusing on the UNESCO-listed coastal city of Essaouira in Morocco, the research explores how ecotourism contributes to adaptive capacity, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion. Essaouira represents a unique setting where diverse ecosystems and rich intangible cultural heritage intersect, providing a strong foundation for sustainable tourism initiatives.

Drawing on qualitative fieldwork, interviews, and policy analysis, the study evaluates local ecotourism practices against key resilience principles, including adaptability, inclusion, and environmental integrity. Findings highlight that initiatives such as eco-lodges utilizing renewable energy, community-based tourism led by local cooperatives, and sustainable recreational activities contribute to economic diversification and empower marginalized groups, particularly women and youth. These practices foster environmental awareness while reinforcing community participation and cultural preservation.

The study also situates Essaouira within broader global shifts toward regenerative and sustainable tourism in the post-COVID context. It argues that ecotourism extends beyond an economic strategy, functioning as a governance tool that promotes long-term socio-ecological resilience and place-based solidarity.

The findings underscore the importance of adopting a systemic perspective that integrates environmental, social, and cultural dimensions. Essaouira offers a transferable model for coastal regions seeking resilient and sustainable development pathways in the Anthropocene.

Keywords: ecotourism, territorial resilience, sustainable tourism, Morocco, local development, community-based tourism, environmental sustainability

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN THE SPORTS INDUSTRY: NEGATIVE IMPACTS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF GREEN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the environmental impact of the sports industry within the broader framework of sustainable development, emphasizing environmental sustainability as a critical challenge. As global demand for sports activities increases, the sector contributes significantly to environmental degradation through high resource consumption, energy use, and greenhouse gas emissions. Sporting events, facility construction, and mass participation intensify pressures on natural resources, while unplanned infrastructure, chemical use, and fossil fuel–based energy systems further contribute to soil, water, and air pollution.

Adopting a qualitative, literature-based approach, the study reviews academic research, policy documents, and industry reports to evaluate the ecological footprint of sports-related activities. The findings indicate that the sports industry is a notable contributor to environmental pollution, particularly through carbon emissions associated with transportation, large-scale events, and energy-intensive facilities.

The study highlights the urgent need for integrating environmentally sustainable practices into sports management. Strategic planning, green policies, and innovative management approaches are essential to mitigate environmental impacts. Promoting energy efficiency, sustainable facility design, and responsible consumption practices can significantly reduce ecological harm.

The research concludes that the long-term sustainability of the sports industry is closely dependent on environmental sustainability. Reducing its environmental footprint is essential not only for preserving ecosystems but also for ensuring that sport continues to fulfill its social, cultural, and economic role for future generations.

Keywords: environmental sustainability, sports industry, sustainable development, environmental impact, greenhouse gas emissions, sports management, carbon footprint

DECENTRALIZED DEEP LEARNING MODEL FOR WATER QUALITY MONITORING

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ABSTRACT

Continuous water-quality monitoring requires learning from geographically dispersed sensors (e.g., pH, temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and conductivity), whose data are heterogeneous, non-independent and identically distributed (non-IID), and often incomplete. Centralizing these data streams is costly and raises concerns related to privacy and data governance. This study presents a decentralized (federated) deep learning framework for water-quality monitoring across multiple sensor sites without transferring raw data off-device.

In the proposed approach, each site trains a lightweight time-series model locally and shares only model updates. A central aggregator employs the FedAdam algorithm to combine updates and accelerate convergence under conditions of non-IID data, partial participation, and intermittent connectivity. The system is designed to be edge-friendly, incorporating small models and mixed-precision training. It also addresses missing data through masking and time-gap encoding and includes an optional proximal term to stabilize training across heterogeneous data distributions.

The framework is demonstrated on two tasks: Water Quality Index (WQI) regression and exceedance classification. Results indicate that the model effectively supports end-to-end training while maintaining stable performance and preserving data locality. On a held-out test set, the global model achieved a mean squared error (MSE) of 10.4759 and a mean absolute error (MAE) of 1.4515.

Keywords: federated learning, water quality monitoring, deep learning, non-IID data, time-series modeling, edge computing, sensor networks, environmental monitoring, FedAdam, spatio-temporal forecasting

EFFECTIVENESS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE INITIATIVES IN INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING IN KIGAMBONI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL IN TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

Despite ongoing efforts to improve work–life balance, significant challenges persist in public organizations, including inadequate support systems and inflexible work arrangements. This study evaluates the effectiveness of work–life balance initiatives in influencing employee well-being at the Kigamboni Municipal Council in the Dar es Salaam region, Tanzania. A cross-sectional research design was employed, combining quantitative data from structured questionnaires administered to 218 employees with qualitative insights obtained through semi-structured interviews.

Data were analyzed using descriptive and thematic approaches to explore the relationship between work–life balance initiatives and employee well-being. The findings indicate that most employees were dissatisfied with existing initiatives, particularly regarding flexible working hours, opportunities for remote work, leave policies, and the availability of on-site childcare facilities. Although health and wellness programs were perceived positively, employees reported concerns about long working hours and excessive workloads, which negatively affected their work–life balance.

Qualitative findings corroborate the quantitative results, highlighting insufficient managerial support and a lack of comprehensive policies tailored to employees' needs. The study concludes that improving both the implementation and communication of work–life balance initiatives is essential. Additionally, addressing workload and working-hour constraints is critical for enhancing employee satisfaction and overall well-being.

Keywords: work–life balance, employee well-being, public sector, organizational support, local government authority, Tanzania, human resource management

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (HRM) PRACTICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN KATHMANDU METROPOLITAN

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ABSTRACT

Business enterprises play a vital role in job creation and national economic stability, with human resource management (HRM) practices serving as a key driver of organizational performance, particularly in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This study examines the impact of HRM strategies on SME performance and identifies challenges faced in their implementation.

The research is based on primary data collected from firms in the Kathmandu Metropolitan area through structured questionnaires, as well as interviews and discussions with HR managers and employees. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with SPSS version 20. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, while correlation analysis measured relationships between variables, and regression analysis was employed to evaluate causal effects.

The findings indicate that HRM practices significantly influence business performance. Key dimensions—such as recruitment and selection, training and development, talent retention, performance management, and work environment—have both direct and indirect effects on organizational outcomes. In particular, talent retention, employee training, and performance management emerged as the most influential determinants of profitability and competitiveness. However, several challenges hinder effective HRM implementation, including inadequate employee retention strategies and limited investment in staff development. These constraints reduce the potential benefits of HRM practices.

The study highlights the importance of adopting effective HRM strategies to enhance long-term sustainability, innovation, and competitiveness in SMEs. Future research may explore sector-specific and regional variations in HRM practices and their impact on SME performance.

Keywords: human resource management (HRM), SMEs, organizational performance, team cohesion, talent retention, employee training, Nepal, HRM strategies, business sustainability

EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENTS: EXPECTATIONS AND REALITY OF EMPLOYERS IN THE PR INDUSTRY IN CROATIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the evolving field of public relations (PR) in Croatia, focusing on the competencies required for successful career development in a rapidly changing media and communication environment. Although relatively recent, PR has become an increasingly popular discipline due to its diverse career opportunities, dynamic nature, and potential for professional growth. The study emphasizes that, beyond formal education, continuous professional development and lifelong learning are essential for adapting to technological advancements and industry trends.

The growing influence of digitalization and artificial intelligence has reshaped the skill set required of communication professionals. Key competencies include social media content creation and management, fact-checking, disinformation awareness, data analytics, and the effective use of AI tools, alongside critical thinking and strategic planning. The transition from education to the labor market further highlights the need for adaptability to evolving employer expectations.

Using a qualitative methodology, the study draws on in-depth interviews with PR professionals across different organizational roles to explore employer expectations, required competencies, and the impact of generational differences. The findings reveal both commonalities in expected skills and notable differences based on organizational roles and generational groups. Variations were observed in attitudes toward work, motivation, digital literacy, and adaptability to organizational culture.

The study concludes that aligning educational outcomes with labor market demands requires an integrated approach that considers technological competencies, lifelong learning, and generational diversity within the workforce.

Keywords: public relations, competencies, artificial intelligence, digital communication, new technologies, employers, competencies, lifelong learning, generational differences, Croatia

THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS IN THE PRODUCTION OF MEDIA CONTENT: EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDES OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the growing role of artificial intelligence (AI) in the media industry, with particular attention to its implications for journalism, ethics, and professional standards. The widespread adoption of tools such as ChatGPT since late 2022 has increased the use of AI for both professional and personal purposes, while simultaneously raising concerns among media organizations. These concerns are especially pronounced in relation to copyright protection, as publicly available journalistic content is often used to train AI models without clear regulatory frameworks.

At the same time, competitive pressures within the media industry have reduced field reporting, shifting journalistic work increasingly toward newsroom-based content production. This shift, combined with the growing use of AI, has intensified concerns regarding the preservation of journalistic integrity, accuracy, and trust. The proliferation of misinformation and the limitations of AI-generated content further contribute to a decline in public confidence in media institutions.

The empirical component of the study investigates communication students' use of AI tools, their purposes, and their perceptions of the ethical challenges associated with AI in media production. Using a qualitative approach, the findings reveal widespread use of AI tools, alongside an awareness of ethical risks, including reliability, bias, and academic and professional integrity.

The study concludes that while AI offers significant opportunities for innovation in media production, it also necessitates critical engagement, regulatory oversight, and enhanced ethical awareness among future media professionals.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, ChatGPT, media industry, media content production, professional standards, journalism, ethics, misinformation, AI tools, digital media, copyright

BIOECONOMY, GENDER, AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between the bioeconomy and women's labor within the context of sustainable development. Throughout history, women have carried a disproportionate share of responsibilities related to managing natural resources and sustaining household livelihoods, particularly in developing countries. Gender-based data indicate that women constitute a significant proportion of those dependent on environmental resources, making them more vulnerable to challenges such as water scarcity, soil degradation, and climate change.

The bioeconomy, as an emerging paradigm, promotes the use of renewable biological resources for the production of food, energy, and industrial inputs, aiming to reduce reliance on fossil resources and support sustainable development. This transition has important implications for rural economies and gender dynamics, as it increases the demand for sustainable resource management—an area where women's labor and knowledge are particularly significant.

Adopting a bibliometric approach, this study analyzes research published between 2015 and 2025, sourced from databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, and TR Index. It maps the evolution of scholarly perspectives on the intersection of gender, bioeconomy, and sustainability.

The findings suggest that integrating women's roles into bioeconomic frameworks is essential for achieving inclusive and effective sustainability outcomes. The study highlights the need for gender-sensitive policies and practices that recognize and support women's contributions to resource management.

Overall, the research provides a comprehensive overview of the field and serves as a reference for future studies on gender, circular economy, and bioeconomy.

Keywords: bioeconomy, women's labor, gender, sustainable development, rural development, renewable resources, bibliometric analysis, environment

THE ‘TRADWIFE’ TREND ON SOCIAL MEDIA: RISING HOSTILITY TO FEMINISM

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the “tradwife” (“traditional wife”) trend on social media and its implications for gender roles and young women’s perceptions. Widely disseminated through platforms such as Instagram, this trend promotes a modernized form of anti-feminist rhetoric that idealizes domesticity, emphasizing women’s roles as wives and mothers while devaluing education and career aspirations.

The research analyzes how tradwife content constructs and reinforces a submissive female identity, often associating fulfillment with caregiving in idealized, affluent domestic settings. By framing traditional roles as desirable and aspirational, this discourse may limit young women’s engagement with opportunities for personal and professional development.

Using discourse analysis, the study examines selected Instagram content to explore how visual and textual elements shape narratives around femininity, success, and happiness. The findings reveal that the tradwife trend is sustained through aestheticized imagery, persuasive storytelling, and selective representations of lifestyle, which collectively normalize and promote restrictive gender norms.

The study highlights the role of digital media in reproducing and amplifying ideological narratives, demonstrating how social media environments contribute to shaping attitudes toward gender, education, and work. It concludes that critical media literacy is essential for enabling young women to navigate and evaluate such content, thereby supporting more informed and autonomous life choices.

Keywords: tradwife, social media, gender roles, anti-feminism, discourse analysis, Instagram, media representation, young women, digital culture, education equality

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION THROUGH THE LENS OF FEMINIST THEORY: THE CASE OF TÜRKİYE AFTER 1934 AND COMPARISONS WITH AFGHANISTAN AND DENMARK

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines women's political representation in Türkiye from historical and comparative feminist perspectives. Although Türkiye implemented legal reforms granting women the right to vote and stand for election as early as 1934, structural inequalities, a patriarchal political culture, and media bias continue to limit women's meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Using a qualitative comparative approach, the research contrasts Türkiye's experience with that of Afghanistan—where women face severe political repression—and Denmark, which represents a more inclusive political model supported by feminist governance and voluntary quota systems.

Drawing on liberal, radical, and postmodern feminist theories, the study critically analyzes both visible and invisible barriers that hinder women's full recognition as political actors in Türkiye. It further examines how factors such as class, religion, education, and ethnicity shape patterns of political exclusion across different social contexts. The findings indicate that formal legal equality remains insufficient without corresponding structural reforms and cultural transformation. Accordingly, the study advocates for the implementation of binding gender quotas, the promotion of feminist education, and comprehensive measures to prevent gender-based violence—particularly in digital spaces—as essential steps toward achieving substantive gender equality in political representation in Türkiye.

Keywords: women's political representation, Türkiye, gender equality, feminist theory, political participation, gender quotas, structural inequality, intersectionality, comparative analysis

THE RESURGENCE OF COUPS IN AN ERA OF DEMOCRATIZATION: CASE STUDY OF BURKINA FASO

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the resurgence of military coups in West Africa, with a focus on Burkina Faso, which experienced two coups in 2022, despite a broader continental shift toward democratization since the 1990s. It argues that this reversal is driven by governance failures, jihadist insurgencies, and weakened state institutions in the Sahel region. Using a qualitative analysis of secondary sources, including academic literature, policy reports, and media coverage, the study applies neo-patrimonialism theory to explain the persistence of power structures based on personal networks, patronage, and corruption rather than democratic norms.

The findings indicate that declining public trust in civilian governance created conditions that enabled the military to justify its interventions as necessary corrective actions. Popular support for coups was largely rooted in frustration with insecurity, ineffective leadership, and perceived overreliance on external actors such as France, rather than ideological support for authoritarianism. Coup leaders capitalized on weak institutional legitimacy to present themselves as agents of national rescue.

Additionally, inconsistent responses from regional and international organizations, including ECOWAS and the African Union, reveal limitations in deterring unconstitutional changes of power. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for strengthening democratic institutions, restoring civilian–military relations, and addressing underlying socioeconomic and security challenges to prevent further democratic backsliding in the region.

Keywords: military coups, resurgence of coups, Burkina Faso, West Africa, neo-patrimonialism, governance failure, democratization, political instability

A LINGUOSTYLICTIC ANALYSIS OF INAUGURAL ADDRESSES

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the stylistic features of contemporary political discourse, emphasizing its dual function as both an informational and persuasive medium that shapes public perception and political consciousness. Grounded in a discourse-based approach, the research explores the complex interplay between language, cognition, communication, and power, highlighting how linguistic choices influence societal attitudes and political identity.

Focusing on the genre of inaugural addresses, the study examines speeches by Vladimir V. Putin (2024) and Donald Trump (2025), delivered during critical moments in national contexts. These speeches are treated not merely as rhetorical acts but as symbolic political actions aimed at legitimizing leadership, fostering national unity, and articulating strategic priorities. The analysis demonstrates how stylistic devices—such as metaphor, repetition, intensification, and evaluative language—are employed to construct persuasive narratives and reinforce shared values.

Methodologically, the research combines discourse analysis, linguostylistic examination, and comparative approaches, incorporating elements of linguocultural and pragmatic analysis. This enables a nuanced understanding of how political meaning is constructed and conveyed across different cultural and political settings.

The findings reveal that inaugural discourse operates as a key mechanism for mobilizing collective identity, integrating historical memory with future aspirations, and reinforcing political authority. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of language in shaping political reality and highlights the significance of stylistic analysis in interpreting contemporary political communication.

Keywords: political discourse, stylistics, inaugural speech, linguistics, discourse analysis, rhetoric, political communication, comparative analysis

KHIMI THIM (HOUSE OF THE DEPARTED SOUL): A SPACE FOR THE INDIGENOUS SUSTAINABILITY

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This study examines the role of *Khimi Thim* as a sacred socio-cultural institution in sustaining indigenous knowledge and practices within the Thakali community of Thasang villages in Mustang, Nepal. Grounded in an ethnographic tradition informed by indigenous research methodologies, the paper explores how *Khimi Thim* functions as a space that embodies traditional worldviews centered on respect, collective responsibility, and reciprocal relationships between humans, nature, and spirituality.

Drawing on lived experiences and active participation in the *Khimi Rhamden* ritual, the study highlights how knowledge is generated, preserved, and transmitted across generations through oral traditions, communal practices, and ritual engagement. The findings illustrate that *Khimi Thim* serves as an integrative system that maintains ecological balance and cultural continuity, linking spiritual beliefs with environmental stewardship and social cohesion.

The research further demonstrates that indigenous practices foster emotional, ethical, and communal well-being, reinforcing strong kinship ties within sub-clan (*Khyu*) structures. These practices offer alternative models of sustainability rooted in holistic and interconnected understandings of existence.

The study concludes that indigenous knowledge systems, such as those embodied in *Khimi Thim*, provide valuable insights for contemporary sustainability discourse. It calls for greater recognition and integration of indigenous heritage in modern contexts, including emerging technological landscapes such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), to ensure culturally grounded and ethically informed approaches to sustainable development.

Keywords: indigenous knowledge, Khimi Thim, Thakali community, sustainability, sacred land, ethnography, Nepal, cultural heritage

BRIDGING WORLDS: TRANSLATION AS A BRIDGE ACROSS CULTURES AND TIME

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the critical role of translation in bridging linguistic, cultural, and ideological divides in an increasingly fragmented world. While language serves as a medium for expressing human emotions and shared experiences—such as freedom, suffering, and hope—barriers across cultures often hinder mutual understanding. In this context, translation emerges as a vital practice that not only conveys words but also transmits meaning, emotion, and cultural consciousness.

Drawing on historical and literary examples, the study highlights how translation enables the circulation of ideas that challenge oppression and authoritarianism. By making influential works accessible across linguistic boundaries, translators contribute to the dissemination of critical thought and democratic values. The discussion emphasizes the symbolic significance of translating texts such as George Orwell's *1984*, particularly in contexts where freedom of expression is restricted, illustrating the transformative potential of translated literature in shaping political awareness.

Furthermore, the study underscores the role of translators in giving voice to historically marginalized or silenced figures, positioning translation as an act of resistance and cultural preservation. Through this lens, translation is conceptualized not merely as a technical skill but as an ethical and humanistic endeavor that fosters global dialogue and solidarity.

The research ultimately argues that translation is essential for sustaining intercultural communication and promoting shared human values. By bridging divides and amplifying suppressed voices, translation contributes to a more inclusive and interconnected world.

Keywords: translation studies, intercultural communication, cultural exchange, literary translation, freedom of expression, globalization, cultural identity, knowledge dissemination

GLOBAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the growing impact of climate change on human health and healthcare systems, emphasizing both risks and sectoral responsibilities. Climate change intensifies health threats through rising temperatures, increased air pollution, extreme weather events, and shifting patterns of infectious diseases. These pressures contribute to higher incidences of cardiovascular, respiratory, and infectious diseases while straining healthcare systems and compromising service delivery, particularly for vulnerable populations.

Paradoxically, the healthcare sector itself is a significant contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for approximately 4.4–4.6% of worldwide emissions. This dual role highlights the urgent need for the sector to transition toward sustainability. International frameworks such as the Paris Agreement and the United Nations 2030 Agenda provide guiding targets for emission reduction and climate resilience. In response, initiatives such as the Geneva Sustainability Centre's Sustainability Accelerator Tool (SAT) support healthcare organizations in measuring, benchmarking, and reducing their environmental footprint.

Emerging standards and certifications, including the Joint Commission International (JCI) Healthcare Sustainability Certification and ISO's Net Zero initiatives, further strengthen global efforts toward sustainable healthcare systems. However, achieving net-zero emissions requires coordinated, sector-wide strategies that address both direct and indirect emissions, particularly those arising from supply chains.

The study underscores the importance of international collaboration and cross-sector partnerships in enhancing climate resilience and advancing sustainability in healthcare. It concludes that comprehensive, system-level approaches are essential to ensure both environmental responsibility and the continued delivery of effective healthcare services.

Keywords: climate change, healthcare systems, greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, public health, net zero, Paris Agreement, healthcare resilience, environmental impact

EFFECTS OF AQUEOUS EXTRACT OF HIBISCUS SABDARIFFA (ZOBO LEAVES) ON EPINEPHRINE AND NOREPINEPHRINE LEVELS OF CHRONIC STRESS-INDUCED WISTAR RATS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of aqueous extract of Hibiscus sabdariffa on stress-related hormonal changes, specifically epinephrine and norepinephrine levels, in chronically stressed Wistar rats. Chronic stress disrupts physiological homeostasis and elevates catecholamine levels, contributing to adverse health outcomes. Hibiscus sabdariffa, widely used in traditional medicine, contains bioactive compounds such as polyphenols, anthocyanins, and organic acids, suggesting potential therapeutic benefits.

Thirty adult Wistar rats were randomly assigned to six groups and subjected to varying protocols of chronic stress induction and extract administration via oral gavage. Hormonal levels were measured using enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), and data were analyzed using one-way ANOVA with post hoc testing ($p < 0.05$ considered significant).

The results demonstrated significant modulation of stress hormones. Epinephrine levels decreased significantly in certain treatment groups compared to the control, while an increase was observed in one group subjected to combined prolonged stress and treatment. Norepinephrine levels showed a significant reduction in selected groups. Overall, the findings suggest that Hibiscus sabdariffa extract may exert modulatory and potentially corrective effects on stress-induced hormonal imbalances.

These results support the potential of Hibiscus sabdariffa as a natural therapeutic agent for managing stress-related endocrine alterations. Further research is recommended to clarify underlying mechanisms and evaluate clinical applicability.

Keywords: Hibiscus sabdariffa, chronic stress, epinephrine, norepinephrine, Wistar rats, phytochemicals, ELISA, stress hormones, natural therapeutics, anti-inflammatory, adaptogenic

THE ROLE OF MYCOTOXINS IN FOOD SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Mycotoxins are toxic secondary metabolites produced by molds such as Aspergillus, Fusarium, and Penicillium species in agricultural products, posing a significant global threat to food safety and sustainable development. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that approximately 25% of the global food supply may be contaminated with mycotoxins. This widespread contamination not only jeopardizes public health but also undermines food security and economic sustainability.

The primary health effects of mycotoxin exposure include hepatotoxicity, immunosuppression, and carcinogenicity. In developing countries, inadequate food safety infrastructure further increases population vulnerability to contaminated food consumption. Additionally, the removal of contaminated products from the supply chain contributes to substantial food loss and waste, thereby intensifying environmental sustainability challenges.

From a sustainability perspective, addressing mycotoxin contamination is not only a toxicological concern but also an environmental and socio-economic priority. Strategies such as integrated agricultural practices, climate-resilient storage systems, advanced analytical detection methods, and increased awareness among producers and consumers are essential for mitigating this issue.

In conclusion, ensuring food safety is intrinsically linked to sustainable living. Effective mycotoxin control supports public health protection while promoting environmental sustainability. In this context, toxicology plays a vital role in guiding policy development and advancing global food safety standards.

Keywords: mycotoxins, food safety, sustainable development, food security, toxicology, agricultural contamination, environmental sustainability, public health

SUSTAINABILITY IN PHARMACIES: WASTE MEDICINE MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The environmental impact of pharmaceuticals has gained increasing attention as a critical dimension of sustainable healthcare. Improper disposal of pharmaceutical waste contaminates water resources, soil, and ecosystems, posing significant risks to both environmental sustainability and public health.

This study highlights the importance of effective waste medicine management in community pharmacies within the framework of sustainable pharmacy practices. Key areas of focus include optimizing stock management, promoting the rational use of medicines, enhancing public health literacy regarding the risks associated with pharmaceutical waste, and strengthening the implementation of existing waste management programs.

Furthermore, the study examines the role and responsibilities of pharmacists in delivering environmentally responsible healthcare services. This includes aligning pharmacy practices with national and international policies and sustainability frameworks. By integrating environmental considerations into routine pharmaceutical care, community pharmacies can contribute to reducing ecological risks and promoting sustainable health systems.

The findings underscore the need for coordinated efforts among healthcare professionals, policymakers, and the public to improve pharmaceutical waste management and minimize environmental harm.

Keywords: pharmaceutical waste, sustainable healthcare, community pharmacy, environmental impact, waste management, rational drug use, health literacy, environmental sustainability

YAŞLILARDA DİYET KALİTESİNİN YAŞAM KALİTESİ VE METABOLİK SENDROM ÜZERİNE ETKİSİ

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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, yaşlı bireylerde diyet kalitesi ve yaşam kalitesinin metabolik sendrom üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektedir. Yaşam kalitesi, bireyin kendi kültürel ve değer sistemleri çerçevesinde yaşamına ilişkin algısını ifade eder. Küresel ölçekte yaşlı nüfusun artışı, beslenme alışkanlıklarının ve sağlık sorunlarının önemini artırmaktadır. Yaşlılık dönemi genellikle yetersiz beslenme, düşük diyet kalitesi ve yaşam kalitesinde azalma ile ilişkilidir.

Araştırma, Haziran–Kasım 2022 tarihleri arasında Karaman'da özel bir yaşam merkezine başvuran ve gönüllü olarak katılan 65 yaş ve üzeri 94 birey (34 erkek, 60 kadın) ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Diyet kalitesi Sağlıklı Yeme İndeksi-2010 (SYİ-2010) ile, yaşam kalitesi ise Dünya Sağlık Örgütü Yaşam Kalitesi Yaşlı Modülü (WHOQOL-OLD) ile değerlendirilmiştir. Ayrıca katılımcıların biyokimyasal verileri, kan basıncı ve antropometrik ölçümleri incelenerek ATP-III kriterlerine göre metabolik sendrom durumları belirlenmiştir.

Bulgular, katılımcıların %53,2'sinde metabolik sendrom bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Diyet kalitesi açısından bireylerin %49'unun kötü, %51'inin ise geliştirilmesi gereken düzeyde olduğu saptanmıştır. Metabolik sendrom görülme sıklığı, geliştirilmesi gereken diyet kalitesine sahip bireylerde %58,7, kötü diyet kalitesine sahip bireylerde ise %47,9 olarak belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca yaşam kalitesi puanı, geliştirilmesi gereken diyet kalitesine sahip bireylerde daha yüksek bulunmuştur.

Sonuç olarak, diyet kalitesi ve yaşam kalitesi yaşlı bireylerde metabolik sağlık üzerinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: yaşam kalitesi, diyet kalitesi, metabolik sendrom, yaşlılık, beslenme, SYİ-2010, WHOQOL-OLD, halk sağlığı, yaşlı sağlığı

SAĞLIKTA SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİR WELLNESS UYGULAMALARI

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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, sağlık anlayışındaki dönüşümü ele alarak "wellness" kavramının sürdürülebilir sağlık uygulamaları içindeki rolünü incelemektedir. Günümüzde sağlık, yalnızca hastalıkların tedavisiyle sınırlı olmayan; bireyin fiziksel, zihinsel ve sosyal iyilik halini kapsayan bütüncül bir yaklaşım olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda wellness uygulamaları, bireysel yaşam kalitesini arttırmanın yanı sıra toplumsal refahı, işgücü verimliliğini ve sağlık sistemlerinin sürdürülebilirliğini destekleyen önemli bir unsur olarak öne çıkmaktadır.

Çalışma, wellness uygulamalarını yaşam boyu perspektifte değerlendirerek çocukluk, erişkinlik ve yaşlılık dönemleri üzerinden incelemektedir. Çocukluk döneminde sağlıklı beslenme, fiziksel aktivite alışkanlıklarının kazandırılması ve duygusal gelişimin desteklenmesi temel önceliklerdir. Erişkinlikte, stres yönetimi, sürdürülebilir beslenme modelleri ve psikolojik iyilik halini güçlendiren yaklaşımlar ön plana çıkarken, yaşlılık döneminde ise beslenme gereksinimleri, kognitif fonksiyonların korunması, kas-iskelet sağlığı ve sosyal izolasyonun önlenmesi gibi konular önem kazanmaktadır.

Nitel bir değerlendirme yaklaşımıyla hazırlanan çalışma, güncel bilimsel veriler ve uygulama örneklerini disiplinlerarası bir bakış açısıyla ele almaktadır. Ayrıca farklı ülkelerden uzmanların katkılarıyla elde edilen karşılaştırmalı perspektif, kültürel farklılıkların wellness uygulamalarına etkisini ortaya koymaktadır.

Sonuç olarak, yaşamın tüm evrelerinde sürdürülebilir wellness uygulamalarının geliştirilmesi, sağlıklı bireyler ve güçlü toplumlar oluşturmanın temel koşullarından biridir. Bu doğrultuda, bütüncül ve kültürel olarak duyarlı sağlık politikalarının geliştirilmesi büyük önem taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: wellness, sürdürülebilir sağlık, yaşam kalitesi, bütüncül sağlık, sağlık politikaları, yaşam döngüsü, halk sağlığı

SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİRLİK VE YAPAY ZEKA EKSENİNDE MODA ENDÜSTRİSİ: FIRSATLAR VE ÇELİŞKİLER ÇIKMAZI

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ABSTRACT

Moda endüstrisi, küresel ekonomi içinde en hızlı değişen, dinamik, yön verici ama bir o kadar da tartışılan sektörlerin başında gelmektedir. Son yıllarda sezon ve koleksiyon sayılarının artması, hızlı moda ve tek kullanımlık moda anlayışının yaygınlaşması ile birlikte çevresel, ekonomik ve toplumsal açıdan ciddi sürdürülebilirlik sorunları ortaya çıkmaktadır. Tekstil üretiminde ekilebilir arazilerin işgali, aşırı su ve enerji tüketimi, açığa çıkan yüksek karbon oranları, atık yönetiminin zorlukları, su ve hava kaynaklarını kirlenmesi, yoğun toksik madde kullanımı, tüketim kültürü teşviki, ucuz iş gücüne dayalı üretim süreçleri vb modayı sürdürülebilirlik tartışmalarının odağına yerleştirmiştir.

Küresel platformda sürdürülebilirlik ile birlikte tartışılan bir diğer konu da yapay zekâ teknolojileri ve çeşitli sektörlerdeki etkisidir. Yapay zekâ, verimlilik konusunda pozitif yenilikler ortaya koyarken, aynı zamanda çevresel etkiyi azaltma, kaynakları verimli ve sürdürülebilir anlayışla kullanmak konusunda da alt yapı çalışmalarını güçlendirmektedir. Yapay zekâ destekli algoritmalar stok fazlası, depolama, moda tasarımında kumaş ve aksesuar kullanımını optimize ederek aynı zamanda çevre dostu, kişiselleştirilmiş tasarım önerileri doğrultusunda tüketiciyle iletişimi güçlendirerek ilerlemektedir. Bu anlayış ile yapay zekâ sürdürülebilir modanın tasarım, üretim süreçleri, ürünün kullanım döngüsü araştırmalarıyla tüketici ilişkilerinin de dönüşümüne katkı sağlamaktadır.

Bu çalışma, sürdürülebilirlik ve yapay zekâ ekseninde ortaya çıkan fırsat ve çelişkileri moda dünyasının dinamikleri çerçevesinde ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Moda endüstrisinin sürdürülebilirlik konusunda yarattığı sorunlar ve çözümler ile aynı zamanda yapay zekanın sunduğu fırsatlar ve yarattığı sorunlar çıkmazı tartışılmaktadır. Ayrıca teknolojinin ve sürdürülebilirlik adına yapılan çalışmaların ekolojik, sosyal ve etik sınırları değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma kapsamında moda markalarının sürdürülebilirlik ve yapay zekâ faaliyetleri karşılaştırmalı vaka analizi yöntemi ile irdelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: moda endüstrisi, sürdürülebilirlik, yapay zekâ, sürdürülebilir moda, tüketim

XVII. VE XVIII. YÜZYIL TARİHİ İSTANBUL KIŞLALARININ YENİDEN İŞLEVLENDİRİLMESİNDE ÖZGÜN MEKANLARIN DEĞİŞİM SÜRECİNİN KIŞLA MİMARİSİNE ETKİLERİ: RAMİ KIŞLASI ÖRNEĞİ

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Selva KÖROĞLU KURT
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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda askeri mimarinin önemli unsurlarından biri olan kışla yapılarının tarihsel gelişimini ve günümüzdeki restorasyon süreçlerini incelemektedir. II. Mahmut döneminde Yeniçeri Ocağı'nın kaldırılmasıyla başlayan askeri modernleşme süreci, kışla mimarisinde önemli dönüşümlere yol açmış; bu yapılar yalnızca barınma alanları değil, aynı zamanda eğitim ve sağlık hizmetlerinin sunulduğu çok işlevli mekânlar haline gelmiştir.

Araştırma, özellikle İstanbul'daki 17. ve 18. yüzyıllardan günümüze ulaşan kışla yapılarının restorasyon süreçlerini ele almakta ve Rami Kışlası'nın sürdürülebilir bir kütüphaneye dönüştürülme sürecini mekânsal açıdan analiz etmektedir. Çalışmada literatür taraması, arşiv incelemesi, saha araştırması ve karşılaştırmalı analiz yöntemleri kullanılmış; Selimiye, Kuleli, Davutpaşa ve Rami gibi önemli kışlalar kapsamlı biçimde değerlendirilmiştir.

Elde edilen bulgular, Osmanlı ordusunun değişen ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda kışla yapılarının işlevsel çeşitlilik kazandığını göstermektedir. Rami Kışlası örneğinde, yapının özgün plan, taşıyıcı sistem ve cephe özellikleri korunarak çağdaş işlevlerle yeniden kullanıma kazandırıldığı görülmektedir. Özellikle arşiv binasının peyzajla bütünleşen tasarımı ve mevcut silüeti koruma yaklaşımı, sürdürülebilir restorasyon anlayışının başarılı bir örneği olarak öne çıkmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak, kışla yapılarının yeniden işlevlendirilmesi sürecinde mekânsal sürekliliğin ve tarihi değerlerin korunmasının önem taşıdığı; bu tür dönüşümlerin kültürel mirasın geleceğe aktarılmasına katkı sağladığı ortaya konulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kışla mimarisi, Osmanlı mimarisi, restorasyon, yeniden işlevlendirme, Rami Kışlası, sürdürülebilir mimarlık, kültürel miras, İstanbul'daki tarihi kışlalar, mekansal analiz

ESKİ TÜRK-İSLÂM TOPLUMLARINDA MANEVÎ DEĞERLER VE BUNLARIN EDEBİYATA YANSIMASI

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ÖZET

Din, "Tanrı düşüncesine dayalı toplumsal bir kurum" olarak tanımlanmakta; Allah'a inanma ve O'na bağlanma biçiminde tezahür etmektedir. Edebiyat ise sanatçılar aracılığıyla topluma tutulan bir ayna niteliğindedir. Toplumda var olan olumlu ya da olumsuz unsurların edebiyata yansıması kaçınılmazdır. Bu bağlamda, Orta Çağ edebiyatlarının büyük ölçüde dinî ve tasavvufî bir karakter taşıdığı görülmektedir. Dinî edebiyat, inanç, ibadet ve kutsal değerlerin edebî düzlemde yansımasını içermektedir.

Bilim dallarının kendilerine özgü terimleri, yöntemleri ve kimi zaman teorik çerçeveleri bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, özellikle Müslümanların manevî değerlerini yansıtan edebî eserlerin bir kısmı ele alınmıştır. Çalışmanın temel amacı, dinî edebiyat içerisinde oluşmuş edebî türleri tespit etmek ve bunları sistematik bir biçimde tasnif etmektir. Bu doğrultuda, ilgili türler; adları, konuları ve temaları açısından, görme, işitme ve dokunma gibi duyusal algı kategorileri temel alınarak sınıflandırılmıştır.

Ortaya konulan bu teorik yaklaşımın geçerliliği, İslâm dini bağlamında temellendirilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bununla birlikte, söz konusu teorinin yalnızca İslâm diniyle sınırlı kalmayıp, diğer dinlere ve din temalı edebî eserlere de uygulanabilir nitelikte olduğu ileri sürülmektedir. Ayrıca bu yaklaşımın, milletlerin dinî edebî mirasını tespit etmede yol gösterici olduğu; bunun yanı sıra, söz konusu eserlerin yokluğu ya da sınırlı sayıda oluşunun nedenlerini açıklayarak edebiyat tarihçileri ve araştırmacılar için açıklayıcı bir çerçeve sunduğu değerlendirilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din, Dinî Edebiyat, Tasavvuf, Orta Çağ Edebiyatı, İslâm Edebiyatı, Edebî Türler, Tasnif, Teori, Duyusal Algı (Görme-İşitme-Dokunma), Manevî Değerler, Edebiyat ve Toplum

LA GESTACIÓN SUBROGADA EN ESPAÑA

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RESUMEN

Este trabajo analiza la gestación subrogada en España desde perspectivas jurídica, ética y social, examinando la contradicción entre su prohibición interna (nulidad contractual art. 10 Ley 14/2006, filiación por parto art. 116 CC, sanción penal art. 221 CP) y el reconocimiento registral parcial, hasta 2025, de menores nacidos en el extranjero mediante esta técnica.

La metodología combina análisis normativo, jurisprudencia reciente del Tribunal Supremo (SSTS 1626/2024 y 437/2024), derecho comparado (EE.UU., Reino Unido, Grecia, Israel) y debate doctrinal ético sobre explotación, dignidad y derechos reproductivos. Los resultados evidencian un giro prohibicionista reforzado tras la STS 1626/2024, que considera la gestación subrogada contraria al orden público por cosificar a mujer y menor, motivando la Instrucción de 28 de Abril de 2025 que prohíbe toda inscripción registral basada en documentos extranjeros y remite a vías ordinarias de filiación (adopción, reconocimiento, acogimiento).

Se concluye que España requiere un debate político-social que conduzca a una solución normativa estable (prohibición clara o regulación altruista muy restrictiva), priorizando dignidad humana, interés superior del menor y protección frente a la mercantilización del cuerpo femenino, inclinándose la autora por la prohibición o regulación extraordinariamente garantista.

Palabras Claves: gestación subrogada, filiación, orden público, dignidad humana, interés superior del menor, registro civil.

ANÁLISIS DEL MARCO LEGAL Y LAS CLÁUSULAS MÁS RELEVANTES EN LOS CONTRATOS DE VENTA Y EXTRACCIÓN DE CORCHO. ESPECIAL RELEVANCIA DE SU IMPACTO SOCIAL, ECONÓMICO Y AMBIENTAL EN LA REGIÓN DE EXTREMADURA, ESPAÑA

Antonio Silva SANCHEZ
University Of Extremadura, Spain

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo analizar y estudiar los caracteres generales y las cláusulas específicas más importantes en el marco legal de los contratos de extracción y compraventa de corcho en España con especial atención a la región de Extremadura, dado su importante repercusión laboral e impacto socioeconómico y ambiental en dicha región autónoma española.

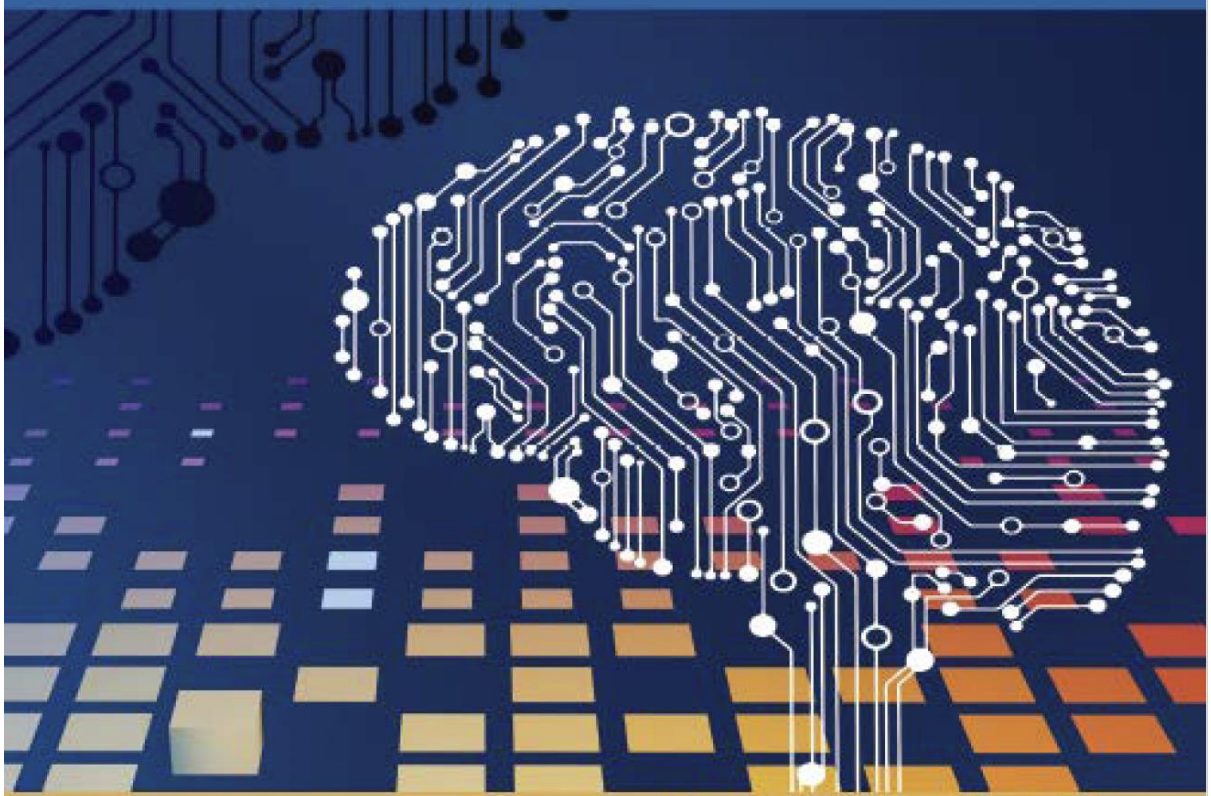
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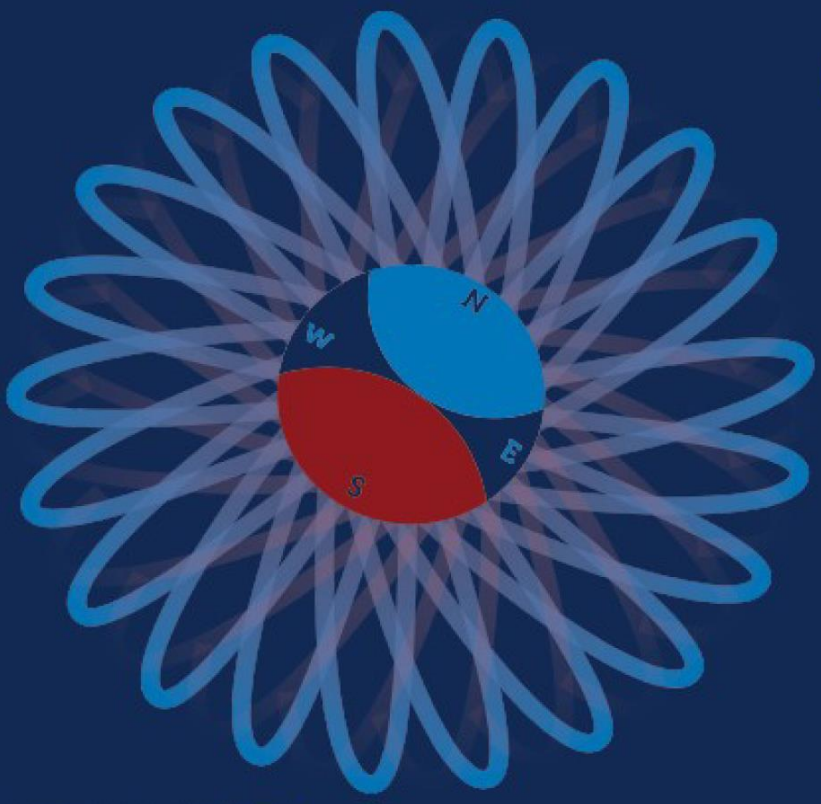
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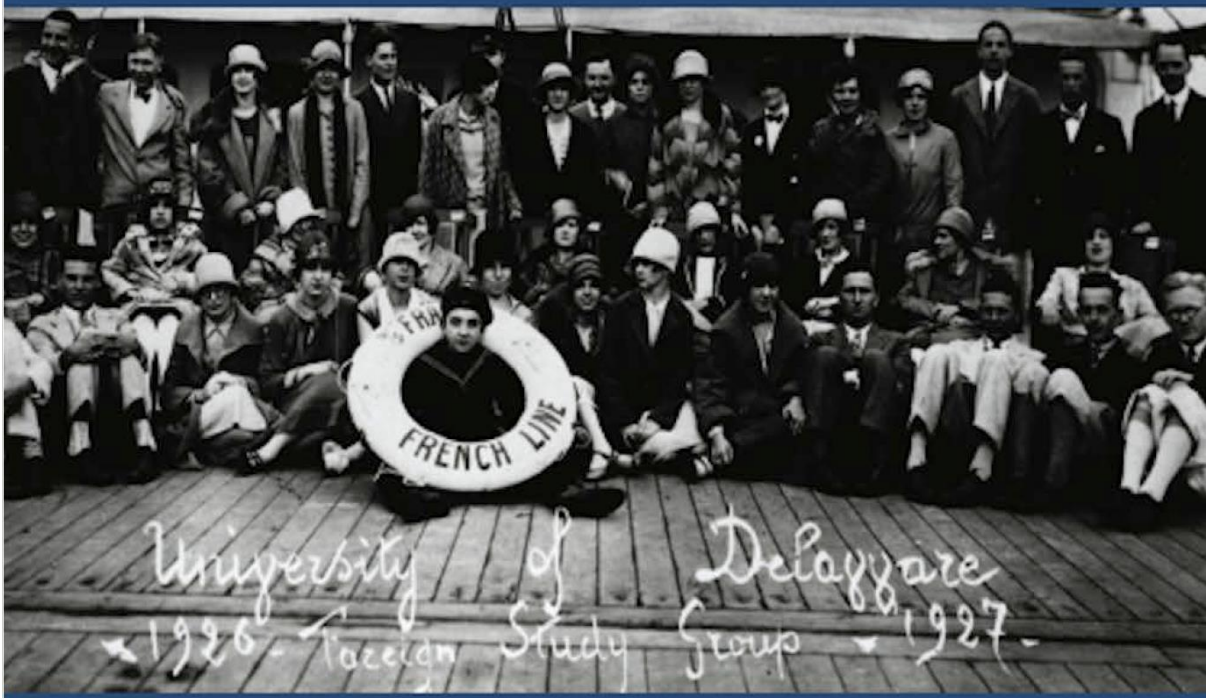
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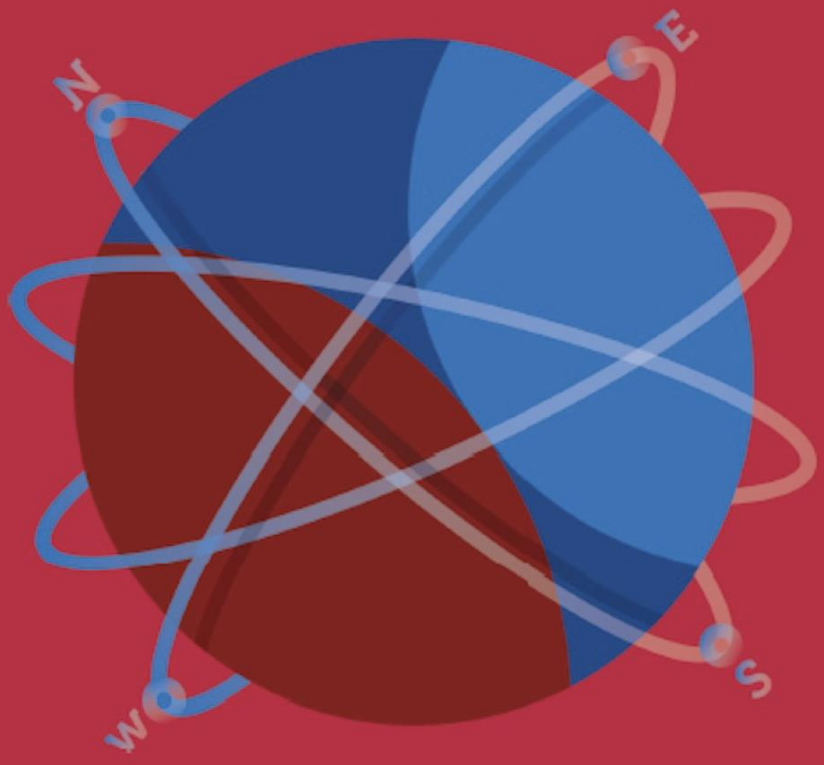
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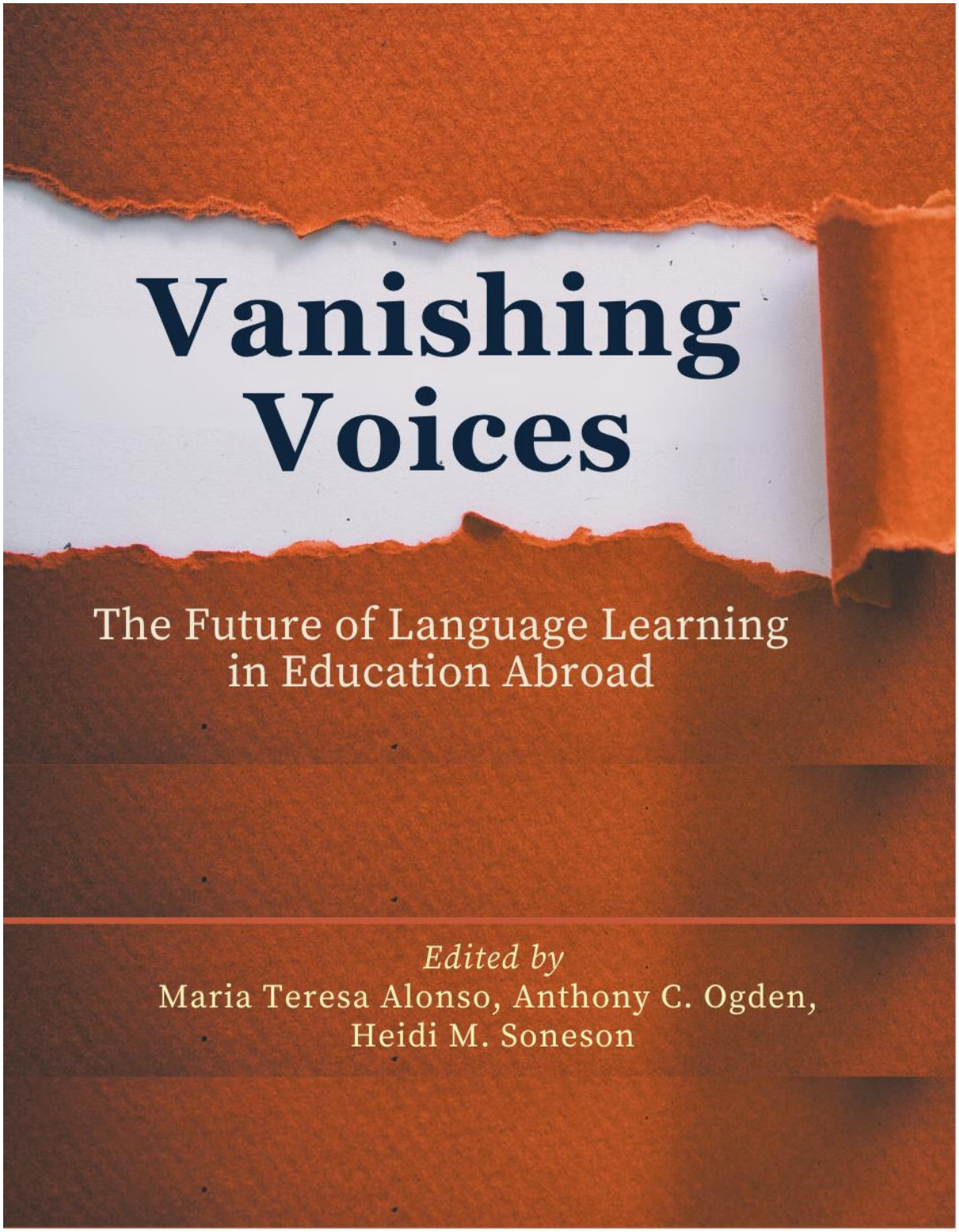
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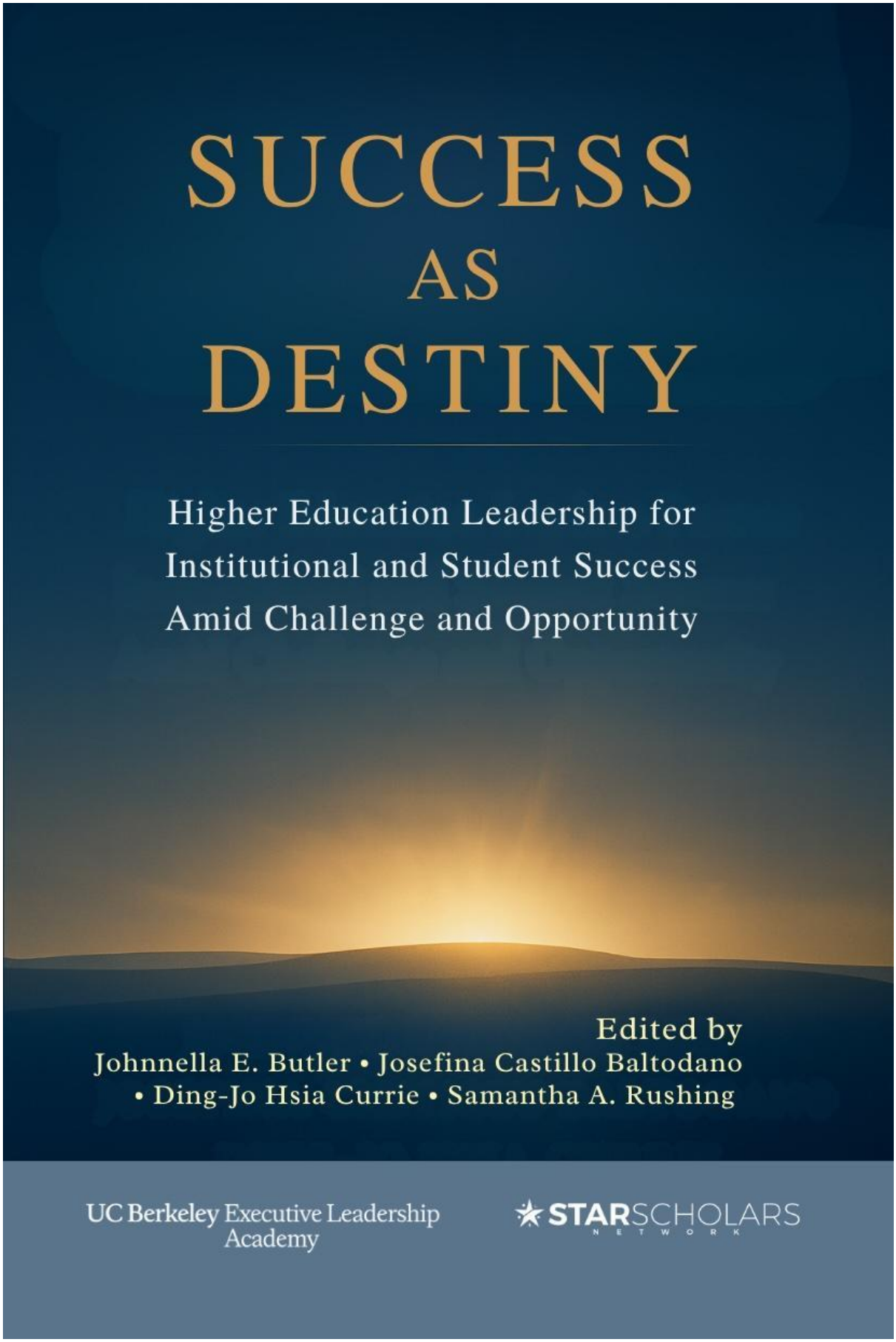
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