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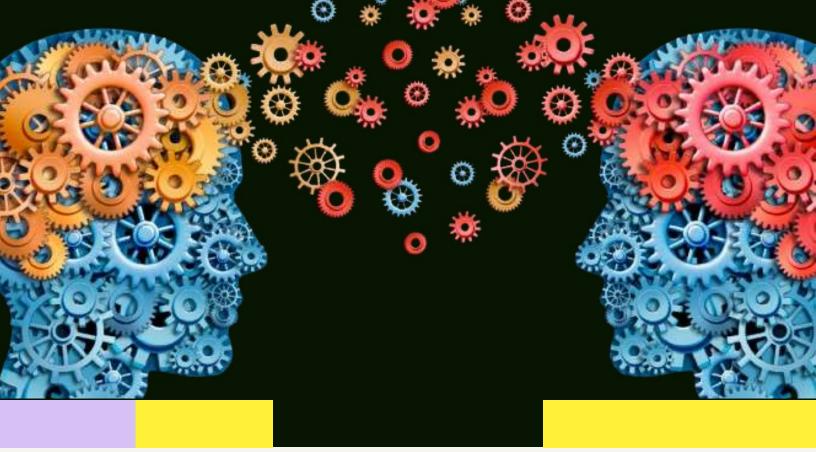
Behavioral & Social Science Research

October 23rd, 2023

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PROCEEDING BOOK

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Introduction

The International Congress on Behavioral & Social Science Research 2023, organized by the Sciinov Group, was successfully held on October 23rd, 2023. This event brought together experts, scholars, activists, and thought leaders from around the world to explore how behavioral science can help us understand the complex interplay between individual behavior, social norms, and broader cultural and political systems.

The event provided a platform for both established and emerging voices, with participants from diverse backgrounds contributing to dynamic conversations about the evolving understanding of behavioral and social science in today's world. The Sciinov Group was proud to host this inspiring and impactful conference, which not only highlighted critical issues but also offered hope and actionable solutions for a more inclusive future.

Keynote Presentations

Navigating the 'messy middle' of e-commerce with behavioural science

Alec Barr

Head of Agency Growth at Askable,

United Kindgom

Abstract:

The world of e-commerce is enormous, nebulous, and accelerating at lightspeed following the global pandemic. It is said of the internet that one can cover more retail 'ground' in 10 minutes than would be possible in 10km of physical high street real estate.

(Since 2020 there has been a steady but meteoric rise in e-consumerism - a trend that is locally reflectd in varying degrees but globally representable across a large spectrum of sectors)

But as the marketplace has grown, so too has our confusion about the decision theory that underpins it. This is the central paradox of marketing science: as our ability to measure interactions online has gone up, our ability to comprehend what we're looking at has gone down.

The decision-making faculties of consumers are now so complex and spread thinly across so many touchpoints, they have become almost inscrutable to behavioural science practitioners. How do we operate in a space where there is this much uncertainty?

In this lecture, we will look at the psychological principles behind WHY e-commerce is so wildly popular, and how we can leverage behavioural economics strategically to improve the end-user experience. We will examine contemporary research on the use of "nudges" in e-commerce settings, told through the lens of Google's latest academic study, as well as several examples of this new thinking we have run using a proprietary framework.

Biography:

Alec Barr is a respected a tenured leader in the world of human-centred design in the field of communications. With 11 years of experience in the Experience Design space, Alec has led award winning teams and given lectures at the Queensland University of Technology on topics as diverse as "The Behavioural Science of Covid-19" and "The Lie of Data Security & Privacy". He specialises in the practical application of behavioural economics tactics to deisgn solution to digital products that make the more usable and desirable for the end-consumer.

Prosocial Leadership for Flourishing: Reimagine Leadership Wellbeing and Development

Julia Mahfouz

University of Colorado Denver,
USA

Danny Yahya

University of Colorado Denver,
USA

Abstract:Through their ability to cultivate effective flourishing communities, leaders have an immense impact on their companies or organizations in relation to work environment, productivity, innovation, and interpersonal dynamics among employees. However, there is sparse research on how to develop the requisite social and emotional competencies (SECs) in school leaders to effectively cultivate these environments. Further, leaders experience substantial job-related stress, and often lack the resources to develop their own SECs that could help them respond. Many leaders also believe they lack these skills to effectively lead their companies, and high turnover rates create significant financial and operational burden. Despite a clear need to build leader SECs, few interventions for leaders have this focus.

The Prosocial Leader Model describes how promoting SECs for prosociality in leaders positively influences the broader community. Prosociality, specifically, is thought to be essential to effective leadership because prosocial leaders use their work to promote the welfare of others and expand flourishing. Without research evidence for effective interventions aimed at developing leaders' prosocial SECs, systems will struggle to support and retain leaders and employees alike who can meet the increasing demands of their profession and avoid falling prey to the burnout and turnover that often characterizes these roles. Thus, based on a corpus of research studies, this presentation investigates how we could rethink leadership in an attempt to answer the following overarching questions: 1. How can we reimagine leadership wellbeing and development? 2. How do we define and operationalize wellbeing for leaders so they become enablers of flourishing for their organizations and people?

Biography:

Julia Mahfouz, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Colorado Denver. She has been recently selected to be part of the inaugural cohort of CASEL Weissberg scholars. Her research explores the social, emotional, and cultural dynamics of educational settings placing specific emphasis on adult social and emotional competencies (SECs), specifically school administrators and the integration of systemic SEL into principal preparation programs. Thus, she has implemented mindfulness-based and social emotional learning (SEL)-based professional development programs to understand how such programs can improve principal wellbeing and leadership. She has also investigated how preparation programs and certification standards can be strengthened to enhance effective leadership by supporting principals to deepen their social and emotional competencies.

Danny Yahya, MSc, MBA is an independent researcher whose research interests include self development, leadership, managing emotions during crisis and change, and coping strategies of stress through adopting healthy practices. As a professional lead in the healthcare sector, he is focused on converting research findings into evidence-based practices that guide leaders to drive change and empower a healthy working culture. Hi research has been published in practitioner based outlets such as The Greater Good Magazine.

Oral Presentations

In pursuit of understanding human behavioral algorithms: Finding the sentimental equilibrium while humans engage with digital technologies

Jay van Zyl
ecosystem.Ai, USA

Abstract:

In the modern age, technology has become an integral part of our lives, and it is increasingly difficult to imagine life without it. Technology has revolutionized the way we interact with each other and our environment, and it has enabled us to gain a better understanding of our behavior and the behavior of others. With the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), our understanding of algorithms, which are the mathematical rules used to process data, has become increasingly important.

Computational social science is a field that uses algorithms and AI to study human behavior, and it has been used to gain insight into the behavior of individuals, groups, and societies. The intersection of behavioral science and AI can be used to better understand algorithms of the human organism while interacting with technology. Specifically, the focus is on how AI can impact the algorithms that govern our emotions and our ongoing interactions.

Sentimental equilibrium is finding the optimal relationship between changing human emotions and ongoing interactions with communication technology. AI-driven algorithms can be used to identify and track the emotions of individuals and to respond to those emotions in order to create a more harmonious relationship. By understanding the emotional state of individuals, AI-driven algorithms can be used to provide more tailored responses to their needs and to create a more positive and productive environment.

Will explore how the intersection of behavioral science and AI is used to better understand algorithms of the human organism while interacting with technology, with a focus on how AI will impact the algorithms that govern our emotions and our ongoing interactions. By understanding the emotional state of individuals, AI-driven algorithms can be used to provide more tailored responses and to create a more harmonious relationship.

Biography:

Jay completed his PhD in 2000 focusing on multidisciplinary studies between computer science and human learning. He continued his research, and in 2011 published, Built to Thrive: Using Innovation to Make Your Mark in a Connected World, focusing on finding change drivers as the social human pursues and implement new ideas. His latest startup, ecosystem.Ai, is focused on real-time prediction using behavioral models with a no-code platform that guides model serving and real-time interventions to liberate the data scientist.

Exploring the Psychosocial Experiences of Foster Parents Caring for Adolescents Presenting with Risk Behaviour

Fatima Mmusi
University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Abstract:

In this paper, we focus on a study that aimed at gaining insight into foster parents' psychosocial experiences in fostering adolescents presenting with risk behaviour. Foster parents were recruited from two districts in the North West province in South Africa. To achieve the study aim, we believed that a qualitative approach, utilising an exploratory descriptive design, was the most suitable. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews with a group of 32 purposively selected foster parents caring for adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 years. The data collection continued until data saturation had been reached. A content analysis revealed that foster parents have a range of lived experiences in caring for adolescents presenting with risk behaviour, including the ability to effectively deal and cope with fostered adolescents' emotional and behavioural needs. Based on the findings, we recommend specialised parenting interventions that are directed at enhancing foster parents' skills in dealing with both emotional and psychological difficulties faced by adolescents who enter foster care.

Biography:

Fatima Mmusi completed her PhD in 2020 from North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus in South Africa with her thesis is entitled " The development of adolescent risk behaviour management (ARBM) programme for foster parents".She is currently a senior lecture at University of Johannesburg teaching both undergraduate and postragraduate students.She serve as an internal and external examiner for postgraduate research, as well as a peer reviewer for national and international scientific journals.Her expertise is within child protection with a specific interest on out-of-home care, intervention for foster families, risk behaviour presented by adolescents, care leaving, and family preservation.

The Effect of General Trust on Willingness to Communicate in English Among Japanese Individuals Across Various Situations

Takehiko Ito

Hosei University, Japan

Abstract:

This study examined the effect of general trust on the willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among the Japanese using a new scale for WTC. Previous studies have utilized the original scale for WTC, which presented abstract situations such as "Talking in a small group of acquaintances." However, it was unclear whether the impact of general trust on WTC varied across different specific situations. In this study, the situations were defined based on two perspectives: whether the conversation would develop or not and whether the conversation was active or passive. For instance, if the conversation were developing and active, the item would be "Asking a question in English about his/her hobby to a person who attended a party." If the conversation were not developing and passive, the item would be "Answering a passenger who asked how to make a transfer in English at a station." Two types of conversation partners were considered: native and non-native speakers. Ultimately, 74 items were created. An online social survey targeted 500 Japanese ranging from their 20s to 60s. The results were as follows: 1) the WTC score was higher in passive conversations than in active ones, but there was no difference in WTC scores between developing and non-developing conversations; 2) the WTC scores demonstrated a similar trend for both native and non-native conversation partners; 3) general trust had equal positive effects on WTC in all situations, including developing/not developing and active/passive. Therefore, higher general trust enhanced English communication for Japanese people.

Biography:

Takehiko Ito is an Associate Professor at the Department of Economics, Hosei University, located at 4342 Aiharamachi, Machida, Tokyo, Japan 194-0298. He has published over 15 papers in renowned journals.

Objection! Student disciplinary may be THE pathway to reducing GBV in higher education: A conceptual analysis on the role of higher education disciplinary services, in combating GBV in South African Institutions of higher learning.

Vedhna Lalla
North West University, South Africa

Abstract:
This is a conceptual paper, and the study is currently ongoing. Gender based violence, (GBV), is a term that encompasses a range of detrimental actions that mostly targets females due to their gender. In other words, gender-based violence (GBV) is a type of violence that targets a person based on their gender identity with the intent to control or harm them. It includes various forms of violence such as sexual harassment, assault, coercion, and exploitation, which can have serious physical, emotional, and psychological effects on victims. Within the higher education sector in South Africa the Student Judicial/student disciplinary services plays an integral role in terms of the management of matters pertaining to gender-based violence (GBV) on campus is managed. While academic integrity and misconduct issues are at the forefront of the student judicial/student disciplinary services, issues relating to gender-based violence (GBV) have recently intensified and thus have become services that the student judicial/student disciplinary department must regulate. This paper will examine the role of student judicial/student disciplinary services on matters related to GBV in higher education in South Africa. In institutions of higher learning, GBV not only undermines the safety and well-being of students, but also impedes their academic success and hinders their ability to fully participate in campus life. In August 2022, the South African Minister of Higher education, Minister Blade Nzimande, stated during a media briefing that within South Africa, institutions of higher learning account for 10% of reported rape cases. To achieve the aim, we will utilise a conceptual approach to analyse and determine how student judicial/student disciplinary services can be effectively used to successfully manage and reduce the number of GBV cases on the campuses and on how to ensure that persons affected by GBV are supported in a non-threatening way without any re-victimisation. This will include a desktop review of all participating student judicial/student disciplinary services within the higher education institutions in South Africa to assess and compare the services rendered. Furthermore, an extensive literature review will be carried out on the subject matter to further broaden our understanding. Based on the findings we envision that information from this study will add value to the existing knowledge and will in turn enhance services rendered by the student judicial/student disciplinary services in terms of regulating GBV within the higher learning institutions in South Africa.

Biography:

Vedhna Lalla is a social work lecturer and researcher with over 20 years progressive experience in social work practice and 5 years in the expansion of academic programs, policies, and initiatives to promote student success and achievement. Vedhna has extensive insight into matters pertaining to gender empowerment and development. She is currently employed as a lecturer at the North West University in the School of Psychosocial Health and is a PhD candidate in the Optentia Research Entity. Vedhna's PhD is surrounding empowerment, flourishing and capabilities of women.

Dyslexia and job burn-out: Supporting the mental health needs of dyslexic employees

Shae Wissell
re:think dyslexia, Australia

Abstract:
Job security and employment are crucial factors that impact an individual's health and wellbeing. However, in Australia, only about half of people with disabilities are part of the workforce, as reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2018. Dyslexia is a public health issue. It is a lifelong, specific type of learning disability that affects 1 in 10 Australians and represents 50% of the neurodivergent population. While the psychological risks and educational requirements of dyslexic individuals still in school or post-secondary education have been the subject of increased attention over the last decade less attention has been given to the process of dyslexic adults entering the workforce. Additionally, although legal policies have been implemented in Australia and abroad to protect people with dyslexia against discrimination there has been a lack of commitment to supporting those with dyslexia in workplaces.

Until now the link between workplace job resources, job demands and work-related outcomes, such as job burnout, has remained unclear for individuals with dyslexia. This presentation brings together my lived experiences of dyslexia and my Australian-first, internationally published research exploring the systemic barriers that working adults with dyslexia face, that can contribute to low levels of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. It will bring together the finds from this research and provide practical strategies and solutions across the employee life to support and improve employee wellbeing. These strategies support dyslexic individuals and enable organisations to build their capacity to create more inclusive environments where dyslexic cannot just survive but thrive.

Biography:
Shae Wissell is a respected thought leader, researcher and award-winning advocate for adults with dyslexia, with a background in speech pathology, and a Master of Public Healthand Health Administration. A seasoned entrepreneur Shae has extensive experience in health, not-for-profit and social enterprise industries using her business acumen to create successful ventures. She brings a wealth of expertise to her work running her own successful businesses as the director of re:think dyslexia and founder of the Dear Dyslexic Foundation its partnering charity. Shae leverages her diverse skillset and lived experiences of neurodivergence to offer valuable coaching and advisory services to individuals, entrepreneurs and organisations looking to take their lives and businesses to the next level.

As a doctoral candidate at La Trobe University's School of Psychology and Public Health, Shae's research centres on the lived experiences of adults with dyslexia in Australia. Her work explores the social inequalities individuals with dyslexia may face across healthcare, education, employment, interpersonal relationships, and social and emotional well-being. Shae has published locally and internationally on work experiences, mental health, and well-being.

As a certified Fempire coach for women in start-ups and new businesses, Shae's strong coaching skills have helped many dyslexic individuals and business owners achieve their goals. Her empathetic and empowering coaching style helps her clients overcome obstacles and unlock their full potential.

Beyond research and coaching, Shae is accomplished workplace advisory offering consulting and learning and development programs that provide invaluable guidance to businesses seeking to create more inclusive workplaces. Her expertise in dyslexia and other learning differences has been instrumental in shaping workplace policies and training programs that foster greater diversity, equity, and inclusion. Helping organizations unlock the full potential of their neurodiverse employees. Through her innovative approaches to dyslexia advocacy and education, Shae is creating a brighter future for individuals with dyslexia, while helping businesses thrive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

In addition to her research, Shae is a confident public speaker, host of the Dear Dyslexic podcast series, and published author. Her debut book, "The Hobo CEO: A Year in the Life of a Dyslexic Social Entrepreneur," reached the top spot-on Amazon's bestseller list. With her unique blend of personal and professional expertise, Shae is a valuable asset to the dyslexia community and beyond.

Impact of Cultural Behaviour on Indoor Comfort: Examining the Nexus between User Behaviour and Indoor Air Quality in British Asian Homes

Satish BK
Cardiff University, United Kingdom

Abstract:

There is a limited understanding of householders' behaviour pattern and their impact on spatial organisation and energy behaviour in dwellings. Indoor air quality directly impacts the health and well-being of occupants. Preliminary research conducted in Plymouth, UK indicates that British Asians use their homes differently compared to native British in terms of spatial organisation, cooking habits (on average, they spend five times more time cooking the daily meal) and ventilation strategies, all of which have an impact on indoor air quality. This project establishes the impact of culturally informed choices on indoor air quality and the extent to which the norms that guide the design of energy-efficient homes ignore potentially significant cultural and behavioural differences. It will achieve this by focusing on the impact of energy behaviour and choices related to cooking on the indoor air quality of British-Asian households. The project aims to quantify temperature, humidity and air quality by data collected by a study in Plymouth and Cardiff, UK. We will engage the community in a participatory methodology using correlational research and survey questionnaires and IAQ Data Loggers to evidence anomalies from the design norms currently used in the UK. The primary outcome is to evaluate the impact of cultural behaviour on the air quality of super-insulated British-Asian homes through an interdisciplinary methodology. This project lays the foundations for larger-scale research working with diverse ethnic minority communities to harmonise homeowners' aspirations towards a low-carbon society.

Biography:
Satish is an Associate Professor (Senior Lecturer) at the Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University, UK. He is an architect and a researcher in the sustainable built environment (since 2014). Before joining WSA, he was the Associate Head of the School, Teaching, Learning & Student Experience at the School of Art, Design and Architecture, Plymouth University. His PhD in Architecture from the University of Edinburgh, UK (2014) is in the field of the sustainable built environment. Satish has published in reputed journals and presented at international conferences.

Psychology of Lookalikes: A Review of the Literature

Sebastian Roca
Influence At Work, United States

Biography:
Sebastian, an Associate Behavioral Scientist at Influence At Work, a consultancy founded by Robert Cialdini and Steve Martin, specializes in applying behavioral insights to the consumer, pharmaceutical, and financial sectors. He holds a master's degree in Behavioral Science from the London School of Economics and is a qualified Peruvian solicitor with over seven years of experience in complex negotiations, including M&As, financing, and legal analysis. Sebastian's prior roles have covered the energy, financial, and commercial sectors, and he is fluent in both English and Spanish.

Between A Rock And A Hard Place: Migrant Workers in Singapore

Julia J. Schoonover
University at Buffalo - Singapore Institute of Management

Abstract:

 Singapore's expansive economic growth in the last few decades has motivated hundreds of thousands of workers from neighboring countries to migrate to Singapore in search of work. Migrant workers travel in search of better jobs and employment opportunities than are available to them in their own countries. However, for the typical migrant worker, obtaining safe, well- paid employment upon their migration is not easy. Many migrants work in low-wage jobs in the construction, manufacturing, and processing sectors. These jobs are physically demanding and operate under tough working conditions. While these jobs are essential to Singapore's economic growth, the work itself is often risky for workers; indeed, injuries and abuse are pervasive. Although their contributions are clear, there is often little or no concern for their experiences upon arrival. Through a mixed methodological analysis, this research identifies the conditions of work for low-wage migrant workers in Singapore. Thus, I examined migrants' economic outcomes and their experiences in Singapore. My research also includes an analysis of the perceptions of Singaporeans about low-wage migrants' work and the contributions of them. Studying the circumstances of work for low-wage labor migrants in Singapore helps provide a better understanding of temporary labor regimes across the globe.

Biography:
Julia Schoonover PhD is a dedicated, insightful, and synergetic researcher. While working more recently as a Knowledge Manager and throughout the process of obtaining a Ph.D., she has developed strong skills in research and evaluation, communication, and dynamic problem-solving. Within her research, Julia's work is around societies understanding of human rights and the rights of workers and immigrants. Julia is mainly interested in studying how we use public policy to shape our acceptance of our rights and the rights of others within a global ecosystem.

Poster Presentations

The Impact of Elderly Care Needs on Household Migration of Rural Residents-An Empirical Analysis Based on CHARLS2015

Wang Fang
Xi'an Jiaotong University, China

Abstract:

JTo study the impact of elderly care needs on household migration of rural residents based on China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study(CHARLS) Followup Questionnaire 2015.Elderly care needs are measured on three levels: the daily care needs of the elderly, the age of the elderly, and the self-rated health of the elderly.The results show that, in the full sample, both elderly daily care needs and elderly age had a significant negative effect on children's household migration, while elderly self-rated health did not have a significant effect on children's household migration.The sub-sample estimation results show that elderly daily care needs and poorer health have a significant negative effect on sons' household migration; meanwhile, elderly age has a significant negative effect on daughters' household migration.In the future, policies related to new urbanization construction should pay more attention to family care needs and ensure the integrity of family functions, thus better promoting the integration of migrant agricultural population into cities.

Biography:

Wang Fang, a PhD student, is currently studying Sociology in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Xi'an Jiaotong University. Her main research fields are social mobility, social inequality and adolescent social psychology. She has published two articles at this stage.

Jiang, Hechao has completed his phD at the age of 30 years from Nanjing University. He now is a associate professor in Southwestern University of Finance and Economics. He has published 13 articles by now.

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