

# BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS CIRCLE INTERNATIONAL

21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE

BRIDGING BOUNDARIES FOR  
GLOBAL INNOVATION PROFILE



Vitez, Bosnia & Herzegovina



24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> April 2025

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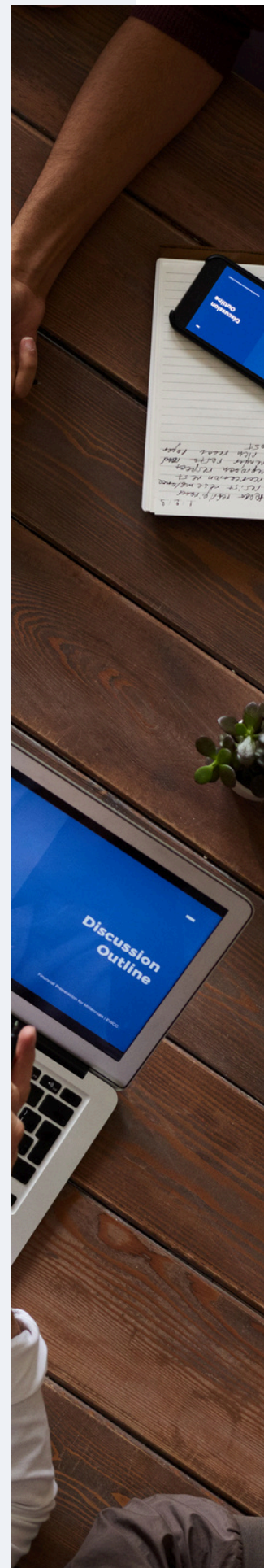


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# INTRODUCTION

The results of the 21st Annual Conference, "Bridging Boundaries for Global Innovation," held from April 24th to 26th, 2025 at Vitez, Bosnia and Herzegovina, demonstrate the dynamic interchange of ideas and new research that occurred during this key academic event. This conference brought together academics, practitioners, and industry professionals from various backgrounds to address current concerns, exchange cutting-edge research, and develop cross-disciplinary cooperation.

The subject of this year's conference, "Bridging Boundaries for Global Innovation," shows our dedication to tackling the current problems and possibilities in our disciplines. Participants participated in meaningful debate via keynote talks, panel discussions, and interactive workshops that not only highlighted current trends but also laid the groundwork for future improvements.

We thank all of the contributors who submitted their work for presentation, as well as the organising committee and volunteers who helped make this event possible. Their effort has ensured that the proceedings capture the breadth of the conversations and research presented during the conference.

This book contains a compilation of abstracts, offering a thorough overview of the research undertaken by our respected participants. We hope that these proceedings will be a great resource for scholars, practitioners, and students, motivating more study and conversation in our disciplines.

We encourage you to investigate the ideas and findings provided in this collection, and we look forward to seeing how these contributions influence future study and practice, as well as the publications and journals maintained by Circle International, which we will highlight below.

Thank you for taking part in the 21st annual conference.

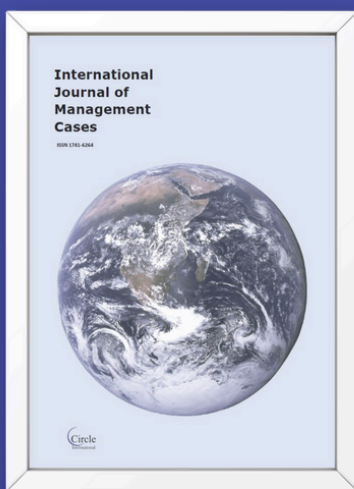
Sincerely

**Professor Mohamed El-Ansari**



# PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITIES: CIRCLE INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS

Circle International publishes two peer-reviewed, open-accessed academic journals that provide valuable publishing opportunities for researchers, academics, and practitioners, including junior scholars seeking to refine their research and writing skills.



## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT CASES (IJMC)

Established in 1998, the International Journal of Management Cases (IJMC) serves as a platform for both established and emerging researchers to present detailed analyses of practical management issues. By emphasizing real-life applications, IJMC provides junior scholars with constructive feedback aimed at enhancing their analytical and writing capabilities. IJMC is committed to fostering significant scientific dialogue and advancing the field of management through the dissemination of important knowledge and insights relevant to business and multidisciplinary research. The journal embraces a wide range of scientific approaches, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SALES, RETAILING AND MARKETING (IJSRM)



Founded in 2011, the International Journal of Sales, Retailing and Marketing publishes original research and in-depth analysis on topics related to sales, retail, and marketing disciplines. The journal is suitable for both experienced researchers and junior academics, offering constructive peer reviews and feedback that supports authors in improving their academic writing and research skills. Articles accepted by IJSRM include empirical studies, conceptual frameworks, and detailed case analyses.

**Professor Nikola Draskovic**  
Editor in Chief



## PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITIES

Accepted abstracts will be published as full papers in selected journals, including:

- ☑ International Journal of Management Cases (IJMC).
- ☑ The International Journal of Sales, Retail, and Marketing (IJSRM)
- ☑ International Journal of Technology Transfer and Commercialization.
- ☑ International Journal of Business and Globalisation.
- ☑ SKEI – International Interdisciplinary Journal

## Enterprise Social Media (ESM) Flexibility, Job Crafting and Work Performance

**Authors:** Dr. Arnaud Anouba, Dr. Okeoma John-Paul Okeke  
**Institution:** Faculty of Business and Technology (FBT), The University of Sunderland, England, UK.



In the evolving world of work, knowledge workers are witnessing a growing flexibility regarding where, when, and how they perform their work, often enabled by enterprise social media (ESM). This study investigates the effect of ESM flexibility on work performance, with a particular emphasis on the mediating role of job crafting on employee work performance, specifically focusing on the SME sector in Côte d'Ivoire. A quantitative methodology was employed, utilizing a Structural Equation Model (SEM) for data collection through a structured questionnaire with 353 SME employees in Côte d'Ivoire. This approach enabled a detailed exploration of the relationship between ESM flexibility, job crafting, and work performance. The study utilized frameworks including Social Exchange Theory, Job Crafting Theory, Performance Theories, and Organizational Learning.

The results demonstrated that ESM flexibility was positively related to both job crafting and employee work performance. Additionally, job crafting was found to mediate the positive relationship between ESM flexibility and work performance. The analysis also indicated that high resistance to change may increase job crafting through ESM flexibility. This study contributes valuable information for organizations aiming to create optimized work environments by leveraging ESM flexibility and facilitating job crafting, which is critical in providing HR managers with a deeper understanding of how workplace settings influence employee behavior. By becoming more aware of these dynamics, managers can better support employees in capitalizing on diverse workplaces and working hours, ultimately enhancing overall productivity and satisfaction within the workforce.

**Keywords:** Enterprise social media (ESM), Organizational learning, SMEs, Social Exchange Theory, Côte d'Ivoire.



### Dr. Arnaud Anouba

PhD in Business Administration in field of sustainability, entrepreneurial and management's.



### Dr. Okeoma John-Paul Okeke

He is a Senior Lecturer in Management (Strategy and Operations) with over eight years of experience in UK higher education and international Transnational Education (TNE) partnerships. He currently serves as Global Partnership Lead for MDIS Dushanbe, Tajikistan. With a strong academic and professional background, he has led programmes, supervised doctoral research, and contributed to academic standards through teaching, committee work, and roles as an External Examiner.

## Education Matters: 2050 Competencies and Skills for Future Jobs - Not Yet Known

**Authors:** Prof. Alexandra J. KENYON, Prof. Carmen R. SANTOS, Oliver TORRES-REYNOSO

**Institution:** Management and Social Sciences, University Vitez, Bosnia; Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, University of León.



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Education has been recognized as a fundamental human and legal right since 1945, serving not just as a means of learning but as a gateway to individual human development, social justice, and peace. This commentary paper discusses the urgent need to reimagine education systems, pedagogy, and curricula to ensure that all citizens understand their roles in promoting social justice and climate solidarity. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a global roadmap for achieving these aims, particularly reflecting on SDG 4: Education.

The paper emphasizes the immediate need for educational systems to pivot towards preparing learners—both students and current employees—with the competencies and skills essential for future jobs that remain undefined. It also examines macro trends driving business transformations, arguing that educational institutions must mobilize and create lifelong learning pathways that accommodate the need for upskilling, reskilling, and redeploying entire workforces. Stakeholders, including international organizations and governments, must ensure that students and existing workforces engage with the dynamic job market, empowered with skills that function within ethical frameworks. This commentary ultimately posits that education should be viewed as a social contract, with a focus on sustainability and digital transformations to enhance individuals and communities through collaborative efforts.

**Keywords:** Education, Education Futures, Social Contract, Global Citizens, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



### Prof. Alexandra J. KENYON

Professor Doctor Alexandra Kenyon has the honour of working within two European Universities; University of Vitez; Bosnia and Her-zegovina and Universidad de Leon, Spain. Professor Doctor Alexandra Kenyon is also the Editor in Chief for the International Journal of Sales, Retailing and Marketing. She is also an author and her 10th Edition of the International Marketing Strategy academic textbook is launched in 2025. In addition; Alexandra is a Research Consultant at Leeds Beckett University in the UK; her most recent project, with National Pubwatch. was to investigate how Local Pubwatch Schemes contribute to safe, secure and sociable night-time economies.



### Prof. Carmen R. SANTOS

Prof. Carmen R. Santos is Vice Dean of the Department of International Relations. She is also Director of COBEREN (Consumer Behaviour Research Network), the first Network coordinated by a Spanish university to be approved by the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Program 2009 selection process.

# Cultural Diplomacy in the United Arab Emirates: A Strategy for Soft Power and Global Identity

**Authors:** Dr. Mohamed AlMuaini, Professor Nabil Ayad

**Institution:** University Vitez and Glasgow Caledonian University



Strategic approach to enhance its soft power, promote international understanding, and redefine its global identity. The analysis examines key initiatives like the Louvre Abu Dhabi, Expo 2020 Dubai, and the Abrahamic Family House, showcasing how the UAE leverages culture to position itself as a leader in innovation, tolerance, and sustainability.

These initiatives serve not only to address global challenges but also to foster unity within the country's diverse population, establishing the UAE as a cultural hub and a progressive global player. The dual nature of the UAE's cultural diplomacy is highlighted—while it builds a cohesive national identity domestically, it enhances the UAE's credibility internationally by aligning its cultural initiatives with global priorities such as sustainability and interfaith dialogue.

Despite notable successes, challenges remain, particularly regarding authenticity and inclusivity in representation. The paper underscores the importance of participatory cultural narratives to enhance the credibility and sustainability of cultural diplomacy efforts. It contributes to the academic discourse on cultural diplomacy by providing a detailed case study of the UAE, illustrating a model for leveraging culture to bridge domestic and international objectives. Practical recommendations for policymakers focus on integrating digital tools and grassroots engagement, emphasizing the potential of cultural diplomacy in fostering international dialogue and global harmony.

**Keywords:** cultural diplomacy, soft power, UAE, nation branding, sustainability.



## Dr. Mohamed AlMuaini

Dr. Mohamed AlMuaini is the Founder and Chairman of the Global Centre for Cultural Communications (GCCC) and the International Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (IICD). With over 15 years of leadership in cultural diplomacy, he has dedicated his career to promoting global cultural understanding through events, exhibitions, and strategic communications. Based in the UAE, Dr. AlMuaini is recognized for his commitment to building long-term partnerships, fostering innovation, and advancing cultural dialogue on a regional and international scale.



## Professor Nabil Ayad

Professor Nabil Ayad is Director of Global Diplomacy Programmes at Circle International, Vitez University and also a PhD supervisor to a number of research students in diplomacy and related disciplines at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU). Prior to that he was Professor of Diplomacy Studies and Director of the Postgraduate International Diplomacy Programmes at the British School of Leadership and Management, GCU London.

He was the Founder and Director of The Academy of Diplomacy and International Governance, Loughborough University in London from November 2014 to October 2017. He pioneered the concept of presenting integrated postgraduate Diplomacy programmes in the UK and has over 30 years of experience directing innovative postgraduate degrees in Diplomacy and related disciplines for staff of governments and organisations as well as for graduates aspiring to an international career. Professor Ayad also established the Diplomatic Academy of London at the University of Westminster and served as Head of the Department of Diplomacy and Applied Languages and subsequently Rector of the London Academy of Diplomacy at the University of East Anglia, London Campus.

## Effect of Tax Evasion: Bosnia and Herzegovina as a Focus

**Authors:** Saudin Terzić

**Institution:** Faculty of Business Economics, University "VITEZ", Bosnia and Herzegovina



Tax evasion remains a widespread issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina, impacting all societal layers and contributing to the strain on the fragile economy. This paper analyzes the scope and consequences of tax evasion on the nation's development, aiming to outline the problem clearly and propose practical solutions. The core of the study focuses on public attitudes toward tax evasion, examining whether these perceptions have evolved over time.

The research employs a comparative analysis of survey responses gathered from 2016 to 2024 to pinpoint trends and shifts in public perception regarding tax evasion. The findings highlight a persistent lack of trust in institutions and the rule of law, exacerbated by the prevalence of tax evasion, which undermines economic stability and public confidence. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach involving policy reforms, public awareness campaigns, and strengthened enforcement mechanisms to foster compliance and restore trust in the tax system. This paper contributes to understanding the socio-economic dynamics of tax evasion in Bosnia and Herzegovina and presents a pathway for enhancing fiscal responsibility and governance.

**Keywords:** Finance, Business Law, Taxation, Tax policy, Tax evasion.



### Saudin Terzić

Dr. Saudin Terzić is an experienced economist with a strong background in customs and taxation. He holds a Master's and Doctorate in Economics from the University of Banja Luka. Since 2004, he has held key roles at the Indirect Taxation Authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Assistant Director for Law Enforcement, Assistant Director of the Tax Sector, and currently Head of the Customs Department in Travnik. Dr. Terzić specializes in fraud investigations, cross-border and VAT audits, and regularly participates in international seminars. He is also a published author in the fields of fiscal policy and economics and serves as a part-time professor at the University "Vitez." , as a part-time professor and instructor in university "Vitez" B

# Bridging Knowledge Gaps: Collaborative Research in Transnational Education

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**Authors:** Prof. Mohamed El Ansari

**Institution:** Circle International



In an increasingly globalised world, the demand for innovative educational approaches has become critical. Transnational education (TNE), which includes various forms of cross-border educational collaborations, has emerged as a vital strategy to address knowledge gaps and foster global academic partnerships. This paper explores the significance of collaborative research within TNE, positing that it serves as a crucial mechanism for bridging knowledge disparities, enhancing intercultural understanding, and improving educational outcomes.

TNE provides educational opportunities across borders, enabling students to access international curricula while remaining in their home countries. The growth of TNE has been driven by technological advancements, changing migration patterns, and rising demand for higher education. This paper emphasizes the importance of collaborative research initiatives in TNE, which allow institutions from different countries to work together on shared academic interests, integrating diverse perspectives and methodologies.

Furthermore, collaborative research in TNE fosters greater intercultural understanding, which is essential in today's interconnected world. The study highlights the importance of context-specific factors in shaping educational experiences and promoting intercultural dialogue. While the benefits of TNE are significant, challenges such as differences in academic standards and legal constraints can hinder effective collaboration. This paper calls for the establishment of clear communication and mutual respect among partners, as well as the development of sustainable funding models to support long-term collaborative research initiatives. In conclusion, collaborative research in transnational education is vital for enhancing educational quality and addressing global challenges.

**Keywords:** Transnational Education, Collaborative Research, Knowledge Gaps, Intercultural Understanding, Educational Outcomes.



## **Prof. Mohamed El Ansari**

Prof. El Ansari is a Visiting Fellow at the University of Bradford and visiting Professor at the University of Vitez. He has contributed to an international project to give access to quality education and promote the local, regional and national value of international education, emphasizing the importance of international students to employment and educational opportunities at a local & International level. He has extensive experience in international educational diplomacy. He is Chair of the London Education and Research Network as well as a member of the recently founded Transnational Education committee.

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# The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing Customer Experience in the Automotive Industry in Germany

**Authors:** Ms. Saeideh Hosseinian Maleki, Prof. Dr. Hans Rüdiger Kaufmann

**Institution:** University of Applied Management Studies, Germany



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This research examines the potential of artificial intelligence (AI)-powered technologies such as chatbots, voice bots, virtual reality (VR), and machine learning (ML) to improve customer experiences along the customer journey in the German automotive sector. Utilizing qualitative methods, the study involved detailed interviews to gather comprehensive insights. The findings suggest that transparency of information, personalized service, and hybrid collaboration between humans and AI significantly enhance customer interactions.

AI technologies provide real-time availability of information, enabling customers to quickly access and compare product attributes. They also facilitate personalized advertising tailored to customer preferences, particularly during the pre-purchase stage. Additionally, car configuration is enhanced using VR, offering an immersive experience that aids decision-making.

Despite the advantages of AI, significant concerns regarding data security and the need for human intervention persist. The research highlights the transformative potential of AI in enhancing customer satisfaction, process efficiency, and personalization levels within the automotive sector. The paper concludes by emphasizing the importance of addressing ethical concerns surrounding AI to maintain consumer trust and ensure its effective application in enhancing customer experiences.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Customer Experience, Customer Journey, Automotive Industry, Germany.



## Ms. Saeideh Hosseinian Maleki

Saeideh Hosseinian Maleki holds a Master of Arts (M.A.) in Business Management from the University of Applied Management Studies Mannheim (Hochschule der Wirtschaft für Management – HDWM), Germany, and a Master's degree in Economic Sciences (Theoretical Economics) from Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran. She has extensive professional experience in banking, customer relationship management, and financial services, having worked for over 15 years at EghtesadNovin Bank in Iran, where she served in various leadership roles. In Germany, she gained additional experience in the communication department at Hutchinson Company in Mannheim.

Currently, she is contributing as a Research Assistant at HDWM Mannheim for the project "Developing Innovative Practices for Tackling Dementia and Eliminating Stigma." Her areas of interest include strategic management, financial management, marketing, and innovation in service delivery. The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing Customer Experience in the Automotive Industry in Germany

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### **Prof. Dr. Hans Rüdiger Kaufmann**

Hans Rüdiger Kaufmann is Full Professor Marketing and Head of the doctoral methodology module at the University of Nicosia in Cyprus since 2006 until today. Since 2016, he is affiliated with the University of Applied Management Studies Mannheim as Professor for International Sales Management. He was the Chair of 3 programs: B.A. Management & Leadership, B.A. Management & Leadership (Professional Vocational University) and M.A. Business Management/M.A. Business Management & Digital Leadership (international).

Consumerism is the core of his well cited research reflected in many book publications (including Handbooks), book contributions, journal publications, editorial engagement, key notes, and international conference publications/organization. In particular, his interests revolve around consumerism related themes such as branding, luxury, identity and new trends, i.e. sustainability, digitalization and AI. Prof. Kaufmann is Editor-in-Chief of the journal Progress in Industrial Ecology.

He has been a launching member and President/Vice President of the following research networks: American Marketing Association (AMA) Global Marketing SIG, EuroMed Research Business Institute, CIRCLE International, Consumer Brand Relationship Institute.

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# An Exploration of the Dimensions of Responsible Leadership for Telecom Organisations: A U.S. Territory Perspective

**Authors:** Niroshi A. Rajamohana, Tahir Rashid, Neil Robinson  
**Institution:** University of Salford



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Responsible leadership is increasingly recognized as a socio-relational and ethical phenomenon, reflecting an emerging research topic within stakeholder societies. This study aims to advance our understanding of the dimensions and constructs of responsible leadership in interconnected stakeholder environments. Employing a qualitative mono-method approach and case study research strategy, the research involved collecting empirical data through in-depth interviews with participants from a telecommunication organization in a U.S. territory.

The findings highlight relational and ethical dimensions as key aspects of responsible leadership, alongside emotional and ethical intelligence as vital qualities for leaders. The research contributes to the development of a conceptual framework for responsible leadership, emphasizing its necessity in sustainable telecom business environments. The study proposes that emotional and ethical intelligence, collectively termed 'Integrated Relational Intelligence' (iRI), forms a fundamental basis of responsible leadership frameworks in business contexts.

The implications of these findings extend to practical applications in leadership development and organizational strategy, providing valuable insights into how responsible leadership can foster ethical stakeholder relationships and contribute to sustainable business practices within the telecom industry.

**Keywords:** Responsible leadership, Stakeholder relationships, Emotional intelligence, Ethical intelligence, Integrated relational intelligence.



## Niroshi A. Rajamohana

Anne Niroshi Rajamohan is a scholar of the University of Salford, Manchester, United Kingdom. Niroshi holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree (B.Com), an MSc in Project Management and is a Doctor of Business Administration student at the University of Salford. Her current research interests are around responsible leadership in the era of digital revolution and artificial intelligence. With over twenty-five years of professional experience in the ICT, Technology and Telecommunications industry sectors, Niroshi has engaged with diverse stakeholder groups across global geographies and has been instrumental in delivering transformational results for organizations. She has also contributed to PMI's Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) 7th Edition. Leveraging professional experiences and academic learnings, Niroshi aspires to pursue the research journey and contribute to making meaningful changes in the practice world.



## Tahir Rashid

Prof. Rashid is a highly qualified international academic and has taught postgraduate and professional courses in Austria, Germany, Lithuania and the UK. He is the Director of Post Graduate program in International Marketing & Services Management and Senior Lecturer in Marketing and Corporate Strategy at the University of Salford.

# Analysis and Development of Movie Recommendation Systems Using Artificial Intelligence

**Authors:** Mr. Vernes Vinčević, Nešad Krnjić, Bakir Čičak  
**Institution:** University of Vitez, Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina



This paper discusses the application of artificial intelligence in generating a movie recommendation system. The objective is to analyze a specific dataset and implement various AI methods and algorithms. Recommendation systems, a branch of AI, utilize large datasets to predict user preferences based on different algorithms, providing accurate suggestions. This study focuses on hybrid recommendation systems, combining the benefits of content-based and collaborative filtering techniques.

Creating an effective and accurate recommendation system relies on several factors, including adequate datasets and the selection of optimal algorithms. The paper details the analysis and evaluation of models using various metrics to determine performance and accuracy in generating recommendations. The research leverages big data, using extensive datasets to filter users, products, and services based on similarities. The findings underscore the importance of recommendation systems in enhancing user experience in various applications, such as Netflix, Amazon, and Spotify.

**Keywords:** Artificial intelligence, Machine learning algorithms, Big data, Recommendation system, Data analysis.



## Mr. Vernes Vinčević

Vernes Vinčević, senior assistant at the University "Vitez" at the Faculty of Information Technologies. He is currently a graduate student in doctoral studies at the University "Vitez" in Bosnia and Herzegovina



## Nešad Krnjić

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## Bakir Čičak

Bakir Čičak, professor at the University "Vitez" at the Faculty of Information Technologies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

# An Evaluation of Sustainability of Transnational University Partnerships: A Comparative Case Study of Branch Campuses in the UAE

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**Authors:** Saeed Alkuwaiti  
**Institution:** Vitez University



This paper examines the establishment of international branch campuses (IBCs) as a significant trend in global higher education. With the UAE emerging as a leader in hosting IBCs, this study focuses on the motivations, trends, and implications of IBC development within the broader context of transnational education. IBCs play a crucial role in promoting academic knowledge and enhancing the quality of national education systems, serving a diverse population and contributing to local economic growth.

The research highlights the challenges faced by IBCs, including maintaining academic standards comparable to home institutions, effective integration into the national education system, and navigating complex governance structures. The paper emphasizes the importance of aligning IBCs with local labor market needs and providing meaningful educational experiences. Additionally, it discusses the need for coordinated efforts between host and home countries to ensure sustainable partnerships and maximize the benefits of IBCs in higher education.

**Keywords:** International Branch Campuses, Transnational Education, Higher Education Policy, UAE Education System, Knowledge Transfer.



## Saeed Alkuwaiti

Saeed Alkuwaiti specializes in Public Office Management and Administration, bringing extensive experience in enhancing productivity and service quality. Currently based in the UAE, he leads a team of 150 HR professionals, focusing on employee development and operational excellence.

His background includes roles in both the banking and government sectors, where he has excelled in workflow planning, staff management, and strategic planning. Saeed holds an MBA from Al Hosn University and is currently pursuing a PhD at Vitas University, Bosnia & Herzegovina. His research interests lie in the fields of management, human resources, and higher education policy, with a particular emphasis on transnational education.

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# Business Intelligence Engagement in Human Capital Improvement: Etimad Holding Case

**Authors:** Abdullah Al Bloushi

**Institution:** Vitez University



In today's knowledge-driven economy, human capital is one of the most strategic assets for organizations, offering a unique competitive edge when properly nurtured. This study explores the role of Business Intelligence (BI) systems in enhancing human capital, using Etimad Holding, a key player in the UAE's health sector, as a case study. The research is structured into four sections, starting with the methodology that details design, sample selection, and data collection instruments.

The second section presents a theoretical framework that reviews literature on BI and human capital, highlighting the strategic value of integrating BI tools into HR practices. The third section discusses empirical findings, revealing strong positive correlations between BI engagement and improved outcomes in talent acquisition, performance evaluation, and strategic workforce planning. The study concludes by recommending the expansion of BI training, investment in integrated platforms for human capital analytics, and fostering a data-driven culture within organizations to leverage the benefits of BI effectively.

**Keywords:** Business Intelligence, Human Capital, Talent Development, Data-Driven Decision Making, Health Organizations.



## Abdullah Al Bloushi

Abdullah Al Bloushi is a highly skilled Systems Analyst with over 14 years of experience in designing, implementing, and maintaining IT systems. He has a proven track record of analyzing business requirements and translating them into effective system solutions. Known for his ability to troubleshoot and optimize system performance, he brings a strong attention to detail and a deep commitment to user satisfaction. Currently, he is pursuing PhD research at the University of Vitez, focusing on the role of business intelligence systems in human capital development.

## Consumers' Attitudes Towards Humour and Celebrities in the TV Advertisements for Polish Banking Products

**Authors:** Dr. Beata Szymańska-Waczyńska, Alexandra Kenyon, Eamonn Judge

**Institution:** Jan Wyżykowski University, Poland; University "VITEZ" Vitez, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom.



This paper investigates the use of humour and celebrity endorsements in enhancing consumer attention towards Polish banking advertisements. Despite concerns that using humour trivializes high-risk products, many banks in Poland continue to employ humorous elements in their advertising strategies. This mixed-methods research examines consumer attitudes towards these advertisements, utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods to explore participants' views, experiences, and beliefs regarding the effectiveness of humour types and celebrity attributes.

Through a rigorous methodology, including a survey of 424 participants, the research reveals insights into consumer preferences and the impact of humour and celebrity endorsements on advertising effectiveness. The findings suggest that while humour can engage audiences, the attributes of the celebrities featured play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions. The paper discusses the implications for future advertising strategies, emphasizing the need for a deeper understanding of consumer attitudes across different demographics and products.

**Keywords:** Humour in advertising, Celebrity endorsement, Attitude, Attitudinal theory, Banking advertising.



### Dr. Beata Szymańska-Waczyńska

Beata Szymańska-Waczyńska PhD is a graduate of doctoral studies at Leeds Beckett University in the UK. She graduated with distinction from the Master of Business Administration studies at the Polish Open University in Warsaw and Oxford Brookes University in the UK.

She has many years of experience as a business advisor, trainer and lecturer. She has cooperated with many educational institutions in Poland and the UK, including: Leeds Beckett University, Wyższa Szkoła Zarządzania / Polish Open University in Legnica, Warsaw and Krakow, Warsaw University of Technology, Jan Wyżykowski University.

She has published her articles in the UK, Ireland and Poland. She is a lecturer at the Jan Wyżykowski University. Beata Szymańska-Waczyńska also conducts business and language trainings for employees of such prestigious companies as Mercedes-Benz Polska, LIS Polska, Toyota Boshoku, Haerter Technika Wytłaczania, KGHM PM S.A., VOSS Automotive Polska Sp. z o.o., and Johnson & Johnson Poland.

# Addressing Energy Poverty in Nigeria: A Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System and Incentive-Based Approach for Small Business Enterprises

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**Authors:** Dr. Ogonna Nnaemeka Richard  
**Institution:** University Sunderland



Access to affordable and environmentally friendly energy sources is critical, as highlighted by UNSDG-07. Approximately 40.5% of Nigeria's population lacks electricity access, prompting this study to address energy poverty through the use of off-grid solar photovoltaic systems. The research aims to facilitate the adoption of these systems by offering incentives such as tax rebates, grants, and loans to small-scale business enterprises.

The study employs online questionnaires using Likert scaled questions, with a sample size of 621 participants out of 2070. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using SPSS, revealing strong reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.739. The findings demonstrate a correlation between the proposed incentives and the willingness of businesses to adopt solar PV systems, supporting the hypothesis that financial incentives can effectively enhance energy access and contribute to economic development in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Energy poverty, Nigeria, UNSDG-07, Off-Grid, Solar PV systems.



## **Dr. Ogonna Nnaemeka Richard**

Experienced Maintenance Manager with a strong Wireline Logging background in the oil & energy industry. Skilled in Oil & Gas, Electrical & Electronic Engineering, Project & Asset Management and a strong operations professional with a Master of Engineering Management (MEM) with research interest in Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency from University of Port Harcourt. Member, Nigeria Society of Engineers, MNSE and a Registered Engineer by the council for regulation of Engineering In Nigeria, COREN.

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# Embedding Resources in New Social Business Ventures: A Network Interaction Approach

**Authors:** Nicole Lillini, Alessandro Cinti, Valerio Temperini

**Institution:** Università degli Studi di Perugia



The emergence of social business ventures presents unique challenges related to resource acquisition and competence development, particularly for entrepreneurs facing physical or cognitive disabilities. This study explores how resources are integrated when establishing social business ventures, utilizing a Network Interaction Approach to analyze the dynamics of resource embedding and mobilization through a case study.

The findings highlight the significance of resource reconfiguration across various organizational and institutional interfaces, demonstrating how social business ventures leverage network relationships to access critical assets. The study contributes to the understanding of resource interactions in social entrepreneurship, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and network positioning in overcoming resource constraints. Future research should investigate the longitudinal evolution of these interactions to enhance our understanding of social business emergence.

**Keywords:** Social enterprise, Social entrepreneurship, Business networks, Resource combining, Network Interaction Approach.



## Nicole Lillini

Nicole Lillini is a research fellow at the Università degli Studi di Perugia, where she obtained a Master's Degree cum laude in Philosophy and Ethics of Human Relations. Her research interests include policy innovation, industrial marketing and business management and social responsibility. She currently works as Marketing Manager for SITUM, an academy of innovation and entrepreneurship developed in partnership with Università degli Studi di Perugia, Università degli Studi dell'Aquila, Università Politecnica delle Marche, and the Chambers of Commerce of Marche, Abruzzo, and Umbria.



## Alessandro Cinti

Alessandro Cinti is a post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Management at the Università Politecnica delle Marche, where he reached a PhD in Management and Law and Master's Degree cum laude in Economics and Management. He has spent 10 years mainly working in the marketing sector, in Milan and Rome in public and private international companies. His research interests include policy innovation, industrial marketing and business management, with several publications in international journals. He is the general coordinator of SITUM, an academy of innovation and entrepreneurship in partnership with Università degli Studi di Perugia, Università degli Studi dell'Aquila, Università Politecnica delle Marche, Chambers of Commerce Marche, Abruzzo and Umbria. He is affiliated to SIM (Italian Marketing Society).



## Valerio Temperini

Valerio Temperini is associate professor of Business Management at the Polytechnic University of Marche, Department of Management (Ancona, Italy). PhD in E-learning (Methods and techniques for computer assisted education). Research interests: services marketing, tourism and territorial marketing, food marketing, marketing strategies with specific reference to SMEs. He teaches marketing, services marketing, green marketing at the Marche Polytechnic University. He has been visiting scholar at the Montclair State University (New Jersey, USA).

# Ethical Tourism: Principles, Challenges, and Implications for Sustainable Development

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**Authors:** Prof. Razaq Raj, Yasin Bilim, Ahmad Albattat  
**Institution:** Leeds Beckett University



Ethical tourism has gained prominence in contemporary tourism studies, reflecting a growing recognition of ethical considerations in travel. This paper explores the development and fundamental principles of ethical tourism, particularly in the context of sustainability, cultural preservation, and social equity. The discourse has evolved to encompass broader concerns beyond economic benefits, including environmental impacts and cultural integrity.

The research discusses the significant influence of responsible consumption and sustainability on the tourism industry, prompting stakeholders to reassess their ethical responsibilities. The paper examines key milestones in the evolution of ethical tourism, including the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism established by the UNWTO. Despite the growing commitment to ethical practices, challenges persist, notably the gap between ethical intentions and actual tourist behavior.

The paper emphasizes the importance of ethical marketing and responsible consumer choices in shaping the future of tourism, ultimately providing a comprehensive analysis of ethical tourism as a means to foster responsible and equitable tourism practices.

**Keywords:** Ethical tourism, Sustainability, Cultural preservation, Responsible consumption.



## **Prof. Razaq Raj**

Prof. Raj is a Principal lecturer in the Business school in Leeds Beckett University. His research interests include community events, outdoor events, economic impacts, religious tourism, cultural festivals and sustainable tourism, cultural diversity in events management and international tourism.

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# Consumer Acceptance of Food Assistance: Behavioral and Psychological Barriers among Low-Income Households in Post-Pandemic Japan

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**Authors:** Dr. Mitsunori Hirogaki  
**Institution:** Kyushu University, Japan



In post-pandemic Japan, the increase in food-insecure households is attributed to rising living costs and declining wages. In response, various food assistance programs have been introduced; however, acceptance of these services is not universal among those who could benefit. This study investigates the decision-making processes surrounding food assistance acceptance and rejection, focusing on stigma, social judgment, and perceptions of program quality.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines surveys and interviews with low-income households to uncover the emotional and cognitive factors affecting participation. The findings suggest that psychological barriers significantly hinder acceptance of food assistance, leading to recommendations for designing more inclusive, consumer-centered support services. The implications extend to social marketing strategies aimed at reducing food waste and promoting social inclusion, highlighting the need for targeted outreach to overcome stigma and encourage engagement with food assistance programs.

**Keywords:** Social Marketing, Food-insecure, Stigma Consciousness, Brand Image of Public Services, Japan.



## Dr. Mitsunori Hirogaki

Dr. Hirogaki is currently an Associate Professor of Marketing Strategy at Kyushu University, Graduate School of Economics, Department of Business and Technology Management (QBS Business School), where he teaches Marketing Strategy and International Marketing. He also serves as a part-time lecturer at a Catholic women's university, where he teaches International Marketing. Dr. Hirogaki's current research focuses on Cross-Cultural Consumer Behavior in international marketing and marketing strategies in mature, developed societies. He is a member of Japanese Economic Association, Japan Society of Marketing and Distribution, and Japan Association for Consumer Studies.

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# Visualisation Tools in Road Construction Project Management: A Case Study of the Abuja-Kano Road Project in Nigeria

**Authors:** Dr Nikola Draskovic, Monika Stojadinov, Krešimir Žnidar

**Institution:** Algebra Bernays University, Croatia; Julius Berger Nigeria Plc, Nigeria



This study investigates the application of visualization tools in managing road infrastructure construction, specifically focusing on the Abuja-Kano Road project executed by Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Visualization tools are recognized for their ability to transform complex project data into actionable insights, significantly influencing decision-making, stakeholder communication, and overall project productivity.

Employing a qualitative research approach, the study includes a comprehensive review of relevant literature and semi-structured interviews with key project management personnel. Findings indicate that visualization tools enhance productivity and profitability by optimizing resource allocation and improving project timelines. The research identifies challenges in deploying these tools, such as technological limitations and resistance to change, while emphasizing the potential for integrating advanced technologies like augmented reality to enhance project management practices.

**Keywords:** Visualization Tools, Construction Project Management, Decision Making, Infrastructure Development, Virtual Design and Construction (VDC).



## Dr Nikola Draskovic

Associate Professor Nikola Draskovic leads the University Department of Economics at Algebra University. He completed his PhD in 2010 at Leeds Metropolitan University, UK, specializing in marketing. Before this, he acquired dual master's degrees in marketing and management from the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Economics and Business. From January 2019 to February 2023, he served as the Commercial Director at Colas Hrvatska d.d. and as a director at its Slovenian subsidiary. His academic tenure includes roles as Lecturer and Senior Lecturer at RIT Croatia, spanning four years. Before that, he spent thirteen years as a sales manager and key account manager at Vetropack Straža d.d. His career initiation was in the marketing sector, managing advertising projects for both domestic and international clients, including notable companies like Hrvatski Telekom, Unilever, Johnson & Johnson, and Hyundai. His research focuses on the marketing role of packaging, personal sales, marketing strategy, and digital marketing.

# A Degree Apprenticeship Scheme as a Talent Management Strategy for Generation Y Hospitality Employees

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**Authors:** Dr. Dougie Yourston

**Institution:** University of Gloucestershire, UK



This paper evaluates the effectiveness of UK-based degree apprenticeships as a talent management strategy, focusing on Generation Y hospitality employees. The study captures their onboarding journey and experiences during the first year of their apprenticeship, employing Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to gather insights from 10 UK-based hotel employees.

The findings reveal that degree apprenticeship programs are effective in nurturing talent and skill development, contributing to employee retention. However, challenges associated with balancing studies and external commitments are also highlighted. The research offers critical insights for management regarding the implementation of degree apprenticeship schemes and their impact on talent management within the hospitality sector, emphasizing the need for structured support to facilitate employee success.

**Keywords:** Hospitality Apprenticeship, Mentorship, Talent Retention, Work-life-study balance.



## **Dr. Dougie Yourston**

Dougie Yourston is the Postgraduate Research Degrees Lead (PhD and DBA), PhD Course Leader, and senior lecturer in the School of Business, Computing and Social Sciences at the University of Gloucestershire. Dougie has extensive hospitality and now lecturing experience in the FE and HE sectors in Australia, Hong Kong, Vietnam and the UK. His teaching subject areas includes research methodologies, management studies, including financial and the experience economy, along with publishing several research articles published on generational studies, talent management and the hospitality industry.

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# International Student Workforce Integration in the UK's Northeast Tech Sector

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**Authors:** Mr Seyi Musibau, Dr. Okeoma John-Paul Okeke

**Institution:** Faculty of Business and Technology (FBT), The University of Sunderland, England, UK.



This study investigates the challenges faced by international graduates in integrating into the UK tech sector, particularly in the Northeast region. Despite their crucial role in filling workforce gaps, international students encounter various barriers to integration, including language challenges, cultural adaptation issues, and limited professional networks.

Using a qualitative methodology, the research included semi-structured interviews with HR and talent acquisition managers from tech companies in the Northeast. The findings reveal a significant skills gap between international graduates' technical abilities and the broader competencies sought by employers. Additionally, while international graduates bring valuable skills and diverse perspectives, they often struggle with soft skills and navigating the UK tech job market. This research provides insights for educational institutions and policymakers to better support the integration of international talent into the workforce.

**Keywords:** International graduates, Workforce integration, UK tech sector, Northeast, Talent acquisition.



## Mr Seyi Musibau

Seyi Hammed Musibau is a Business Analyst and postgraduate researcher with over six years of experience across IT, Banking, Telecommunications, and Security. He holds an MBA from the University of Sunderland and is a certified Lean Six Sigma Green Belt. Seyi specializes in digital transformation, process optimization, and data-driven analysis, with strong proficiency in tools like JIRA, Visio, Power BI, and SQL. His professional background includes roles in quality assurance, customer experience, and change management, underpinned by expertise in SDLC and Agile methodologies. As a researcher, his interests focus on talent identification and business development in the UK technology sector and beyond. Seyi aims to bridge practical industry challenges with academic insights, contributing to innovation and sustainable growth through strategic talent and process development.

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# Key Factors to Enhance Business Performance of Small to Medium Sized Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) in Buffalo City, South Africa

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**Authors:** Prof. Dinesh Vallabh

**Institution:** Walter Sisulu University – South Africa



This study highlights the critical role of small businesses in driving economic growth and employment opportunities, particularly for small to medium-sized tourism enterprises (SMTEs) in Buffalo City, South Africa. Despite their importance, many SMTEs face challenges due to low levels of education and skills among owners and managers, which hinder entrepreneurial growth.

The research employs both qualitative and quantitative methods, administering surveys to SMTEs in Buffalo City. The analysis, conducted using SPSS software, reveals that the education and skills of SMTE owners and managers are pivotal for enhancing business performance. The study concludes by recommending that SMTE owners invest in education and skills development initiatives, and that the government provide effective training support programs to foster growth potential in this sector.

**Keywords:** SMTEs, Education, Training, Skills, Performance.



## Prof. Dinesh Vallabh

Professor Vallabh is Head of the Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Management. His primary areas of interest range from Marketing, Small Businesses, Customer Relationship Management, Religious Tourism and Rural Tourism. He also currently serves as a City Councillor in Buffalo City Metropolitan City of South Africa.

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## Enhancing Organizational Productivity Through Employee Training: A Strategic Approach

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**Authors:** Mr Rashed Abdulla ALDosari

**Institution:** Vitez University



This paper investigates the significance of employee training programs in enhancing organizational productivity, particularly in today's competitive business environment. Employee training is defined as a structured process aimed at modifying behavior through various learning events, leading to the acquisition of essential skills and competencies. The research evaluates different types of training programs, including technical, soft skills, and leadership training, emphasizing their positive impact on employee performance and overall organizational productivity.

The findings suggest that effective training not only boosts employee morale and retention but also enhances customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. Despite challenges such as high costs and difficulties in measuring training effectiveness, the paper encourages organizations to prioritize training investments. By overcoming these challenges through strategic planning and resource allocation, organizations can maximize the benefits of employee training programs, ultimately leading to increased productivity and long-term success.

**Keywords:** Employee training, Productivity, Workforce development, Organizational success, Training programs.



### Mr Rashed Abdulla ALDosari

Rashed Aldosari is a seasoned public sector leader with over two decades of experience at Abu Dhabi Police, specializing in service delivery, institutional excellence, and customer happiness. He currently serves as Head of the Service Delivery Department, where he leads initiatives focused on digital transformation, customer engagement, and service quality standards. Throughout his career, he has held multiple senior roles, including Director of Institutional Excellence, Head of Services Measurement, and Coordinator of the Minister of Interior Excellence Award. Rashed is also certified in ISO 9001 auditing and holds numerous professional diplomas in leadership, quality, and innovation. His extensive experience is backed by a strong commitment to excellence and continuous improvement in public service.

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