



# Phoenix Scholar™

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# Editorial

It is with great pride and excitement that we present this special anthology edition of the Phoenix Scholar in celebration of the 10th anniversary of our Knowledge Without Boundaries (KWB) annual research summit. Ten years may seem like a long time to some, however, it seems like just yesterday when we first introduced this summit to our academic community and industry partners as a way to showcase the meaningful and transformative research and scholarship being generated by our faculty, staff, students, and research center personnel.

Since then, we have endured environmental threats, geopolitical wars, and the aftermath of a seemingly once-in-lifetime pandemic. The world has changed dramatically in the last decade, not only with the advent of technology that has brought us closer together, but with situations and problems that require intricate and unique solutions which must be tested and examined. Enter the theme of the 2023 research summit: Thrive in a Brave New World.

Opening Day One of the 2023 KWB Summit, Dr. Cheryl Lentz, a former College of Doctoral Studies graduate, teacher, and entrepreneur delivered a powerful autoethnographical keynote. Day Two, University of Phoenix President Chris Lynne recognized the 2023 winners of the inaugural President's Award for Excellence in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging in the areas of research, scholarship, and dissertation research. Finally, on Day Three, College of Doctoral Studies Vice Provost Dr. Hinrich Eylers presented the 2023 Dissertation of the Year Awards.

Within this three-day, online venue, we provided attendees a chance to experience a wide array of presentations from scholars whose explorations into topical matters have broadened and expanded meaningful research and scholarship, documented complex issues, and presented new and innovative practices beneficial to higher education and industries. We engaged with a record number of attendees representing over 14 countries including the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Italy, Algeria, United Arab Emirates, Trinidad/Tobago, Philippines, Peru, Nigeria, Mexico, Japan, Jamaica, and Ghana. In addition to over 70 presentations, we had over five



hundred attendees, which made this one of the largest research summits in our history.

As we reflect on the last ten years and begin planning the next decade of the KWB Summit, we invite you to pause with us as we present this edition as a recognition of the research and scholarship excellence in the 2023 KWB Summit. In this issue you will find abstracts from the 2023 KWB presentations; an interview with the KWB Keynote Speaker, Dr. Cheryl Lentz; and an article from KWB presenters Elif Kalemdaroglu-Wheeler and Marty Hill. We look forward to seeing you at the next KWB Summit in October 2024!

Sincerely,

*Hinrich Eylers, Ph.D.*

Vice Provost, Doctoral Studies and Academic Operations  
College of Doctoral Studies

*Rodney Luster, Ph.D.*

University Research Chair  
Center for Leadership Studies and Organizational Research

*Kimberly Underwood, Ph.D.*

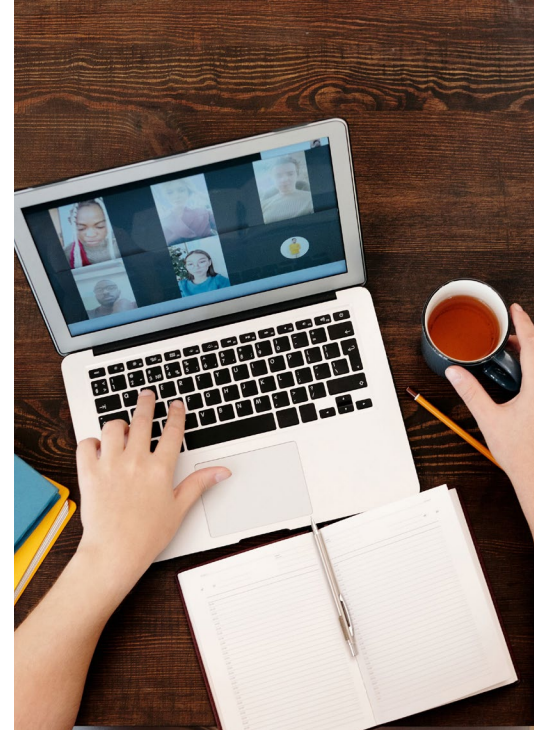
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# 2023 Knowledge Without Boundaries (KWB) Virtual Summit Proceeding Abstracts



## Day One

### Building Social Capital as a University Imperative

*Kimberly Underwood*

This presentation introduces the focus on professional social capital and students of color through the partnership between the University of Phoenix and Jobs for the Future (JFF). Professional social capital is an asset that includes connections, networks, and resources that help people understand, access, and navigate educational systems and the workforce. Through this understanding, the Center for Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Research launched two research studies, included within this session, focused on students and workers of color.

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### How Employees of Color Experience a Sense of Belonging Within the Work Environment

*Sandra Sessions-Penny, Joy Taylor, & Marlene Blake*

In a brave new world, people of color want to be treated fairly, equitably, and afforded the same opportunities for growth within the organization as all employees. They desire to be valued and recognized for their contributions to organizations. The results may impact the development and sustainability of diverse talent within organizations and promote a stronger sense of belonging. Employees of color also desire to have the opportunity to exponentially develop their social capital and thus help to eliminate the economic wealth gap between all employees which contributes a sense of belonging. Employees of color are identified as people who are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino/ Other Spanish, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and other. The literature review revealed employees who experience a sense of belonging at work are more inclined to remain, excel and support the organization's brand, culture, and vision (SHRM, n.d.). Organizations are aware how racism has contributed to every aspect of employee recruitment, retention, development, and satisfaction. To thrive in an organization, employees of color (NIH, n.d.) need to feel a sense of belonging, trust, and support (Coffman & Gordian, 2021). To close the wealth gap between employees of color and their white counterparts, organizations must attract, grow, and promote talented employees of color who may want to have careers within organizations.

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## **How Higher Education Leaders Can Help Students of Color Thrive by Building Belonging**

*Marlene Blake, Jessica Flores, & Patricia Battson*

Recent trends in higher education point to challenges with building student belonging. Researchers report that a decline in student sense of belonging results in lower levels of perceptions regarding feeling valued, part of the community, and comfortable at the institution (Mueller et al., 2022; NSSE, 2021, Tice et al., 2021). The problem investigated in this study is that students of color may encounter exclusion experiences in educational institutions resulting in lower levels of sense of belonging (Lewis et al., 2021). Establishing a sense of belonging provides positive benefits for students. Specifically, researchers reveal the strong association of students' sense of belonging with academic achievement, university success, satisfaction, progression, and becoming more empowered to engage fully in the online or face-to-face learning community (Pickford, 2016; Smith et al., 2021; Thomas, 2012; Thomas et al., 2014). Thus, it is increasingly important for higher education leaders to investigate opportunities to intentionally implement practices to build belonging throughout the college community.

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## **Great Resignation of COVID-19: The Entrepreneur's View on the Challenges and Benefits of Transitioning from Employee to Entrepreneur During a Pandemic**

*Thureiyya Rodriguez & Sharam Moslehi Seisan*

The "Great Resignation" during the COVID-19 pandemic shaped the future of the workforce. The great resignation involved employees voluntarily resigning from their company en masse during the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The shift in the economic stance greatly influenced the voluntary resignations. Throughout the pandemic employees were either on unemployment due to closure of a business, working additional hours with additional duties, or working from home. The pandemic caused a shift in how employers performed business, but it also shaped how employees began to view their current perspective working for someone else. The economy saw a spike in small business ownership and eventually led to a trend in becoming an entrepreneur. The closure of big corporations and the opening of small business does not always have positive outcomes. This study takes a look the individual's perspective on the challenges and benefits of leaving an organization and pursuing entrepreneurship during the COVID-19 pandemic. A random sample within the United States was used to conduct a survey of each individual's view on the great resignation and how it affected their career choices. This study aims to provide a greater perspective on pursuing a career change during a pandemic and at what cost does change affect one's personal life.

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## **Women's Advancement Lived Experiences in the Consumer-Packaged Goods Industry: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study**

*Karen Martin, Les Huffman, & Donald Munday*

This dissertation presents a qualitative phenomenological study that explores the experiences of women who have achieved senior leadership roles in the consumer-packaged goods industry within the United States. Despite advancements in gender equality, women continue to be underrepresented in leadership roles in various industries. The purpose of this research was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and barriers women who have encountered in their journey to leadership and to identify common themes and patterns within their narratives. The findings of this research contribute to the existing literature on women in leadership and provides insight into the complex challenges faced by women aspiring to leadership positions. The identification and exploration of these barriers inform discussions on gender equality and emphasize the need for targeted interventions to address the same. This study's implications extend to both academia and practice, as it offers organizations and policymakers valuable information to develop evidence-based strategies, programs, and policies that promote women in leadership. In addition, this study underscores the importance of creating inclusive environments that support women's professional growth and advancement, and it provides a

foundation for future research and advocacy aimed at breaking down barriers and fostering gender equality in leadership roles.

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## **The Relationship Between Work Stress and Job Satisfaction: Organizational Stress Prevention Programs as a Moderator**

*Jason Stroman & Crystal Lupo*

Work stress can lead to a host of issues including productivity reduction, lack of organizational commitment, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intent (Burnett & Pettijohn, 2015). The higher the organizational stress, the lower the organizational commitment (Ali & Kakakhel, 2013). Yang and Tseng (2022) identified job satisfaction one of the most significant predictors of organizational commitment. Job satisfaction has also been shown to mediate the relationship between work stress and turnover intent (Li et al., 2021). Organizational stress prevention has been shown to reduce workplace stress (Bakhuys et al., 2020; Maartje et al., 2020; Page et al. 2013). The problem is that the moderating effect of organizational stress prevention on the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction remains unknown.

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## **Equitable Design of Virtual Leadership Development Programs for Remote Employees: Unveiling Insights from a Quantitative eDelphi Study**

*Kristy Tyson*

Virtual leadership development programs for remote employees often need more equity, causing missed opportunities for executive leadership positions. The quantitative eDelphi study explored the level of consensus among talent development experts. The researcher aimed to identify equitable ways to design virtual leadership development programs for remote employees, leading to better opportunities and preparedness for executive leadership positions. The study consisted of three surveys, answering research questions focused on the consensus among the Association of Talent Development (ATD) talent development experts on equitable programs. The findings provide valuable insights into the most equitable ways to design and implement virtual leadership development programs for remote employees. The study revealed six essential traits for successful remote leadership: people management/supervision, teamwork/team compositions, communication, collaboration, cooperation, sharing experiences and knowledge, risk management, work intensification, job satisfaction, or burnout. Additionally, the coding projects have revealed that training and management systems are required for remote leaders, along with a company culture that embraces remote leadership. Active participation, open-mindedness to learning, and competency are necessary qualities for remote leaders. Though the world is changing, and businesses need to remain flexible, hiring remote leaders may be challenging.

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## **Case Study of the Challenges of Creativity and Innovation in Virtual Organizations**

*Ken Murphy*

As virtual workforce environments become increasingly prevalent, organizations face the challenge of nurturing creativity and innovation among remote teams. While virtual work offers flexibility and access to diverse talent, it also presents unique obstacles that hinder creative thinking and the generation of innovative ideas. This study explores the challenges to creativity and innovation faced by virtual teams and investigates strategies for overcoming them. By examining the barriers to innovation in virtual team settings, this research provides valuable insights into factors that impede creativity. The findings offer practical recommendations to unlock the creative potential of remote teams, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and success of virtual workforce environments. The study employs a case study approach, focusing on multiple virtual teams, to capture diverse experiences and perspectives. The identified challenges include communication barriers, limited social interaction, team dynamics and trust, and the absence of a physical environment. The study reveals that fostering effective virtual communications, creating virtual collaboration spaces, encouraging diverse



perspectives, and supporting continuous learning and skill development can overcome these challenges. The findings highlight the potential of video technology, virtual collaboration rooms, diverse teams, and continuous learning to foster creativity and innovation in virtual workforce environments. Organizational adoption of these strategies can promote a culture of creativity and innovation in remote settings.

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## **Thriving in a World that Needs Bionic Energy: Reflections on Self-Care for the Speed of Life**

*Janice Cardwell & Renee Green*

We have the technology, we have the capability, we can be better, stronger, faster (Six Million Dollar Man, ABC 1973-1978). The opening commentary of the seminal television series, the Six-Million-Dollar Man is reflective of the state of today's society which seems to require bionic energy to adapt in this post-pandemic world, where change is an expected part of life. Charles Darwin stated that "it is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one most adaptable to change" (1963). In this post pandemic and artificially intelligent society the most significant changes are happening in workplaces and school places. Today, change management is an expectation as innovative technologies, new ways of delivering services, products, or education, and new employee and consumer expectations are fueling new ways for organizations to adapt, shift, or flex. Employee and student expectations have changed. Employees and students are showing up with less and going through the motions. As workplaces and school locations have shifted to hybrid or fully virtual service models, the dynamics of service delivery have changed. In this environment of evolving change, performance outcomes are impacted. In the workplaces, leaders are challenged with uncertainties of what needs to change to stay competitive (Rinne, 2023). In the school places educators are challenged with uncertainties of student participation, student engagement, and student enrollment.

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## **The Condition of Education: Teacher Absenteeism in the Aftermath of COVID-19**

*Maureen Marzano, Juana Lang, & Joshua Valk*

Addressing teacher absenteeism stemming from mental health challenges can promote the overall well-being of educators. The problem is that teachers experienced stressful job demands stemming from the first wave of the COVID-19 virus, resulting in increased mental health-related teacher absenteeism in the 2021-2022 school year (Lang & Valk, 2022; Sokal et al., 2021). The significance of the problem is that according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2022), public schools in the nation showed a 49% teacher absenteeism higher than in 2020-2021 and 72% higher than in pre-pandemic years. Absenteeism in the teaching profession is higher than in other professions (e.g., business) and continues challenging educational organizations in many countries (Garaba, 2021). The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study is to describe, from the perspectives of middle school teachers and administrators, teacher absenteeism related to teachers' mental health stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic's stressful job demands during the school year 2021-2022. Three years into the COVID-19 pandemic, federal data showed that many teachers nationwide have missed 10% or more school days (Sparks, 2022). A literature review on teacher absenteeism revealed that teachers working under stressful conditions are frequently more absent (Sokal et al., 2021). After the COVID-19 pandemic, the condition of education worsened, affecting many teachers' lives; therefore, the effects of the pandemic could also be viewed from a trauma perspective (Harper & Neubauer, 2021). Furthermore, researchers have also discovered the risk that ecological disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic pose to mental health (Herman et al., 2021). In addition, researchers have also uncovered an existing link between teacher absenteeism and mental health (Sokal et al., 2021).

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## **Preschool Teachers' Perceptions of Early Learning Science Standards and Implementation: A Qualitative Exploratory Case Study**

*Courtney Campbell & Iris Campbell*

Preschoolers receive inadequate science instruction despite preschool science benefits and adopting early

learning science standards in New Jersey. This qualitative exploratory case study explored 17 preschool teachers of 4-year-old students' perceptions of using the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards for science and how they integrated science concepts and instructional practices into the preschool curriculum in a Northern New Jersey public school district. Preschool teachers were recruited using purposive sampling. Semi-structured interview transcripts, qualitative questionnaire responses, field notes, and archival documents were analyzed and triangulated to the study's findings and two research questions. The first research question explored preschool teachers' perceptions of applying the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards for Science to develop instructional practices in the classroom curriculum. The second research question explored how preschool teachers perceived their role in teaching science concepts. Open coding, thematic analysis, and NVivo12 coding software revealed three themes: 1) Preschool teachers engage in bounded decision-making, 2) Beliefs in teaching preschool science for later academic and career success, and 3) Preschool teachers' perceptions of their preparedness in teaching science concepts. The results had implications for early childhood settings, including 1) Preschool teachers required more funding, resources, and support to implement science concepts from administrators, 2) Teacher preparation programs offer more science courses to assist teachers in learning science concepts and standards, and 3) Preschool teachers participate in professional learning communities to build capacity for science.

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## **Increasing Student Engagement and Enjoyment through the Oppositional Gaze**

*Jaynelle Nixon*

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are increasingly becoming the standard in higher education. However, the literary canon does not sufficiently reflect the diversity of race/ethnicity, gender identity, and ability within the 21st century classroom. All students should be able to see themselves represented in classroom texts. However, when that is not possible—or worse—when the image shown is problematic, students must be taught to employ what bell hooks coined “the oppositional gaze” in her analysis of Black female film spectators. This presentation provides a framework for teaching students to employ the oppositional gaze not only to film, but also to written texts.

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## **The Access to Smart Finance - Female Entrepreneurship Survey: A White Paper to Shape the Future of Female Entrepreneurship**

*Kyla Tennin*

The WEF (2016) advised as whole industries adapt and new ones are birthed, various current professions will undergo a transformation. Therefore, a variety of circumstances and even crisis can create and dissolve jobs. Also, seemingly within new business startups. Seemingly because if the correct supports and resources are established for entrepreneurs to not only survive, but thrive, jobs can be established. The Kauffman Indicators of Entrepreneurship (KIE) (2021) organization provided some interesting statistics regarding early-stage entrepreneurship. KIE (2021) explicated 2021 national averages of 0.36% of the population in the United States started a new business, 80.87% of new entrepreneurs opened an enterprise by choice instead of out of necessity, and 4.74% is the average number of jobs produced by new businesses in the first year of existence (KIE, 2021). KIE (2021) reported 81.70% of startups remain active after the first year of business (KIE, 2021). Moreover, Stephan et al. (2021) found during the COVID-19 pandemic, 41.3% of enterprises in the United States stated they closed temporarily because of the pandemic. Perhaps due to needing or teaming with strategic partners to provide financial resources, education, training, or mentoring on corporate strategy, governance, operations, innovation, digital transformation, or product development to create additional revenue streams to pivot and keep up with the sign of times and remain open. Furthermore, in the United Kingdom, 32.5% of entrepreneurs stated they were able to work during the pandemic, compared to entrepreneurs in North America (55%), France (55.9%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (81.6%), and Norway (58.5%) (Stephan et al., 2021). The World Economic Forum produced a global study where various companies were surveyed from manufacturing companies to

automotive enterprises, startups, and music festivals (WEF, 2020). 70% of startups reported they terminated a fair number of full-time employees since the COVID-19 pandemic began (WEF, 2020). Only 40% of new companies reported they have enough cash flow to last less than three months of operations (WEF, 2020). So, a number of issues exist with entrepreneurs, along with corporates voluntarily terminating various women during COVID-19. As the Fourth Industrial Revolution begins to grasp different job families and industries, it will impact female and male workers in distinctive ways (WEF, 2016). By their very nature, many of the key drivers of transformation presently affecting global industries have the potential to incite entrepreneurial interest (WEF, 2016). Entrepreneurs are also employers; entrepreneurs employ themselves and other individuals. The described research on job creations and replacements, and varying entrepreneurial statistics demonstrate resilience, varying entrepreneurship education, financial inclusion, and strategic partnerships are needed to protect entrepreneurial ecosystems during unprecedented times and in general because times change (Tennin, 2022a). Particularly, if businesses operate in emerging economies or markets with institutional forces, voids, and/or slow economic growth (Tennin, 2022a). However, entrepreneurship education, financial inclusion, and strategic partnerships come with challenges and opportunities. Including traditional gender barriers surrounding financial inclusion. Tackling gender gaps can unlock new opportunities for entrepreneurial and economic growth (WEF, 2016).

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## **Burnout, Cynicism, and Performance: A Correlational Examination of Adjunct Online Instructors at a Private Higher Education Institution**

*Rheanna Reed, Jennifer Carriere, & Laura Pipoly*

Adjunct faculty represent a large percentage of higher education faculty in the United States. Universities and colleges depend on adjunct faculty to meet institutional demands; however, the temporary labor force is not always treated similarly to full-time faculty. Uncertainties experienced by adjunct faculty include job security, support, scheduling, and the overall relationship with the university. The needs of the adjunct do not typically guide universities and tend to be directed by business needs. While these needs may seem disparate, adjunct faculty and university leadership share a desired outcome to create a compelling student learning environment. Private online universities use many adjunct faculty, particularly universities that value faculty practitioner knowledge in the classroom. The perspectives of adjunct faculty's employer actions may be skewed based on the many uncertainties they experience. These employer actions may result in the sense of perceived elements of injustice. Over time, perceived injustices may lead to organizational cynicism. Adjunct faculty may be susceptible to cynicism and burnout, negatively affecting facilitation practices that could impact the student learning experience at private online universities. This descriptive, non-experimental, quantitative correlational study examined the relationships between adjunct faculty burnout, organizational cynicism, and adjunct faculty facilitation performance at a private online university.

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## **Patient/Family Engagement in Advisory Councils, Quality Improvement, or Safety Committees: A Qualitative Exploratory Case Study**

*Nadine Spence-Clarke & Charles Elliott*

This presentation presents a qualitative exploratory case study designed to explore the perspectives of healthcare leaders about the influence and value of engaging patients and families to serve as advisors on patient and family advisory councils (PFACs), quality improvement, or safety committees in acute care hospitals. The results revealed three common themes: healthcare leaders view patient and family advisors (PFAs)/PFACs as highly valuable, PFAs have different views from employees, and PFAs are engaged in a broad scope of activities. The recommendations for healthcare leaders and practitioners can be summed up in one phrase, consider partnering with patient and family advisors as important as delivering quality care to patients and families.

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## Examining the Value and Utilization of Earning a Bachelor's Degree Among Women of Color

*Joy Taylor & Sandra-Sessoms Penny*

There is a continuing need to explore the resilience of students completing their degree online. As women continue to garner increased access to higher education, Women of Color (WOC) in particular are motivated more than ever to seek higher education due to intrinsic and extrinsic reasons (Catalyst, 2021). A qualitative narrative inquiry examined how WOC value earning and utilizing their bachelor's degree and how they were supported in the online environment. The research explored how earning a bachelor's degree contributed to their representation in higher education; career and personal goals attainment, and representation in the workplace. Women of Color are identified as women who are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino/ Other Spanish, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or identifying as two or more races. Each demographic group of women experiences its own set of challenges and accomplishments. Each demographic group of women presented their stories of challenge and how they overcame their adversities while in pursuit of obtaining their online degrees.

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## Understanding Online Community College Students' Underachievement Reasons: An Exploratory Case Study

*Ashita Parmar*

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to understand the community college online instructors' and online students' perceptions of the underlying reasons for academic underachievement at a California community college. The study comprised eight online instructors and seven online students at a community college in California. The study employed purposive sampling to recruit participants. The data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews, field notes, and member-checking. The data was systematically analyzed using NVivo 12 software and Atlas.ti8™. Two main research questions and six research sub-questions were created focusing on factors affecting the underachievement of online students. The data analysis revealed six significant themes: Online instructors view the potential in students to be successful online, online instructors are provided ample resources and services for online teaching and professional development, support and training from institutions, instructors use flexible and creative teaching strategies, students face challenges in online education that impacts their progress, students challenges in time management, and students' mixed experiences with online learning. Findings showed that online students should have a realistic understanding of online studies, basic knowledge of reading and comprehension, and remain mindful of time management. Online instructors are encouraged to be well-versed in technology and available for students. The recommendation is to focus on teachers from a wide range of online education.

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## Identifying Online Student Support Approaches

*Brian Stern*

With the increased demand for online learning opportunities comes an increased responsibility for institutions to provide support for students. Moreover, the number of students matriculating at institutions that are not college ready continues to increase. Students are also coming to institutions with higher levels of non-academic needs. The literature provides a plethora of information related to student support approaches for students in traditional institutions; however, there is less information about best practices for supporting students in a virtual learning environment. This literature review seeks to illuminate what is currently in the literature related to student support approaches in online environments. The galvanizing research questions for this research focus on unique course content that supports first-year student success in an online modality, remedial support to foster student success in online programs, and strategies to support student computer literacy.

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## Exploring Educational Implications and Strategies of Using ChatGPT in Courses at an Online Higher Education Institution

*Aaron Kenneston, Arnetra Arrington, & Susan Fereee*

Bullying in the workplace has become an organizational challenge for unions, human resource departments, management, and regulatory agencies (Orr & Seter, 2020). Approximately 60 million United States workers have either experienced or witnessed workplace bullying (Workplace Bullying Institute [WBI], 2017). Workplace bullying is negative workplace behavior, either perpetrated or received among employees in the workplace (WBI, 2017). The behaviors include overt actions or covert actions, such as withholding information, socially isolating, or demeaning an individual (Clearly, Hunt, & Horsfall, 2010). Commonalities exist among the varied definitions of bullying (Kemp, 2014): bullying is repeated, bullying negatively harms the individual targeted (Sansone & Sansone, 2015), and defense against bullying by the target is challenging (Samnani, 2013). Workplace bullying has been found to occur when there is change, need for role clarity (Orr & Seter, 2020), organizational conflict, workforce fluctuation, increased workload, and a poor working environment (Feijo, et al., 2019). The effects of workplace bullying are far reaching as the behaviors have been found to impact, not only the targets of bullying, who experience health risks such as stress (WBI, 2017), anxiety and fatigue (Attell, Brown, & Treiber, 2017), and low self-esteem (Orr & Seter, 2020), but employees who witness bullying (Emdad, Alipour, Hagberg, & Jensen, 2013). Ortega, Hogh, Pejtersen, & Olsen (2009) note individuals working with devices or objects and individuals working with customers or in hospital-type settings recount greater levels of bullying. Further, Notelaers, Vermunt, Baillien, Einarsen, & De Witte, (2011) found manufacturing to be among the top industries for workplace bullying. Compared to the service sector, the odds of an employee in the manufacturing industry being a victim of workplace bullying are 1.93 times higher (Notelaers & Vermunt, et al., 2011). As the U.S. manufacturing industry employs 12.8 million workers (NAM, 2021) and women make up 29.5% of the working population in manufacturing industry (BLS, 2020), workplace bullying within the manufacturing industry is of particular interest because of its potential for being a high-risk industry for bullying (Notelaers & Vermunt, et al., 2011). While bullying has been found to occur at all levels of an organization, managers and supervisors were implicated in 61% of the bullying cases in the United States (WBI, 2017). Onorato (2013) positioned leadership as a major antecedent of workplace bullying and researchers have found the behaviors of leadership can either reduce (Ertureten, et al., 2013) or trigger (Dussault & Frenette, 2015) bullying in the workplace. A quantitative correlational and regression study was conducted to (1) examine the relationship between leadership style and bullying in the manufacturing industry; and (2) assess the extent to which leadership styles and age, gender, education, race, and tenure predict bullying in the manufacturing industry. To broaden views on the impact of workplace bullying, it is important to understand the influence of leadership in professions within the U.S. private sector and explore various cultural demographics in relation to this concept.

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## Application of Machine Learning and Generative AI to Create Systematic Literature Reviews Using a Technical Action Research Approach

*LauraAnn Migliore*

The purpose of this presentation is to show the current relevance of machine learning to automate the systematic literature review (SLR) process and how generative AI can be integrated to improve research methods. Key topics include discussion on advantages and limitations of using machine learning and generative AI for literature reviews, methods, tools, and a future research agenda to build upon. The presentation will focus on the author's technical action research (TAR) study to improve the process of using Google's cloud platform, machine learning, and generative AI applications for creating an automated systematic literature review. Also included are guidelines for integrating generative AI in the research process. The author will describe advantages and limitations without going into technical details and provide suggestions for how to overcome some of the shortcomings. The TAR study is a work-in-process to produce an automated systematic literature review as a research outcome using Google Cloud with Vertex AI, an end-to-end machine learning



(ML) development platform to build, deploy, and manage a ML model for this purpose. Google provides many application programming interfaces (APIs) and software development kits (SDKs) for developers to prototype and build applications like what has been described. The concept described will be illustrated in process form along with status of the study at time of the KWB conference presentation. It is the author's hope to show a prototype of a SLR as an outcome of employing Google's cloud platform using Vertex AI for automating the research process in creating a generative AI literature review via a systematic approach. The potential of machine learning and generative AI can optimize researchers' work faster, more reliable, efficient, and convenient. This presentation will highlight the advantages and limitations experienced by the author using Google's cloud platform and Vertex AI.

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## **Thrive in a Brave New World: The Role of AI and Possible Channels of Impact and Growth**

*Octavia Quarles*

What is artificial intelligence (AI), and how might it help the healthcare revenue cycle? Artificial intelligence systems can evaluate medical information, find pertinent codes, and ensure proper reporting and invoicing. This automation relieves administrative employees of their load, allowing them to focus on other vital work and, as a result, speeding up the revenue cycle. AI can be applied in RCM in various ways, including claims processing, rejection management, patient billing and collections, denied claims, revenue generation, and patient finance experience. Also, AI can help with statistical research, reporting, analytics, and workflow optimization for improved outcomes. Revenue cycle management can encourage providers to assess clinical treatment data through comprehensive revenue cycle management. By analyzing this data, providers can identify the points in the cycle where mistakes are made and find solutions to cut costs. As a result, this will boost provider income and enhance the patient's experience (Raymond, A.2023).

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## **Third Culture People Evolving Management and Leadership Post-Pandemic: An Applied Multicultural Industrial and Organizational Psychology Perspective**

*Joanne Vázquez de Príncipe*

The proposed presentation highlights the research concepts and principles introduced in a collaborative resource book publishing effort entitled *Examining Applied Multicultural Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Christiansen & Even, 2023). Príncipe's (2023) chapter to be discussed, explored the benefits of leveraging business strategies, which incorporate third culture-building approaches throughout the entire organizational ecosystem, with a deep dive into people management and leadership aspects. Third-culture kids who grew up to be working adults were influenced by their parental, organizational, and personal intercultural dynamics, fostering a strong personal identity enriched by their diverse lived experiences. Post-pandemic, there seems to be a high-demand trend for attracting talent with global capabilities and cross-cultural multidisciplinary leadership perspectives to conduct business across borders with greater ease and minimal training. Leaders and managers who can leverage mindsets associated with third culture perspectives are increasingly developing a competitive edge within multicultural organizations. Concepts in the chapter aimed to deepen awareness, understanding, and appreciation for third culture mindsets, guided by mixed-methods doctoral dissertation research findings. The pandemic affected the future of work as this unprecedented catastrophe dismantled the traditional workplace and thrust individuals and enterprises into virtual or hybrid environments (Gallup, 2023). Nevertheless, consummate leaders were able to rapidly shift to new settings with crisis challenges perceived as an opportunity to learn (Waal & Born, 2020), adapt to this disruptive situation promptly, and perceive sudden experiences from change challenges as opportunities to grow. Third-culture people organically exhibit critical foundations consistent with a more robust set of multicultural personality traits and intercultural competencies. Their intercultural life experiences positively impacted their resilience and capacity for change by developing strong communication and relational competencies such as social flexibility/initiative, tolerance for ambiguity, managing uncertainty, cultural empathy, and global ethical responsibility (Pollock et al., 2010; Waal & Born, 2020). These third-culture individuals demonstrate

increased levels of cultural intelligence, which indicates an intercultural competence with a greater capacity for adaptability within highly diverse multicultural organizations (Fang et al., 2018; Matveev, 2017; Schlaegel et al., 2017). Vázquez-de-Príncipe (2021) investigated integrative facets of workplace culture change leadership, human intelligences, change management, and sustainable organizational transformations. The multidisciplinary research approach incorporated psychosynthesis and superconscious principles, which inspired a new framework for Work-Life Predictive Dynamics and Holistic Leadership Intelligence models (Vázquez-de-Príncipe, 2021) for reimagining the future of work/life constructs. The pandemic and civil unrest fractured the sense of civility and belongingness throughout all aspects of society, fostering a work-life unbalanced calamity evident from the high levels of stress-related burnout, mental health issues, quiet quitting/firing, and the great resignation/reshuffle challenges (Wigert & Agrawal, 2022). Henceforth, the research insights on culture highlighted work-life dynamics impacted by the chaotic state of the world, incorporating leadership, authenticity, grit, resilience, social-emotional skills, growth intelligence, and spiritual intelligence concepts (Vázquez-de-Príncipe, 2021).

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## **Examining Leadership Styles as Predictors of Workplace Bullying**

*Alisa Fleming*

While bullying has been found to occur at all levels of an organization, managers and supervisors were implicated in 61% of the bullying cases in the United States (WBI, 2017). Onorato (2013) positioned leadership as a major antecedent of workplace bullying and researchers have found the behaviors of leadership can either reduce (Ertureten, et al., 2013) or trigger (Dussault & Frenette, 2015) bullying in the workplace. A quantitative correlational and regression study was conducted to (1) examine the relationship between leadership style and bullying in the manufacturing industry; and (2) assess the extent to which leadership styles and age, gender, education, race, and tenure predict bullying in the manufacturing industry. To broaden views on the impact of workplace bullying, it is important to understand the influence of leadership in professions within the U.S. private sector and explore various cultural demographics in relation to this concept.

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## **Women in Leadership in Higher Education: A Systematic Review**

*Ela-Joy Lehrman, Martha Zepeda, & Tiffany Lemmen*

There are many factors expressed in the literature about the role of women in leadership and what societal, cultural, and organizational viewpoints affect the role of women in leadership. This systematic review aims to examine the literature to explore these viewpoints. The purpose of this research is to complete a comprehensive review of the current (2018 through 2023) published research literature to present an overview of the status of women across racial/ethnic groups in higher education leadership positions in the United States in the areas of Business and Technology, Education, and Health Care. The research methodology and design for the study will follow a systematic literature review research design that incorporates the 2020 PRISMA Statement Guidelines and will include a synthesis of current published qualitative and quantitative studies. Current research studies tend to include a specific under-represented racial/ethnic group of women as participants; there is a need to bring those research findings together into a comprehensive overview of the status of all women in higher education. Reviewed studies are limited to studies conducted within the 50 United States to avoid confounding factors found in foreign educational systems.

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## **Day Two**

### **The Implications of a Protein Named Fosb in Addictive Behavior and How to Challenge It**

*Rodney Luster*

Addictive behaviors can manifest in the form of mood-eating, porn use, internet (doom-scrolling), sex, social

media, exercise, gambling, or psychoactive substance engagement such as stimulants, depressants, opiates, and hallucinogens (Gomez et al., 2022). Whatever form it takes, when a person develops an addiction, the brain's inhibitory response process (ability to stop) becomes greatly compromised, and thus, many succumb to their overwhelming emotional impulses. Thus is the inherent cyclical nature of addiction. However, recent research is beginning to uncover more about the functional aspects that contribute and reinforce the nature of addictive behavior. In fact, research concerning the role of an implicated protein called FosB expands our understanding of how the brain is further stimulated and learns to adapt in response to repeated behaviors, thus instigating the likelihood of compulsive engagement repeating itself the next time. One may consider the analogy of a stack of bricks (FosB protein), wherein each protein builds upon itself, thus creating denser layers of coded behavior. This engagement behavior to stimuli builds upon itself and reinforces the stability and strength of FosB, making it even harder to break the chain of compulsion. This workshop focuses on broadening our understanding and nature of FosB, how it contributes to "repeat behaviors" in addiction, how hedonic processing complements its formation, and how psychology might also understand the "unstacking" principle as a way to illuminate efficacious strategy that deals with the insidious properties of addiction and Fosb.

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## **Mitigating the Waste Management Problem In Haiti from an Entrepreneurial Standpoint**

*Madrid Francois*

Abstract not available at time of publication.

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## **Curriculum-Based Professional Development for Third Through Fifth-Grade Teachers: A Qualitative Exploratory Case Study**

*Iris Campbell & Courtney Campbell*

The purpose of the qualitative exploratory case study was to explore third through fifth-grade teachers' perceptions of how being provided with curriculum-based professional development could influence instructional techniques and skills in the classroom. Two research questions guided the study. The questions focused on third to fifth-grade educators' perceptions of how the school district might improve its professional development plan and how their existing PDP influenced and addressed their professional needs in the classroom. The qualitative case study used a sample of 16 third to fifth-grade elementary teachers in an urban school district in northeastern New Jersey. Semi-structured interviews, qualitative questionnaires, and archival documents were used to collect data. Three themes emerged from the triangulation of the data tools: 1) Teachers want to have an active role in creating their professional development, 2) Teachers want the skills learned in professional development to apply to their classroom instruction, and 3) Teachers go outside the district for professional development to build capacity and classroom resources. Recommendations were made based on the study's results. Recommendations included creating a task force with educational and instructional leaders and teachers representing each grade level to develop and monitor support after professional development. Creating professional development committees of teachers of the same grade level was also recommended to express their concerns about skills and techniques needed to implement the curriculum effectively.

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## **African American Male High School Student Persistence: An Exploratory Case Study**

*Zenovia Braham*

The purpose of the qualitative exploratory case study was to examine how African American males who participate in the Boys and Girls Club in the Southeast region persist in high school. The study sample consisted of 20 participants, including mentors, teachers, and curriculum coaches. A purposeful sample method was used based on the criteria protocols. The data collection instruments used in the study consisted of a survey, phone interview, and document review. The data analysis consisted of categorizing the participant feedback into themes. The survey and interview questions were designed to assess vital information about the organization.

The analysis of the data revealed three emergent themes and sub-themes: (1) Harness Student Interest, (2) Academic Support Building, (3) Intervention for students learning. Subthemes were also identified and discussed. Based on the study results, recommendations for future research on how to help African American male to persist in school and reach academic success were provided to the leaders.

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## **Considering Belonging: Making a Case for Allyship**

*Scott McCalla, Lisa Langford, & Alfreda Goods*

Drawing on two significant studies, including the 2021 Culture Report by Achiever Workforce Institute and the 2023 University of Phoenix COI, this presentation will shed light on the lack of belonging experienced by marginalized groups in the workplace and the importance of allyship as a method to help mitigate deleterious effects of lack of belonging. The two interconnected ideas, belonging and allyship, are crucial for promoting inclusive and equitable environments, particularly in diverse communities and organizations. Addressing the systemic and hegemonic structures perpetuating discrimination is crucial to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) within organizations. This response requires an inclusive approach that goes beyond addressing ethnic and racial diversity but also incorporates measures to foster fairness and equity for people with disabilities, diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and other marginalized groups, as well as fostering allyship within the employee groups. Allyship can foster a sense of belonging. Individuals engaging in allyship help build inclusive and egalitarian environments, resulting in individuals from marginalized or underrepresented groups feeling appreciated, accepted, and supported. Employees are more likely to feel true belonging in an atmosphere where allyship is practiced because of the culture of respect, acknowledgment, and shared values that foster equity and inclusion. Fostering a sense of belonging is more crucial than ever in a world that is paradoxically becoming more connected while still feeling more alone. It is important to note workplaces with effective DEI programs still sometimes fail to provide safe environments for all employees. Overall, allyship and belonging are essential for creating principles of inclusiveness, equity, and respectful communities and organizations that value diversity. By adjusting organizational procedures and employee practices, including anti-discriminatory approaches, and cultivating a sense of belonging and allyship, organizations can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive work environment in which teams are cohesive, and employees are empowered and psychologically safe.

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## **Improving Cultural Competency for Educational Best Practices**

*Paula Johnson*

Education continues to increase in diversity as the population evolves in the United States. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2020), an increase of all ethnicities with the exception of white students increased between 1980-2022. This means that there is a multiplicity of races that are seeing the value of education and taking advantage of opportunities. With the increase in diversity, there should be an increase in the understanding of cultural competency and how it adds to the educational experience. As we now live, work and compete globally, we must provide opportunities to learn diverse perspectives in the classrooms. World-class education begins with world-class experiences during the matriculation of our educational journey.

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## **The Seven Sources of All Impartiality**

*Erik Bean*

This presentation is based on a paper the researcher had published in the June 2023 issue of the peer reviewed European Journal Media Literacy and Academic Research. Since the inception of transforming information into accessible formats for the public by library science, the examination of media bias has primarily revolved around information gatekeepers who determine the content, manner, and timing of publications based on narrative significance and factors like distribution. This viewpoint excluded non-journalism entities or

individuals. The rise of the internet and subsequent proliferation of social media platforms empowered individuals to disseminate information promptly, circumventing gatekeepers and thereby influencing public perception on various subjects. Scholars introduced a theoretical framework for molding public opinion, while others delved into the potential skewing and partisanship of information. Nonetheless, these foundational approaches did not effectively define information bias in relation to the inherent partiality of principal sources themselves. Evaluation methods like Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, and Purpose (CRAAP) and Stop, Investigate, Find, Trace (SIFT), proposed as tools to gauge bias in information, fall short in addressing the initial step of what to scrutinize and how to categorize it. The absence of comprehensive literature dissecting the diverse biases can be a bewildering task. To address this, this paper suggests an initial methodology as the first stride in classifying information bias, regardless of its medium—be it analog or digital. It advocates grouping bias into seven significant sources, each inherently linked to its own yet broader impartiality. The subsequent sources of information bias will be discussed alphabetically: 1) academic, 2) for-profit, 3) government, 4) hidden agenda, 5) individuals, 6) nonprofit, and 7) watchdog groups. This presentation will share the particulars of each of the 7 sources and how ChatGPT sees itself among them.

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## **A Review of Higher Education Institutional Policies and Practices in Response to the Use of ChatGPT**

*Sonja Lamppa, Yvette Ghormley, & Yuvonne Richmond*

The recent implementation of ChatGPT, an AI innovative tool, has roused interest across the world due to its vast capabilities to create an awe-inspiring spectrum of results based on simple searches. This interest has been extended to higher education institutions to determine the possible values that ChatGPT offers to both students and instructors in online learning. The overall purpose of this study is to investigate how using ChatGPT transforms online education. This presentation will focus on a review of institutional policies and practices in response to the use of ChatGPT by students and faculty. In this analysis, thirty (30) institutions that serve both nontraditional and traditional students were reviewed. Using publicly available information, institutions were evaluated to determine the policies and guidance they have provided for faculty, students and administrators regarding the use of ChatGPT. In this presentation, we will present the findings of this review, highlight similarities and differences in institutional responses and offer recommendations for promising practices based on the analysis conducted.

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## **Linkages Between Corporate Sustainability Practices and Corporate Financial Performance: A Systematic Review**

*Suchitra Veera, Samantha Bietsch, & Susan Jones*

Environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and corporate governance (ESG) are becoming increasingly important as complementary efforts to improving corporate financial performance and achieving long term sustainability of global organizations. Prior empirical research of the relationship between corporate sustainability initiatives and financial performance has shown inconsistent results because of lack of clarity and consensus regarding the conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of corporate sustainability and its impacts. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the linkages between corporate sustainability and financial performance for medium to large companies. The drivers of sustainability and resulting financial impacts include internal drivers such as cost savings, CEO motivation, and Board member characteristics, and external drivers such as market demands and shareholder demographics, awareness and influence. Accordingly, this research is done taking into consideration the Resource-based view and Stakeholder influence theories. A practitioner-focused objective of this research is to utilize the research findings to develop a sustainability and financial performance framework for guiding sustainability initiatives in companies. This study adopts a qualitative methodology by conducting a systematic review of prior literature following the PRISMA framework. The findings will be important in understanding the impact of these practices on companies' financial outcomes.



Green practices benefit all members of society, and understanding the business benefits and target market relationships could promote a more widespread adoption of sustainable practices.

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## **Helping Teachers of Color Feel Included: What Can K-12 Leaders Do?**

*Joy Taylor & Sandra Sessoms-Penny*

Students of color perform better in schools when they have at least one teacher of the same race. The impact is so significant, that having just one African American teacher in elementary school reduces low-income male students' probability of dropping out by 39 percent (Mitchell, 2018). These teachers tend to not only have a better cultural understanding of their students, but research shows they have higher expectations as well. As of 2014, 50.3% of the students in the K-12 public school system identified as Black, Hispanic, Asian or another non-white ethnicity while more than 80 percent of the teacher workforce was white. Teachers of color comprise only 20% of the teaching profession in the United States with just two percent (2%) being black males (USDOE, 2016). As demonstrated in our study, school leaders play a critical role in the recruitment, retention and overall job satisfaction of Black male educators in the K-12 public school system. Recruiting more teachers of color, especially Black men is a challenge. Retention of these teachers once they enter the workforce is also difficult due to many Black educators reporting feelings of isolation, discrimination and the lack of cultural sensitivity. Holding on to teachers of color, requires educational leaders to understand the world experiences unique to Black males in America. The literature and lived experiences of men in the study, strongly indicate a need for school leaders being trained in strategies which will establish a school culture that incorporates intentional processes. Effective school leaders influence teaching conditions and can create environments in which teachers of color want to continue to teach (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

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## **The Rise of the Stress Arc: Managing (ROC) Rapid Onset of Change in Business Through Efficacious Strategy**

*Rodney Luster*

As the onset of 2020 began, so did a tsunami of social and environmental phenomena. As you can guess and by looking at history, leaders have, over the years, been subjected to some unexpected and large-scale impacts that have required their actionable oversight. But what we have faced in the past two years most especially, has tested the boundaries of leadership to a greater degree. change. To date, leaders have struggled in unprecedented fashion with the scope of pernicious disaster phenomena and “black swan” events that have impacted the psychological states, physical lives, and overall well-being of their employees, where such phenomena like the pandemic and harsh working conditions or overwork, as examples, have contributed to a “dysfunctional momentum” in the workplace (Barton, Christianson, et al.,2020). In fact, symptomology of anxiety disorder and depressive disorder currently denotes an upward trend in the United States during April–June of 2020, compared with the same period in 2019 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). The merits of this presentation should illuminate the need for more research and training around leadership, while fostering strategic insights for helping manage employees during such extreme impacts or, what I will call-- ROC-Rapid Onset of Change events. As noted by McKinsey and Company, “In landscape-scale crises such as COVID-19, such events strip leadership back to its most fundamental element, which is: making a positive difference in people’s lives” (McKinsey & Company, 2021). This presentation explores the potential for merging a powerful trifecta of theory and process that includes: Mindful Leadership, Relational Leadership, and DBT within Psychology as a primary model for engagement by leaders.

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## **University Supervisors of Student Teachers: A Scoping Review**

*Danielle Kearns-Sixsmith*

An important influence during higher education for students of education is the university supervisor, assigned

to prepare teacher candidates as they actualize pedagogical practices in live K-12 classrooms (Livers, Baker, Guerra & Acosa, 2022). A scoping review was used to yield substantial information about the: (1) historical evolution of the definitions, roles, and responsibilities of university supervisors, (2) problems, models, and approaches to researching the topics, as well as (3) reveal best practices and recommendations from study findings for training university supervisors. Using a PRISMA approach and the Noodle Tools research platform, 89 references resulted from iterative filtering. Findings were organized in notecards built by capturing main ideas from each reference. The number of articles grew in number each decade, from 1952 through 2022. While 11 different journals were represented, the Journal of Teacher Education accounted for the majority of articles and also had the highest 5 year impact factor of those listed. Authors from around the U.S were represented. The studies varied in design but the vast majority were qualitative, mainly case studies. Methods varied greatly but the most popular involved analyzing journals, field notes, or interviewing and then using thematic analysis and/or coding. Many did not provide in-depth understanding of the process used. In the few quantitative studies, there were less than a handful of instruments employed, mainly based on disposition scales, and each one differed from the next. Focus ranged from metrics, i.e. number of visits or duration of dialogue to measuring styles and preferences. Theoretical frameworks also differed substantially and included grounded theory, Flanders Interaction Analysis, Kolb's learning cycle, and cognitive apprenticeship theory, among others. From the categorization of notecards, the history revealed a development of the definition, roles, and responsibilities of a university supervisor. The necessity of a supervisor was debated throughout the 1980s. Beginning in the 1990s, nuances of the behavior and psychology could be found in further explorations in the interactions, compatibility, and preferences between supervisor and student. As late as 2020, the consciousness of the supervisor was being explored (Burns, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2020). The basic definition of a supervisor remains consistent over the last 70 years. Yet the responsibilities have grown with an ever-deepening understanding of learning and engagement. The problems, too, remain consistent, that university supervisors feel undervalued, disconnected, and develop lower expectations of their role, fostering lower expectations for the student teacher. Among the recommendations gleaned for university supervisor training are: (1) Define the role, responsibility and relationship; (2) Emphasize and honor the role of the supervisor by providing opportunities to share vision and make connections; (3) Provide soft skill training on mentoring, coaching and dialogic discourse to prepare for frequent conversations with the student teacher; (4) Share the model, based on a sound theoretical framework as found in the literature, to provide a deeper understanding of what the educator preparation program and thus the supervisors, should represent; and, (5) Evaluate through action research to further develop one's training intervention and the whole student teacher experience.

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## **Work-Life Dynamics Evolving Strategic Holistic Ecosystems Post-Pandemic: An Applied Organizational Development Perspective**

*Joanne Vázquez de Príncipe*

The proposed presentation highlights the research concepts and principles introduced in a collaborative resource book publishing effort entitled *Measuring the Effectiveness of Organizational Development Strategies During Unprecedented Times* (Tennin, 2023). Príncipe's (2023) enclosed chapter explored the benefits of leveraging strategic tactics incorporating holistic approaches throughout cross-functional holistic ecosystems. This multidisciplinary research incorporated superconscious leadership principles, which inspired a new framework of Work-Life Predictive Dynamics and informed the ideation for the Holistic Leadership Intelligence (HLQ) Model (Vázquez-de-Príncipe, 2021). The conceptualized frameworks of the mixed methods doctoral dissertation research study discussed herewith emphasized a deep dive into core work-life dynamics associated with organizational effectiveness, culture transformations, and change leadership aspects impacting the evolution of the organizational development (OD) discipline (Príncipe, 2023). Businesses today are consistently undergoing rapid change triggered by the current volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) post-pandemic state of the world. To enhance organizational efficiencies and effectiveness, astute, resilient, consummate leaders have found it imperative to align long-term evidenced-based scientific OD strategies with

measurable people management and business outcomes. It is imperative post-COVID to align holistic mindsets by embedding them within leadership, education, and human-centered well-being ecosystems to ensure the sustainment of organizations that empower thriving multicultural communities. The key concepts in this chapter will inform best practices, deepen awareness at all levels, and establish an appreciation for holistic leadership mindsets, which can address challenges such as internal aspects of employee disengagement and external aspects of customer or stakeholder dissatisfaction. The doctoral dissertation study explored the influence of leadership and human-intelligences on impacting work-life dynamics toward fostering sustainable organizational excellence transformations. In Vázquez-de-Príncipe's (2021) study, organizational excellence was perceived as the capacity of professional practitioners to catalyze dynamic cultural enhancements towards serving as a precursor alignment construct for establishing sustained quality performance improvements. Additionally, enterprise organizational change management was emphasized as being necessary to effectively communicate strategic business transformations with a concerted effort to mitigate the risk of resistance and to minimize uncertainty or obstructions towards enhancement behaviors and engagements (Vázquez-de-Príncipe, 2021). Change agents, in particular, have the critical role of anticipating resisters, analyzing the potential consequences of any negativity, and engaging the workforce to learn perspectives from the resisting person or the people asked to perform a new behavior or activity. Change professionals challenge complacency intentionally to lead by example to promote the desired behavior, strategically design motivators, and courageously address the potential consequences of 'culture of entitlement' behaviors often evident in highly hierarchical public sector or government institutions.

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## Holistic Leadership

*Donna Taliaferro*

In a fast-paced world and changing educational needs, it is easy to forget about holistic care when you are in a leadership role. There are numerous conflicting demands that often change the way in which leaders lead. Most of the leaders in academia, business, and healthcare call themselves transformational leaders. Yet many describe transformational leaders as narcissistic, megalomaniacs and have poor decision making at the great expense of those organizations they serve. Many believe that leaders are qualified to lead when in fact they have no preparation on how to lead. Most leaders learn by trial and error. If you are good at what you do, then your experiences will award you with promotions to more administrative responsibilities. Leaders learn the process by experience, and some survive, and some do not. Because education is often taught in a silo, it creates environments of competition, power, and hierarchies rather than a spirit of collaboration. Our role as leaders is to change that mentality into one of caring and respect for each other. To expect our colleagues to engage in collegiality, the leaders also must engage in collegiality. We need wisdom, knowledge, experience, love, vulnerability, and acceptance. Much of this inward look comes from being a reflective practitioner. Whether we are administrators, educators, researchers, or practitioners, we must learn from our ability to reflect on the past, the present and what we want the future to be. We are all leaders in some point in our careers. It could be leading at the employee level, leading a committee, or leading an organization. A true leader will have followers that are supportive of a visionary change. Most of us will either support the leader or spend time in the background of silence or critique. To expect our leaders to behave ethically and responsibly may have our expectations set too high. The news tells us every day that our leaders are far from that. We want to believe that our leaders are looking out for the best. The only way to change that is to be actively engaged in looking at ourselves and changing how we lead. Engaging in reflection will guide us through that. Reflective practice is about becoming aware of our own assumptions and how we might change them. Being reflective is not easy and by doing so we really look inside and make the change in how we want to be. Helping others to be reflective can be engaging for many. We can change the dark side of transformational leadership and be the leader that we want to be. We can engage those that exhibit the dark side and question their ability to lead. Our own holistic view should use the principles of holism to support an engagement of the body, mind, and spirit to the care of all. There is an interconnectedness with the environment, with relationships, and with our world. If we use that holistic care and caring, we can make an impact as a leader of any organization.

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## **The Relationship Between Employee Engagement and Perceived Mindful Leadership: A Quantitative Correlational Study**

*Carmen Vega-Stevens & Charles Elliott*

There are many approaches to and styles of leadership. The research problem addressed the lack of positive leadership in the healthcare service industry resulting in poor employee engagement. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine if a relationship existed between mindful leadership and employee engagement, if there was a statistically significant relationship in how mindful leadership affects the engagement of a sample of nurses using moderating factors of years employed or the direct or indirect contact with a supervisor or manager. A total of 116 nurses participated by completing two survey questionnaires that determined presence and degree of mindful leadership and assessed employee engagement. The study was guided by three research questions. The research questions were designed to measure the impact of a specific aspect of mindful leadership on employee engagement. The Mindfulness Theory was the theoretical framework used in this quantitative correlational study. Linear Regression analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between mindful leadership and employee engagement of participants, years of experience moderated the relationship between mindful leadership and employee engagement, and the moderating variable of direct or indirect contact did not affect the relationship between how mindful leadership practices impact employee engagement. Healthcare leaders could use the results of this study to gain insight into what leadership actions increase healthcare worker behaviors positively and improve their quality of life. The results of the study may offer a platform for further investigation into job satisfaction moderated by mindful leadership, and its relationship to nurses' engagement.

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## **Examining the Retention and Exodus of Women in Technology**

*Christa Banton & Tiefsa Jones*

When we look at the dynamics of the workplace, especially given the pandemic, we must identify why individuals are choosing to leave certain fields such as STEM and specifically technology. Given that the education needed to obtain a job in technology, one would assume that obtaining that job would equate to success especially for underrepresented groups such as women and people of color. However, just obtaining the job does not mean that women or people of color feel like they belong within those work environments. The purpose of this study was to identify the unique belonging experiences of women who specifically work in the technology field. Using a narrative approach nine women were interviewed for their unique perspective of belonging in the technological workspace. Data collection consisted of 30–45 minute interviews conducted on Zoom. Data analysis consisted of manually coding the transcriptions to develop concept mappings to derive themes and analyze the results. Of these nine participants the ages ranged from 26-72 years. In addition, 33% identified as multi-racial, 33% identified as African American and 33% identified as Caucasian/White. Within the transcriptions certain preliminary themes were derived from the data. One dominant theme found included trust; coworkers and customers did not trust the experience of women in the technology industry. This led some people to seek a second opinion from a male coworker even if the women had a greater degree of education and experience. In addition, sometimes they were the only women in the workspace and there was little in common with coworkers. Finally, in some instances they were paid less than male coworkers for the same work or not given raises. However, in a few interviews we also found that women can be effective leaders in the technology industry if they are supported by someone else within the workspace.

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## **Identifying Effective Elementary Teacher Preparation for Integrating STEM**

*Danielle Kearns-Sixsmith, Nicole Baker, & Jesse Fidelio Garza*

STEM education can be implemented in the elementary classroom by integrating problem-based, inquiry-based,

and project-based learning lessons with students (Aydin, 2020). Scholarly literature has identified possible challenges for elementary STEM educators. What do elementary STEM teachers need to effectively integrate STEM practices? Our team is prepared to report on problems and recommendations in the literature about elementary STEM teaching practices and preparation. The Center for Educational and Instructional Technology Research (CEITR) provided an opportunity and ongoing support for this collaborative team to initiate a study related to STEM education. The purpose for this convergent parallel mixed methods study was to examine the lived experiences and perceptions of STEM educators in the preparation and planning needed to provide efficacious STEM teaching to K-5 classrooms. Instrumentation included the quantitative T-STEM survey and qualitative open-ended questions. Recruitment was done through social media and several challenges and solutions will be shared. Data analysis to include reliability tests, means calculations, and associations following coding. Our team will provide a first look at preliminary data. It is the hope of the researchers that this study will provide evidence and recommendations for teacher preparation programs and K-5 school leaders. Come join this conversation!

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## **Solving Employers' Dilemma Through Academe-STEM Industry Partnerships**

*Louise Underdahl, Myrene Magabo, & Maureen Marzano*

Existing literature validates a mismatch between STEM graduates' classroom acquired knowledge and skills versus those needed to perform tasks in the workplace. Most studies and curricular developments focus on improving discipline-specific content rather than soft skills such as willingness to learn, flexibility, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork. Graduates, in general, are less equipped or less prepared for real workplace tasks placing them mostly in entry-level positions for further company training. By identifying skills requirements of the STEM industry from STEM employers, this study provides actionable data for academe - STEM industry partnerships. A mismatch between the knowledge and skills graduates acquire at universities and the skills required by a dynamic and evolving labor market. Some studies contend that employers describe university graduates as not 'work-ready,' because academic training delivers discipline-specific content, rather than soft skills such as communication, learning ability, flexibility, critical thinking, time management, problem solving, interpersonal skills, and creativity. STEM graduates are expected to perform tasks that require systems design thinking, technology skills, critical and creative thinking, mathematical and problem-solving, and project management aptitude. Many students fail to utilize opportunities to develop employability skills because they assume coursework will adequately prepare them for successful university-to work transition. Contributing factors may include failure of curriculum development specialists to incorporate data management innovation, lack of active learning pedagogy and engagement in workplace activities, and suboptimal integration of career services with academic programs to stimulate graduates' perceived employability potential.

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## **Student and Faculty Perspectives on Barriers, Challenges, Facilitators, Strategies, Determinants, and Connections for Progression and Completion of the DNP Degree**

*Patricia Finch Guthrie & Jamie Buchanan*

Little is known about barriers and challenges Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students face or determinants predicting progression and completion. Withdrawals, failures, and failure to progress are costly for DNP students and institutions. This presentation presents an integrative literature review (IR) conducted to understand the experience of students, faculty, and programs and determine barriers, challenges, facilitators, connections, and strategies for student progression and completion as a basis to improve the newly developed DNP program at the University of Phoenix.



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## Thriving in a Brave New World: IoT (Internet of Things) and Adult Online Learning

*Pamayla Darbyshire & Mar Navarro*

The terms distance learning, e-learning, and online instruction all refer to forms of accessing educational lessons via computer and the Internet. Course enrollments for online learning have increased exponentially, exceeding pre-pandemic levels, as it is an important tool helping to increase access to education for students who may not have other learning opportunities, including working adults. As technology continues to evolve to support online education, adult learners continue to seek innovations to maximize their online learning experience.

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## Implementation of a Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Practice Guideline in a Free Clinic Setting

*Linnea Axman*

The purpose of this project was to address the lack of screening for and treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in adults 18 years of age and older at high-risk for PTSD that accessed care at three free clinics in southern California. Background. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder disproportionately affects medically uninsured people. Individuals that seek care at the free clinic project sites in southern California are at high risk for PTSD. Despite their increased risk for PTSD and related comorbidities, patients at the project sites had not been routinely screened for PTSD. Methods. A multiple time series design was used to determine if the implementation of the Veterans Affairs /Department of Defense (VA/DoD) Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG) for Management of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Acute Stress Reaction (2017) achieved the intended results of increased screening, referral, and treatment for PTSD at three free clinics over the four-month project period. Implementation of the PTSD CPG included the development of the PTSD Treatment and Referral Protocol (Southern California Care Community [SoCalCC], 2023) and orientation of volunteers, staff, and students to the project. Patients were screened for PTSD using the five-item PTSD Primary Care Checklist for the DSM-5 ([PTSD-PC], Prins, et. al., 2015. Results. The project goal for screening was met. More than 80 percent of all adult patients aged 18 years and older who accessed care at the free clinics (N = 476) were screened for PTSD using the PTSD-PC four months after implementing the PTSD CPG with the percent of patients screened statistically significantly dependent upon the clinic at which the patient accessed care [ $M2 = (1, n = 630) = 93.291, p < .001$ ]. The project goal for referral was partially met with 68 percent of patients that screened positive for PTSD (n = 34) referred for further evaluation during the four-month intervention. The project goal for treatment was met. Ninety-three percent (n = 13) of the patients diagnosed with PTSD and who received care for PTSD at the free clinics over the course of the intervention (n = 14) were treated according to the PTSD CPG. Prior to the intervention, two patients out of a total of 481 unique patients received a diagnosis of and treatment for PTSD. By the end of the four-month project, 14 additional patients out of a total of 476 unique patients had received a diagnosis of and were receiving treatment for PTSD representing a statistically significant increase in patients treated for PTSD,  $\chi^2 (1, n = 957) = 9.28, p = .002$ . Discussion. Implementation of the PTSD CPG using the protocol developed for local context increased screening, referral, and treatment of patients at high risk for PTSD. The differences in screening and referral rates by clinic were attributed to a lack of sufficient numbers of medical interpreters. The findings from this project could be used to increase screening and treatment for similar patient populations at high risk for PTSD.

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## Day Three

### Teachers' Experiences with Physical or Verbal Aggression After the First Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic

*Juana Lang, Karen Johnson, & Lucinda Hines*

Verbal or physical violence against teachers perpetrated by students is not a new problem (Winding et al., 2022).

After the COVID-19 pandemic, physical and verbal abuse toward teachers committed by students increased (McMahon et al., 2022). Hence, this interpretive phenomenology study will focus on understanding teachers' lived experiences with verbal or physical violence at the hands of students after the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic when schools reopened for face-to-face instruction. The study of aggression against teachers is significant for education and society as teachers' well-being is an ethical issue and a collective responsibility. Teachers have the right to feel safe while fulfilling our children's nation's academic and emotional needs. The sample for this study will comprise 5 to 10 teachers who self-reported being the victims of verbal or physical violence. The study will be grounded in the tenets of the Social Learning theory, the Social-Ecology theory, the Attribution theory, and the Transactional Stress theory. Instrumentation will consist of open-ended interviews. Data analysis will follow the recommendations of Moustakas (1994), consisting of iterative interviews allowing for the researcher's reflection and the participants to glean rich data. Data will be coded, and categories will be formed to develop themes.

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## **Successful Digital Transformation Leadership Constructs in Commercial Aviation**

*Robert Rencher*

Abstract not available at time of publication.

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## **Educators' Perceptions of Social Media as a Professional Development Tool: An Exploratory Case Study**

*Nicole Masters & Karen Johnson*

Prior to the 2020 COVID pandemic, educators relied primarily on face to face professional development with little consideration of finding the same or similar resources through social media platforms. The purpose of this exploratory case study was to explore K-12 educators' perceptions of the use of social media as professional development tools in an independent school district in Texas. The population for the study was approximately 934 teachers, administrators, and instructional design coaches. The sample size was 20 participants. A word cloud and the thematic analysis method of data analysis were used to organize the interview responses and identify common emerging themes. According to the participants' responses to the interview questions, 73% of educators perceive social media to be time-efficient, cost-effective, and an easily accessible professional development option. The participants identified various challenges to using social media for professional development which include the key issues of safety and security, as well as too much information. The results of this study may contribute new ideas to educators and school and district leaders as they consider more effective methods of professional development for current and future educators.

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## **Workplace Spirituality for Online Educators: Inherent or Cultivated?**

*Jaime Davis*

Workplace spirituality is an organizational culture construct, a lens that frames organizational values in a way that encourages individual transcendence through and in their work roles and their sense of connection to both colleagues and the organization that instills positive feelings (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Hassan et al., 2016; Long & Mills, 2010; Pawar, 2014; Roof, 2015). Creating an organizational culture of workplace spirituality requires individuals to foster an environment that recognizes individual calling and requires a commitment to the shared community (Roof, 2015; Skaržauskienė, 2010). Workplace spirituality provides benefits to employee engagement and participation through the design of organizational cultures that meet the demands of stated organizational values (Fachrunnisa, Adhiatma, & Mutamimah, 2014; Kolodinsky, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2008). When values align, organizational culture is positive. Employees are satisfied both as individuals and as company representatives and are thus more effective and efficient. This sense of value alignment creates organizational commitment (Pawar, 2014). Workplace spirituality is modeled by behaviors that embrace a sense

of calling, commitment, and community to create an engaging and sustainable organizational culture. Online educators do not inherently experience workplace spirituality due to their calling to education, but the calling can be affirmed as they build their motivation and expertise. Once calling is confirmed, workplace spirituality is nurtured as online educators pursue employment with institutions that exhibit value congruence, both in their stated mission and in the modeled behaviors of other employees. It is further cultivated when the shared calling and commitment lead to connection with other educators, providing support and camaraderie amidst changes and challenges that arise.

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## **Effective Leadership**

*Paul White*

Effective leadership plays a vital role in driving organizational success and achieving sustainable growth. This scholarly presentation aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the key dimensions of effective leadership and their impact on organizational performance. By examining various theoretical perspectives and empirical studies, this abstract emphasizes the importance of effective leadership in fostering employee engagement, promoting innovation, and cultivating a positive organizational culture.

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## **Exploring Reverse Mentoring to Prepare Millennials for Leadership within Janssen Scientific Affairs: An Appreciative Inquiry**

*Renata Walton*

The purpose of this appreciative inquiry was to establish recommendations for a consistent approach to reverse mentoring as an opportunity to prepare Millennial knowledge workers within Janssen Scientific Affairs for future leadership opportunities. A qualitative appreciative inquiry was conducted among 75 employees at one of the top pharmaceutical companies in the world. Leveraging the unique analytical capabilities of network maps and Sankey diagrams, an immersive and rigorous analysis produced a best-practice strategy to assist in the installation of a consistent approach to reverse mentoring. This study contributes to the body of current literature by expanding on the understanding of Millennials' proclivities, and reverse mentoring practices, and offering future practitioners examples for applying appreciative inquiry.

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## **The Effects of Employee Motivation on Employee Engagement: An Exploratory Grounded Theory Study**

*Shahir Mohammed*

Employee disengagement is a problem that is costing the United States alone billions of dollars every year in lost productivity. In this study, the concept of employee motivation was considered as a means of optimizing work productivity and engagement in organizations. The purpose of this exploratory grounded theory study was to derive an operational model for sustaining employee motivation for leaders to implement in the wholesale and retail trade industry (WRTI) to enhance employee engagement in work. The overarching research question that guided this study was: How can employees in the WRTI be motivated and higher engagement be achieved? A qualitative methodology was chosen for approaching this study because employee motivation and employee work engagement are both subjective experiences and the psychological processes one goes through cannot be fully explored through a quantitative method. Grounded theory design was used because the study was about the understanding of a process and deriving a model. Sixteen participants were purposively selected from three WRT businesses in central Trinidad. The three instruments developed for collecting data were: a demographics questionnaire, an interview questionnaire, and an interview protocol. The conceptual framework utilized the Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory and the Kahn's theory of engagement. From the data analysis, four themes were revealed. From the research it was posited that employee motivation is a dynamic and consequential phenomenon and it may be difficult to sustain. However, it was also posited that employee motivation could

be sustained by avoiding the causal conditions that influence their employees' demotivation in work. Also, identifying the causal conditions for employees' motivation and adjusting the working environment to encourage these conditions can also promote employee motivation and enhance employee engagement in work.

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## **Organizational Communication Through the Lens of Support Staff at Post-Secondary Institutions: Phenomenological Study**

*Pam England & Joann Kovacich*

Companies and institutions that master organizational communication may increase organizational functionality, sustain goals, and preserve organizational associations and culture (Uslu, 2017). Transparent, efficient, and timely information sharing has a positive influence on job performance and satisfaction, promoting sustainable internal and external socio-economic growth. Unfortunately, many post-secondary institutions have deficient communication protocols resulting in costly time, knowledge, and production losses (Birx, 2019; Sharma, Lampley, & Good, 2015). Clear communication is essential in general for post-secondary education, but even more so for support staff tasked to provide services to stakeholders (Durnali, Akbasli & Dis, 2020). To gain a better understanding of the impact organizational communication has on student services support staff, this transcendental phenomenological study explored the perceptions and lived experiences of six participants representing admissions, financial aid, registrar, and advising departments. Guided by communication theory (Shannon, 1948), system theory of communication (Almaney, 1974), critical communication theory (Varey, Wood-Harper & Wood, 2002), and employee engagement (Curran & Prottas, 2017; Reissner & Pagan, 2013; Yadav, 2016;), purposive sampling was used to invite participants from six institutions located in the Southeast United States. Each participant was interviewed three times, allowing for greater reflection and in-depth data collection. Semi-structured interviews were recorded, transcribed, and member-checked before coding aided by NVivo12, software application. Data analysis followed Moustakas' seven-step modified van Kaam method for phenomenological inquiry (Moustakas, 1994). Three themes and six subthemes emerged from the data analysis: the definition and reality of day-to-day organizational communication, the impact of ineffective communication on support staff job satisfaction and performance, and recommendations for support staff inclusion in communication processes and protocols. Support staff identified accessing communication that impacted day-to-day tasks as challenging. Messages or directives often lacked clarity or precision, negatively impacting their ability to make informed decisions relevant to assisting students. Untimely or non-existent communication caused breakdowns in student services. In addition, the siloing of departments led to incomplete organizational communication access and handicapped execution of front-line employee job tasks. Participants often felt alone and unsupported, resulting in on-the-job frustration, work stress, job dissatisfaction, and productivity strain. Excluded from organizational decision-making discussions due to top-down leadership styles made frontline workers feel undervalued. To improve organizational communication, employee buy-in, and organizational sustainability, participants recommended cross-department collaboration, inclusion in job-relevant structural decision-making processes, and employee input in knowledge-sharing dissemination processes. In summary, this study demonstrated that support staff must be included in communication plans as the face of the organization. Organizational leaders who embrace relationship-building communication are better positioned to meet stakeholder needs, address change, and maintain a competitive edge. This study contributes to higher education, support staff, and organizational communication addressing the critical need for inclusive communication for organizational sustainability.

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## **Beyond Optimism: Roadmaps for Career Progression**

*Louise Underdahl*

Data validate significant gaps between what American workers believe their employers do to support them, and what employers themselves believe their companies offer employees. Building roadmaps for career progression can eliminate existing disconnects and help employers channel workers' optimism in their own abilities to

their current place of work. This white paper describes actionable strategies to align worker expectations with employer needs to benefit both businesses and their workforces. Widespread adoption of digital and automated work processes has necessitated large-scale reskilling and upskilling workforce initiatives by educators, employers, and policymakers. Industry 4.0 (I4.0), also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, encompasses digitization and automation, interconnectivity between cyber and physical processes, and utilizing real-time data to optimize decision-making and performance. Distinguishing between myth and fact, Tortorella et al. validated non-digitization leads to obsolescence. The World Economic Forum predicted 50% of all employees worldwide would need reskilling by 2025. Li offers a succinct assessment: “Industry 4.0 is about creating a unique life-long education system that ensures a future-ready workforce.” Evidence suggests digitalization is predicated on education and learning programs that infuse technology into content and integrate experiential activities to train, skill, reskill, and upskill the future-ready workforce. Education alliances between employers, educators, and governmental policymakers are a promising framework for adapting to economic uncertainty and change. Employers can use roadmaps to eliminate the disconnect between worker and employer perceptions of skilling opportunities. To create and preserve a competitive edge, workers must embrace a continuous process of learning, skill acquisition, and adaptability. To create an appropriate learning environment, educators are rethinking pedagogy and transitioning toward interactive, dynamic learning environments. Strategies include designing skills-aligned training curricula to bridge the skills gap between workforce knowledge and industry needs and use data to monitor implementation. By investing in employees’ professional development, mental health, mentorship, and deeper engagement within their organizations, employers can channel workers’ optimism in their own abilities to their current place of work, benefitting both businesses and their workforces. This study contributes to existing literature on the importance of training, skilling, reskilling, and upskilling by providing roadmaps to eliminate worker/employer disconnects, promote career progression, and create a future-ready workforce. Collaboration between educators and employers to align curricular, extra-curricular, and training materials with Industry 4.0 requirements can transform optimism into career progression.

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## How Can I Speed Up My Doctoral Journey?

*Roxanne Williams & Josh Valk*

If a student approaches the doctoral journey as an isolated race car driver, a crash may result; however, student achievement may be sped up through team assisted pit stops. The presenters discuss doctoral student strategies to achieve quicker dissertation acceptance. A James and Slater (2014) text about the dissertation process is required reading for University of Phoenix (UoPX) doctoral learners, but students may not always understand the application of this text. The significance of this presentation is connections between the required text and practical suggestions will be presented by a UoPX doctoral committee Chair and a Panel Validator. The best student practices will be discussed with analogies to motor sport pit stops for adjustments, refueling, and repairs. Students enroll in ACCESS courses at the beginning of the UoPX doctoral journey. Panel Validators facilitate the ACCESS courses and aid students in understanding the doctoral process. The James and Slater (2014) text is part of the required reading in ACCESS courses. Students read about requirements for writing a dissertation, how to choose a researchable topic, and bridging topic choice to methodology choice. The text and presenter advocate for review of previous dissertations, review of scholarly literature for a possible researchable topic, and connecting student rough drafts of research questions to possible methodology choices. The Panel Validator advocates for student pitstops to adjust for accelerated resource acquisition and addressing feelings of isolation in an online doctoral journey. One adjustment pitstop includes scheduling a one-on-one conference with a UoPX librarian to speed up library searches of dissertations and scholarly peer reviewed sources. Another adjustment pit stop is the scheduling of a one-on-one conference with the course facilitator to discuss methodology options and/or by joining the Research Methodology Group at TEAMS. Students use pit stops to adjust for needed resources and collaboration with experts. UoPX doctoral students enroll in courses after the ACCESS Courses and the Chair guides the students during portions of phases 3, 4, and 5 of the doctoral journey. The James and Slater (2014) text is part of the required reading during the



courses within these phases. The authors and Chair advocate for developing dissertation methodology, writing and defending a dissertation proposal, analyzing data and data collection processes, and preparing for oral defense. The Chair advocates for student pitstops to refuel the student for momentum and to make repairs. Pit stops during phases 3, 4, and 5 include creating relationships with other students with periodic check-ins, working between classes and checking in with the chair regularly, and meeting with & managing the doctoral committee using doctoral demeanor. The pit stops at these phases refuel students through relational emotional support and repairs on dissertation parts suggested by the chair and committee. Audience participants should anticipate presentation of best student practices for accelerated dissertation acceptance. Students who attend the presentation will comprehend the connection between the James and Slater (2014) required reading and practical recommendations. UoPX doctoral students thrive when they understand the strategic benefit of the pit stops which require team connections.

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## **A Literature Review on the Effectiveness of Case Management Approaches for Addressing the Needs of Chronically Mentally Ill Homeless Individuals**

*MacDonald Chaava & Pamayla E. Darbyshire*

Homelessness in the USA is a pressing and complex issue (Burt, 2015; Ding, Loukaitou-Sideris and Wasserman, 2022; Urada, Nicholls and Faille, 2022), particularly prominent in large metropolitan areas, commonly known as megacities. Extensive research has been dedicated to exploring the multifaceted challenges of homelessness, including its intricate association with mental disorders. Understanding the contributing factors to homelessness has been crucial for crafting effective interventions (Jagpal et al., 2020; Merdsoy, Lambert and Sherman, 2020; Paudyal et al., 2021). In recent times, there has been a growing emphasis on case management approaches as a means to address the unique needs of homeless individuals with chronic mental illnesses (Pearson, 2011; Parker and Dykema, 2013; Burt, 2015). This presentation aims to delve into the effectiveness of case management strategies (Clark and Rich, 2003; de Vet et al., 2013) in supporting this vulnerable population. By synthesizing existing literature on this topic, we seek to shed light on the impact of various case management interventions and explore how they can contribute to mitigating the hardships faced by chronically mentally ill individuals experiencing homelessness.

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## **Dissertation of the Year Winners**

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### **Perceptions of Test Score Pollution Stemming From COVID-19 and State Testing: An Exploratory Case Study**

*Elif Kalemdaroglu-Wheeler*

*Chair: Dr. Joshua Valk*

Test score pollution is defined as influences on students' test scores from test preparation, situational, and external factors (Haladyna et al., 1991). The problem is COVID-19-induced changes in teaching modality, delivery, and curriculum content may result in test score pollution and affect state standardized test scores (Middleton, 2020). Test scores are used in decision-making about student placement in classes, graduation, special education, advanced programs, counseling and career guidance, teacher professional development activities, program efficiency, allocation of resources, the efficiency of curricula, identifying at-risk students, and bringing awareness to the public about educational issues. Test scores provide consistent data to allow comparisons between students. Validity and reliability are crucial because the tests are used in many decisions. Standardized tests, by design, present students with the same type of questions under the same conditions and settings, and they are scored in the same manner. However, family and personal issues of students, illnesses, lack of technological skills and access to technology, teachers' ability to deliver the curriculum through new

modes of instruction, and testing conditions since COVID-19 school closures could affect test performance. Aligned with the problem was the purpose of the study to explore teachers' and administrators' perceptions of COVID-19-related test score pollution in state standardized tests. The following themes emerged through data analysis: a) inadequately preparing students for state standardized tests, b) de-valuing of education, c) understanding students' emotional well-being, d) providing data-driven support, e) questioning test validity, and f) recognizing magnified student disparities. The themes aligned with the theories of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, Kane's Validation Model, and Campbell's Law. This study implicated a need for test score pollution awareness, realignment of state standardized tests with learning gaps in mind, the validity of state standardized tests, the need for student remediation, "Whole Child" services, and redefinition of student accountability measures. In addition, there is a need for in-depth correlational analysis of individual test score factors since COVID-19 and its impact on scores, more holistic and trauma-informed teaching, allocation of public education resources to support students' emotional well-being, and urgency for states to align the standardized tests with post-COVID-19 teaching and learning.

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## **The Experiences and Perceptions of Cultural Bias in Multinational U.S. Organizations: An Exploratory Case Study**

*Dr. Daniel Collins*

*Chair: Dr. Julie M. Ballaro*

Cultural bias is present in multicultural and multinational organizations impeding the ability for employees to adapt to the changes necessary for improving organizational performance and productivity and limiting the growth and health of an organization. The purpose the study was to understand solutions and best practices to reduce cultural bias and promote inclusion and positive organizational change. Two research questions were developed to explain how cultural bias impedes organizational change and growth, and how training employees on inclusion and cultural awareness reduces cultural bias. The qualitative explanatory case study was chosen to gain insight on employees' experiences and perceptions on how to facilitate a deeper understanding of cultural bias and its effects on organizational change. The sample from the population consisted of employees in multicultural and multinational organizations located in the southwest region of the United States who were employed in varied industries to include Healthcare, Media, Retail, Fitness, Government, Education, Financial, and Business Services. Fifteen employees and five leaders participated in interviews and focus groups. From the thematic analysis, seven themes emerged. The results indicated cultural bias is present in multicultural and multinational organizations and affects cohesiveness among workgroups. Recommendations to leaders that emerged from the themes include implementing a comprehensive training program to promote cultural awareness and inclusion as a strategy for boosting the organization's health and employee productivity. HR strategies include, develop a succession plan, interview, hire, onboard, promote, and mentor a diverse workforce to promote inclusion and strengthen workgroup cohesiveness important for successful organizational change.

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## **Cross-Contamination and Personal Protective Equipment A Quantitative e-Delphi Design**

*Dr. Eric Johansen*

*Chair: Dr. Daniel Smith*

Personal protective equipment is frontline healthcare workers' first line of defense while caring for patients with an illness from an infectious organism. Donning and doffing of the equipment must follow a meticulous process to prevent cross-contamination and the spread of the organism. Unfortunately, the number of hospital-acquired infections continue, and the most recent spread of the COVID-19 virus has indicated that healthcare workers do not follow the process causing cross-contamination. This qualitative e-Delphi study, the health belief mode, aimed to identify administrative leaders' perceptions of the barriers for healthcare workers to follow the process and identify possible strategies to improve compliance while reducing cross-contamination. A panel of nine healthcare leaders from one healthcare organization in the Southwest region of the United States were recruited

to participate in three rounds of questionnaires following an e-Delphi design. The first two rounds consisted of open-ended questions collecting data which were coded using open and axial coding identifying keywords and themes. A 5-point Likert scale was used in the third round of questions to achieve a consensus of opinion. At the end of the third round, a consensus was reached on one strategy. Potentially educational training with in-person demonstration and sign-off was the most effective strategy identified through the consensus by the panel. It is recommended that healthcare leaders must obtain firsthand knowledge of the barriers frontline workers encounter, which prevent compliance with donning and doffing processes, causing cross contamination. Additionally, implement strategies that will improve compliance and reduce the cross-contamination rate of infectious organisms.

# An Interview with KWB 2023 Keynote Speaker Dr. Cheryl Lentz, an Engaging, Dynamic, and Unique Entrepreneur



Dr. Cheryl Lentz

College of Doctoral Studies Graduate

Founder: The Refractive Thinker book series

Keynote Speaker for the 2023 Knowledge Without Boundaries Summit

**ERIK BEAN:**

Let's start at the beginning. Please tell our Phoenix Scholar readers your background, where you grew up, the degrees you acquired and what led to the pursuit of your doctoral degree here 20 years ago?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

Yes. I come from Chicago. I am a junior high and high school valedictorian. I attended a small undergrad school, College of St. Benedict's in Minnesota because I was going to be a musician. But a professor with whom I was to study with was on sabbatical. I didn't like his replacement. So I left and transferred to the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign, which is ironic as this was the one place I didn't want to go because all of the time I spent during my high school years there during marching band and symphonic band seasons. This move turned out to be the happiest three and a half years of my life. I now sit on the Board of Directors for their alumni group— Suburban Illinois Club. I graduated from U of I with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Music History, and a sorority girl (Alpha Sigma Alpha).

**ERIK BEAN:**

Explain what happened during a required instrument rating session there?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

It was like comps for a master's program. To move to the next level, I had to pass my juries (thinking a playing competency exam). My professor said, "You're done, dismissed!" I was in shock. He walked out of my practice room that day. I was sitting there thinking I had been playing since I was five years old and had no plan B, no warning. I was out of his league. He was training musicians to be Olympians to play at Holy Name Cathedral, or Notre Dame, Royal Albert Hall, the big dogs and I was sitting there playing my little Bach Prelude and Fugue. So he dismissed me and my life was forced to pivot because of forced compliance.

I shifted my college focus. I soon became a concierge for 10 years simply because somebody told me I could get paid for planning parties as I did for my sorority and soon thereafter joined the hospitality industry."

**ERIK BEAN:**

Where did your professional hospitality journey take you next?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

I moved to Seattle for a two- and half-year stint working at the Four Seasons Olympic downtown. From there, I devoted the next 25 years of my life being a military wife for the United States Air Force.

As a military wife, I enjoyed seeing the world. But while in Japan I got bored and took advantage of a military educational fund for spouses overseas and started my master's degree. Even though I was working part-time and making good money just for talking to people to help them learn English. I started my Master's (MS) in international relations at Troy University with a concentration in National Security. Before I was finished, we transferred to Albuquerque, NM and I finished my degree in distance ed, though the school was located in Alabama. I was an early adopter of distance learning, receiving weekly VCR tapes of my lessons first begun in Japan and it carried me through graduation, even though I never saw the school! Twenty years ago, this was almost unheard of. Attracted to online learning, I also pursued a second Master's recently at Walden University in Criminal Justice through their Tempo program.

**ERIK BEAN:**

Wow you really did some hustling there to solidify your master's work. What led you to a doctorate degree here?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

I was interested in pursuing some very definitive questions about how organizations make decisions and being an early adopter of online education. The University of Phoenix -DM program was a good fit. My dissertation Strategic Decision-Making in Organizational Performance: A Quantitative Study in Employee Inclusiveness, provided that framework. This degree opened the door to many non-traditional teaching roles including dozens upon dozens of dissertations I have chaired.

**ERIK BEAN:**

How did you stay motivated and what other avenues did you pursue to bolster your academic and professional career since?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

The trauma that ensued at University of Illinois might have been a driving factor (facetiously laughing). And so I took all these experiences and put my entrepreneurial hat on. While it took me over 10 years to do a TEDx Talk, that and my groundbreaking work as the publisher of the Refractive Thinker® book series edited by those with firsthand knowledge of best practices in academia and industry, premiered

in 2008. These popular peer reviewed books are set to debut yet another set of talented authors well into 2024 and beyond. This work helped to catapult the professional connections and notoriety to actively move me forward.

**ERIK BEAN:**

And no doubt also led to many professional awards and accolades, but none of these without some hurdles?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

That's right. We are all only as good as our last job and no one can sit on their laurels. So, it's about shaking things up. The Refractive Thinker series offers amazing research and not just because doctoral trained individuals contribute to it, but because the advice is timely and just makes good sense. However, it can be frustrating that those who could benefit most from the advice, may overlook or construe as simply just academics . But I have the gift of gab, and I do so if it gets traction and gets the people who work with me noticed. This mindset allowed me to publish my first book, The Golden Palace Theory of Management. My preface was and is that one cannot teach leadership from behind a desk. One cannot run an organization from behind the desk either. One must actually get up, open their mouth and go out and see the people. I'm still amazed that 23 years later my premise is still as fresh as it is today. But many students have trouble discerning the difference between leadership and management. I consider myself a voice of reason. These views can be so practical and challenge other theoretical voices and this is something we all must do from time to time. Not everyone is going to like what we have to say. In hindsight, like so many who did their undergrad work, I never knew I would go on to acquire my advanced degrees and challenge some of the accepted ways of thinking. However, in some ways, we all need to from time to time. This is why we must always embrace a formal education that includes our ability to inquire, and become lifelong learners.

**ERIK BEAN:**

Sounds like you would agree you are a rebel? Even Dr. John Sperling, the founder of University of Phoenix entitled his biography, Rebel With a Cause.

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

I am and will maintain being one. I am no shrinking violet. I do like to shake things up. I remember being



at one education conference. It was so sterile, like somebody belching in church. It was my EF Hutton moment (referencing the financial company's famous commercial tagline, 'When EF Hutton talks people listen'). So while I identify with the academia I also hold some of it in contention. But we all need to act in the best interest of those we serve. This mindset has opened doors to speaking engagements as well as other opportunities."

**ERIK BEAN:**

Dr. Lentz it is quite obvious the hurdles you have overcome, and your steadfast thinking has been fruitful in so many ways. What advice can you share with those who come from many different backgrounds and experiences are finding their doctoral degree journey here so challenging?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

It's about relationships. I know that's not going to answer exactly your question, but to keep the mindset skill set, we must teach. We can teach you APA, I can teach you passive voice and that can teach you all of the other needed writing skills. What I can't teach you is how to keep your head in the game that comes with attitude that comes with the mindset that comes with relationship building. The students who stay when trouble hits become toughest because they're hanging with me. I have a student and I can't tell you, her name. She had a brain tumor removed yesterday, Erik. I didn't even know. I knew she was kind of messing with this, but she kept it to herself and when I compare that to other students who from time to time complain about anything under the sun, this student whose tumor was the size of a golf ball, had it removed, and she still had her assignment turned in on time. She truly is a role model for all doctoral students to behold. But it's about relationships, listening to your chair and committee and staying in the game.

I can tell you what's required. You're not always going to like my answers. But you've got to find somebody that you can relate to and who's going to tell you what you need to hear, not always what you want to hear. I also can adapt to how you want me to mentor/coach. Pursuing a doctorate is about being authentic, after all your dissertation is a product of what interests you the most. It is about endurance. Be real. It reminds me of a video that was taken of me on my kayak. I had put a hole in it (unbeknownst to me!) and the boat was sinking.

When I showed it students, they were laughing because I could not hide my authentic self. I wanted to look like an experienced kayaker, but what they saw and what I portrayed were the opposite. But I still managed to pull it off. Unforeseen things will crop up during your doctoral pursuit. I have had a friend pass away recently, and yet I was scheduled to deliver a presentation on their behalf due to another commitment. And I'm thinking, what are the odds? And you could hear my voice quiver. People die. I had students die. And so that relationship is what keeps my students in the game and they appreciate it more because they get to the end based on the authenticity we both share.

I can't change things that happen around us, but I can hold their hand as a mentor and make it easier for getting them through. But doctoral students should reach out to more than just their chair. They should solicit help from anyone willing to offer it. I tell my students your name is on the front of the dissertation and where invisible ink is on the bank to include the many other people you've never met, hundreds of them, for each had to endure their doctoral journey. So you cannot do this alone. And that's the message, they've got to find people for whom they can share their journey. I don't care if it's their dog. I don't care if it's peers in their cohort. You cannot be an island; the emotions will kill you.

**ERIK BEAN:**

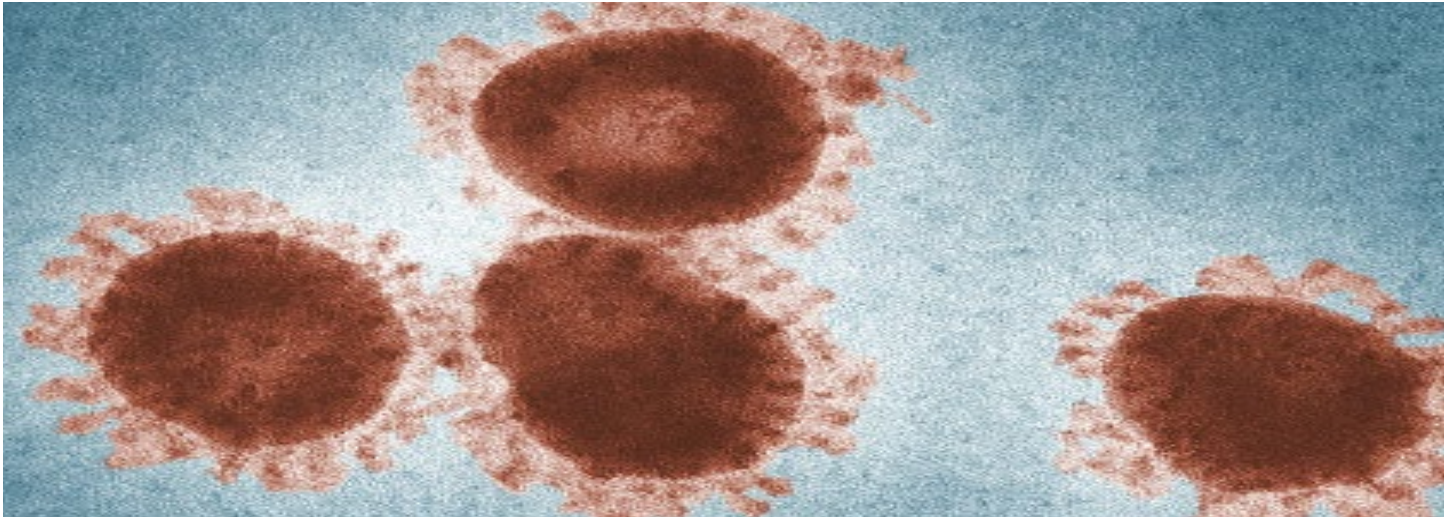
So poignantly said Dr. Lentz. So before we close, what do you like to do when you are not involved in your lifelong learning, speaking, and entrepreneurial pursuits? Do have a favorite TV series or sport besides kayaking?

**CHERYL LENTZ:**

A couple of years ago, I watched *The Queen's Gambit*. I loved it and watched every episode from start to finish one rainy day. I thought the storyline, music, and production were done very well. But when I can, I love to kayak. It is my personal happy place!

**ERIK BEAN:**

Erik Bean: Thank you Dr. Lentz! It is quite obvious you made for an excellent keynote at this year's Knowledge Without Boundaries Summit and we all look forward to how you will impact the world of education and industry next!



# Full Article from KWB 2023 Presenters: Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle and Higher Education Entrance Exams Post COVID

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## Abstract

Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, introduced in the field of quantum physics in 1927, explained how a particle's position and speed cannot be determined due to constant variances within its surrounding. The uncertainty of all aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic is a consideration in education. Educators faced a dramatic shift in positioning students for learning and test preparation with an uncertainty of student achievement or test pollution. Higher education admission processes include SAT and/or ACT scores, yet may need to consider a holistic approach until the uncertainty and unknowing of the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic are fully realized.

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## Introduction

An increased interest in research related to online education, teacher professional development, the

economic impact of school closures, and the quality of education emerged after the initial school closures due to COVID-19 in March 2020. The issue of test score pollution, first addressed by Haladyna et al. in 1991, has regained attention during and post-COVID-19. Test preparation practices, test administration factors (situational), and circumstances beyond the control of the schools (external) may affect students' test scores on standardized tests (Haladyna, 1992; Haladyna et al., 1991). Furthermore, pressure on standardized tests may indirectly cause test score pollution (Alimorad, 2014; Pearson et al., 2001).

College entrance exams are standard aptitude tests providing measures to guide admission decisions and to make predictions on students' future academic abilities and are based on students' learning through high school years, irrespective of students' social and educational background (Arce & Young, 2022; Hampton et al., 2021; Lyons et al., 2021; Szóllos et al., 2023). The two widely used standardized college

entrance exams are The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Testing. SAT emerged in 1926, and its competitor, ACT, emerged in 1959 (Bennett, 2022; Zwick, 2019). Both tests are also used in making scholarship determinations and providing additional students once enrolled in HE institutions (Marcus, 2021).

Little is known if test score pollution from COVID-19-related issues impacts scores on SAT and ACT and if the tests can be considered reliable and valid sources of assessments to measure student aptitude. Although the pandemic presented multifarious challenges in education and testing, the composite scores for ACT remained relatively the same. In 2017, the mean score for ACT was 21, which was 20.3 in 2021. Contrarily, the mean score for SAT since 2017 remained relatively the same, with a slight decline in 2020 and an increase in 2021. The percentage of high school graduates taking SAT in the United States declined from 61% in 2019 to 41% in 2021. Similarly, the percentage of students taking the ACT in 2017 dropped from 56 % to 35% in 2021 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021a; 2021b).

Disrupted learning modalities and opportunities brought on by the pandemic created content gaps within subjects and an academic gap between students (Lim, 2021). Such disruptions to learning and interpretations of test scores require analysis in terms of test validity. The loss of educational time based on the availability of resources and modalities should be considered a historical factor. The disparities and varied impact of the pandemic on students' economic, social-emotional well-being, educational abilities, and test administration changes may threaten the validity of the tests. Lastly, comparing students' scores to assessments prepared before the pandemic may raise bias issues.

In the spring of 2020, the COVID-19-related challenges of taking the college entrance exams prompted HE institutions to consider holistic admission processes (Arbuthnot, 2020). As a response, test-optional and test-free admissions for higher education institutions have increased since COVID-19 (Bennett, 2022; Marcus, 2021). Hossler et al. (2019) noted in 1983, 283 colleges and universities were test-optional. Shortly before the pandemic, the number of test-optional institutions was 1050. Currently, 1921 HE institutions offer test-optional admission, and 86 offer test-free admission (National Center for Fair & Open Testing, 2023).

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## Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle and Standardized Exams

Heisenberg's (1983) Uncertainty Principle, first published in 1927, derived from quantum physics, posited the impossibility of determining the accurate trajectory of particles; thus, the very act of measuring a particle/variable creates an imbalance in the variable being measured. Glickman et al. (2018) stated successful educational initiatives possess uncertain outlooks or trajectories due to constant changes within educational institutions. The COVID-19 pandemic, ensuing lockdowns, and other pandemic factors created a rapid rate of change and an imbalance of predictability for educational institutions, not excluding the preparation and execution of standardized tests such as the SAT and ACT.

Interruptions to learning environments, school closures, student psyche, daily living conditions through COVID-19, and impact on families' economic, physical, and psychological well-being could be classified as turbulences, aligned with Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. The unpredicted turbulences may directly impact test preparation, situational, and external factors, which could jeopardize test scores and students' performance on high-stakes tests. Bridges and Woolcock (2022) posed that desultory and aimless data collection could have unintended consequences. As such, data-driven policies are not *prima facie*, and variables surrounding such policies should be examined consistently. The numerous entities and interactions have different impacts on educational outcomes. Furthermore, social, cultural, and political contexts impact the dynamics of the interactions and create uncertainty in the outcomes.

McIntyre-Mills (2021) claimed all relationships have consequences, and the cause-effect cycle could be examined in all aspects of life. The relationship between students and the agents of learning environments, curriculum, pandemics, economic, and health concerns ultimately relate to students' success. The unforeseen changes in any of the agents lead to uncertainty. For example, COVID-19-related school closures and changes in the learning environments may correlate to student performances in college entrance exams. As Sireci and Suarez-Alvarez (2022) indicated, there are too many plausible alternative explanations for changes in test scores. The



disturbances could be considered test score pollution factors.

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## Role of Standardized Tests in Admission and Test Score Trends since COVID

COVID-19-induced changes in teaching modality, delivery, and curriculum content may result in test score pollution and affect high-stakes tests (Arenas et al., 2021; Lim, 2021; Middleton, 2020). Mete et al. (2022) noted the pandemic severely disrupted test preparation and administration for college entrance exams. Due to school closures and changes to the learning environment since the pandemic, teaching test-taking strategies and adequate preparation for high-stakes exams became more challenging. In addition to teaching the regular curriculum, teachers provide remediation and additional support services to academically-behind students. Pier et al. (2021) found economically disadvantaged students, English as second language learners, and minority students experienced a more significant learning gap since COVID-19. Lastly, the inability to close the learning gap and sufficiently prepare students for high-stakes exams contribute to student anxiety (Ewell et al., 2022). Test anxiety, stress, fatigue, motivation, and test administration practices are documented sources of situational test score pollution factors (Abrams et al., 2003; Chalak & Tavakoli, 2010; Haladyna, 1992).

Test fairness provides equal opportunities to all test takers throughout test design, development, administration, scoring, score interpretation, and uses of the tests (American Educational Research Association, 2014). Bennett (2022) and Arenas et al. (2021) indicated a correlation between HE entrance exam scores and the gender, race, and socioeconomic status of the students. Similarly, Hampton et al. (2021) concluded a substantive relationship between students' digital skills and college entrance exam scores. Thus, students with limited access to technology and digital platforms tend to perform lower.

The COVID-19 pandemic worsened the existing economic, social, and racial inequalities in education (Dimitrijevska-Markoski, 2022; Lund et al., 2020; Moulin et al., 2022; Rogers et al., 2021; Santibañez & Guarino, 2021; Scott et al., 2021; Sosu et al., 2021).

Frohn (2021) identified disparities exacerbated during the pandemic, such as lack of physical space to study, limited access to technical equipment, inadequate access to non-technical resources, and varying levels of skills and competencies among parents/caregivers, including attitudes towards school, subject-specific skills, motivation, self-sufficiency, digital and media skills, language skills, and social-emotional skills of students. For instance, Schnieders (2023) highlighted the negative impact of the pandemic on students whose parents did not have a college degree, affecting their academic performance and resilience.

Test preparation practices for college entrance exams favor wealthier students with means to additional academic resources (Rosinger et al., 2021). Ewell et al. (2022) stated students shifted their concern during the pandemic to survival issues of housing and food insecurity and added caregiving roles for siblings and elderly family members. Although students across various races, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds reported challenges with academic progress, the most prevalent challenges differed by socioeconomic subgroups. Scott et al. (2021) concluded Black/African American and Asian students reported higher academic challenges and Hispanic/Latino students indicated higher challenges in physical health.

Variance in school attendance is another turbulence to consider with the unpredictability of the pandemic. School absences directly impact students' test scores and social-emotional skills (Santibañez & Guarino, 2021). The more social-emotional and academic challenges students encounter lead to increased absences. Rogers et al. (2021) indicated adolescents from lower-income households experienced more significant family conflicts and higher levels of anxiety and depression. Low-income students, students with disabilities, foster youth, and homeless students were more subject to learning loss and chronic absenteeism, given the challenges of the pandemic.

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## Trends in Holistic HE Admission Processes

Holistic practices to admission mirror the "Whole Child" principle in K-12 education. Academic achievement and measures consider students' background, challenges, and commitment to school and community (Bastedo et al., 2018; Coleman &

Keith, 2018). Learning Policy Institute (2018) declared the “Whole Child” framework dictates that child development is “malleable” and the brain changes in response to experiences and relationships. Pandemic-related school closures, social distancing, the death toll, and the educational impact manifest as traumatic experiences. (Fitzpatrick et al., 2021; Lessard & Schacter, 2020; Longmuir et al., 2021). The traumatic experiences correlate to academic performance and lower cognitive and intellectual functioning, ultimately affecting performance on the SAT and ACT entrance exams.

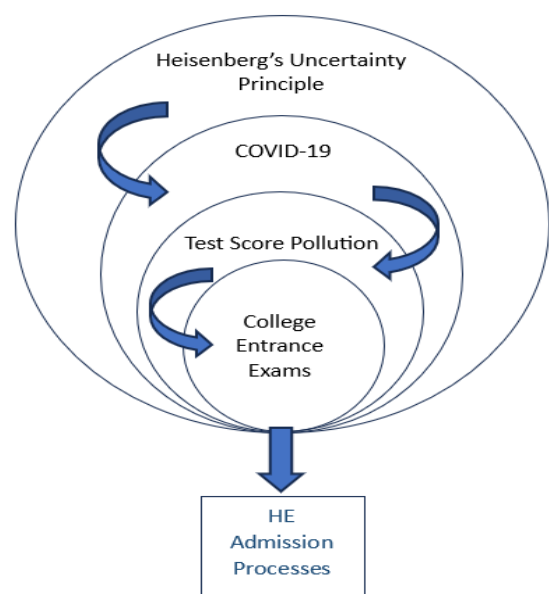
Quantitative measures, such as SAT and ACT, add validity to predict future academic performance when coupled with a high school grade point average (Bennett, 2022; Rosinger et al., 2021; Westrick et al., 2021; Zwick, 2019). Holistic approaches to college and university admission processes include examination of students’ nonacademic attributes, co-curricular activities, and leadership experiences to increase diversity in the student population (Maude & Kirby, 2022). A myriad of factors, such as the ability to link knowledge across domains, effort and motivation, teamwork, leadership, self-management, cultural competency, special interests, essays, recommendations, and self-efficacy, play a part in holistic admission decisions (Coleman & Keith, 2018; Hossler et al., 2019; Rosinger et al., 2021). Other factors recently added to SATs include a Landscape score, information about students’ neighborhood income, and crime rates (Marcus, 2021). Niessen et al. (2018) added high school grade point average is an effective predictor of academic performance; however, given the unpredictability of the circumstances COVID-19 created and the educational gap, lowering the GPA requirements may provide additional support to pandemic-era students (Marsicano et al., 2020).

## Conclusion

Neyişiçi and Toptan Güneş (2022) suggested organizations and leaders with an emphasis on uncertainty and unpredictability in society tend to overcome more challenges. Bennis and Nanus (1985) introduced the VUCA theory: Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, and is used in business leadership yet, could apply to the field of education. Volatility is the rate of change, magnitude, and dynamics of the change within an

industry (Edmondson, 2021; Hadar et al., 2020). Correspondingly to Heisenberg’s principle, uncertainty is the lack of predictability of events and issues. Complexity is the entanglement surrounding issues, and ambiguity is the equivocation factors create (Hadar et al., 2020). COVID-19-related issues have followed the VUCA trend and impacted the education system (Babbar & Gupta, 2022; Edmondson, 2021). The challenges facing the HE institutions post-COVID require agile leadership to address equitable admission procedures in support of students whose test scores may reflect test score pollution.

COVID-19-era K-12 students are already disadvantaged due to interruptions in education and the learning gap created. The COVID-19-related challenges and modifications to education are examples of Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle. As Sireci and Suarez-Alvarez (2022) indicated, there are too many plausible alternative explanations for changes in student performances on standardized tests. Additional considerations should be made for the new generation of HE students for admission practices. However, the recent decisions from the Supreme Court on Affirmative Action and HE admission procedures are another example of Heisenberg’s Principle at play. The unpredictability of factors may impact students who need holistic approaches to admission processes. Figure 1 shows the interconnection between Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle, test score pollution, and HE admission processes.



**Figure 1** | Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle and HE Exams



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## About the Authors

Elif Kalemдарoglu-Wheeler, MBA, Ed.D., has 23 years of experience in K-12 teaching and school administration. She served as a Behavior Intervention Coordinator, Dean of Students, Athletic Director, Instructional Coach, Head of Academy, and Director of Virtual Curriculum and Instruction. She founded Capella Educational Services, LLC., which provides educational consulting, coaching, and mentoring services. She is currently in line to obtain her Master of Jurisprudence with a concentration in Education Law. She is a recent research fellow with the Center of Leadership Studies and Organizational Research at the University of Phoenix.

Dr. Marty Hill is a Doctoral Area Chair in the ACCESS Program at University of Phoenix. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Leadership, Administration, and Foundations from Indiana State University. Since 2009, Dr. Hill has focused her educational pursuits on mentoring doctoral students to achieve their educational and professional goals through co-creating, implementing, and facilitating curriculum in the ACCESS Program as well as serving on dissertation committees. Dr. Hill resides on a small homestead in Central Texas with her Border Collie 'Charlie' and many family members close by. Life is Good.

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## Upcoming Events and Workshops



The College of Doctoral Studies offers a variety of events and workshops for students, faculty, and alumni. Below, you will find information for upcoming events and workshops; to access the full calendar please visit the [Workshop Calendar](#) on the Research Hub. All events are in the Arizona time zone, which does not observe daylight savings time. Feel free to reach out to us if you have an idea for a future event or workshop.

Date	Time	Title & Presenter	Description	Details
01/25/24	4 PM (MST)	<b>Deep Dive: APA Rules for Citations and Resources</b> CDS Student Writing Team	This session will allow students to familiarize themselves with some of the basic format requirements. This workshop will highlight general guidelines students should know, familiarize students with effective utilization of the manual, and present the mechanics of some of the more common citation and resource formats.	Register Via <a href="#">Google Form</a>
02/03/24	10 AM (MST)	<b>EDD Essentials</b>	EDD Essentials Meetings are optional meetings for all Educational Leadership Doctoral Students. It is meant as an opportunity to present topics of interest to EDD students at the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix. The meeting will be 1 hour long (10:00 AM - 11:00 AM AZ) on the first Saturday of every month.	Via <a href="#">Microsoft Teams</a>
02/10/24	9 AM (MST)	<b>DHA Networking Call</b>	An opportunity for DHA students to meet others along the dissertation journey, gather insights, and build a community of learning.	Via <a href="#">Microsoft Teams</a>



Date	Time	Title & Presenter	Description	Details
03/02/24	10 AM (MST)	<b>EDD Essentials</b>	EDD Essentials Meetings are optional meetings for all Educational Leadership Doctoral Students. It is meant as an opportunity to present topics of interest to EDD students at the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix. The meeting will be 1 hour long (10:00 AM - 11:00 AM AZ) on the first Saturday of every month.	Via <a href="#">Microsoft Teams</a>
03/09/24	9 AM (MST)	<b>DHA Networking Call</b>	An opportunity for DHA students to meet others along the dissertation journey, gather insights, and build a community of learning.	Register Via <a href="#">Google Form</a>
03/16/24	9 AM (MST)	<b>CDS Student Coffee Chat</b> CDS Coffee Chat Team	The College of Doctoral Studies Student Coffee Chat (SCC) is a virtual, bi-monthly event aimed at fostering student success. Each session includes a lively discussion, with like-minded people, for inspiration and guidance as students advance within their programs and beyond.	Register Via <a href="#">Google Form</a>
04/06/24	10 AM (MST)	<b>EDD Essentials</b>	EDD Essentials Meetings are optional meetings for all Educational Leadership Doctoral Students. It is meant as an opportunity to present topics of interest to EDD students at the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix. The meeting will be 1 hour long (10:00 AM - 11:00 AM AZ) on the first Saturday of every month.	Via <a href="#">Microsoft Teams</a>
04/13/24	9 AM (MST)	<b>DHA Networking Call</b>	An opportunity for DHA students to meet others along the dissertation journey, gather insights, and build a community of learning.	Via <a href="#">Microsoft Teams</a>
05/04/24	10 AM (MST)	<b>EDD Essentials</b>	EDD Essentials Meetings are optional meetings for all Educational Leadership Doctoral Students. It is meant as an opportunity to present topics of interest to EDD students at the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix. The meeting will be 1 hour long (10:00 AM - 11:00 AM AZ) on the first Saturday of every month.	Via <a href="#">Microsoft Teams</a>
05/11/24	9 AM (MST)	<b>DHA Networking Call</b>	An opportunity for DHA students to meet others along the dissertation journey, gather insights, and build a community of learning.	Via <a href="#">Microsoft Teams</a>



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