



WELCOME TO THE LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2025

PCR Conference by PCR's for PCR's!

Tuesday 10 June 2025

Rose Bowl, Leeds Beckett City Campus

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

EVENT PROGRAMME



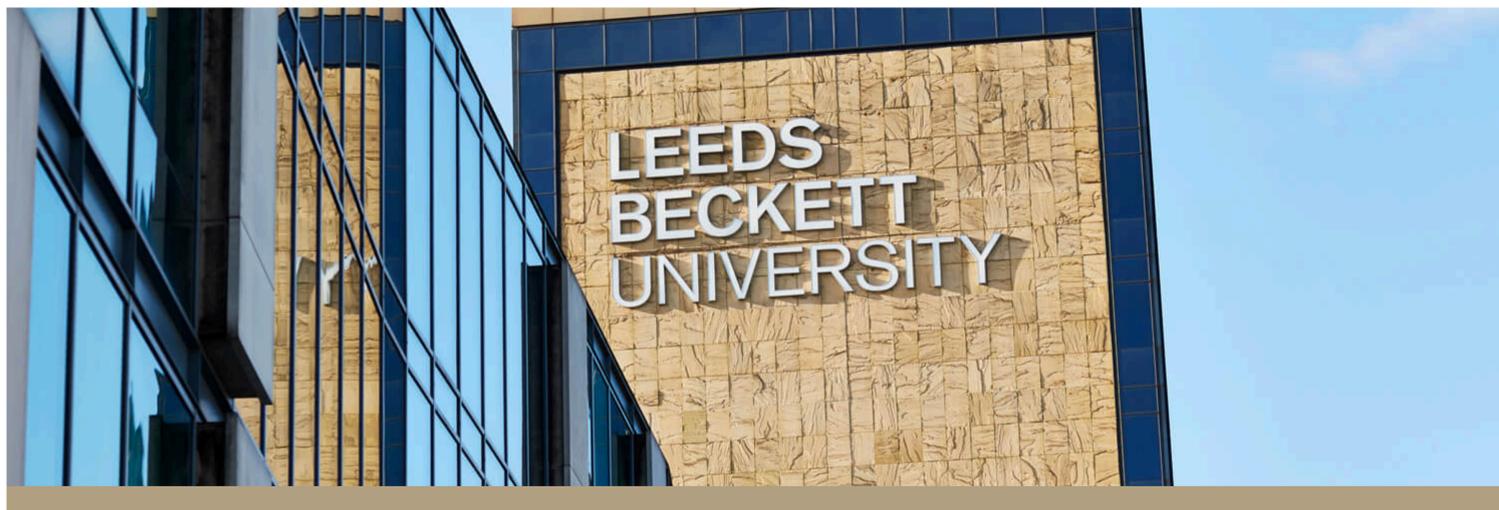
 DATE: TUESDAY, 10TH JUNE 2025

 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 Address & Safety Briefing Misan Jekhine	Sagar Wright Theatre A
10:10	Overview of Research Impact Juliet Harrison	Sagar Wright Theatre A
10:20	Fireside Chat - Impactful Research Prof Silke Machold (Pro Vice-Chancellor) Professor Rachel Armitage	Sagar Wright Theatre A
11:00	3MT Presentations in Groups	RB 226 RB 229 RB 231
12:30	Poster Presentations	Rose Bowl Atrium
13:00	Lunch	Rose Bowl Atrium
14:00	3MT Presentations in Groups	RB 226 RB 229 RB 231
14:50	Short Break	
15:00	Beyond Academia – PGRs in The Boardroom Dr. Ainoje Alex Irune Dr. Mariana Pexton	Sagar Wright Theatre A
16:00	Presentation of Gifts & Closing Remarks Peter Mackreth – Dean, CSS	Sagar Wright Theatre A
16:30	Event Close	Sagar Wright Theatre A
17:00	Social Hour	Rose Bowl Atrium

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 A - Prof. Kate Dashper and Prof. Tom Fletcher - RB 226	
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	2:00 PM- 2:50 PM
Fatin Nabilah Azren	Marta Salvador-Almela
Hafsat Abubakar Kari	Heidi Yang
Janeil Bennett	Zoe Stuart
Simon Boon	Ankit Vyas
Liam Colbert	
Daniel Duke	
Igho-Osagie Imuetinyan	
Tracey Lancaster	
Metrey Mashapuri	

GROUP B - Prof Emma Wood and Dr Chen Zheng - RB 229	
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	2:00 PM- 2:50 PM
Orighomisan Jekhine	Nicole Dodds
Dawn Power	Getrude Poku
Sidriana Scheffer	Clare Freeman
Hussain Zameel	Sonia Khan
Anisa Ali	
Abdullah All Mamun Anik	
Natalia Benova	
Katja Brown	

PRESENTATION GROUPS



GROUP C - Dr Lisa Gorton and Dr Davide Sterchele - RB 231	
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	2:00 PM- 2:50 PM
Edwin Magio	Naf Ahmed
Jessica Benton	Marielle Reuser
Claire Chaisson	Louise Cooper
Sarah Douglas-Lee	Tournesac Yann
Corinne Feuillatre	
Cathianne Hall	
Janith Jayatilake Kankanamalage	
Kendra Jumbo	
Rene Kuklinkova	
Reuben McKay	

Group D - Rose Bowl Atrium	
Nurhanis Abdullah Sani	Charlotte Nicholls
Tanzila Saeed Ahmed Kousar	Christopher Nicholls
Maha Alruwaili	Ify Nwiwu
Yiu Fai Chan	Keith Ritchie
Holly Dodsworth	Marilyn Scott
Farah Farok	Jodee Simpson



Liveness: The Dawn of Likeness

Ahmed, Naf | Leeds Beckett University

Reimagining Liveness: Simulacra, Likeness, and the Live Futures.

With the emergence of complex technological representations of artists, the boundaries between the real and the virtual increasingly blurs the degree of 'liveness' in performance. This research re-examines how such high-tech concert and theatre productions leverage mediated performance to reconstruct what it means to experience something 'live.' Using evocative autoethnography, this study interrogates the shifting dynamics of immediacy, presence, and authenticity in technologically enhanced events.

Grounded in the theoretical framework of 'Kayfabe', the performative reality within professional wrestling, this research positions liveness as a constructed experience. By examining immersive theatres like ABBA Voyage and Elvis Immersive, this study will showcase how simulacra and likeness interplay in fabricating a sense of presence and immediacy that extend reality beyond spatio-temporal confines. Through personal reflections and critical analysis, it highlights how technology challenges traditional notions of immediacy and truth, while also resonating with post-truth and techno-pagan paradigms.

It offers insights into the evolving relationship between audiences and performance where reality is increasingly curated and suspending disbelief is part of the show. This study proposes that liveness is not diminished by media technology but rather cascades into a re-situated liveness.



An Investigation into (Dis)Embodied Experience in the W(NBA) and NBA G-League Metaverse: A Woman's Journey Through Digital Sporting Worlds

Abdullah Sani, Nurhanis | Leeds Beckett University

The metaverse is transforming sports by creating immersive environments that redefine fan engagement. However, the gender dynamics in these spaces, particularly in the W(NBA) and NBA G-League, remain under-researched. This study explores how women experience embodiment, interaction, and community in virtual sports spaces and whether they feel liberated or constrained in these digital environments. The study utilises a mixed-methods approach, combining autoethnography with the walkthrough method, netnography, and semi-structured interviews to capture the complex experiences of women. These methods shed light on the extent to which the metaverse promotes autonomy or reinforces structural barriers. Drawing on claustropolitanism and digital feminist theory, the study highlights the dual potential of the metaverse: while it promotes women's empowerment through participation and representation, it can also expose them to harassment, marginalisation, and entrenched gender biases. The findings can contribute to policy, practice, and theory by informing governance frameworks that prioritise inclusivity. Virtual sports developers can use these findings to create safer and more equitable experiences. The study enriches the discourse on digital embodiment and the intersection of gender, technology, and sport. It argues for collaborative efforts to ensure that virtual sports environments become truly inclusive and empowering spaces for women.



Life in the Dark: Circadian Rhythms of Naked Mole Rats

Abubakar Kari, Hafsat | University of Bradford

Naked Mole Rats (NMR) have an extraordinary lifespan of more than 35 years and display no age-related declines in reproduction, physiological and biochemical function retaining healthy life up till the end of their long lifespan. NMRs are resistant to cancer and exhibit the most striking example of eusociality among mammals, living underground, in the dark and at low oxygen levels in large colonies characterised by a rigid behavioural and reproductive hierarchy. Interestingly, NMRs are often cited as having no circadian rhythms and/or being active around the clock. Circadian rhythms are important for organisms and control almost all aspects of physiology and behaviour in nearly every living organism studied. The biological clock that regulates these rhythms is dynamic over the lifespan and it is well recognised that rhythmic activities such as sleep/wake patterns change remarkably as we age. Prolonged rhythm disruptions are detrimental to our health and can lead to chronic adverse conditions including dementia and cancer. Therefore, understanding the extent of the circadian system in NMRs, which, in theory, do not need a functional circadian clock, and how the system is entrained will give fundamental biological insights into the relevance of the circadian system using a mammalian model.



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

Ahmed Kousar, Tanzila Saeed | Leeds Beckett University

Background: Ovarian cancer is the 5th most common cancer among women worldwide. Current clinical presentation suggests that the oral contraceptive pill is protective against the development of ovarian cancer with a 29% decrease in ovarian cancer risk following five years of use but still, there is a gap present in understanding the mechanisms occurring at cellular, genetic and molecular levels.

Objectives: Therefore, the main aim of this research is to investigate the mechanisms of protection from ovarian cancer following combined contraceptive pill use to determine the role of cellular characteristics, proteomics, inflammatory, & genetic factors.

Methods: Briefly, cell lines were exposed to various concentrations of 2nd generation contraceptive compounds for 24 hours. The various assays for proliferation including MTT, Cell titre glo and trypan blue exclusion, migration, reactive oxygen species detection and cell cycle progression were executed to illustrate the role of oral contraceptive compounds in ovarian cancer.

Results: 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 cancer cells in comparison to the normal cell line.

Conclusion: The data from the current research supported the clinical evidence that use of OCP compounds reduces ovarian cancer.

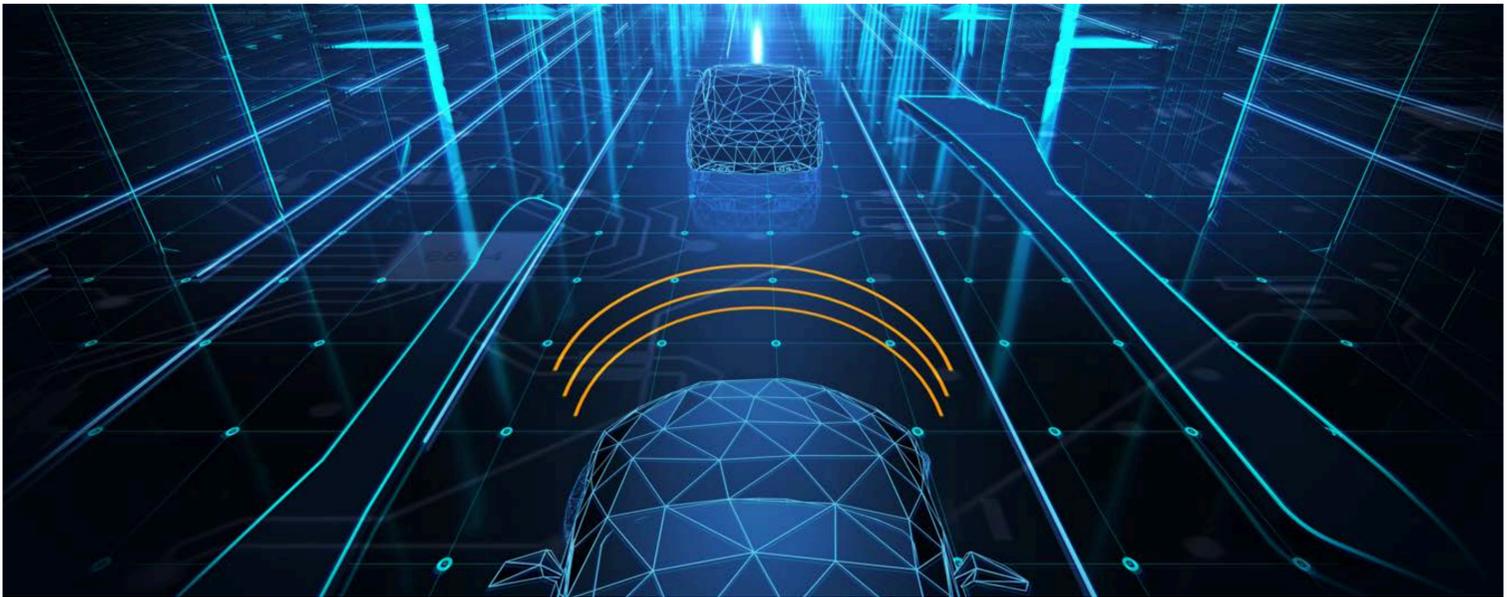


Development of In Vitro Infection Models to Test the Efficacy of Antimicrobial Medical Devices

Ali, Anisa | University of Bradford

Orthopaedic implants are commonly used to improve joint function and alleviate pain, but they come with risks, the most serious being infection. Medical device-related infections present significant clinical challenges, particularly in an era of increasing antibiotic resistance. This project aims to develop in vitro infection models to assess the efficacy of antimicrobial medical devices by examining the interplay between biomaterials, antimicrobial agents, and cellular responses. This research explores how biomaterials and antimicrobial agents influence bacterial adhesion, biofilm formation, and host cell interactions under dynamic flow conditions mimicking in vivo environments.

The research involves co-culture systems integrating bacteria, osteoblasts, and fibroblasts to investigate the "race for the surface", where bacterial colonisation competes with host cell integration. Testing will include nano-patterned biomaterials, antimicrobial coatings, and novel drug-eluting devices, such as an electrospun antimicrobial-coated tampon. By progressively increasing the complexity of testing methodologies, this project aims to develop standardized models for evaluating biomaterial performance. The findings will contribute to the designing of antimicrobial and tissue-integrating materials, as well as the testing of these materials, potentially reducing infection rates and improving patient outcomes in orthopaedics and wound care.



Integrated Machine Learning and Hybrid Optimization for Efficient Resource Allocation in Autonomous Vehicular Networks

Alruwaili, Maha | University of Leeds

Autonomous vehicular networks require intelligent and adaptive resource allocation strategies to ensure seamless communication, minimize latency, and optimize power consumption. This research introduces an Integrated Machine Learning and Hybrid Optimization Framework to efficiently manage computational and communication resources in dynamic vehicular environments. The proposed framework synergizes reinforcement learning (RL) for adaptive decision-making with Sequential Quadratic Programming (SQP) and Genetic Algorithms (GA) to optimize resource distribution under stringent Quality of Service (QoS) constraints. By incorporating real-time traffic conditions, energy constraints, and vehicular mobility patterns, our approach dynamically adjusts task prioritization, bandwidth allocation, and computational offloading while maintaining network stability. Extensive simulations validate the effectiveness of our model, demonstrating up to 40% reduction in latency, 35% improvement in energy efficiency, and enhanced system throughput compared to conventional optimization methods. The results confirm the superiority of hybrid optimization coupled with machine learning in addressing the challenges of autonomous vehicular networks. This work provides a scalable, real-time, and adaptive solution for next-generation vehicular communication, contributing to the evolution of intelligent transportation systems and autonomous mobility.



Process Optimisation for Robotic Manufacturing System to Implement Industry 4.0

Anik, Abdullah All Mamun | University of Huddersfield

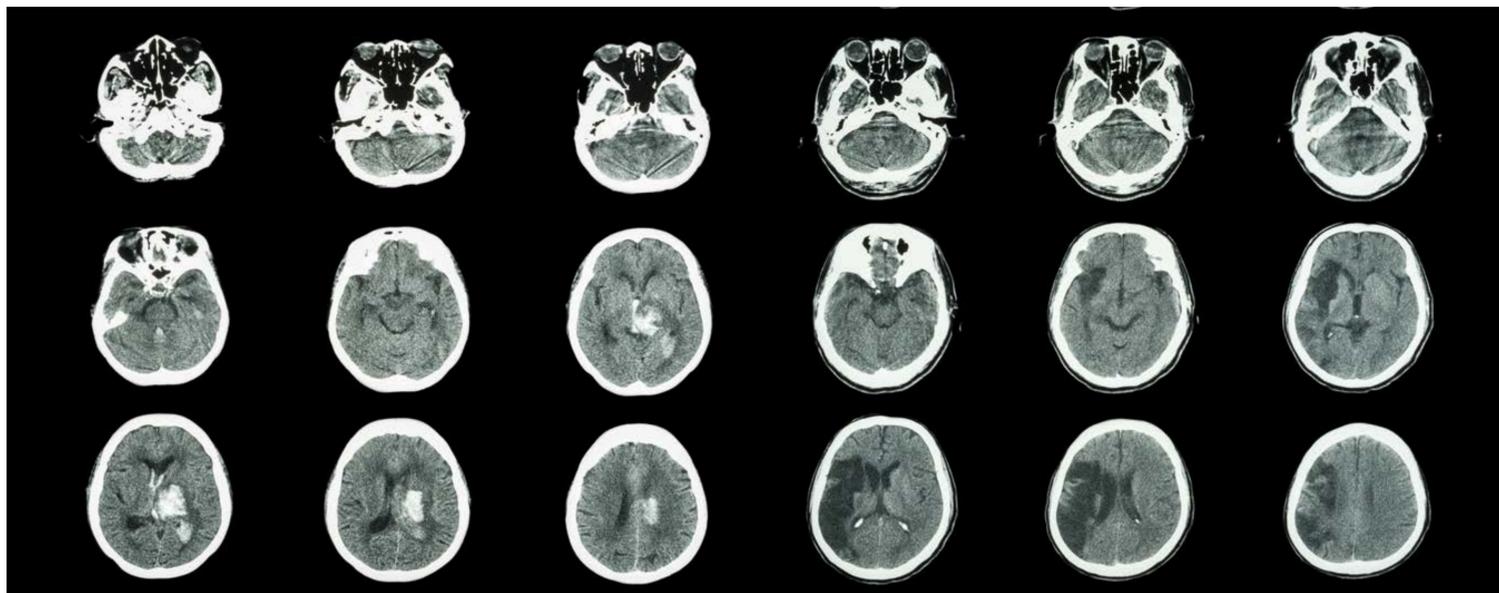
To ensure the scheduling of processes, improve accuracy, and minimize quality impairment due to vibration caused by operational difficulties. Low stiffness and inadequate accuracy are generally considered as the two primary challenges confronting current automated manufacturing technologies. When used in production, cognitive appliances flexible arms suffer dynamical accuracy considering they are extremely versatile, agile, and easily maneuverable. The machine's muscles shaking and clattering will result in poor production performance. The key problems with modern robotic machining systems are often described as low rigidity and poor accuracy. Robotic machining with process optimisation and manual programming takes responsibility for countless operational elements, allowing businesses to get a deeper knowledge of their operations. These include mechanical investigation, method improvement, and computerized supervision. Digital simulation of processes using AI and ML boosts implementation rates of effectiveness. This enables businesses to reduce process restructuring while continually refining production processes and modeling machining capabilities to increase reliability and precision.



Exploring Muslim Women's Experiences As Sports Spectators: A Halal Tourism Perspective

Azren, Fatin Nabilah | Leeds Beckett University

Malaysian Muslim women face cultural, religious, and logistical barriers as spectators at sports events. Despite efforts to promote inclusivity in sports tourism, their experiences remain underexplored. This study addresses this gap by applying the Halal Tourism Framework and Intersectionality Theory to examine these challenges. This approach integrates practical needs (e.g., halal facilities, privacy) with social dynamics (e.g., gender, marital status, cultural expectations) to explore how these factors shape participation in sports events. Focusing on a marginalised group in sports tourism, this research highlights an overlooked perspective in academia and practice. Through ongoing online interviews and thematic analysis, preliminary findings reveal challenges such as inadequate facilities, cultural sensitivities, and accessibility barriers. These findings show how cultural and religious identities influence sports spectatorship, shaping participation experiences. This study offers practical recommendations for policymakers, sports organisations, and event planners in Malaysia to foster more inclusive environments. It also serves as a model for other Muslim-majority countries in developing culturally sensitive tourism and leisure practices. By amplifying the voices of Malaysian Muslim women, this research contributes to academic knowledge and promotes inclusivity in sports tourism.



The Perceptions of Young Stroke or Transient Ischaemic Attack Survivors and their Family Members Regarding Secondary Stroke Prevention

Bennett, Janeil | Leeds Beckett University

The onset age for stroke and transient ischemic attack (TIA) is declining, increasingly affecting young adults aged 65 and younger. This rise in young stroke and TIA cases has highlighted concerns about recurrences among this demographic. Young stroke survivors often face modifiable risk factors that can be managed through secondary stroke/TIA prevention (SS/TP) strategies, including lifestyle changes and medication adherence. However, their compliance is typically low, and their families often lack understanding of the importance of these strategies. Therefore, a scoping review was conducted as the initial study in this research to explore the perceptions of young stroke survivors and their families regarding these SS/TP approaches. It adhered to the methodological framework established by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and the Joanna Briggs Institute Manual (Peters et al., 2020). Selected databases (e.g., MEDLINE, CINAHL, CENTRAL, ASSIA, PsychINFO) were searched for relevant peer-reviewed and in-press papers, while conference proceedings, dissertations, and theses served as a secondary search strategy to uncover additional pertinent literature. Findings were extracted, synthesised, and presented through descriptive summaries and thematic analysis, which aided in illuminating identified evidence and gaps in this emerging area of stroke research. The scoping review protocol for this study has been registered on OSF.



Identification and Characterisation of Regulatory Noncoding Mutations in Ovarian Cancer

Benova, Natalia | Leeds Beckett University

Ovarian cancer (OC) remains one of the deadliest malignancies, with high relapse rates due to late-stage diagnosis. Despite advances in treatment, long-term survival rates remain poor. Previous efforts have primarily focused on coding mutations, overlooking the vast regulatory landscape of the noncoding genome, where regulatory elements control gene expression and mutations in this region can disrupt cellular processes, contributing to cancer progression.

Although researchers have tried to identify noncoding mutations with regulatory potential, none have leveraged robust data integration to systematically identify their functional impact.

Here we have developed a robust pipeline that integrates genomic, transcriptomic and epigenomic data to identify such mutations. Application in OC has identified a noncoding variant rs2158564 that directly regulates PURB gene, involved in DNA replication and transcription. Our results show that in the presence of this variant, PURB gene expression increases. Additionally, CRISPR knockout screen revealed that in absence of this variant, cells become highly depended on PURB for survival. Interestingly, we observe that patients with low PURB expression show significantly worse outcomes, suggesting that this variant plays a protective role. This approach enables the identification of regulatory mutations, opening new possibilities for patient stratification and targeted treatments in OC.



Understanding and Tackling the Gap in Justice for Disabled People Subjected to Crimes Against Humanity through Disability Legal Studies and Disabled Perspectives

Benton, Jessica | Leeds Beckett University

Disabled people have endured and continue to endure targeted and systematic violence and atrocity. These egregious violations of rights may show elements of Crimes Against Humanity as described under the Rome Statute. Despite this, there remains a lack of discussion of disabled people routinely experiencing these egregious violations in the international criminal justice field.

This research aims to answer the question comprehensively of how International Criminal Justice has responded to egregious human rights violations against disabled people as a group. Then, subsequently, answer how their decisions and views shaped the gap in justice and discussion of disability in international criminal justice. The thesis will make proposals for how international criminal justice processes and scholarship should address crimes against disabled people and create lasting progress towards equality.

The contribution of this project to existing knowledge in this area will be two-fold. This will be through testing the use of Disability Legal Studies as an approach to analysing and critiquing international criminal law. Another contribution will be to construct a full, connected narrative of how disabled people and disability issues have been viewed by international criminal justice processes in relation to the development, investigation, and prosecution of Crimes Against Humanity.



The Long Shadow - What The UK's Rwandan Diaspora Can Teach Us About Post-Conflict Recovery

Boon, Simon | Leeds Beckett University

Over thirty years since it took place, Rwanda's genocide still fascinates researchers; not just because of its brutality and speed, or the studied inaction of the West, but also because of its remaining centrality in the reshaping of Rwanda under Kagame's leadership. Spectacular economic progress, social engineering, and sustained peace have all been achieved in an atmosphere of authoritarian rule, where heavily-curated narratives underpin his brand of benevolent dictatorship, pilloried for its non-pluralism, while lauded for its national rejuvenation.

By highlighting disparities between the majority of secondary research, highly critical of Kagame, and the lived experiences of people enjoying post-conflict peace and prosperity, this research aims to understand why Rwandans appear content to have their experiences, memories, and beliefs subordinated in the name of peace and prosperity.

Oral history has been used to track the path of Rwanda's recovery through the voices of its diasporans. The research investigates how individuals and communities have navigated a path from violence to recovery despite the genocide remaining central to their national identity. It also aims to understand whether the experiences of the UK's Rwandan diaspora can be used as a model for other post-conflict societies and whether any lessons learned can be generalised.



Creating the Chimera: Towards a Theory of Rhizomatic Genre. A Creative/Critical Thesis on the Evolution of Literary Classification

Brown, Katja | Leeds Beckett University

Rewrites of Greek myth continue a tradition of toxic and damaging masculinity toward women both in literature and society meaning women are still at the mercy of such traditions. I hold up a contemporary mirror to this entitlement through a new approach to rewriting, including this author's experience, innovative approaches to genre theory, a new literary term and examining Greek myth as a gateway to autobiographical writing. I did this by writing a novel about Hades and Persephone's relationship, including parallel narratives to mirror specific narrative choices, poetic interventions, authorial interventions that comment directly on the author or narrative choices and experimenting with form, structure and content. What I discovered was an avenue into the expanse of genre through hybridity and its freedom of movement by accepting multiplicity instead of singularity and restraint. I found that multiple genres can successfully and simultaneously exist in a text in generic incongruity. I discovered that genre could be considered a yes and experience by both writer and reader allowing for further interaction between process and product and by extension product and reader. I believe that the future of this research lies in the application of abjection, in so far as the monstrosity of hybridity does not align with the socially imposed identity of genre, and Plato's cave, re-examining the shadow of genre and rewriting based on what we think we see, instead of what it is.



Automatic Sprint Detection in Inertial Measurement Unit Data

Chaisson, Claire | Leeds Beckett University

One of the challenges in team sports is bridging the gap between laboratory assessments and field-based monitoring. Traditional performance evaluations often require expensive equipment and laboratory visits, limiting routine access. In contrast, many team sport athletes use wearable technology to track performance. A sprint detection algorithm was developed that automatically identifies sprints from continuous velocity signals during typical football training sessions (~2 hrs) and competitions (~1.5 hrs). Once detected, each sprint is split into acceleration and maximum velocity phases. This method eliminates the need for manual tagging of data and accommodates various sprint protocols (e.g., one or multiple athletes sprinting simultaneously). Detected sprints provide insights into a player's sprinting profile, allowing practitioners to assess sprint frequency, speed and phase durations in training versus competition, as well as monitor fatigue across repeated sprints. While this algorithm was tested using 10 Hz IMU data, it lays the foundation for future applications with higher frequency data (e.g., 1000 Hz), which would allow for detection of key gait events such as toe off and foot strike, enabling analysis of gait changes within and across sprints to monitor fatigue and performance.



Integrating Digital Tools in Social Entrepreneurship Education: Enhancing Engagement and Learning Outcomes

Chan, Yiu Fai | University of Salford

Social entrepreneurship education (SEE) equips future leaders with the skills to address pressing global challenges like climate change, social inequality, and public health crises. The rise of digital tools has transformed education, creating new opportunities for engagement and learning. This study explores how technologies like learning management systems (LMS), virtual simulations, AI-driven feedback, and collaborative platforms enhance SEE. Virtual simulations immerse students in real-world challenges, encouraging problem-solving and stakeholder collaboration, while AI tools personalize learning experiences.

Grounded in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model, and the Theory of Planned Behavior, this research examines how digital tools influence learning, technology adoption, and entrepreneurial intentions. Despite their benefits, challenges such as digital access disparities and the need for faculty training persist, particularly in developing regions.

To maximize impact, SEE must integrate best practices, including professional development for educators, equitable access to technology, and supportive policy initiatives. By fostering partnerships and investing in digital infrastructure, stakeholders can create innovative, inclusive educational environments that empower future social entrepreneurs to drive meaningful change.

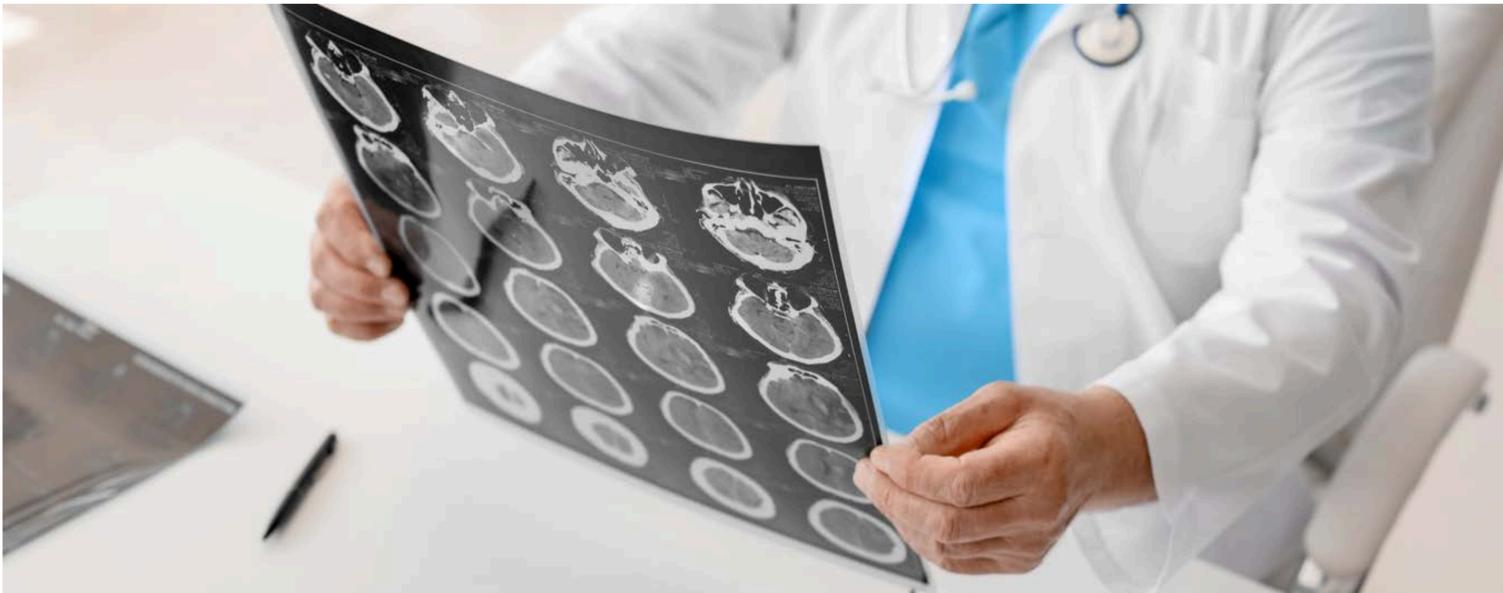


PhD in Injury Prevention in Female Youth Rugby Union

Colbert, Liam | Leeds Beckett University

Rugby union (rugby) is a field sport characterized by repeated high-intensity collisions, running efforts, and intermittent low-intensity activity. Women's rugby is the fastest-growing sector globally, with participation increasing by 28% annually. Despite this growth, research on the female game remains limited, particularly at the youth level, where most injury prevention strategies are derived from male cohorts. Notably, female youth players sustain higher injury rates than their male counterparts, with concussion being the most prevalent injury.

Injury prevention in sport is typically structured around three key pillars: (1) policy changes (2) training practices and (3) equipment recommendations. Video analysis has been incorporated into evaluating these three pillars and provides valuable insights into injury mechanisms and frequency, contributing to evidence-based recommendations for enhancing player safety. This PhD project employs video analysis to assess injury prevention strategies by examining (1) the impact of lowering the legal tackle height on tackle characteristics of suspected concussion incidence, (2) neuromuscular training (NMT) warm-up practices for injury reduction, and (3) equipment usage and its role in injury mitigation.



A Study of the Personal Experiences of Parents of Children Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), along with Enhancing Liaisons with the Professionals: Utilising Thematic Analysis

Cooper, Louise | University of Wolverhampton

It is widely acknowledged and established that Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) not only impacts upon the individual but also upon their family, the caregivers Guertsen et al, (2011). Having undertaken a literature review it demonstrated that there is very little literature showing the impact of these experiences, upon the relative/carers who are caring for their child with ABI. Nevertheless, it does suggest an abundance of studies around the areas such as mental health problems and learning disabilities Edwards et al. (2014). Furthermore, there is a wealth of studies on the effects upon spouses and, to a lesser degree, the children of adults with ABI. However, literature relating to childhood ABI and its effects upon the family is sparse. Additionally, there is literature suggesting that professionals appear to lack awareness of the trials and tribulations involved in the journey of the ABI child and his/her family.

Utilising the Thematic Analysis (TA) methodology, this study will investigate families' experiences of caring for a child (0-18 yrs old) with ABI, giving professionals a further insight into these families' lives. It will use semi-structured interviews and focus groups to gather data allowing for knowledge development of family experiences for healthcare professionals and agencies.



All Routes Lead to Infatuation: An Investigation into Collection Practices, Spillage and Waste in Global Anime Otaku Culture

Dodds, Nicole | Leeds Beckett University

This practice-based PhD study generates new knowledge into global Anime Otaku collection practices, focusing on the concept of spillage developed and defined through a body of artistic research. Otaku is a Japanese term that is generally defined as an individual who has an intense interest or obsession with a particular topic. The research is pertinent in the context of the increasing responsibilities of art galleries, museums and cultural institutions surrounding carbon footprint and waste.

The project asks: What are the environmental consequences of Anime Otaku collecting practices? How does the practice of collecting within the Anime Otaku community serve as a means of self-expression, identity construction and social belonging? To what extent do Anime Otaku collectors perceive their collections as extensions of themselves, and how does this perception influence their interactions with materiality?

I aim to offer knowledge generation on an increasingly growing community, their collection practices and the consequential spillage produced. It will allow insight into a relatively closed-off group, who prefer to shy away from outside discussion surrounding their community. The main contribution to the field will be the highlighting of the implications of collection practices and its spillage that is continuing to emerge.



Exploring the Experiences of Care Home Staff in the Optimisation of Care for Individuals Living with Dementia and Comorbid Osteoporosis. A UK Based Study

Dodsworth, Holly | Leeds Beckett University

Background

Around 70% of care home residents have dementia, with 20.6% diagnosed with osteoporosis. While data on their overlap is limited, both are common in older adults. Caring for both is challenging due to the complex intersection of these conditions, further confounded by staff turnover and heavy workloads. Involving staff in this under-researched area may be crucial for optimising care.

Aim

To explore the experiences of care home staff in optimising the care of people living with dementia and osteoporosis within care homes in the United Kingdom.

Methods

Ethnographic data will be collected from three care homes via observations, conversations and interviews with people living with dementia, families and staff. A total of 400 hours of observation and 40 interviews are planned for the study. Flexible data collection methods will enable people living with dementia to take part.



The Impact of Family Traits on Resilience of Small to Medium Hospitality Businesses in Yorkshire

Douglas-Lee, Sarah | Leeds Beckett University

Business resilience has emerged as a critical research area, particularly for small firms that form the economic backbone of the UK (Georgiou et al., 2023; De Massis and Rondi, 2024). The hospitality sector highlights these challenges starkly, with over 400 pubs closing in 2024 (Kollewe, 2024) and family businesses facing extreme vulnerability. Notably, 75% of family businesses fail to transition to the second generation (Jahmurataj et al., 2023), underscoring the urgent need to understand organisational survival mechanisms.

Focusing on the Yorkshire region, the research aims to bridge significant gaps in understanding why some family firms thrive while others collapse. Current literature lacks comprehensive insights into the resilience of these enterprises, predominantly examining narrow aspects like succession and governance (De Massis & Kammerlander, 2020).

The study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining in-depth interviews with family business stakeholders and a broader quantitative survey. The study will integrate multiple theoretical frameworks, including dynamic capabilities, resource-based view, and socio-emotional wealth perspectives (Jaskiewicz et al., 2020; Raetze et al 2022) to explore how familial traits contribute to organisational resilience.

Commencing in February 2024, this four-year PhD research seeks to provide critical theoretical and practical insights for family businesses navigating increasingly volatile economic environments.



Accomplished: Conceptualising the Convergences between Coaching and the Practice Architectures of Skills Pedagogy in Further Education

Duke, Daniel | Leeds Beckett University

This research explores the potential of coaching to enhance the pedagogical practices of Further Education (FE) Construction Tutors, focusing on developing effective teaching methods for young learners. It examines the historical and contemporary landscape of FE, shaped by socio-economic transformations and policy changes, which have significantly influenced the sector's evolution. The research delves into the complexities of pedagogy within FE, emphasising the need for a balanced approach that integrates theoretical knowledge with practical skills, thereby addressing the skills gap and improving student outcomes. By synthesising various coaching approaches and theoretical frameworks, this research identifies strategies to support FE construction teachers. These strategies aim to foster a culture of continuous improvement, promoting reflective practices and collaborative learning environments. Through this exploration, the research bridges theoretical insights with practical applications, highlighting the importance of coaching in equipping tutors to meet the diverse needs of their students and preparing them for the demands of the construction industry.



A Cultural Discourse of Fan Engagement on X: A Netnography on Liverpool FC Fans in Malaysia

Farok, Farah | Leeds Beckett University

The growth of X (formerly Twitter) has changed the way on how football fans behave, creating a notable power shift in the fan-club dynamics. Fans are no longer passive bystanders and receivers of content, but instead wield considerable influence as active creators, curators, and distributors of social media content, as well as their choice of content selectivity. This study identifies of what is known as Fan-Group Generated Content (FGGC), a form of user-driven content created by fan accounts as a transformational change of the initial norms of how the culture between fans and clubs would function. Distinct from User-Generated Content (UGC), FGGC creates an unidentified and unique position of where fan accounts operate, as they are a mixture of influencers, content creators, and opinion leaders. Focusing on transnational Liverpool FC fans in Malaysia, this study explores how local cultural nuances shape the creation and engagement of fan content. Utilizing a netnographic approach by collecting online data from X, this study then employs a social network analysis to uncover conversational patterns, relationship dynamics, and influential figures around whom fan engagement revolves. Additionally, a visual discourse analysis reveals how FGGC is constructed, interpreted, and communicated, highlighting recurring themes that foster fan engagement.



Bioarchaeology: A Gateway for Early Life Nutrition

Feuillatre, Corinne | University of Bradford

The environment during the first 1000 days of a baby's life from conception has a large influence on adult health outcomes such as diabetes or cardiovascular disease, and nutrition is key to epigenetic changes. However, measuring nutrition during this crucial time can be complex. The food we eat and the physiological imbalances we experience are recorded in our body tissues as they grow.

Bioarchaeologists measure molecules in teeth and bones to understand the diets of ancient people including how infants were fed and what physical stresses people suffered. Could they also find out how well-nourished babies were in the past? And could the same approach be useful for babies born now? This PhD research works with contemporary babies and their mothers to investigate how this important developmental period can be understood using proteins in hair, nails and naturally shed deciduous teeth. The project offers the potential for a novel biomarker to assist nutritional assessment and by extension the identification of health risk during the crucial early life period in both archaeological and modern populations.



Winning Well? An exploration of coaches' perceptions and experiences of effective and ethical practice in a new Olympic sport: a case study of Sport Climbing

Freeman, Clare | Leeds Beckett University

Coaching for competition climbing is an emerging phenomenon and sits within a complex and shifting space, as climbing is traditionally positioned as an action-adventure sport - negotiates sportisation, commercialisation, commodification, and inclusion in the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In contrast to the DIY and subculture ethos of rock climbing, competition climbing's inclusion in the Olympic Games has brought with it stricter constitutive rules and regulations, new formats and scoring systems, and funding and interest from government agencies, the media, and corporate sponsors. Given these changes, British climbing is still developing an understanding of effective and ethical approaches to coaching competition climbers.

It has been suggested that dysfunctional, problematic behaviours may already be embedded within contemporary climbing culture while socio-cultural factors have been found to be the main influential on rock climbing instructors. There is a risk that whilst climbing negotiates this shifting space, coaching will tilt towards the win-at-all-costs culture of high-performance sport, potentially leading to the emergence of unethical and ineffective coaching practices as seen in mainstream Olympic sports, e.g. The Whyte Review in British gymnastics.

This research aims to develop an understanding of coaching practice for competition climbing, and how coaches perceive and experience being effective and ethical.



Performing Site Specific Hidden Histories to Illustrate how Women Communicated through Female Conduits, both Anonymously and Spiritually, in the late 19th Century

Hall, Cathianne | Leeds Beckett University

Exploring women's voices in the 1890s through the lens of author Annie S Swan in her advice column "Over the Teacups" in *The Woman at Home's* magazine. My research is by practice, and this aspect of it will be presented as an evening of storytelling, but in this presentation, I will introduce you to the Agony Aunt and the anonymous women who sought her advice and their relevance to women today.



Relationship between Environmental Sustainability Practices, Export, and Resilience: A Systematic Literature Review

Imuetinyan, Igho-Osagie | University of Bradford

This review synthesizes the complex interactions between organizational resilience, exports, and environmental sustainability, exploring their mutual influence, particularly in navigating business disruptions. Preliminary findings indicate sustainable practices, especially Green Management and Dynamic Capabilities, significantly enhance resilience and environmental performance. For export-oriented firms, proactive environmental strategies are crucial for market access and competitive advantage.

The study examines how institutional pressures drive firms to adapt to environmental regulations and global demands, impacting resilience and export competitiveness. Theoretical frameworks like Dynamic Capabilities, Institutional, Resource-Based View (RBV), and Contingency theories are used to understand these relationships. Dynamic capabilities explain resource reconfiguration for adaptation, while institutional theory highlights external pressure; RBV analyzes sustainable practices as valuable resources, and contingency theory examines the fit between internal capabilities and external environment.



Can Youth Power and Agency in Peacebuilding Act as a Catalyst for Post-War Transformation?

Jayatilake Kankanamalage, Janith | University of Leeds

The pivotal role of youth in post-war societal transformation is often overlooked in peacebuilding, limiting its theorisation within International Development. While there is a growing emphasis on involving youth in peacebuilding, particularly in decision-making, the extent of their power and agency remains underexplored, especially from a Global South perspective.

This empirical study assesses youth power and agency throughout the lifecycle of youth-centric peacebuilding education initiatives, from inception to implementation and evaluation. Six organisations in Sri Lanka, selected through stakeholder mapping and inclusion/exclusion criteria focused on youth-centrism, will serve as case studies. The research aims to theorise how youth agency and power enhance peacebuilding education, enriching liberal approaches with locally grounded, culturally responsive practices for sustainable, context-specific outcomes.

Employing qualitative methods, including ethnographic observation, in-depth interviews, a qualitative survey, and desk research, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how youth power and agency in peacebuilding education contribute to societal transformation. The findings will offer insights for policymakers and peacebuilding practitioners on effectively harnessing youth potential for meaningful and responsible peacebuilding efforts.



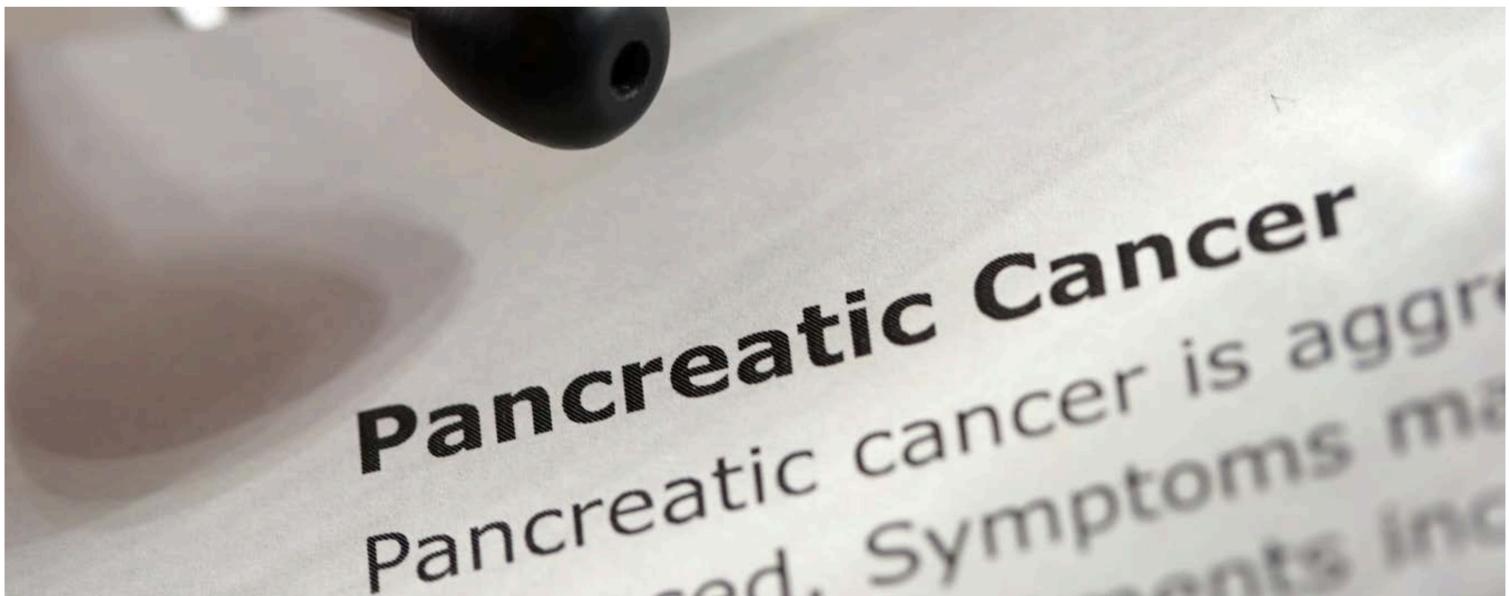
An Exploration into Gender Diversity at Corporate Events in Nigeria, using the Energy Industry as a Case Study

Jekhine, Orighomisan | Leeds Beckett University

The global oil and gas industry has historically and demographically been predominantly male; only 18% of the Nigerian oil and gas industry workforce identified as female (Oyedeji, 2022). The underrepresentation of women at corporate events, platforms for professional visibility further heightens this imbalance.

Interviews were conducted with Nigerian oil and gas employees to explore their lived experiences in the industry and the impact of gender diversity on their careers and at corporate events. Despite corporate awareness of gender diversity across the sector, women in leadership roles are still limited across the industry value chain. The underrepresentation of women as speakers at events, from large conferences to smaller internal company events, was noted in the interviews.

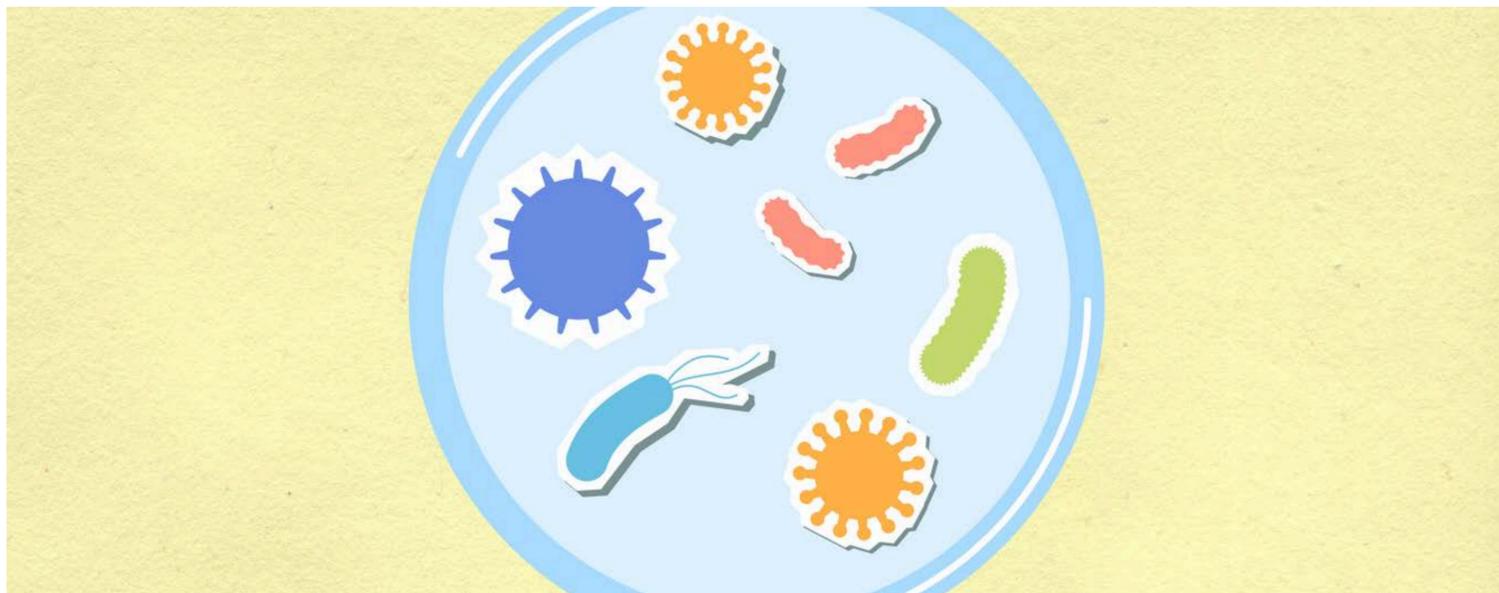
The ongoing findings from this research show a lack of gender diversity across the sector, especially at executive and senior leadership levels. This lack of gender diversity is a norm across the global oil and gas industry. Gender diversity at corporate events can begin to improve female representation in the sector. It can motivate younger females to enter the industry, creating a more diverse talent pool.



Comparative Assessment of Anticancer Drug-induced cytotoxicity in Four Pancreatic Cancer Cell Lines

Jumbo, Kendra | York St John University

Pancreatic cancer (PC) remains a highly lethal disease with poor prognosis and a 5-year survival rate below 9% due to limited treatment options and drug resistance. While some anthracyclines like aclarubicin and doxorubicin show effectiveness in PC cell lines, resistance has remained a challenge. Gemcitabine and FOLFIRINOX, current leading therapies offers only marginal survival benefits, emphasizing an urgent need to explore the efficacy of other drug classes and combinations against PC. This study aimed to comparatively assess the cytotoxicity of six anticancer drugs (IDA, DOX, CPT, PMA) across four pancreatic cancer cell lines (BxPC-3, CAPAN 2, PanC-1, MiaPaCa 2). The cell lines were treated with different concentrations of the drugs for 72 hours, and cell viability was determined using a Resazurin assay with control drugs included. The results indicated differential drug responses across the cell lines. Camptothecin (CPT) and Idarubicin (IDA) demonstrated significant potency in multiple cell lines, while Doxorubicin (DOX) also showed efficacy. These findings suggest that further investigation into the potential of CPT, IDA, and their combinations, considering the tumor microenvironment, could contribute to developing more effective PC therapies.



The Developmental Origin of Germ Cell Tumours (GCTs)

Khan, Sonia | University of Bradford

Germ cell tumour (GCT) prevalence is growing at an alarming rate - global incidence has multiplied since 1960.

This rise is caused by environmental factors, particularly in the form of in utero exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). Though the contribution of EDCs to GCT development is unequivocal, their exact method of action in this cancer pathway is undetermined.

GCTs originate from improperly developed reproductive cells (RCs), cells which mature into sperm or egg cells. RC growth is a complex, multi-stage process. One crucial step ensures that they will exclusively develop into a sperm or egg cell; they are thereafter irreversibly committed to this developmental fate. This process is driven by one or more molecular signals from surrounding cells.

We hypothesise that abrogation of this signal, perhaps by EDCs, is a prerequisite for germ cell tumourigenesis.

This project will use both bioinformatics and experimental methods to characterize this signal, and then to confirm its connection with germ cell tumourigenesis by testing whether its preclusion influences the rate of GCTs in mice. This work offers to advance our understanding of reproductive cell biology and elucidate a possible mechanism by which EDCs lay the foundation for GCT development.



Characterisation of Senescent Cells Across Human Tissues and Lifespan

Kuklinkova, Rene | Leeds Beckett University

Ageing comes with an increased risk of developing age-related diseases, partly due to senescence-induced inflammation. Although clearing senescent cells has been shown to reverse ageing, the effective application of senolytics in humans is limited by the lack of reliable tools to identify them in vivo. Previous efforts to develop such tools have largely relied on in vitro systems without robust performance in vivo. Here we present a tool that uses universally down-regulated senescent genes to robustly resolve the rate of senescence across human organs. Remarkably, we show that different organs accumulate senescence at varying rates, with some tissues, such as the ovarian tissue, doing so more rapidly than others. Additionally, using our tool we identified sensitivity to kinase inhibitors as a new class of senolytics. Our results demonstrate how integrating both up and down-regulated genes in senescence offers a clearer insight into senescence biology and reveals a novel class of senolytics that can be used to target senescent cells effectively. We now provide a robust platform for utilizing kinase inhibitors to efficiently target senescence, facilitating therapeutic advancements in ageing and age-related diseases.



Building Contracts and Unexpected Events

Lancaster, Tracey | Leeds Beckett University

When covid-19 brought the world to a standstill in 2020, the question being asked in the construction industry was whether the force majeure clause would relieve building contractors from their contractual obligations. Since 2020 other events have occurred such as Brexit and the war in Ukraine, which have disrupted supply chains resulting in material shortages and rapidly escalating costs. In the UK, fixed price building contracts are the most popular form, however the challenges faced over the last few years have made it increasingly difficult for contractors to deliver projects for the price and to the timeframe prescribed in the contract. The impact of these unexpected events on construction companies has been dire financial outcomes, resulting in an increased number of companies going into administration and more disputes arising. This study researches the contractual provisions relating to unexpected events contained in two of the most popular forms of contract used in the UK- the JCT Design and Build contract, and the NEC4. This study aims to establish the type of event that is covered by these clauses, and the additional wording required to cover those events that are potentially not covered, thus reducing the risk to contractors.



Exploring Power Dynamics in Community-Governed Tourism Conservancies in Kenya using Political Ecology as Analytical Framework

Magio, Edwin | Leeds Beckett University

Community-governed tourism conservancies have increasingly been promoted as a governance model for protected areas. However, there remains limited understanding of the power dynamics at play. This study, therefore, aimed to explore these dynamics using a case study of IL Ngwesi Conservancy in Laikipia, Kenya. The study employed qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant observation to collect primary data. Additionally, document analysis of meeting minutes, conservancy documents, and records was conducted to collect secondary data. Respondents included conservancy members, community conservancy leaders, and other interest groups, such as neighbouring private conservancies (Lewa and Borana), the Northern Rangelands Trust, Kenya Wildlife Service, government officials (Land Registrar, Chiefs, District Commissioners), and political leaders (Members of Parliament and County Assembly). Purposeful and snowball sampling techniques were used to select participants, and thematic analysis was applied to analyse the verbal data. The findings reveal challenges in participation and power imbalances. The study recommends adopting inclusive practices to enhance the management of conservancies, not only in Kenya but also in other contexts. This research contributes valuable insights into debates, practices, and policy development related to community-governed tourism conservancies as a governance mechanism for protected areas.



Investigating the Transformative Impact of Inclusive Agribusiness Models (IAMs) on the Performance of Smallholder Farmers in Zimbabwe

Mashapuri, Metrey | Leeds Beckett University

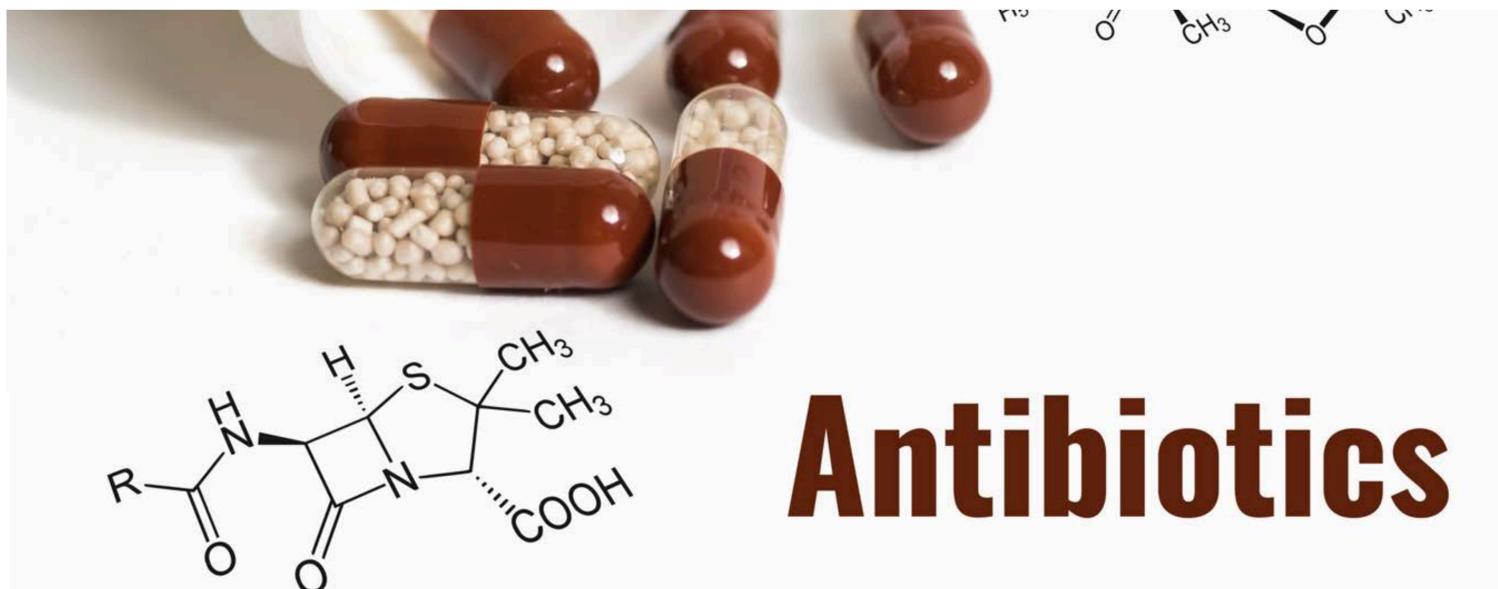
Objective/Purpose: The study investigates the impact of inclusive agribusiness models (IAMs) on Zimbabwe's smallholder farms (SHFs), aiming to improve productivity, income, and resilience by integrating marginalized farmers into value chains (FAO, 2015; Schelle & Pokorny, 2021).

Methods/Approach: A multi-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative tools such as semi-structured interviews and focus groups, is employed to explore SHF experiences (Bryman, 2016; McLeod, 2024). Narrative Inquiry and thematic analysis using Nvivo are applied to uncover patterns and insights (Ulrich, 2007).

Results/Findings: Preliminary data reveal IAMs boost crop yields, market access, and climate resilience through mechanization, better inputs, and sustainable practices (World Bank, 2022; Inclusive Business Models in Agriculture, 2024). However, concerns persist regarding the exclusion of resource-poor farmers (Schelle & Pokorny, 2021).

Conclusions/Implications: IAMs hold promise for transforming agribusinesses into inclusive models. Yet, supportive policies, infrastructure, and stakeholder engagement are crucial to avoid exacerbating inequalities (Wangu, 2021; Mhlanga & Dunga, 2020). The study emphasizes capacity-building and systemic solutions to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable farmers (Tow et al., 2011).

Key Keywords/Concepts: Inclusive agribusiness models, smallholder farmers, value chains, sustainability, systemic solutions.



A New Antibiotic from Nature?

McKay, Reuben | University of Bradford

The world is facing an antibiotics crisis in which the drugs we currently use to treat bacterial infections no longer work. New drugs are urgently required to help address this issue. Scopariusicide C is a natural product with demonstrable antibacterial activity and an antibiotic based on this compound would represent the first in a new class of antibiotic drug; however, the natural product's core "a fused lactone-cyclobutene bicycle with a methyl group at the ring junction" poses a synthetic challenge in the development of a lead compound. Our research aims to address this by applying an enamine [2+2] cyclisation to the synthesis of a small library of scopariusicide analogues that could be evaluated for antibacterial activity.



Those Who Game Together, Stay Together: The Impact of Online Gaming Communities on Social Connection

Nicholls, Charlotte | Leeds Beckett University

This paper looks at why people participate in online gaming groups and how these environments support relationships like those of offline friendships. The study investigates user involvement, the background of online gaming communities, and possible future evolution of these environments. By use of thematic analysis of surveys and interviews, the study investigates how online interactions shape significant relationships.

Emphasizing human experiences and personal narratives to direct the results, 13 interviews in total form the pillar of this research. Based on preliminary findings, online friendships seem to be just as powerful as offline ones; some elements even help to create faster and longer-lasting relationships.

This work advances the disciplines of online communities, gaming, and psychology by providing insights on how digital environments may be created to support significant friendships and social ties.



Designed to Exclude: The Fight for Accessibility in Fighting Games

Nicholls, Christopher | Leeds Beckett University

This research is focused on video game accessibility for physically-disabled players, framed through the lens of fighting games. Studies find that almost half of the population play video games, and every 1 in 5 video game players is disabled. Despite this statistic, disabled game are still excluded from certain experiences, particularly fast-paced real-time action genres like fighting games.

Using the social model of accessibility, this research intends to expose the inequalities faced by disabled gamers, the immoral structures which uphold inaccessibility, and what needs to change for this to succeed. By tackling isolation as a result of ableism in gaming communities, the selfishness and entitlement of non-disabled gamers, and corporate greed, the end result of this research would be a framework for true change and nothing less.

A phenomenographic methodology is central to this research, deeply considering the insights of individual research participants, which include both players and industry experts. The results of this are optimistic, revealing a path forward to improved autonomy, normalisation, and play experience for disabled players.



The Lived Experience Elderly Nigerian Women: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) On The Traditional Modification Of The Female Genital Organs Through FGM and Breast Ironing

Nwiwu, Ify | University of Wolverhampton

This research explores the perspectives of elderly women regarding the practices of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Breast Ironing (BI), examining their lived experiences with these harmful cultural rituals. FGM refers to the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, while BI involves the flattening or pounding of young girls'™ breasts during early development to hinder their natural growth. These practices are traditionally viewed as rites of passage in some cultures, aimed at preserving a girl's dignity by preventing unwanted sexual attention and ensuring her transition from girlhood to womanhood.

Despite efforts by governments, non-governmental organizations, and advocacy groups to combat FGM and BI through legal frameworks, human rights initiatives, and community education, these practices remain prevalent in many African countries and have spread to some European countries due to migration. The persistence of these practices can be attributed to cultural resistance and insufficient awareness of their harmful effects.

This research advocates for a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to eradicate FGM and BI, emphasizing the need to challenge deeply ingrained cultural beliefs that have no medical justification. It calls for the promotion of awareness, legal enforcement, and community engagement to bring about the complete cessation of these practices, as their continued existence poses significant health risks and human rights violations.



Dimensions of Tourism and Crime in Emerging Economies

Poku, Getrude | Leeds Beckett University

While numerous studies and theories have been proposed to unravel various aspects of crime, the motivations of criminals remain largely unexplored. This study aims to develop a comprehensive theoretical and analytical framework for understanding the intricacies of criminal patterns in Ghana's tourism milieu. This study examines not only offender motivations but also the lived experiences and perceptions of key stakeholders, including the police, NGOs, and tourism businesses. These intersecting perspectives allow for a more holistic understanding of how vulnerability, opportunity, and governance coalesce in tourism enclaves. Theoretically, the study integrates Routine Activity Theory, Crime Pattern Theory (CPT), and Situational Action Theory (SAT) to explore spatial and behavioural dimensions of crime. Methodologically, it adopts a qualitative, participatory approach, using in-depth interviews and Thematic Analysis to amplify perspectives often omitted from formal discourse.

Although tourism is widely celebrated as a catalyst for economic growth and development, it also produces power asymmetries, especially in contexts where tourists are predominantly from advanced economies and alleged offenders are often economically disadvantaged local residents. By foregrounding the voices of both formal institutions and marginalised actors, this study contributes to the design of more nuanced and equitable crime prevention strategies in tourism destinations. It not only generates theoretical insights into the nature of crime in Ghana's tourism spaces but also provides practical policy recommendations aimed at enhancing the safety, trust, and sustainability of the sector.



Exploring the Impact of Emotional Eating in Obesity and Effective Intervention Development

Power, Dawn | Leeds Beckett University

Emotional eating (EE) is a key factor in weight management, linked to poorer outcomes. Addressing EE through interventions may improve results. This feasibility study assessed a 16-week online group programme using cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and mindfulness for adults with overweight and obesity ($n=11$, BMI 25kg/m^2). Participants, recruited via Obesity UK and social media site X, accessed weekly sessions and attended psychologist- and dietitian-led meetings.

Assessments at baseline, mid-point, post-intervention, and one-month follow-up measured EE (Three Factor Eating Questionnaire- R21), weight (Kg), wellbeing (Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale), perceived health (SF-12 Health Survey), impulsivity (UPPS-P), and emotion regulation (Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale). Reflexive Thematic Analysis explored programme acceptability and mechanisms of change. Statistical analysis showed significant improvements at each timepoint in EE (-1.86 , $p < 0.001$), uncontrolled eating (-2.91 , $p < 0.001$), and weight (-1.71 kg, $p = 0.003$).

Themes included increased mindfulness, better coping strategies, self-compassion, and peer support. Participants reported greater awareness, improved choices, and enhanced emotional regulation. Findings suggest online EE interventions are feasible and acceptable. However, the small sample size and observational design limit conclusions. A larger randomised controlled trial is recommended to validate results.



AI Art as a Method to Visualise Lived Experience

Reuser, Marielle | Leeds Beckett University

This study introduces a new framework to foster healthier workplaces for (peri)menopausal women and examines the potential of Generative AI to enhance Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) methods by deepening the understanding of women's lived experiences.

Workshops underpinned by the FPAR method of Photovoice (Wang, 1997) invited participants to reflect on their wellbeing and generate visual representations of their symptoms, strengths, and insights. Extending the traditional use of photography to address community concerns, this study integrated Generative AI, enabling participants to visualise experiences beyond the limitations of photographic representation.

Through structured group discussions, participants developed common themes for text prompts, which guided the creation of AI-generated imagery. These visual and narrative outputs were subsequently showcased in a public exhibition, amplifying participants' voices and advocating for workplace change.

Participants reported feeling empowered by the incorporation of new technology and valued the AI-generated images as catalysts for discussions about (peri)menopause symptoms. However, the study also highlighted how biases present in society are reflected in AI tools, fostering critical dialogue on improving such technologies.



Interacting with the Digital in Higher Education: Reflective Interventions

Ritchie, Keith | Leeds Beckett University

This project studied third space teams in higher education attempting to solve the problems they encounter in their work. It has found deficits in time, professional development, and disconnection with macro problems affecting the digital. It has also found teams create Illegitimate Task Perception in some staff they interact with.



Instagram's Role in Shaping Tourists' Imagery and Experiences: A Case Study of Voluntourism

Salvador-Almela, Marta | Leeds Beckett University

This thesis explores how social platforms, specifically Instagram, contribute to the configuration of the imaginary of the voluntourism phenomenon, examining the representation of these experiences by different actors and the influence that this imaginary can have on the behaviour and discourse of tourists while volunteering.

Social media has transformed the way in which tourism services and destinations are promoted and the way in which tourism experiences are shared. Instagram, being the main platform for sharing images, has made it possible for different actors in the tourism sector to increase their visibility and impact. Although voluntourism is a widely studied phenomenon, today online images play an important role in shaping the imaginary of voluntourism experiences and the motivations of tourists.

The research uses qualitative methodologies, more specifically, content analysis and semi-structured interviews. Thus, the typology of images and online narratives about voluntourism, as well as a relationship between the imaginary of Instagram and the motivations, stereotypes and behaviours of voluntourism tourists are explored. Finally, this thesis discusses the need to establish codes of ethics and/or codes of conduct for the use of social media in order to promote responsible practices of online images and narratives in the voluntourism phenomenon.



From Lab to Classroom: Structural Priming and ESOL Learners' Comprehension and Production of Passives

Scheffer, Sidriana | York St John University

Adult ESOL learners in England often receive extensive explicit grammar instruction, yet many continue to struggle with complex syntactic structures essential for full proficiency. Structural priming, the tendency to repeat or more easily process a previously encountered sentence structure, has been explored as a tool for facilitating second language (L2) syntactic acquisition. My study intersects psycholinguistics and applied linguistics, investigating how structural priming can support language learning in classroom settings. Specifically, it examines whether structural priming tasks enhance ESOL learners' comprehension and production of English passive constructions while promoting grammatical development. By translating psycholinguistic findings into pedagogical practice, this research aims to inform alternative teaching strategies for L2 students in general and ESOL learners in particular. The findings have implications for both learners and tutors. For tutors, incorporating research-driven techniques may improve instructional effectiveness and learner engagement. For learners, acquiring complex syntactic constructions in English is a key factor in developing other language skills, such as reading and writing. A strong syntax knowledge enables L2 speakers to interpret and produce grammatically accurate sentences and decode written texts more effectively, ultimately supporting their academic and professional progression in their host country.



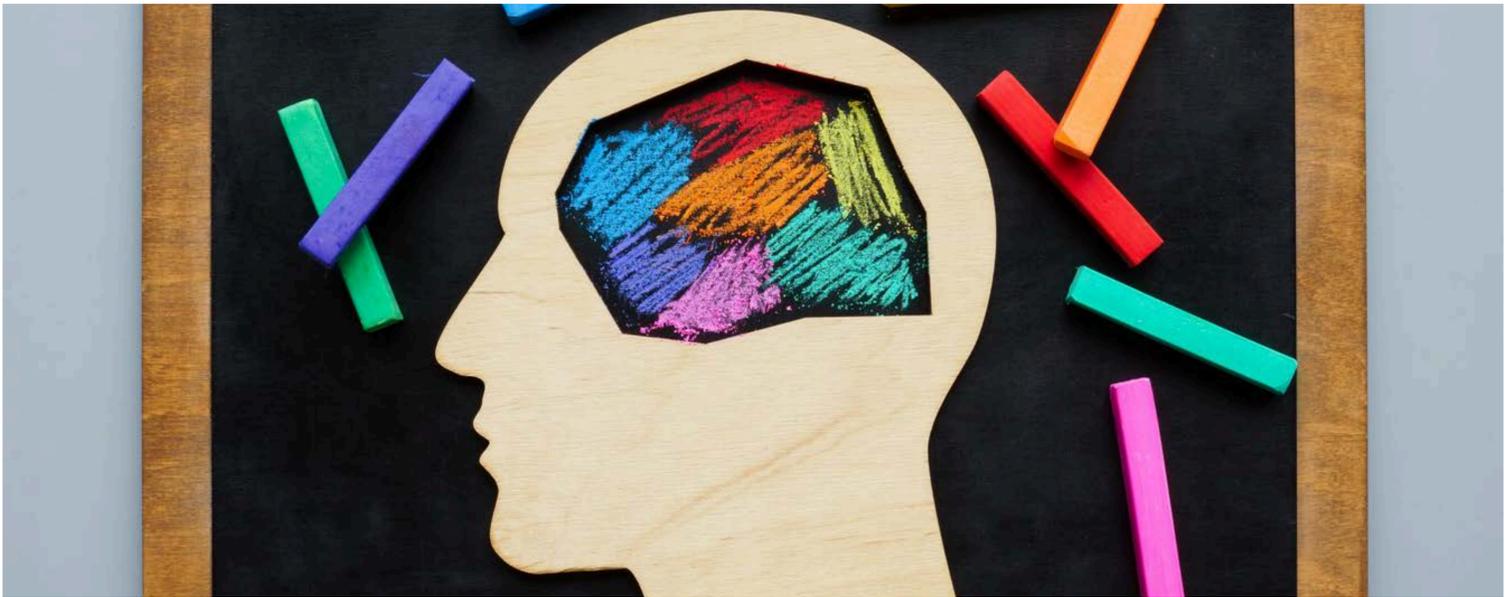
Business Sustainability as a Phenomenon in UK Banking Featuring Senior Executives and Analysts

Scott, Marilyn | Leeds Beckett University

This research project looks at the perspectives and influences of bank professionals on business sustainability as a concept and as a phenomenon. Focusing on the UK banking sector, the aim is to enhance the knowledge of bank professionals by redefining business sustainability and build an enhanced sustainability guide one that is focused on the SDGs and aligning these to business sustainability within UK banking.

The key argument of this thesis is that while weak sustainability was identified in the context of business talk and corporate disclosures of Finnish companies, the concept of strong vs weak sustainability can be extended to assess whether the banking sector business sustainability practices have strengthened or remain weak.

Using rich qualitative data, research employs thematic and content analysis, alongside triangulation, to identify core themes and insights. Key findings reveal that business sustainability is a multi-faceted and evolving phenomenon, with diverse interpretations across different professional roles. Senior managers focus on strategic alignment, while operational staff highlight practical challenges. A significant gap in knowledge and engagement among non-specialist roles emphasises the need for sector-wide education and communication. The thematic analysis further identifies opportunities for innovation, highlighting barriers to business sustainability integration, and the importance of leadership in driving long-term success.



A Qualitative Study, using Semi-Structured Interviews to Explore the Experiences of Neurodivergent (ND) Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) in the Workplace

Simpson, Jodee | Leeds Beckett University

This study explores how neurodivergent speech and language therapists (SLTs) in the UK develop their professional identities alongside positive neurodivergent identities. Using Karen Barad's Diffraction Methodology, it emphasises the creative and non-hierarchical nature of diffraction, disrupting traditional research methods and focusing on the dynamic interplay of stories and perspectives.

Through community-based participatory research, participants collaborate by sharing and rewriting stories of key moments in their personal and professional lives. This process highlights how identities are entangled and continuously evolving, rather than fixed. It juxtaposes the systemic pressures that often push neurodivergent professionals toward conformity or masking against the transformative potential of collective reflection and emancipatory resistance.

Traditional autism research, grounded in positivism and deficit-based thinking, has shaped perceptions and often silenced alternative ways of knowing. By centering lived experiences, this study challenges these frameworks and emphasises the agency of words and stories in reclaiming identity. The researcher, as an active participant entangled in the phenomena, contributes to the emancipatory goal of fostering belonging and resistance within the profession, ultimately reframing what it means to thrive as a neurodivergent SLT.



What are the Implications of the “SEN support” Label in the Journey to Permanent Exclusion?

Stuart, Zoe | University of Wolverhampton

Despite an overall decline in permanent exclusions, pupils with identified special educational needs (SEN) remain disproportionately affected. Those on SEN Support, without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), are at the highest risk, with exclusion rates five times higher than their peers without identified needs (DfE, 2020a). The DfE statistics indicate that pupils with a primary area of need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) are at the highest risk, though the underlying causes remain uncertain. More broadly, the disproportionate exclusion of pupils with SEN raises questions about the extent to which schools fulfil their statutory duties to meet these pupils’ needs (DfE, 2020b). This study investigates how senior leaders interpret the SEN label in exclusion decisions and the perceived benefits of permanent exclusion as a support strategy.

A pilot study using Q methodology was conducted to explore senior leaders’ viewpoints, assess the feasibility of the approach, and refine the research design. Findings highlighted emerging themes that extended beyond initial assumptions, including the role of external pressures, professional identity, and moral dilemmas in decision making. Participant feedback and initial findings have evidenced the need for changes to the methodology, allowing practical adjustments to enhance engagement.



Understanding India's Learning Crisis by Examining Everyday Practices of Frontline Education Officials

Vyas, Ankit | University of Leeds

Various studies have established that India's school education system suffers from a learning crisis. Much literature frames this as a problem of limited teacher capacity and accountability, ignoring the broader institutional context that teachers are a part of, and the role that frontline officials play in contributing to the learning crisis. As intermediaries between policy and practice, frontline officials play a crucial role in the implementation of policy, but there remains limited research on how frontline education officials in India interpret and enact education policy on an everyday basis. This project aims to develop a better understanding of the learning crisis in India's school education system by analysing the everyday practices of frontline education officials.

The project proposes to use an ethnographic approach to analyse everyday practices of frontline officials, incorporating observations and unstructured interviews. It will be inter-disciplinary in nature, drawing on concepts from institutional theory, public administration and political economy to develop its argument.

This research will attempt to expand the theoretical understanding and framing of the learning crisis beyond the limited scope of teacher "capacity" and "accountability" and contribute towards a greater understanding of how bureaucracies (focused on public services) function in practice in low-capacity environments.



Rhetoric and Realities of Human-Horse Relationships: Exploring the Lives of Humans and Horses Working in Equestrian Tourism in Southwest China

Yang, Heidi | Leeds Beckett University

Current literature on equine-related topics is dominated by European, North American and Australian contexts, where horses participate in leisure widely. A few studies draw on Chinese background but focus on the modern equestrian industry or horse racing, which is similar to the Global North practices. This on-going PhD project consists of five-month participant observation in a national park in Yunnan in 2024 and 39 semi-structured interviews with members of the local community, aiming to explore what does a good life mean to the villagers working in equestrian tourism in Southwest China. This presentation is going to share the emerging findings from the data collection phase. Firstly, the villagers in this research were used to be migrant workers, it was not until the development of local tourism industry in recent ten years that they started to work with horses in the tourist site near their home village. Secondly, “One horse per family” policy, each registered household of the horse-riding cooperative owns one horse. Thirdly, the human-horse relationships can be both instrumental and affective, rather than a simple dichotomy. In general, the project potentially contributes to theoretical discussions on human-horse relationships under a different economic, social, and cultural context.



A Longitudinal Approach of Trade Show Performance

Yann, Tournesac | Leeds Beckett University

For the last 50 years, trade show research has considered time as an important paradigm to assess performance but a thorough longitudinal approach embracing all the event's periods (before, during and after) and the correlated interactions among stakeholders (organiser, exhibitor, visitor) has not yet been carried out to reach an extensive time-embedded performance pattern considering the impact of organising company.

The purpose of this paper is to present its findings, using reflexive thematic analysis, after a 13-month qualitative study of 50 hours of interviews covering the pre-event period (1 month before the show) and 3 post-event periods (from 2 to 13 months after the show's termination).

This single-case study has been carried with SIAL Paris 2022 (Salon International Agro-Alimentaire de Paris), which is considered as the second biggest professional food show in the world.

One of the findings of this study is the discovery of a new time-embedded concept designated as the "silent period", which is a period without interactions among stakeholders, and which may result in the deterioration of the event's global performance.



Enhancing the Legitimacy of Indian Ocean Tuna Commission's Allocation Negotiations

Zameel, Hussain | University of Lincoln

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) is one of the five tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) tasked with conserving and managing tuna resources. Indian Ocean states participate in IOTC to fulfil their international legal duty to cooperate for tuna management. IOTC member states have been negotiating on tuna allocation for over a decade without success. Member states, particularly the coastal states, perceive that the ongoing negotiations favor the distant-water fishing nations (DWFNs), which are primarily developed States, perpetuating historical power imbalances and sidelining the less powerful coastal states' rights and interests. These perceptions raise doubts about the legitimacy of the allocation negotiations, hindering the possibility of reaching an allocation regime which ensures sustainability. My research analyses the allocation negotiations at IOTC from the perspective of Global Administrative Law (GAL) principles' legality, accountability, participation, transparency, and reason-giving. Addressing the legitimacy issues in the allocation negotiations at IOTC is crucial, as unilateral objections by member states can undermine the RFMOs' efforts in achieving conservation and management goals. When legitimacy is achieved, it would ensure that IOTC adopts authoritative allocation measures that are widely acceptable and upheld by all member states, ensuring the sustainable management of tuna resources.