



LEEDS
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WELCOME TO THE LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2026

PCR Conference by PCR's for PCR's!

Tuesday 9 June 2026

Rose Bowl, Leeds Beckett City Campus

We are thrilled to have you on our campus.
Enjoy the conference!

EVENT PROGRAMME



 DATE: TUESDAY, 9TH JUNE 2026

 TIME: 9:00AM - 5:00PM

 ROSE BOWL, LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY, PORTLAND WAY, LEEDS LS1 3HB

Time	Activities	Room
9:00	Delegate Registration and Welcome Tea	Rose Bowl Atrium
10:00	Welcome & Safety Briefing Misan Jekhine & Fatin Azren	Sagar Wright Theatre (RB241)
10:10	Keynote Address Professor Saheed Ajayi, Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, BEEC	Sagar Wright Theatre (RB241)
10:20	The PGR to ECR path Sarah Bell (The British Academy) Jenna Sutherland (LBU)	Sagar Wright Theatre (RB241)
11:20	3MT Presentations in Groups	RB 538 RB 539 RB 546
12:30	Poster Presentations	Rose Bowl Atrium
13:00	Lunch	Rose Bowl Atrium
14:00	3MT Presentations in Groups	RB 538 RB 539 RB 546
14:50	Short Break	
15:00	Pathways After the PhD: Real Stories, Real Careers. Owen Abbe (bp International Ltd) Siobhan McHugh (LBU)	Sagar Wright Theatre (RB241)
16:00	Presentation of Gifts & Closing Remarks Professor George Lodorfos Dean, Leeds Business School	Sagar Wright Theatre (RB241)
16:30	Event Close	Sagar Wright Theatre (RB241)
17:00	Social Hour (Optional)	The Cuthbert Brodrick - JD Wetherspoon

PGR CONFERENCE TEAM



Lead Organiser

Misan Jekhine

Organiser

Fatin Azren

Organising Committee

Edwin Magio

Heidi Yang

Getrude Poku

Nafis Ahmed

Brochure Designer & Editor

Diane Jekhine

PRESENTATION GROUPS



Group 1 - Dr James Musgrave and Dr Sandra Obiora - RB 538	
11:20 AM - 12:30 PM	2:00 PM- 2:50 PM
Christianah Akinyemi	Misty MacDonald
Mohamed Ali	Xheri Nabeil
Peter Amoh	Ayodeji Oluwasuyi
Sarah Douglas-Lee	Erika Pontarollo
Augustine Ezeanochie	Marilyn Scott
Cameron Hughes	Paul Tranter
Misan Jekhine	

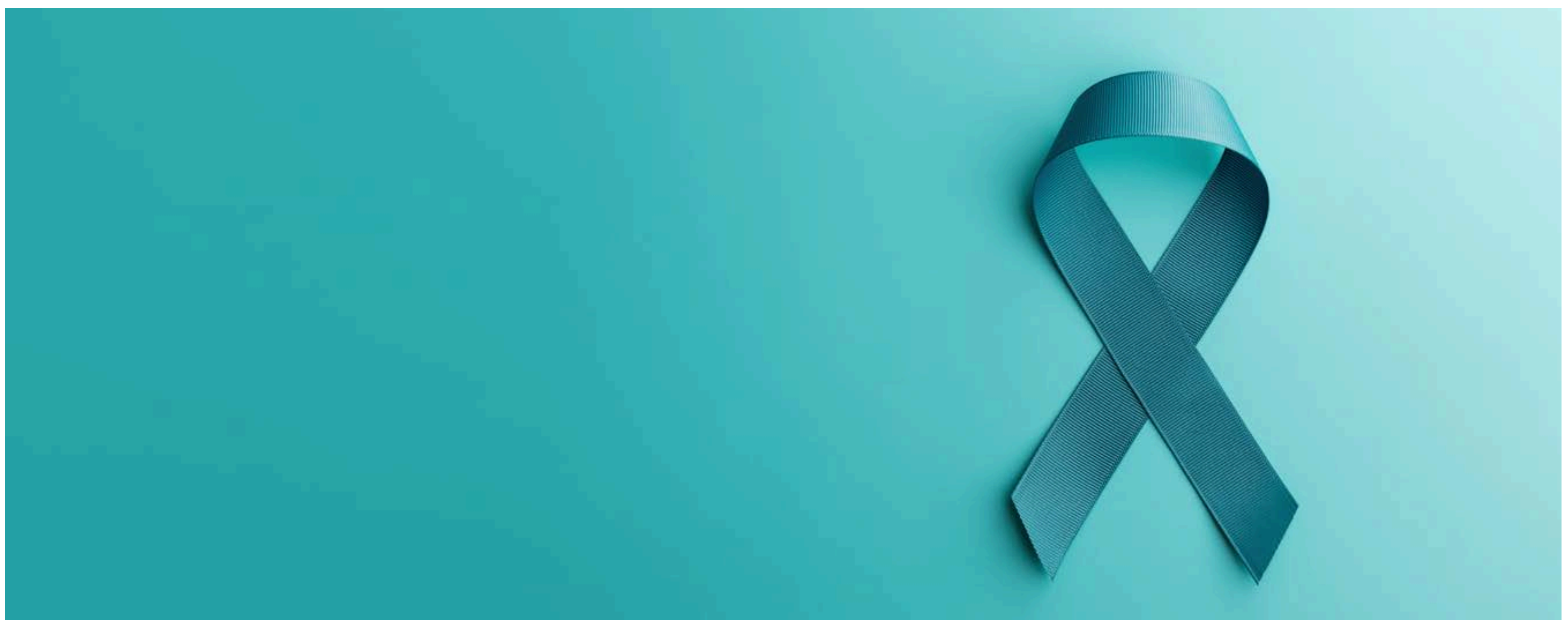
Group 2 - Dr Sepehr Ghaffari and Prof Kate Dashper - RB 539	
11:20 AM - 12:30 PM	2:00 PM- 2:50 PM
Anas Al Ani	Kayah Marsden
Fatin Nabilah Azren	Chinelo Okonkwo
Loren Birkett	Michael Osagie
Amajuoritse Ebijuwa	Kazi Turin Rahman
Hanein Hassan	Kaydee Shepherd
Maryam Irekeola	Maryann Udodirim
Clara Juncker	

PRESENTATION GROUPS



Group 3 - Dr Alice Stamataki and Prof Tom Fletcher - RB 546	
11:20 AM - 12:30 PM	2:00 PM- 2:50 PM
Akanksha Arora	John Myers
Holly Dodsworth	Olubusola Olojede
Eunice Emeakaroha	Becky Pearce
Md Junayed Hossain	Sadia Sarwar
Titilola Ishola	Neegar Sultana
Alex Liversidge	Naf X

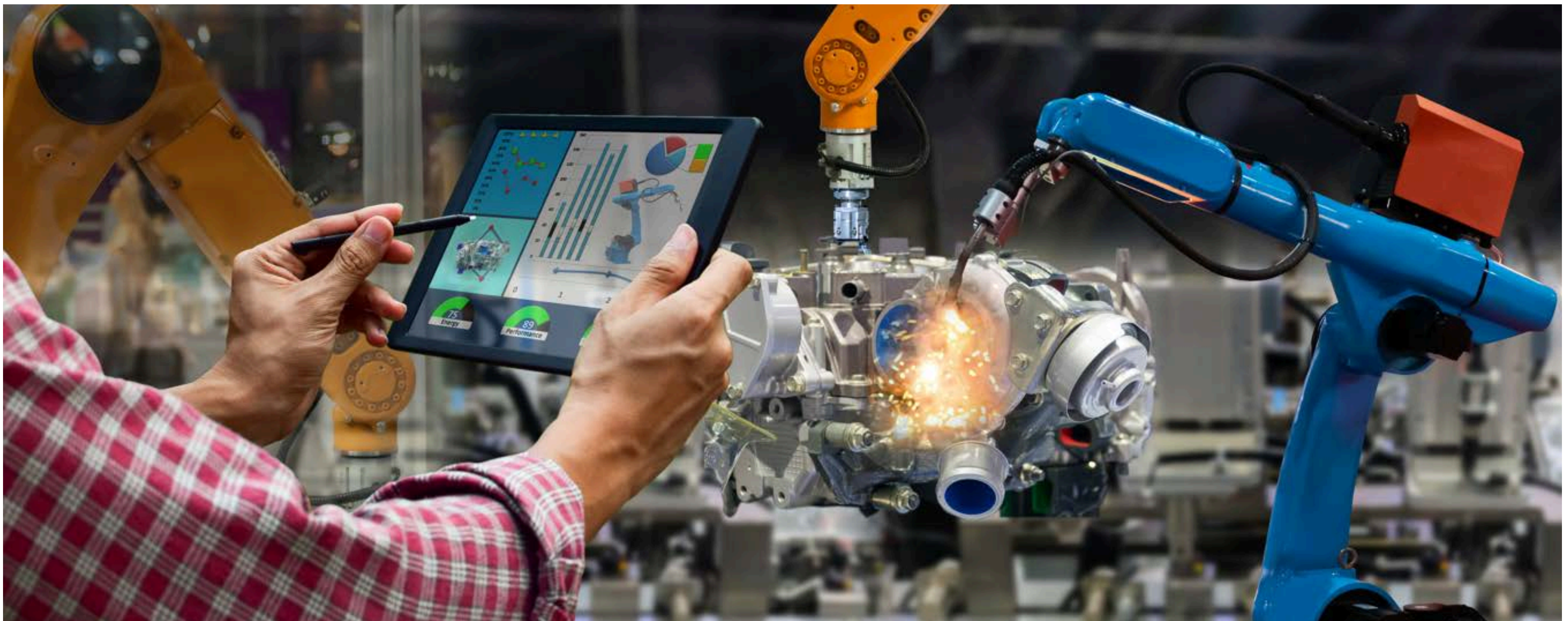
Group 4 - Posters - Rose Bowl Atrium	
12:30 PM - 13:00 PM	
Tanzila Saeed Ahmed Kousar	Deborah Nice
Abdullah All Mamun Anik	Nur Nizam
Riccardo Bela	Opeoluwa Olowe
Lizzie Coombes	Getrude Poku
Joaquim Dias	Jodee Simpson
Metrey Mashapuri	Daniel Tollady



An Experimental Study to investigate the Cellular, Genetic, and Molecular Mechanisms of Combined Oral Contraceptive Pills in Ovarian Cancer

Ahmed Kousar, Tanzila Saeed | Leeds Beckett University

Combined oral contraceptive pills are commonly used to prevent unintended pregnancy and various conditions such as hirsutism and polycystic ovarian syndrome. However Current clinical presentation suggested these pills are protective against ovarian cancer development but still, there is a gap present in understanding the mechanisms occurring at cellular, genetic and molecular levels. Therefore, the aim of this study is to evaluate the chemo-preventive potential of OCP in epithelial ovarian cancer in vitro. Briefly, 3 cell lines were exposed to various concentrations of contraceptive compounds for 24 hours. The various assays were performed including proliferation, migration, reactive oxygen species detection and cell cycle progression were executed to illustrate the role of oral contraceptive compounds in ovarian cancer. To further clarify the underlying process, proteomics was performed, following proteomics, qPCR was performed. This research revealed that treatment with OCP compounds significantly reduced the cell growth and migration by reducing ROS levels, inducing cell cycle arrest and triggering cell death and reducing cell migration in a dose-dependent manner. The current research supports further investigation by looking at molecular and genetic mechanisms which may lead to changes in prescription practices. This research will provide a new understanding of how OCP prevent ovarian cancer.



The Impact of Data-Driven Decision-Making Capabilities on Productivity in UK Manufacturing SMEs

Akinyemi, Christianah | University of Salford

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are central to the UK economy, yet many manufacturing SMEs struggle to translate digital investments into measurable productivity gains. Although digital tools are increasingly accessible, the ability to develop effective data-driven decision-making (DDDM) capabilities and extract value from data varies widely across the sector. This study aims to examine how DDDM capabilities influence productivity in UK manufacturing SMEs and explore the organisational conditions that enable firms to turn digital initiatives into improved performance. A particular emphasis is placed on organisational readiness and capability development as mechanisms linking data-driven practices to productive outcomes. The study proposes a conceptual model explaining how organisational factors and DDDM capability may interact to influence productivity. It will consider how leadership commitment, workforce skills, and resource availability shape firms' capacity to use data effectively. Drawing on Dynamic Capabilities Theory and the Technology–Organisation–Environment framework, the research seeks to develop an integrated understanding of factors influencing productivity outcomes in manufacturing SMEs. The intended contribution is to strengthen understanding of how data-driven capabilities may influence productivity while informing SME leaders and policymakers seeking to support productivity improvement in the manufacturing sector.



Modelling and Simulation based Performance Assessment of Wireless Power Transfer for Electric Vehicles under the SAE J2954 Framework

Al Ani, Anas | University of Bradford

Wireless power transfer (WPT) is becoming an increasingly important technology for convenient electric vehicle (EV) charging, and the SAE J2954 standardised several power levels for light-duty EVs. This paper develops simulation-based models of WPT classes in MATLAB/Simulink and compares their performance in terms of power transfer capability and overall efficiency.

The simulation models are designed to reflect key aspects of the SAE framework, and are tested under a range of operating conditions. The simulations are carried out under standard parameters to examine how each WPT class responds to changes in alignment, load variation, and coupling strength. This approach allows a comparison of the three classes in terms of performance and sensitivity tolerances.

The expected outcomes include identifying the operating ranges where each WPT class achieves its best efficiency, understanding the power capability and highlighting how misalignment affects each system differently. These findings should help guide the selection and design of suitable WPT levels for light-duty EV applications. Overall, this paper provides a structured method for evaluating SAE J2954-compliant WPT systems and offers useful analysis into performance and design considerations for efficient and practical wireless EV charging solutions.



Safer Heat in Harehills: Linking Urban Overheating Risk and Passive Retrofit Strategies in Pre-1919 Terraced Housing

Ali, Mohamed | Leeds Beckett University

Urban overheating poses a growing public health threat in our cities, yet assessment frameworks rarely operate at the neighbourhood scale required for targeted intervention. This study examines residential overheating in Harehills, Leeds, where the urban heat island effect produces temperatures up to 5.9°C above surrounding rural areas, persisting into the night when thermal recovery matters most.

Three pre-1919 archetypes were selected: a mid-terrace back-to-back (27BG), an end-terrace back-to-back (17BG), and an end-terrace (01BA). Dynamic thermal simulations were run in DesignBuilder using locally calibrated weather files and assessed against CIBSE TM59 Criteria A and B. Thirteen passive retrofit strategies across fabric, glazing, shading, ventilation, and combined categories were tested against each baseline to discover which passive strategy will help to adapt with overheating for Harehills.

Findings inform a neighbourhood-scale prioritisation framework linking building performance, social vulnerability, and retrofit cost-effectiveness, offering transferable guidance for housing policy across comparable Northern English communities facing similar climate and stock challenges.



Modelling Enterprise Risk Interdependence and Bank Risk Performance: Evidence from US Commercial Banks

Amoh, Peter | Leeds Beckett University

Risk management in the banking industry has attracted significant attention in modern finance literature, with a particular focus on crisis events. In the US, advances in technology, industry regulations, and risk techniques have broadened the bank risk landscape. This extends beyond conventional risks such as market, operational, credit and liquidity to include interactions with ESG, climate, cyber, and strategic events which shape bank performance. However, these interactions are largely excluded from empirical studies, which adopt silo-based models that limit insight into how risk interdependencies contribute to performance.

This study will examine how enterprise-wide risk exposures of US banks influence performance by integrating risk interdependence and aggregation effects while estimating the impact of institutional and contextual factors. Using financial data of publicly listed US commercial banks covering 2000-2026, this study will construct an Enterprise Risk Index (ERI) using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to capture the multifaceted nature of risk. Bank performance will be estimated using several measures: TOBINS Q, Z-SCORE, ROA, ROE and cost efficiency.

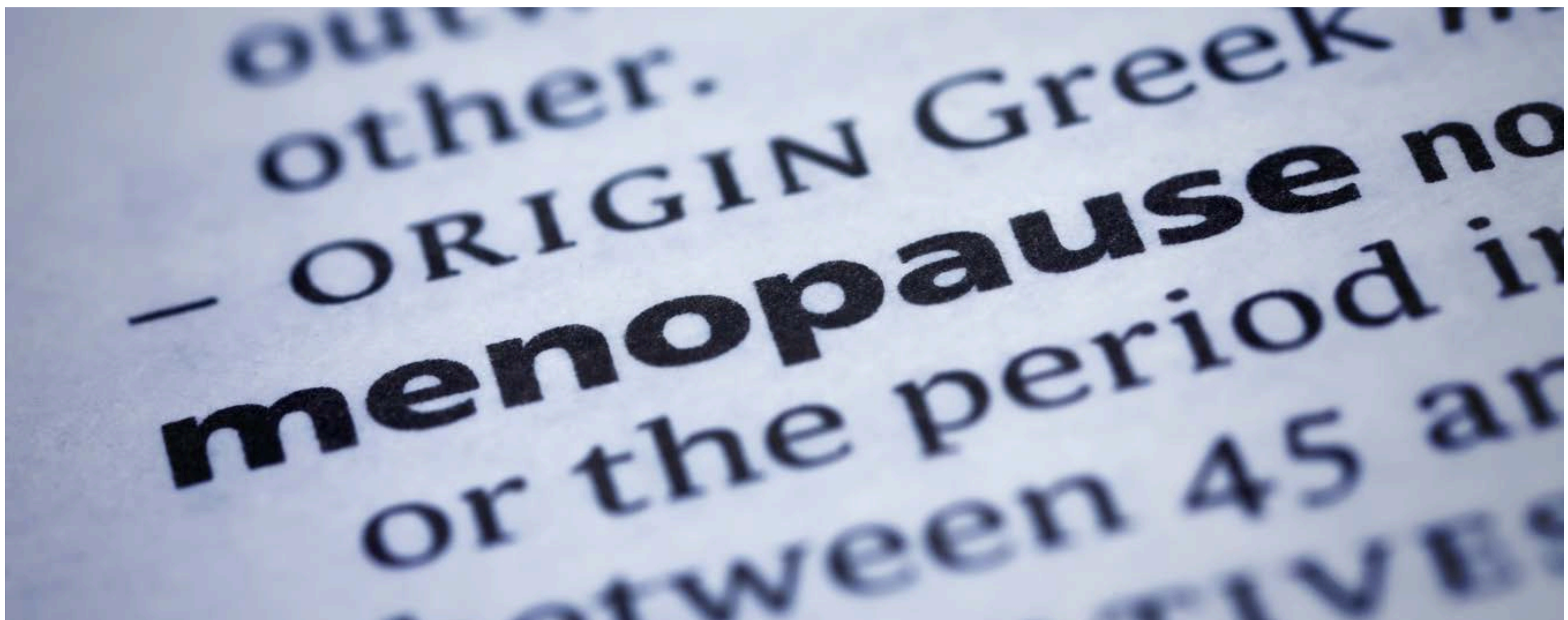
The expectation is that this study will contribute by developing a comprehensive risk model which incorporates the aggregation and interactive effects of multiple risks and accounts for contextual and institutional factors in the risk-performance relationship.



Capability Modelling of Robotic Machining System for Digital Twin

Anik, Abdullah All Mamun | University of Huddersfield

In the era of technological advancements, digitalisation, advanced manufacturing, and industrial revolution, the world is moving forward with intelligent manufacturing processes. Engineers, human experts, and technicians are making their production planning through manual check before robotic machining without any organised capability modelling. Digital Twin are now established technology on the market and are commonly deployed for robotic machining. Capability modelling is a part of digital twin for robotic machining production planning, feasibility analysis, and demand estimation. But digital twin technology don't have any capability modelling architecture with it for ensuring production plan and forecasting robot's operational capacity. Capability modelling of robotic machining system through a Digital Twin bridges the gap between theoretical robot specifications and practical machining applications, driving innovation and competitiveness in automated and cloud manufacturing. The capability modelling for Digital Twin enhances robotic machining performance, prevents issues, boosts collaboration, data sharing, and decision-making, leading to greater efficiency for cloud manufacturing system. The virtual model of physical industrial robot integrates extensive simulation, analysis, and informatics of machining potentiality by differing robotic operational conditions.



Muscle Health across Menopausal Stages: Characterisation, Determinants and Resistance Training for Improving Engagement and Acceptability

Arora, Akanksha | Leeds Beckett University

Resistance training (RT) is recommended by health organisations worldwide for several health benefits, including musculoskeletal health. However, despite these benefits, female participation remains low (14-26%). This gap is particularly relevant in midlife as females approach menopause, a life stage associated with early declines in musculoskeletal health. Many interconnected barriers contribute to the disconnect between recommendations and behaviour, including competing responsibilities, perceived complexity, limited knowledge of RT, and a lack of accessible guidance and support.

This research explored which features of RT interventions enhance participation and evaluated the feasibility and acceptability of an evidence-informed RT intervention in females. The synthesis of the available literature and findings from a multi-arm intervention study consistently showed that supervision plays a central role in improving adherence and the overall exercise experience. Supervised group-based formats were well received, with participants valuing the associated technical and social support.

These findings position the instructional and experiential environment, rather than exercise prescription alone, as central to addressing the participation gap in RT in this population.



Muslim Women as Sports Spectators in Malaysia: An Intersectional and Halal Tourism Perspective

Azren, Fatin Nabilah | Leeds Beckett University

Muslim women are active participants in Malaysian's sporting landscape, yet their experiences as spectators remain underrepresented in tourism research. This study brings their perspectives forward by examining how they engage with sports events while navigating the intersecting influences of faith, gender norms, and everyday social responsibilities. Drawing on qualitative interviews with women from diverse age groups and life stages, the findings show that attending a sports event involves more than simply watching the match. Participants described considering modesty, comfort, safety, and family commitments, all of which shape their participation.

Using intersectionality and halal tourism as interpretive lenses highlights the importance of environments that support not only religious needs but also emotional comfort, dignity, and a genuine sense of belonging. Many women emphasised that feeling respected and welcomed was central to their enjoyment and willingness to attend future events.

By humanising the stories of Malaysian Muslim women, this study challenges assumptions that they are disengaged in sports settings. Instead, it reveals how they actively negotiate their participation, offering insights for more inclusive tourism and event design in both Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority contexts.



Theorizing the Queerness of the Roman Baroque

Bela, Riccardo | Leeds Beckett University

My research aims to theorize the queerness of the Roman baroque via architect Francesco Borromini's church San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, Rome, staging the under-researched intersection of queer space theory and the baroque. Following on from the Neoclassical period, the church was ostracized by many due to its strange forms, with drawers refusing to illustrate the building due to its corrupting wantonness, and some historians considering its conception delirious up until the 1930s. There existed a strand of architectural historians from the 1880s to the 1950s who, conversely, inhabited the elusiveness of the church's forms aiming to determine its geometrical essence. Unlike his predecessors, at the dawn of the 1960s historian Leo Steinberg argued for a space that was made of the eccentric combination of multiple geometries forming an entangling net around the beholder. By building on Sara Ahmed's™s queer-phenomenological work (2006) on orientation to conceptualize the arguable disorientating turns the Roman baroque performs, the interaction of space and body is hereby seen as a productive territory to assess the queerness of the movement. The presentation shall provide an overview of the literature underpinning this interaction.



An Examination of Trust of AI-generated Social Media Influencers: A Digital-Ethnographic Approach

Birkett, Loren | Leeds Beckett University

AI-generated social media influencers are transforming how we interact with digital personalities - but can we really trust them? This study explores how audiences form trust and distrust toward AI influencers, using a digital-ethnographic approach. Drawing on the probabilistic theory of trust and parasocial interaction frameworks (PSI/PSR), it examines how online users navigate authenticity, credibility, and emotional connection with non-human influencers. The research offers fresh insights into the psychology of digital engagement, the future of influencer marketing, and the ethical challenges of AI-driven social media inviting discussion on the evolving boundaries between humans and AI.

Passive social listening on Instagram and TikTok will be utilised, examining natural interactions between social media users and AI generated social media influencers Lil Miquela. Metrics such as engagement, comments and responses will be analysed to understand how trust is present whilst mapping this to existing trust theories such as the probabilistic theory of trust and parasocial interaction theory. Ultimately, extending the frameworks in the context of AI generated social media influencers.



Porous Portraits: Entangled Photographic Objects as Sites of Community Presence

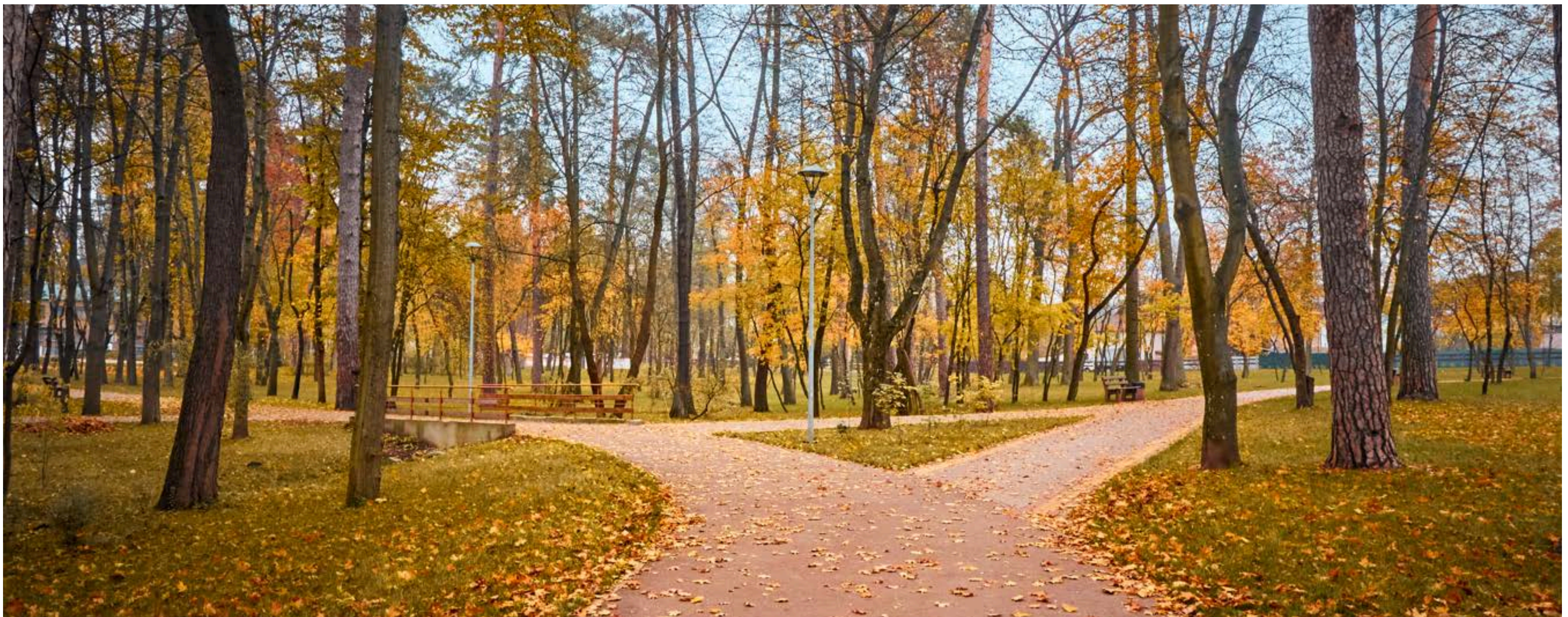
Coombes, Lizzie | Leeds Beckett University

This research presents situated photographic entanglement as an original practice-based methodology for engaging communities through material, place-specific image objects. Building on Elizabeth Edwards' theorisation of photographic materiality and objecthood, and drawing from new materialist and feminist perspectives on entanglement, care, and the social life of images, it expands understandings of photography as a sensory and relational practice to demonstrate how photographic objects actively shape communities within everyday public contexts.

Through practice-based projects, including pop-up studio portraits, banners, and life-size photographic cut-outs, the work traces a progression from image to object, and from object to social agent, generating social relations through placement, movement, and handling within specific community contexts.

Attending to the tactile, embodied, and relational dynamics of images in place, the research foregrounds care and dialogue, demonstrating how photographic objects reveal social relations without oversimplifying them, while exposing the uneven rhythms of participation in public space.

In doing so, it establishes situated photographic entanglement as a methodological contribution, advancing photography as a material, sensory, and relational practice through which communities are continuously surfaced, negotiated, and felt.



Teachers at Crossroads: Navigating Sexuality Health Education towards Holistic Development of Students

Dias, Joaquim | Leeds Beckett University

Developing countries are facing the health, socio-economic and financial burden of what might still be termed an HIV/AIDS pandemic. Management of these conditions intertwined with stigma, discrimination and cultural and political issues have made recognising and treating HIV/AIDS complex and problematic. Few educational programs have emerged which address HIV/AIDS and sexual health awareness in colleges, raising awareness among students and prospective teachers. My research gives a voice to the teachers in terms of their potential role whether they want to take this responsibility or not and whether they are capable of doing it or not. How do they perceive the entire problem and how it is manifested. These young teachers are perceiving a curriculum that encompasses a SHE curriculum, a holistic, collective approach involving the community.



Exploring the Optimisation of Osteoporosis Care for Individuals Living with and without Memory Problems in Care Homes

Dodsworth, Holly | Leeds Beckett University

Recent literature indicates that people living with dementia (PLWD), face an increased risk of developing osteoporosis. It is, therefore, highly likely that both dementia and osteoporosis frequently co-exist as long-term conditions among care home (CH) residents. Despite this, little research has focused on experiences of CH residents receiving and caregivers providing osteoporosis care to PLWD suggesting care could be improved in the UK.

Ethnographic data collection is underway in up to 4 CHs in Leeds via observations (estimated up to 250 hours), conversations, interviews and document research with PLWD, families and staff. This research aims:

- To explore the experiences of, and care delivery to, CH residents with osteoporosis including residents with dementia, to identify and explore any differences in osteoporosis care for residents with dementia and any ways in which care could be improved.
- To explore the barriers and facilitators to providing high-quality, person-centred osteoporosis care/management, including those with dementia, in CHs and to identify possible strategies for mitigating these challenges.
- To identify key outcomes for future research interventions aimed at enhancing osteoporosis care in CHs with specific recommendations that address any unique needs for PLWD.

Flexible data collection methods have enabled PLWD to take part.



Resilience in SME Family Businesses in Yorkshire: Exploring Family, Organisational, and Contextual Determinants

Douglas-Lee, Sarah | Leeds Beckett University

This study explores resilience in SME family businesses in Yorkshire, with a particular focus on the hospitality sector. It examines how family relationships, organisational practices, and contextual influences shape how these businesses respond to challenges and sustain continuity. Drawing on interviews with family business owners and managers, the study investigates how resilience capabilities are developed and enacted through everyday practices within hospitality settings, including breweries, pubs, restaurants, caf  s, and event venues. By situating these processes within the regional context of Yorkshire, the study provides a deeper understanding of how resilience capabilities emerge and evolve in SME family firms operating within dynamic service environments. The findings aim to contribute to debates on family business resilience by highlighting the role of relational dynamics and locally embedded practices, offering insights for business owners and practitioners seeking to support long-term sustainability in the hospitality sector.



Green Transition and Investment Treaty Reform: Towards a New Approach to Sustainable Treaty drafting in Africa

Ebijuwa, Amajuoritse | University of Salford

As African states navigate the global transition to low-carbon economies, the interaction between climate governance and investment protection has become increasingly complex. This paper examines the evolving approach of South Africa to investment treaty reform and considers its implications for climate-responsive governance across the continent. South Africa's decision to terminate several bilateral investment treaties and adopt a domestic investment framework represents a significant departure from traditional investor-centric models. This shift reflects an effort to rebalance the relationship between investor protection and the state's regulatory authority, particularly in areas such as environmental protection and sustainable development.

The paper explores how this transition has addressed concerns about regulatory constraint and legal exposure arising from investor-state dispute settlement. It considers whether South Africa's approach offers a viable pathway for other African states seeking to align investment governance with climate commitments while maintaining conditions for economic development. By situating these reforms within broader debates on sustainable investment and legal design, the paper highlights both the opportunities and limitations of current approaches and suggests directions for future reform across Africa.



Parental Experiences and Coping Strategies in Caring for Children with Noma

Emeakaroha, Eunice | Birmingham City University

Noma is a devastating orofacial condition affecting malnourished children in extreme poverty. Existing research focused largely on the disease's epidemiology and surgical treatment, with limited attention given to the experiences and support needs of parents and caregivers. Drawing on findings from a completed systematic review, it is anticipated that parents experience considerable emotional and psychological distress, worsened by social stigma, financial difficulties, and barriers to accessing healthcare.

Guided by Family Resilience Theory, this study aims to explore the experiences and coping strategies of parents caring for children with Noma in Nigeria. The study will demonstrate how families adapt, cope, and mobilise support despite the challenges associated with the condition. The study also expects to identify different coping mechanisms and support systems that families rely on to manage these challenges, highlighting resilience within the family unit. This study adopts a qualitative research approach using semi-structured interviews to gather information. Data will be analysed thematically to explore experiences, challenges, and coping strategies used by families. The findings will provide valuable insight into the realities faced by parents and caregivers of children with Noma. Understanding these challenges is essential for developing appropriate psychosocial support and knowledge-mobilisation resources for affected families.



Artificial Intelligence, FinTech, and the Future of Trade Law: A Comparative Study of the UK and Nigeria

Ezeanochie, Augustine | University of Salford

The rapid rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Financial Technology (FinTech) is transforming how trade is conducted globally, yet legal frameworks are struggling to keep pace. This research examines how these technologies are reshaping the legal dimensions of trade in two contrasting jurisdictions: the United Kingdom and Nigeria.

Using a comparative doctrinal approach, the study analyses how both countries responded to the COVID-19 pandemic as an event that accelerated digital transformation across trade systems. It explores how AI and FinTech have influenced legal processes, regulatory adaptation, and trade policy reform, while also exposing structural inequalities between developed and emerging economies.

The findings show that the UK has leveraged robust legal frameworks and advanced digital infrastructure to integrate emerging technologies into trade governance effectively. In contrast, Nigeria continues to face challenges such as regulatory fragmentation, limited digital penetration, and infrastructural constraints, despite its growing FinTech ecosystem.

This research highlights the need for context-specific and adaptable legal reforms to support inclusive and sustainable digital trade. It contributes to ongoing policy debates by offering practical insights for policymakers, legal practitioners, and international trade stakeholders seeking to future-proof trade law in an increasingly digital economy.



AI-Enabled Speech Recognition for Early Detection of Depression in Alzheimer's Disease Patients and Mild Cognitive Impairment

Hassan, Hanein | University of Huddersfield

Depression is prevalent among patients with Alzheimer's disease (AD) and mild cognitive impairment (MCI), particularly in early to middle stages, with an estimated 30% experiencing depressive symptoms. This comorbidity significantly exacerbates cognitive decline. The absence of an official diagnostic test presents a major challenge for the medical community. This research addresses this gap by introducing mobile application models to classify depressive and non-depressive dementia.

The research utilized two distinct datasets: 276 Alzheimer's patients with an average age of 70.9 years and 142 patients diagnosed with depression. During preprocessing, interviewer voices and silences were removed from the audio recordings. Various acoustic features (such as MFCCs, spectral centroid, and spectral roll-off), while linguistic semantic, and emotional were specifically extracted from the depression patients.

Using clustering techniques, these extracted depressive speech patterns were then searched for and identified within the Alzheimer's patients' data. To classify the patients, models were trained using traditional machine learning algorithms, specifically Support Vector Machines (SVM), Logistic Regression, and Random Tree. Finally, the system was rigorously evaluated using Deep Learning frameworks. Ultimately, this research transforms automated speech analysis into an accessible mobile app, providing a reliable, non-invasive diagnostic tool.



Cross-Border Bank Flows in Major Reserve Currencies and Banking Systemic Risk

Hossain, Md Junayed | University of Huddersfield

We study how cross-border bank flows denominated in major secondary reserve currencies influence systemic banking risk across 33 countries between 2000 and 2021. While prior research has often examined capital flows by type, destinations or described the safe-haven status of currencies based on their tendency to appreciate or depreciate during stock market turmoil, bond market crises and foreign exchange volatility, this chapter presents a more nuanced assessment by considering whether currency-denominated cross-border flows exhibit stabilising or destabilising properties under banking systemic stress and across varying levels of market concentration. Using SRISK as the primary measure of systemic risk and panel fixed-effects estimations, we show that flows in Swiss francs and British pounds are consistently associated with reductions in systemic risk during crisis periods, and their risk-reducing capacity is more pronounced, particularly in highly concentrated banking systems, which aligns with the concentration-stability hypothesis. By contrast, flows in Japanese yen and euro display weaker and less consistent patterns. Both show limited safe-haven properties in a cross-border setting, contingent on regions. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the stabilising capacity of reserve-currency flows is conditional rather than uniform, and highlight the importance of currency composition and market structure in shaping systemic resilience.



Genre Hybridisation as a Compositional Tool in Popular Music

Hughes, Cameron | Leeds Beckett University

Genre hybridisation, the cumulative interrelation and recontextualisation of indistinguishable idiomatic genre elements. Utilising genre as the grounding factor for genre hybrid compositions, this practice-led research introduces a new framework for a compositional tool within popular music. The starting point of this framework is a synthesised method of analysis that examines the numerous aspects of genres complex interrelationships with multifunctional sound sources informed by musical culture, musical lineage, and the recording industry. This synthesised method of analysis allows for an in-depth description and understanding of how sound source timbres are used to create a texture associated with a specific genre. This genre analysis can be adapted to various popular music genres, for example, within this project, the analysis was applied to contemporary metal, Hip-Hop, Lofi Hip-Hop, Pop-Rock, and Ambient music. Analysing and understanding the genres one wishes to hybridise into new compositions allows for deeper and further integration of sound sources, and thus separating genre hybridity from polystylism and techniques such as parody and pastiche.



Chief Executive Officer Overconfidence and Sustainability Decision Making in the Context of Emerging Technologies

Irekeola, Maryam | Kingston University London

This research examines how corporate governance moderates the relationship between chief executive officer overconfidence and sustainability decision quality in emerging technology contexts. Existing research shows inconsistent effects. A scoping review of 21 studies (2020-2025) reveals that governance context determines whether overconfidence drives environmental innovation or produces harmful consequences. Strong boards enable 20% emission reductions (Kwabi et al., 2024), while weak boards correlate with 10% increased workplace injuries (Chen et al., 2023).

These dynamics intensify with emerging technologies where executives make high-stakes sustainability decisions under uncertainty. However, 94% of existing studies rely on behavioural proxies rather than direct psychological assessment, leaving causal mechanisms unexplained.

This doctoral research addresses this gap experimentally. The study will recruit 300 senior executives via online platforms to complete a decision-making task (15-20 minutes). Participants will read realistic business scenarios manipulating board authority and technological uncertainty, then provide confidence judgments and recommendations. The study measures three overconfidence forms (over-precision, overestimation, over-placement) alongside decision quality and deliberative processing.

The research aims to determine whether board authority reduces overconfidence through deliberative mechanisms, and whether effects strengthen under high uncertainty, offering psychological micro-foundations for sustainability governance.



Assessing Safety Management System Practices in Nigerian Petroleum Refineries

Ishola, Titilola | University of Salford

Emphasis on safety has evolved from a reactive approach to a proactive approach, including establishing a safety management system and integrating it into an organisation's operations and management. The oil and gas industry is globally recognised as one of the most hazardous sectors, yet it plays a crucial role in the development of the economy. In such high-risk industries and environments, effective safety management is crucial for protecting workers and sustaining operational continuity in the workplace.

The research study aims to critically examine the influence of the safety management system (SMS) practices on safety effectiveness in Nigerian petroleum refineries. In this study, SMS practices constitute the independent variable, organisational safety culture, and workers' risk perception serve as the mediating variables, and safety effectiveness, which captures workers' safety practices and safety outcomes, is the dependent variable. The research adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design, with data collected using a structured questionnaire administered to workers in selected Nigerian petroleum refineries. The gathered data will be analysed using Minitab 22 Statistical Software. The study findings will provide evidence-based recommendations to stakeholders to strengthen safety practices, support policy enhancement, and promote sustainable occupational health and safety outcomes within Nigerian petroleum refineries.



Gender Diversity at Corporate Events in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry

Jekhine, Misan | Leeds Beckett University

Gender diversity at events can address gender inequality, which inhibits women's career growth, and motivate younger women to enter a sector (Walters, 2018). This research aims to explore how participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and industry practices reveal how gender shapes participation, visibility, and decision-making at corporate events. Drawing on Gendered Organisations Theory (Acker, 1990) and Social Role Theory (Eagly and Wood, 2012), the research analyses how organisational processes, sectoral norms, and broader socio-cultural expectations shape gender at corporate events.

This research adopts an interpretivist research philosophy and uses a qualitative method. The research draws on semi-structured interviews with industry employees at various career levels, exploring their lived experiences of gender, career progression, and participation in corporate events. These interviews are complemented by event observation, enabling analysis of speaker line ups, panel composition, role allocation and interactions across both large conferences and smaller corporate events. Data was analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns.

The research findings indicated that the underrepresentation of women as keynote speakers and in leadership roles at corporate events persists despite increasing awareness of gender diversity. Job roles remain highly gendered, with women in more customer-facing roles and men in leadership and technical roles at corporate events.



The Publishing Processes of Contemporary Bestselling Books

Juncker, Clara | York St John University

The present study considers bestsellers as a sociological phenomenon and turns to the publishing processes behind their publication, which are considered potent indicators of the current functioning of the publishing industry. It moves away from the simple retracing of the history of publishing and from the idea that bestsellers are random. The claim of this research is that regardless of the content of a book, bestsellers are made through decisions from a number of people within the industry.

The importance of marketing in the making of a book has been recognized for a long time, but what this research aims to highlight is that marketing is but one step in the journey of a book and that many other steps are as crucial, in different ways, in making bestsellers. Through the development of a new publishing model which takes into account new phenomena such as the rise of social media, the rise of the content creator as a crucial influence in selling books, and the new ways in which the other steps in the publishing processes are used to produce bestsellers, it is hoped that this research will bring a better understanding of contemporary bestsellerdom.



Gender in Transfusion Science Study

Liversidge, Alex | Leeds Beckett University

Safe blood transfusion practice relies on accurate patient information, including sex and gender markers, to mitigate clinical risk. In particular, assessment of childbearing potential is critical and has traditionally been based on binary assumptions (female sex, age <50 years). These frameworks do not adequately account for transgender and non-binary patients, potentially introducing patient safety risks. To identify potential patient safety issues in blood transfusion practice for assigned female at birth (AFAB) transgender and gender-diverse service users, and to develop recommendations for best practice.

A mixed-methods study was conducted comprising: (1) a quantitative survey of hospital transfusion laboratories to explore current practices relating to transgender and non-binary patients; (2) a quantitative survey of AFAB transgender and non-binary service users; and (3) qualitative interviews with AFAB transgender and non-binary service users to explore lived experiences of transfusion-related care.

Responses were received from 27 hospital transfusion laboratories, representing a broad geographical distribution and range of hospital sizes. A total of 160 AFAB transgender and non-binary service users completed the survey, and 22 participated in qualitative interviews.



Community Divisions and the Politics of Legitimacy in Cruise Tourism Governance

MacDonald, Misty | Leeds Beckett University

The rapid global expansion of tourism has intensified community polarization and deepened inequalities, reflecting the neoliberal structures underpinning the industry. Cruise tourism, often central to debates on over tourism, exposes tensions between growth oriented development and socio ecological well being. While governance challenges are frequently framed as matters of planning or stakeholder coordination, tourism conflicts more fundamentally arise from disagreements over values, representation, and distributive fairness.

This research examines how social cleavages within host communities shape perceptions of institutional legitimacy and, in turn, influence the emergence of sustainability-oriented governance pathways in cruise destinations. It conceptualizes tourism governance as a contested arena in which competing values, identities, and visions of community are continually negotiated. The study explores how community mobilisation, resistance, and collaborative engagement can renegotiate institutional authority and support more equitable outcomes.

Using a qualitative case study design, the project combines semi structured interviews with documentary analysis to trace the evolution of governance processes and identify key inflection points in the tourism development trajectory. The research aims to generate theoretically grounded, empirically informed insights into how contested legitimacy can be navigated to foster more inclusive and sustainable tourism governance.



Exploring Unheard Voices: Schooling, Identity, and Belonging Among Black Mixed-Race Young Adults in Yorkshire

Marsden, Kayah | Leeds Beckett University

This PhD study explores the schooling experiences of Black mixed-race young adults (aged 18-25) educated in schools across Yorkshire, England. Despite the growing multiracial population, their voices remain marginalised in educational research and policy. The study centres their narratives to examine how schooling shapes racial identity, belonging, visibility, and experiences of inclusion and exclusion.

Grounded in Critical Race Theory and Critical Mixed Race Theory, the research investigates how structural racism and racialisation operate in everyday school contexts. It considers how institutions influence identity development, how participants interpret their experiences, and how school practices may support or undermine their needs.

Using a qualitative, participatory design, the study unfolds across three phases: photovoice, semi-structured interviews, and a focus group. This approach positions participants as active knowledge producers, foregrounding agency and lived experience.



Inclusive Agribusiness Value Chains as Drivers of Smallholder Competitiveness in Zimbabwe

Mashapuri, Metrey | Leeds Beckett University

This study examines how Inclusive Agribusiness Value Chains (IAVCs) can support Zimbabwe's smallholder farmers to become competitive, market-oriented agri-entrepreneurs. Despite their centrality to national food production, smallholders face persistent barriers to market access, value addition, and equitable participation in agrifood systems (FANRPAN, 2025). While inclusive agribusiness models are promoted as market integration pathways through mutually beneficial partnerships (FAO, 2015), outcomes remain constrained by structural and governance failures (German et al., 2023).

Adopting a pragmatist, mixed methods design—combining value chain mapping, institutional analysis, and participatory narrative inquiry—the study explores how value chain integration, institutional arrangements, and inclusive business models shape smallholder performance, resilience, and sustainability within a context of historical exclusion and ongoing structural and climatic pressures (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Findings demonstrate that trust-based coordination (de Vries et al., 2023; Grohmann et al., 2023) and targeted institutional support are critical for improving participation and stability. However, inclusive outcomes depend on adoption of shared values and governance arrangements that address structural inequalities and power imbalances (Ayele and Ebata, 2020).

The study proposes a context-specific evaluation framework and identifies mechanisms to strengthen smallholder integration into coordinated, market-oriented value chains, offering actionable insights for IA development in Zimbabwe and comparable contexts.



Connections: An Economic Sociological Investigation of the UK Horse Racing Industry

Myers, John | Leeds Beckett University

In horse racing, a horse's "connections" (its owner, trainer, and jockey) are discussed constantly. But what happens when we take that word literally and examine the network of relationships that structures the entire industry?

This thesis investigates how social networks shape success within the UK Horse Racing Industry (HRI), applying social network analysis to 1,033 race entries from the 2022 Group 1 flat racing season, supplemented by ten semi-structured interviews with industry stakeholders. Integrating Lin's (2001) social capital theory with Barabasi's (2002; 2018) network science, the study maps the relational architecture connecting 663 owners, trainers, and jockeys to examine how network position produces, amplifies, and reproduces competitive advantage.

The findings reveal a field characterised by extreme structural inequality. Just 8.1% of actors capture over half of all prize money, and the intensity of an actor's relational ties explains 77.6% of the variance in earnings more than talent, investment, or geography. The network exhibits scale-free properties driven by preferential attachment, creating a self-reinforcing cycle in which established positions attract further connections, concentrating advantage among a small elite. The study demonstrates that success in the HRI is relationally produced, structurally amplified, and institutionally reproduced across micro, meso, and macro levels.



Data Protection as a Human Right and the EU Digital Omnibus Package

Nabeil, Xheri | Leeds Beckett University

The Digital Omnibus proposal seeks to simplify and streamline the EU's digital acquis by amending multiple instruments, including the GDPR, the ePrivacy Directive, the Data Act, and the EU AI Act. While framed as a technical and efficiency-driven reform aimed at reducing regulatory burdens and enhancing innovation, the package introduces substantive changes to core GDPR concepts. These include a revised definition of "personal data," expanded reliance on legitimate interests for AI development, adjustments to breach notification procedures, and limitations on data subject rights such as access.

From a human rights perspective, these reforms are controversial. The proposed narrowing of "personal data" potentially reduces the scope of GDPR protection, thereby limiting when individuals can invoke their rights. Similarly, restrictions on access rights and broader allowances for data processing in AI contexts may weaken individual control over personal data, a key element of informational self-determination.

Critics argue that such changes risk undermining the essence of fundamental rights, particularly where economic objectives are prioritised over rights-based safeguards.

The Digital Omnibus represents a shift from a rights-centric model toward a more utilitarian, market-oriented approach, raising critical questions about the future of data protection as a fundamental right in the digital age.



Bridging the Digital Divide: A mixed methods study to explore the impact of community based digital health interventions on health inequalities experienced by older people

Nice, Deborah | Leeds Beckett University

Digital access is not a luxury but is a key social determinate of health. Whilst digital exclusion affects all ages, older people in particular, face barriers to digital technology which affects choice and equal access to services.

The use of community places that offer digital health interventions for older people may be one way of addressing this. This research explores this emerging area of practice by conducting a two-phase, sequential mixed methods study, with a systematic review of the existing evidence base, followed by two contextual case studies, with cross case analysis for similarities.

For phase one, the systematic review identified seventeen studies from the UK and internationally, which employed a range of methodological approaches. The results demonstrated the positive impact of community based digital health interventions on the health and wellbeing of older people. By offering personalised support, trusted community places can reduce barriers to digital inclusion by widening participation and access to a range of services.



Mindfulness and Antisocial Behaviour: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis on the Association Between Mindfulness and Antisocial Behaviour

Nizam, Nur | Leeds Beckett University

(Study Ongoing) Antisocial behaviour can lead to negative consequences for others. Dispositional mindfulness has shown to be linked and reduce the engagement of antisocial behaviours. The present study aims to systematically review and conduct meta-analysis on research that has examined the association between dispositional mindfulness (including its facets) and antisocial behaviour, critically evaluate the methods employed and the strength of the evidence across range of contexts. A systematic search of PsychInfo, SportDiscus, PsychArticles and Medline via EBSCOhost was conducted. The studies included peer-reviewed journals, quantitative measures and outcomes, and participants from any age and population. Data extracted from the studies included population criteria, instrument used to measure mindfulness and antisocial behaviour, study design and key findings. The methodological quality of the included studies was assessed using the Quality Assessment Tool for Observational Cohort and Cross-Sectional Studies (NHLBI, 2013). The overall effects size or relationship will be calculated and then broken down into research findings across different contexts or populations.



ERK5 MAPK Signalling in Alzheimer's Disease

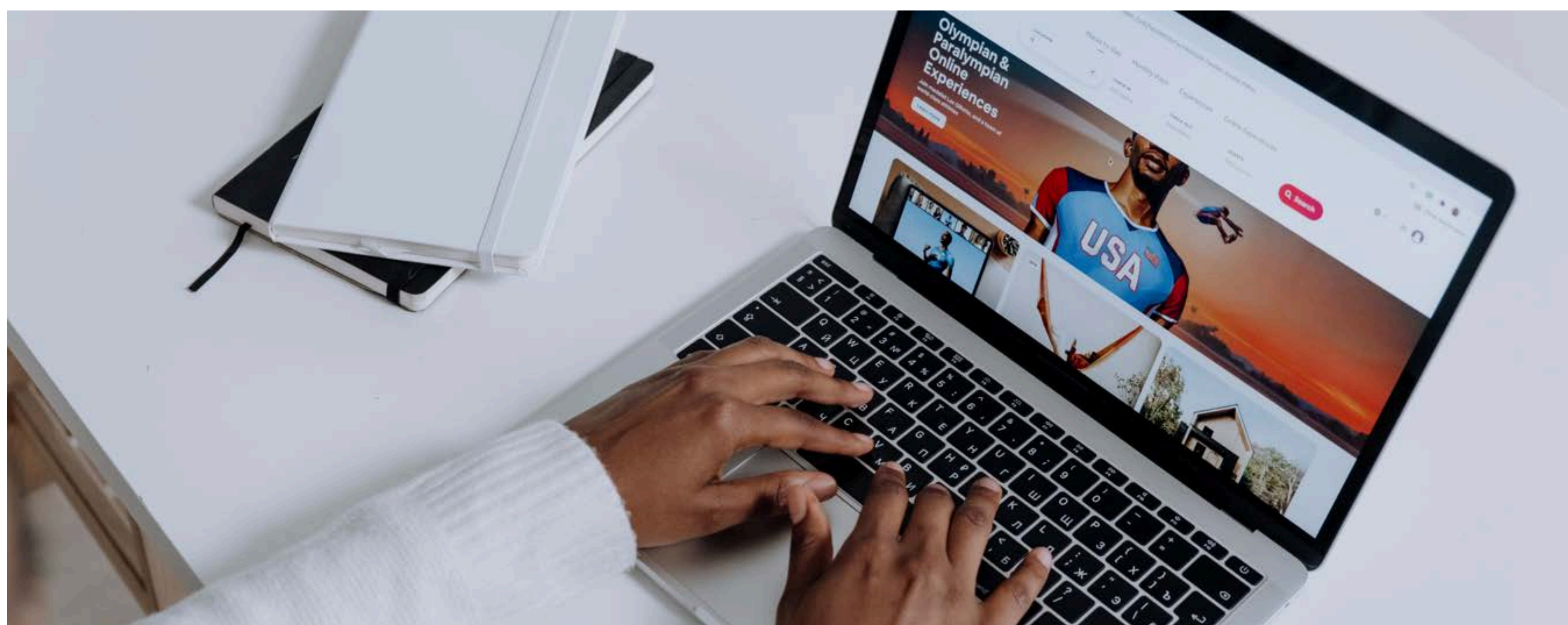
Okonkwo, Chinelo | University of Bradford

Progressive neurological disorders have destructive effects on the lives of individuals and the society, and this is true for Alzheimer's disease (AD). It is a progressive brain disorder characterized by early synaptic dysfunction, neuronal loss, and cognitive decline. While amyloid- β and tau pathology are central features, their presence alone does not fully explain disease progression, highlighting the need to investigate alternative mechanisms, such as intracellular signaling pathways.

One promising candidate is extracellular signal-regulated kinase 5 (ERK5), a member of the mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) family. ERK5 is highly expressed in neurons and regulates survival, synaptic plasticity, and neurogenesis. Despite its established neuroprotective roles, its involvement in AD remains underexplored.

This study hypothesizes that ERK5 protects hippocampal neurons from early AD-related insults, including soluble amyloid- β oligomers and tumour necrosis factor-alpha. Using in vitro hippocampal neuronal models, ERK5 activity will be assessed alongside key synaptic markers, including AMPA and NMDA receptor expression, which reflect synaptic function and plasticity.

By establishing a mechanistic link between ERK5 signalling and synaptic homeostasis, this work aims to position ERK5 as a critical regulator of early neurodegenerative processes and a potential target for disease-modifying strategies in AD.



Assessing the Effect of AI Powered Personalised Marketing Messages on Consumer Trust and Confidence in Fintech Lending Platforms in Lagos State, Nigeria

Olojede, Olubusola | University of Salford

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) in digital finance has significantly altered the methods by which financial technology (FinTech) companies operating lending platforms in Lagos, Nigeria, interact with customers through personalised marketing messaging. AI-driven customisation improves message relevancy and user engagement, but its effect on consumer trust and confidence is yet unclear. Existing literature indicates that while personalised marketing enhances perceived utility and satisfaction, issues pertaining to privacy, transparency, and data security may erode trust. The key problem is the limited empirical perception of how AI-driven personalised marketing affects trust and customer confidence in FinTech financing environments. This paper aims to evaluate the impact of AI-driven personalised marketing messages on consumer trust and confidence in FinTech lending platforms. Based on trust theory and the Technology Acceptance Model, the paper uses a conceptual framework in which trust affects the link between AI personalisation and customer confidence. The paper differentiates trust and confidence as distinct but interconnected entities. It offers practical insights for formulating ethical, transparent, and efficient AI-driven marketing strategies in digital lending contexts.



Beyond the Numbers: A Comparative Socio-Legal Analysis of Functional Board Diversity and Accountability in Banking Governance in Developed and Developing Economies

Olowe, Opeoluwa | Leeds Beckett University

Board diversity is central to corporate governance, particularly in banking, where boards ensure accountability, risk oversight, and systemic stability. However, regulatory frameworks often emphasise numerical representation, such as gender quotas, without ensuring that diverse directors exercise meaningful influence within board structures.

This research explores the concept of functional diversity, examining how diversity operates within board structures through roles, committee membership, leadership positions, and decision-making processes. Adopting a comparative doctrinal approach, the study analyses legal instruments, governance codes, and policy frameworks across the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Norway, and France. These jurisdictions provide contrasting regulatory models, reflecting differences between common law and civil law systems, as well as soft-law and binding quota approaches to board diversity.

Building on agency theory, stakeholder theory, and equality law, the research develops a Functional EDI Governance Model and Diversity Influence Scorecard to evaluate how diversity may translate into board-level influence, accountability, ESG outcomes, and governance resilience. By moving beyond numerical compliance, the study aims to provide a more precise evaluative framework for assessing the practical impact of diversity regulation in financial governance.



Multilevel Governance of Water Adaptation to Climate Change

Oluwasuyi, Ayodeji | York St John University

Climate change increases water scarcity, affects water quality, causes flooding and drought thereby underscoring the need for effective adaptation and governance. When water becomes scarce, managing it becomes increasingly complex, as its diverse uses attract multiple stakeholders with differing interests and priorities. Water adaptation is therefore guided by several governance frameworks or approaches such as top-down, bottom-up, middle-out, polycentric governance, community governance, multilevel governance (MLG). This study argues that no single governance is sufficient alone, hence the need for multilevel governance of water adaptation. Effective water adaptation to climate change therefore requires collaboration and coordination among multiple levels of governance/stakeholders. Multilevel governance examines how authority, resources, and responsibilities are distributed both vertically (across national, regional, and local levels), horizontally (across sectors and stakeholders) and how coordination (or fragmentation) affects adaptation outcomes. This research will focus on Yorkshire and adopt a qualitative approach based on systematic document analysis of policy frameworks, strategic documents and plans and reports and semi-structured interviews to investigate institutional coordination, national, regional, local and community level adaptation strategies. The analysis will examine how duties, decision-making processes, funding mechanisms and accountability are allocated.



Assessment of the Impact of Land Use and Land Cover on the Ecosystem Services of Selected Ramsar Sites, Nigeria

Osagie, Michael | York St John University

Ramsar wetlands are globally recognized for their critical ecosystem services, including water purification, flood regulation, habitat provision, and support of local livelihoods. In Nigeria, selected Ramsar sites such as Apoi Creek face mounting pressures from urbanization, agriculture, and land reclamation, which have altered land use and land cover (LULC) patterns, potentially undermining their ecological and socio-economic functions. This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to assess the impact of LULC changes on ecosystem service provision. Spatial and temporal LULC changes over the past two decades are quantified using remote sensing and GIS, while structured interviews and stakeholder consultations capture local community perceptions of provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural services. Statistical analysis in SPSS and qualitative coding in NVivo are applied to synthesise socio-ecological insights. The research aims to identify the ecosystem services most valued by local communities and evaluate strategies to mitigate negative LULC impacts. By integrating geospatial analysis with participatory fieldwork, this study provides evidence-based guidance for sustainable wetland management and policy development, contributing to the resilience of both ecosystems and communities. The findings highlight the importance of local knowledge and participatory governance in maintaining ecosystem services under rapid environmental change.



Defining Crisis: Exploring the Operational Implications of Crisis-Related Terminology for Communication and Coordination in the UK Outbound Travel Sector

Pearce, Becky | Leeds Beckett University

The UK outbound travel sector operates within an increasingly volatile global environment, where crises are no longer exceptional but a routine feature of organisational life. When disruptions occur, they unfold across complex, interdependent systems in which multiple organisations must coordinate under conditions of uncertainty and time pressure.

Despite the recognised importance of a common situational awareness in crisis response, it is often assumed that terms such as incident, crisis and disaster are understood consistently across organisations. In practice, these terms are interpreted differently depending on organisational roles, priorities and operational contexts. Such variation is significant, as terminology underpins escalation decisions, coordination processes and the activation of response structures.

This study explores how crisis-related terminology is interpreted, communicated and operationalised during the crisis response phase within the UK outbound travel sector. The study will adopt a qualitative, multi-method approach, with the research combining practitioner diaries, semi-structured interviews and artefact elicitation to examine both real-time and retrospective sensemaking.

By focusing on how terminology functions in practice, the study aims to develop a conceptual understanding of how language shapes crisis response, alongside practical insights to support more effective coordination and decision-making across organisations.



Why Do Offenders Target Tourists? Understanding Offender Motivations in Tourism-Related Crimes

Poku, Getrude | Leeds Beckett University

Why offenders target tourists remains insufficiently understood in tourism crime research. Routine Activity Theory (RAT) conceptualises the motivated offender as a necessary precondition for crime but treats motivation as analytically given. While this abstraction has enabled macro-level analyses of crime opportunities, it limits explanatory depth in tourism contexts where offender motivations shape what crimes are committed, where they occur, and when they are perpetrated. Addressing this limitation requires closer attention to the micro-level contexts in which offenders operate and make decisions.

Drawing on qualitative interviews with offenders, tourism enterprises, and institutional actors in Ghana, this study examines how motivations for tourism-related crime are constructed, enacted, and constrained. The findings show that motivations operate along two interrelated dimensions: internal drivers, including personal and psychological influences, and external drivers, including economic pressures, situational opportunities, and physical conditions within tourism environments.

By foregrounding offender-centred perspectives, the study extends Routine Activity Theory beyond opportunity structures and provides new insights for tourism crime prevention and destination security governance, particularly in Global South destinations where socio-economic inequalities shape both criminal opportunities and offender motivations.



Uncovering the Trust Formation Process between Virtual Influencers and Consumers

Rahman, Kazi Turin | University of Huddersfield

This research focuses on the trust formation process between virtual influencers (VIs) and consumers. Trust formation is essential between VIs and consumers as it enables the latter to take action. Although, prior studies have established that trust is important for the VI-consumer relationship, the formation process itself has largely been understudied.

Grounded in Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory, this quantitative study validated a sequential mediation model of trust formation. When exposed to VI cues like human-like appearance and affective empathy, it is theorized that consumers will develop trust perceptions. This is because, if an entity looks and acts like a human, we are likely to treat it like a real human-being. Once the trust is formed, the consumer will be more comfortable in taking action.

600 survey responses from consumers were collected and analyzed using structural equation modelling and mediation analysis. Results revealed that trust formation occurs simultaneously through direct and indirect channels.

Theoretically, this study advances knowledge on the multi-channel trust formation process between VIs and consumers. Practically, it informs VI creators that humanizing their designs are essential towards being accepted by consumers. Finally, this research aligns with UN SDG Goal 9 by advancing trustworthy digital innovation for people.



Biomass Waste Valorisation for Sustainable Production of Green Industrial Chemicals

Sarwar, Sadia | University of Salford

The increasing demand for sustainable chemical production has increased interest in the utilization of lignocellulosic biomass as a renewable feedstock. Top industrial biochemicals are currently derived predominantly from petrochemical routes; substituting these with renewable, lignocellulosic-derived intermediates requires techniques that are selective, efficient, and compatible with industrial processing. Brewer's spent grain (BSG), generated at million tons annually, represents a promising substrate due to its significant hemicellulose content; however, its industrial valorization is hindered by extensive acetylation, arabinose branching and substrate heterogeneity.

This research aims to improve the hydrolysis of acetylated hemicellulose by developing engineered carbohydrate-active enzymes (CAZymes) and integrating them with selective substrate pre-treatments, apply rational mutational design supported by computational prediction. Synergy studies combining esterases with α -L-arabinofuranosidases, alongside substrate pre-treatments (ionic liquids, mild chemical deacetylation), will evaluate increase in xylan accessibility and fermentable sugar release. The approach is expected to generate improved hemicellulases with enhanced tolerance to industrial conditions. These findings support the development of more efficient and sustainable BSG valorization strategies within lignocellulosic biorefineries.



Exploring and understanding bank Professionals' perspectives and attitudes on business sustainability within the UK Banking Industry

Scott, Marilyn | Leeds Beckett University

The research explores business sustainability as a phenomenon in the UK banking industry. Applying the qualitative research method, and in-depth semi-structured interviews with bank professionals. The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis, categorising codes into evolving themes, including Gioia attitudinal matrices, exploring influences and attitudes that were captured. In addition, innovative ideas to increase efficiency and enhance sustainability integration, and how this can be achieved. Creating mechanisms for embedding business sustainability using expanded conceptual and voluntary frameworks to produce tactical and strategic tools. This research project explores the perspectives and influences of bank professionals on business sustainability as an evolving phenomenon. This can be achieved by introducing business sustainability as a phenomenon, and by models and frameworks that embed existing theories. Key findings reveal that business sustainability is a multi-faceted phenomenon, with diverse interpretations across different portfolios and professional roles. Senior managers focus on strategic alignment, while operational staff highlight practical challenges. A significant gap emphasises the need for sector-wide education, communication and collaboration. The thematic analysis further highlights barriers to business sustainability embeddedness and the importance of sustainability leadership in driving long-term success.



Exploring Support for Eating Difficulties in Children and Young People living with Higher Weight

Shepherd, Kaydee | Leeds Beckett University

Around 80% of children and young people seeking weight management support experience eating difficulties, ranging from emotional eating to binge eating disorder. Despite the overlap, services for weight management and eating difficulties are often delivered separately. This leaves a gap for the children and young people who sit between both systems. When eating difficulties are not recognised within weight management services, they may worsen. At the same time, without weight management considerations within eating difficulty services, many young people may not meet the criteria to access support.

My PhD explores how we can better support eating difficulties among children and young people living with higher body weight. Focusing on two clinics offering novel support for eating difficulties within a weight management context, I examine how these difficulties are identified and treated. I will also gain lived experience insights by speaking with children and young people living with higher body weight who experience eating difficulties.

Informed by current literature, clinical practice, and lived experience, this project aims to inform future care for the many children and young people who fall between weight management and eating difficulty services.



A Cabinet of Curiosities: Exploring the Phenomenon of the Neurodivergent Speech and Language Therapist

Simpson, Jodee | Leeds Beckett University

This study explores the phenomenon of the neurodivergent Speech and Language Therapist (ND SLT) by treating the research itself as a ‘cabinet of curiosities’—a space where unexpected objects, images, and ideas gather to disrupt professional knowledge. Rather than a neat, linear account, the cabinet invites the audience to pause and wonder about the many ways ND SLTs navigate their work.

Using Barad’s ‘diffractive methodologies’, the study examines how the profession’s history of identifying and treating “disorder” continues to shape who is seen as “professional,” who fits, and whose knowledge is silenced. These histories influence how ND practitioners are perceived, and how they see themselves.

Findings suggest that professional identity is not neutral, but produced through expectations around communication, behaviour, emotional regulation, and clinical authority. Many ND SLTs described belonging as conditional—welcome only if they shrink aspects of their neurodivergence to align with normative standards.

A key theme is neurodivergent intuition: a relational, sensory, embodied way of clinical knowing that sits in the grey margins of recognised scope. It touches on sensory processing, emotional attunement, and relational safety—areas often assigned as “someone else’s role.”



The Role of Virtual Reality in Promoting Sustainable Destination Marketing: A Study on Islamic Heritage in Bangladesh

Sultana, Neegar | University of Salford

This research assesses Virtual Reality (VR) as a strategic tool for sustainable destination marketing, focusing on Islamic heritage in Bangladesh. While immersive technologies are adopted globally, a significant gap exists regarding their application to religious and cultural heritage in developing nations. This study addresses this oversight by exploring the intersection of digital transformation, sustainability, and tourism marketing.

To provide a strong theoretical foundation, the study introduces a conceptual model explaining how VR influences tourists' sustainable attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. Moving beyond geographically restricted empirical studies, this research emphasises diverse representation. It addresses systemic factors including governance, equitable access, the digital divide, and Bangladeshi infrastructural challenges.

Adopting a qualitative design grounded in interpretive epistemology, the study utilises semi-structured interviews with 25 participants. Data undergoes rigorous thematic analysis via NVivo 14 software to ensure systematic reliability. The findings will offer a comprehensive framework for policymakers and marketers, providing actionable insights into leveraging VR to preserve Islamic heritage while fostering sustainable tourism growth in Bangladesh.



Mapping and Archiving the Queer Spatial Experience of Faversham, Kent

Tollady, Daniel | Leeds Beckett University

The Faversham Society was founded in 1962 in response to the increasing modernisation and development of Kent's historic market town. Amassing a vast archive of material as part of their work, their intention has been to preserve the local heritage and architecture of the town and its surrounding parishes (Faversham Society, n.d.). Using this archive as a starting point, my research seeks to examine the queer experience of the town and its built environment, looking at how different queer identities are enacted (Butler, 1993) and experienced in relation to the town's architecture. Further to this, the research will examine how the LGBTQ+ community inhabit and create private interior domesticities, and temporarily queer public space (Gorman-Murray & Cook, 2018). Methods of autoethnography, productive archiving, mapping, and architectural representation will be used to uncover and document traces of Faversham's queer everyday. Drawings and diagrams will oscillate between differing levels of technicality and subjectivity, operating on different architectural scales of body, interior space and public space. These will inform the construction of a new, queer-spatial archive that works in conjunction with pre-existing local archives to communicate a queer experience and history of the town.



J. M. W. Turner, Flâneur and Land Artist: Retracing the Sojourns Made by the Painter in Wharfedale and Washburndale

Tranter, Paul | Leeds Beckett University

The painter J. M. W. Turner made regular visits to Farnley Hall in West Yorkshire between 1808 and 1824. On those visits he wandered through the local landscapes of Wharfedale and Washburndale, capturing, through 60 pencil sketches, colour beginnings and numerous watercolours the views, colours, light, weather, atmosphere, and industry of the local area.

My practice-based research takes an autoethnographic approach, retracing Turner's sojourns, to visit the places he stood to sketch. Referencing principles of flâneurship, as described by Guy Debord, and adapting that to a rural, British context, I re-imagine J. M. W. Turner as a rural flâneur, wandering, lost, for the sake of an aesthetic adventure. I will deploy the methods of the *dérive* to map the places visited by Turner, examining the palimpsest of histories that overlay these vantages for his work.

I argue that, through these methods, we can learn more about the impact that the immersion in the landscape had on Turner's practice and in casting Turner as a rural flâneur I suggest that his processes in making his art constitute, so far unexamined precedents for the work of land artists in Britain and the role psychogeography might play in such artistic practice.



An Integrated Public-Private-Community Framework for Managing Household Hazardous Waste in Nigeria: A Comparative Case Study of Selected Streets in Abuja & Abia

Udodirim, Maryann | University of Salford

Household hazardous waste (HHW) includes everyday items such as batteries, chemicals, electronic devices, and expired medicines that pose risks to human health and the environment if not properly managed. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, waste management systems are primarily designed for general waste, resulting in hazardous materials being mixed and disposed of unsafely.

This study examines how HHW is generated, handled, and managed in two Nigerian cities - Aba and Abuja. It adopts a literature-informed approach to identify gaps in existing household waste management systems and to analyse patterns of waste disposal practices, providing a basis for developing context-specific solutions.

Findings show that households in both cities generate hazardous waste regularly but rarely separate it from general waste. Although Abuja has relatively more structured waste collection systems, HHW is not managed as a distinct stream. In Aba, poor road accessibility, irregular collection, and weak enforcement contribute to unsafe disposal practices. Across both cities, low public awareness and the involvement of informal waste pickers without protection further increase risks.

The study identifies a gap between policy and practice and proposes an integrated framework combining infrastructure, awareness, enforcement, and workforce inclusion to improve environmental and health outcomes.



Wrestling with Avatar Liveness

X, Naf | Leeds Beckett University

This thesis examines how aliveness in contemporary performance cultures is being reconfigured through the increasing dominance of avatars, replicas, and mediated likeness. Moving beyond presence as a bodily condition, the study proposes that liveness has become symbolic, operationalised through systems of representation rather than co-present human performers. Drawing on autoethnography as a primary methodology, the research develops an original conceptual framework that synthesises processes of erosion (the diminishing necessity of the body) and extension (the amplification of mediated presence).

Through a series of live performance case studies including digital concerts, tribute performances, and legacy artist continuations. The thesis investigates what is termed the politics of likeness: who controls, authorises, and capitalises on reproduced identities. The findings suggest tendencies of live experiences to be gearing heavily towards the likeness economy, as trust and recognisability replace physical presence as the core drivers of value. In this context, avatars are not anomalies but infrastructural elements of a broader hyperreal system. The thesis contributes to performance and media studies by situating live as the context to decipher the emergent likeness economy.