

**BRAD D. SMITH
SCHOOLS OF BUSINESS**



Fifth Annual

MARSHALL BUSINESS RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Friday, November 1, 2024



Featuring the Dean's Distinguished Speaker

Bill Walker

Executive Director of the National Center of
Excellence for Cybersecurity in Critical
Infrastructure

WELCOME MESSAGE



Ben Eng, PhD

Interim Dean, Lewis College of Business, Brad D. Smith Schools of Business, Marshall University

On behalf of the Lewis College of Business at Marshall University, I am honored to welcome you to the Fifth Annual Marshall Business Research Conference. This gathering celebrates a wealth of diverse insights and innovative research from across the globe, with participants from 17 universities, 9 states, 5 countries, and 4 continents. We are thrilled to have you here to share in this collaborative spirit and to advance our understanding of critical issues in business.

This year's theme, Business Frontiers: Integrating Business Research and Cybersecurity, reflects our commitment to accelerating Marshall University's six areas of distinction: cybersecurity, aviation, advanced energy, advanced manufacturing, entrepreneurship, and health sciences. The conference theme also supports the mission of the Lewis College of Business to create and spread knowledge that brings prosperity to our students, West Virginia, and beyond. Today's program features forward-thinking papers that underscore the importance of interdisciplinary research and collaboration in addressing the pressing challenges and opportunities within our fields.

We are especially proud to welcome Mr. Bill Walker as our keynote speaker. As the founding Executive Director of the National Center of Excellence for Cybersecurity in Critical Infrastructure and a distinguished alumnus of Marshall University, Mr. Walker brings invaluable insights from his extensive experience in national security and cybersecurity. His leadership and expertise reflect the

strength of collaboration between government, academia, and the private sector in safeguarding our infrastructures.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated researchers, presenters, and guests for making this conference a success. I am confident that today's exchanges will spark new ideas, partnerships, and solutions that extend well beyond this gathering.

Thank you for joining us, and welcome to the Lewis College of Business at Marshall University. Let's make this a memorable and impactful conference together.

Tom Norton, CPA, JD, LLM

**Assistant Professor of Accounting
Marshall University
Research Committee & Conference Chair**



The Research and Scholarly Activities Committee at the Lewis College of Business is proud to host the Marshall Business Research Conference as a forum to discuss applied business research that makes an impact on practice and the community. As you will see from the presentations, researchers have addressed important practical implications of various aspects of business, healthcare, the economy, and technology. The collaborations, lively interactions, and constructive feedback make this conference special. Thanks to all who have made this conference possible including the presenters, the program committee, the session chairs, and the judges. Thanks also goes to Drew Stephenson, from Marshall University, who prepared the conference proceedings.

Program Committee and Session Chairs

- Boniface Yemba, Associate Professor, Marshall University
- George Lu, Assistant Professor, Marshall University
- Jeff Larson, Assistant Professor, Marshall University
- Alan Letton, Visiting Scholar, Marshall University
- Kevin Knotts, Assistant Professor, Marshall University
- Amanda Thompson–Abbott, Assistant Professor, Marshall University

Conference Judges

Each year, a group of qualified business and academic leaders judge the paper presentations for theoretical and practical contribution, methodology and study design, and visual and verbal quality. Monetary awards are given for the highest score overall and runners-up. We thank all our judges and congratulate all presenters for their high-quality work

- Jungsu Ryu, Assistant Professor, Marshall University
- Jacqueline Agesa, Professor, Marshall University
- Richard Agesa, Professor, Marshall University
- Robert Bookwalter, Professor, Marshall University
- Raymond Keener, Associate Professor, Marshall University
- Nancy Lankton, Professor, Marshall University
- Jeff Larson, Assistant Professor, Marshall University
- Amanda Meadows, Instructor, Marshall University
- Chelsea Norton, Family medicine service line administrator, Valley Health Family Medicine Service Line
- Lei Ouyang, Assistant Professor, Marshall University
- Bob Simpson, Lewis College of Business Advisory Board Member, Marshall University
- Amanda Thompson-Abbott, Assistant Professor, Marshall University

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY



Bill Walker **Executive Director of the** **National Center of** **Excellence for Cybersecurity** **in Critical Infrastructure**

Mr. Bill Walker currently serves as the founding Executive Director of the National Center of Excellence for Cybersecurity in Critical Infrastructure, a joint endeavor between the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Marshall University, West Virginia University, and numerous private sector/industry partners. He also currently serves as Senior Advisor to the President and Director of National Security and Cyberspace Programs at West Virginia University. Until just last month, he served as the Chief of Staff of United States Cyber Command where he managed resources of over \$1.1 Billion in programmed funds, overseeing over 750 military and civilian employees while directing the actions of over 250,000 cyber defenders across the globe daily as USCYBERCOM secured, operated and defended the largest continuously monitored network on the planet. As a native West Virginian, he is a proud graduate of Marshall University where he served a Student Body President. He would go on to serve in the West Virginia Secretary of State and Governor's Office before serving the State of Ohio as the Deputy Director of Public Safety and as the Chief of Criminal Justice for the Ohio Attorney General. He has served in uniform in both the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force for over 31 years, and currently serves as the Director of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance for the West Virginia Air National Guard.

EVENT PROGRAM

[Keynote](#)

9:00 AM **Welcome Remarks**

*Ben Eng, Interim Dean of the Lewis College of Business, Marshall University, WV
Tom Norton, Research Committee and Conference Chair, Marshall University, WV
Avi Mukherjee, Provost and Senior V.P. of Academic Affairs, Marshall University, WV*

9:15 AM **Dean's Distinguished Speaker**

Bill Walker, Chief of Staff, United States Cyber Command Joint Force Headquarters, MD

10:00 AM **The New Business of Applied Business Research**

Alan Letton, Grant Engagement Liaison for the Lewis College of Business, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 1 MORNING SESSION- SBUS 112

[MorningTrack1 Link](#)

Boniface Yemba, Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

10:45 AM **Unlocking Economic Growth: Evaluating the Impact of New Market Tax Credits in Isolated and Underrepresented Communities**

Pavithra Gapdiparthi | Alan Letton | Boniface Yemba | Thomas Norton, Marshall University, WV

11:05 AM **Connecting the Dots: Graph Neural Networks for Auditing Accounting Journal Entries**

Qing Huang, Marshall University, WV | Marco Schreyer, Swiss Federal Audit Office, CH | Nilson Michiles, Brazil Federal Data Processing Services, BR | Miklos A. Vasarhelyi, Rutgers University, NJ

11:25 AM **The Belt and Road Initiative and China's Imports**

Wang Xinghua, Marshall University, WV

11:45 AM **Bridging Gaps for Economic Growth in Black Appalachia**

Reddy Hemanth | Alan Letton | Boniface Yemba | Thomas Norton, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 1 AFTERNOON SESSION- SBUS 112

[AfternoonTrack1 Link](#)

George Lu, Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

1:45 PM **Linguistic Diversity: A Blessing or a Curse for Happiness? Unraveling the Complexity through Multi-Method Econometric Analysis**

Suvayan De, University of Charleston, WV

2:05 PM **Where is the Proof? The Impact of Corporate Governance on Audit Report Lag: An Examination of the Spirits Industry**

Brian Weldon, Marshall University, WV

2:25 PM **The Effect of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 on Community Bank Investments**

George Lu, Marshall University, WV | Jenna El-Khalili, Loyola Marymount University, CA

2:45 PM **Maximizing Mutual Gains: Best Practices for Enhancing Student and University Benefit Through Academic Competitions in Finance and Accounting**

Marjorie Abney, Eastern Kentucky University, KY

3:05 PM **Thinking of Enjoying the Mediterranean Lifestyle in your Golden years on golden sun-drenched beaches? Don't forget about the tax man he could rain on your golden years.**

Charles Stivason, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 2 MORNING SESSION- SBUS 109

[MorningTrack2 Link](#)

Jeff Larson, Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

- 10:45 AM **Navigating AI-Driven Disruptions: Strategic Human Resource Management Practices for Employee Skill Development**
Sheena Metzger, Marshall University, WV
- 11:05 AM **Influence of Gender Diversity in Top Management Teams and the Impact Upon AI Investments, Ethics and Performance**
Christina Clarke, Marshall University, WV
- 11:25 AM **Enterprise Performance Under Successive Shocks: The role of Digital Resilience Capability Maturity in Capital-Intensive Sectors**
Yury Pukha, ESCP Business School France, FR
- 11:45 AM **Rules of Engagement for Cyber Crimes**
Ralph McKinney | Eddie Fuller, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 2 AFTERNOON SESSION- SBUS 109

[AfternoonTrack2 Link](#)

Alan Letton Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

- 1:45 PM **How Effective Supplier Relationship Management Drives the Automotive Industry**
James Kirby Easterling | Alexa Dickenson, Eastern Kentucky University, KY
- 2:05 PM **CASH VS CONTROL: THE BATTLE FOR PERFORMANCE BRAGGING RIGHTS**
Elisabeth Arthur, Marshall University, WV
- 2:25 PM **Has DEI Left the Building?**
Julia Graham | James Kirby Easterling | Kristen Wilson, Eastern Kentucky University, KY
- 2:45 PM **The Hidden "I" in DEI**
Jaylene Berrien | Alan Letton, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 3 MORNING SESSION- SBUS 209

[MorningTrack3 Link](#)

Kevin G. Knotts, Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

10:45 AM **Reversing the trend: For profit hospitals convert to non-profit status**

Daniel J. West | Michael M. Costello, University of Scranton, PA

11:05 AM **SUPERHUMANITY AND FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION**

LAWS: LESSONS FROM MARVEL'S X-MEN

Casey W. Baker | Kevin G. Knotts | Ralph E. McKinny | Olen L. York, Marshall University, WV

11:25 AM **Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Access to Timely Stroke Treatment through Telestroke Technology**

Pavithra Gadiparthi | Dustin Baum | Craig Kimble | Kasi Gordi | Alberto Coustasse, Marshall University, WV

11:45 AM **NAVIGATING DMCA ENFORCEMENT IN LIVE-STREAMING PLATFORMS: A LEGAL AND PRACTICAL OVERVIEW**

L. Kevin Levine | Olen L. York | Kevin G. Knotts | Casey W. Baker, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 3 AFTERNOON SESSION- SBUS 209

[AfternoonTrack3 Link](#)

Amanda Thompson-Abbott, Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

1:45 PM **Use of Lethal Force by Law Enforcement: The Role of Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation**

Liam O'Neill, University of North Texas, TX

2:05 PM **Enhancing Cybersecurity from Executive Leadership Roles in the Pharmaceutical Industry**

Eddie Fuller | Ralph McKinney, Marshall University, WV

2:25 PM **A Cross-Country Study on the Effects of National Culture on Opinion Shopping**

Tim Bryan | Christin Kooti, Marshall University, WV | Ali J Kooti, Georgia Gwinnett College, GA

2:45 PM **Exploring the Operational and Financial Impact of GLP-1 Agonist Reimbursements on Pharmacy Operations and Sustainability**

Thomas Pile | Nick Adams, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 4 MORNING SESSION- SBUS 210

[MorningTrack4 Link](#)

George Lu, Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

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- 10:45 AM **The Effect of the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act on Small Business Lending**
George Lu, Marshall University, WV
- 11:05 AM **#MeToo, Cyberbullying, and Patriarchal Structure: The Modern Struggles of an Industrial Saleswoman**
Laura J. Hundley | Ralph E. McKinney, Marshall University, WV
- 11:25 AM **Can AI Pass?**
Stephen Shakelford | Julia Graham | Kristen Wilson | Marcel Robles, Eastern Kentucky University, KY
- 11:45 AM **Executive Leadership and Budget Model Selection: Understanding the Impact of Leadership Behaviors on Resource Allocation in Higher Education Institutions**
Timothy Shuey, Marshall University, WV

TRACK 4 AFTERNOON SESSION- SBUS 210

[AfternoonTrack4 Link](#)

Boniface Yemba, Session Chair, Marshall University, WV

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- 1:45 PM **Impact of User Cost of Money on Private Investment in US**
Boniface Yemba, Marshall University, WV | Biyan Tang, University of Massachusetts, MA | Chang Dongfeng, Shandong University, CN
- 2:05 PM **A New Kid on The LA's Block: An Exploratory Study of the Origins, Growth, and Awareness of Cricket in The U.S.**
Steve Chen, Morehead State University, KY
- 2:25 PM **Reexamining Employee Selection Processes in the Major League Baseball (MLB) Amateur Draft**
James Kirby Easterling | Beth Polin, Eastern Kentucky University, KY
- 2:45 PM **Opening of High-Speed Rail, Regional Market Environment and Foreign Firm Entry**
Lei Li | Tianyu Wang, Nankai University, CN | Xiaojie Wang, Ocean University of China, CN | Yi Duan, Marshall University, WV

ABSTRACTS

Unlocking Economic Growth: Evaluating the Impact of New Market Tax Credits in Isolated and Underrepresented Communities

Pavithra Gapdiparthi | Alan Letton | Boniface Yemba | Thomas Norton, Marshall University, WV

Purpose: This study aims to evaluate the implementation of New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) in underrepresented and isolated communities, focusing on their effectiveness in stimulating economic development by attracting private investment through tax incentives.

Study Design and Methodology: A qualitative approach was adopted, involving a comprehensive review of NMTC-related literature and an in-depth analysis of recent case studies where NMTC has been implemented. The research methodology included examining program documentation, analyzing funding sources such as Wes Banco and Green Valley Ventures, and evaluating the NMTC application process and its impact on community development.

Findings: The NMTC program demonstrates significant potential in leveraging public-private partnerships to drive investment in low-income communities. It shows flexibility in addressing local needs across diverse sectors, including healthcare and small business development. The program's success is attributed to its ability to generate substantial social and economic benefits, create jobs, and improve community infrastructure in underserved areas.

Originality/Value: This study provides a detailed analysis of the NMTC program's operational framework and success factors in the context of underrepresented and isolated communities. It offers valuable insights for policymakers, investors, and Community Development Entities (CDEs) on the program's potential to revitalize economically distressed areas and enhance the quality of life for residents in these communities.

ABSTRACTS

Connecting the Dots: Graph Neural Networks for Auditing Accounting Journal Entries

Qing Huang, Marshall University, WV | Marco Schreyer, Swiss Federal Audit Office, CH | Nilson Michiles, Brazil
Federal Data Processing Services, BR | Miklos A. Vasarhelyi, Rutgers University, NJ

Purpose: explores how to use graph neural networks to learn graph representations from journal entry data and to systematically understand the intricate patterns and connections inherent in journal entries at the transaction level.

Methodology: leverages the Variational Graph Autoencoder (VGAE) framework to encode graph data into a latent space, facilitating various downstream audit tasks.

Findings: implementations in two datasets demonstrated the graph autoencoder networks (GAEN) model's ability to detect anomalies. The findings provide valuable lessons for the practical application of GAENs in auditing.

Originality: this is first work that utilizes graph representation learning of real-world accounting data at the transaction level.

ABSTRACTS

The Belt and Road Initiative and China's Imports

Wang Xinghua, Marshall University, WV

To explore the effect of the Belt and Road Initiative on China's product imports, we utilize highly-detailed product level data from 2010 to 2022 to identify the effect and the underlying mechanisms on China's import from the countries along the route, which allows a difference-in-difference model settings in our identification strategy. The Belt and Road Initiative has significantly boosted China's imports from countries along the route with an increase of 18%-29%. BRI have positive effects on both general trade imports and processing trade imports. Mechanism analysis shows that policy coordination, cultural affinity and maritime transportation connectivity have strong explanatory power on the policy effects of BRI. We also find that the BRI has played a "boosting" role for import boost for new RTA partners as well as non-RTA economics along the route. BRI is significant positive for various products except raw materials, which partly refutes the argument that BRI is a China's "resource grabbing" scheme for developing countries and consistent with the vision of the BRI to build a community of shared future for mankind and pursue win-win cooperation. The research enriches existing studies of BRI and China's imports and provides support guidance for the construction of the Initiative.

ABSTRACTS

Bridging Gaps for Economic Growth in Black Appalachia

Reddy Hemanth | Alan Letton | Boniface Yemba | Thomas Norton, Marshall University, WV

Purpose

Purpose is to explore and address the economic disparities faced by underdeveloped communities in Appalachia. The research aims to identify systemic barriers and propose solutions that can promote economic inclusion and growth in underdeveloped communities in Appalachia.

Study design and Methodology

The methodology uses a mixed-methods approach, combining interviews with Black Appalachian communities and analyzing economic data to uncover challenges and opportunities for development. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of both personal experiences and broader economic trends to inform practical solutions.

Findings

To finds that current urban development patterns have led to financial instability in cities, as maintenance costs for new infrastructure far outweigh revenue generation. Marohn advocates for focusing on strengthening existing neighborhoods through incremental changes, fostering financial resilience, and reducing long-term risk. (Marohn Jr, C. L. (2019)

Originality and value

This research is important because it looks at economic problems in Appalachia and similar communities that are often ignored. By focusing on the unique challenges of the region, it gives useful ideas to help policymakers create specific solutions that support long-term growth and improvement.

ABSTRACTS

Linguistic Diversity: A Blessing or a Curse for Happiness? Unraveling the Complexity through Multi-Method Econometric Analysis

Suvayan De, University of Charleston, WV

This study explores how linguistic diversity affects national happiness, considering economic and governance factors. It aims to provide insights into the complex interactions between linguistic diversity and socioeconomic variables. Utilizing a multi-method econometric approach, the research applies OLS, Ridge, Lasso, Elastic Net regressions, PCA, and Bayesian Neural Network models. Data is sourced from the World Happiness Report and World Bank Indicators, focusing on GDP, governance, and social variables. Results reveal a negative correlation between linguistic diversity and happiness, mitigated by economic development and governance quality. Nonlinear models uncover intricate relationships, emphasizing the moderating effects of GDP and institutional strength. The study advances literature by employing advanced econometric techniques to dissect the nuanced impacts of linguistic diversity on happiness, offering policy implications for multicultural societies.

ABSTRACTS

Where is the Proof? The Impact of Corporate Governance on Audit Report Lag: An Examination of the Spirits Industry

Brian Weldon, Marshall University, WV

The timeliness of financial reporting is a critical element of the audit process and significantly impacts the usefulness of the information and a firm's overall value. Prior research has revealed a positive correlation between certain traits of audit committee members, such as financial expertise, prior audit committee experience, and independence, and the improved timeliness of financial reporting. However, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the potential effects of audit committee diversity, busyness, and member tenure on financial reporting, underscoring the need for further research and the possibility of uncovering new insights in this area. Therefore, it is imperative to extend existing research on the corporate governance factors influencing audit report lag.

This proposal introduces a novel approach by concentrating on the audit committee determinants of audit report lag for publicly traded companies in the spirits industry. The spirits industry, comprised of 136 publicly traded companies from 2018 to 2022, serves as the focus of this study. The data will highlight the correlation between audit committee diversity, busyness, member tenure, and audit report lag. This study defines audit report lag as the time elapsed from the end of a firm's financial reporting period to the day the external auditor signs off on the external auditor report. Audit committee diversity is defined as outside industry experience, busyness as the frequency of audit committee meetings within a specific period (e.g., monthly, quarterly, annually), and tenure as the number of firm years members have served on the audit committee. Upon completion of this study, the current gap in the literature will be addressed, opportunities for future research will be identified, and our understanding of the impact of audit committee diversity, busyness, and tenure on audit report lag will be enhanced.

ABSTRACTS

The Effect of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 on Community Bank Investments

George Lu, Marshall University, WV | Jenna El-Khalili, Loyola Marymount University, CA

This study examines the effect of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) on community bank investments. Prior to the TCJA, the majority of community banks elected to be S corporations to avoid double-taxation associated with C corporation status. The TCJA lowered the corporate tax rate to 21%, down from the previous 35-39% range. The widened gap between the corporate and individual tax rates arguably drives some banks to convert to S corp status. We intend to provide empirical evidence on the determinants and consequences of the TCJA's effect on formation choice. After establishing the factors predicting formation changes, we intend to show how the law affects bank investments. Specifically, we examine the degree of loans to small businesses, portfolio shifting among debt securities and loans, and the riskiness of the assets in portfolio. Additional tests are intended to show changes in home mortgage, agricultural, and individual lending

ABSTRACTS

Maximizing Mutual Gains: Best Practices for Enhancing Student and University Benefit Through Academic Competitions in Finance and Accounting

Marjorie Abney, Eastern Kentucky University, KY

Purpose

Academic competitions in business higher education have been found to build confidence, enhance technical skills, and develop interprofessional collaboration competencies in student participants. However, the level of benefit compared to time invested can vary significantly. This study develops a framework to maximize the mutual benefits of participating in academic competitions.

Study Design and Methodology

A longitudinal study measures the effects of changes in competition participation. The most impactful practices are incorporated into a framework for faculty.

Findings

The framework includes ten recommendations for best practices in maximizing mutual gains from academic competitions. Selective involvement of stakeholders, including students, faculty, administrators, and university or alumni champions of the student team has a significant effect on the benefit to students and to the university. Thoughtfully designed motivation for faculty advisors and student participants increases the quality of work. Finally, strategic use of social media and physical spaces to recognize student participation and achievements motivate faculty and student interest in future competitions.

Originality and Value

Prior studies focus on the student benefit and not the faculty workload or the benefit to the University. This paper identifies additional opportunity and creates a framework for faculty to utilize in maximizing efficiency and benefit of participation in business academic competitions.

ABSTRACTS

Thinking of Enjoying the Mediterranean Lifestyle in your Golden years on golden sun-drenched beaches? Don't forget about the tax man he could rain on your golden years.

Charles Stivason, Marshall University, WV

Thinking of Enjoying the Mediterranean Lifestyle in your Golden years on golden sun-drenched beaches? Don't forget about the tax man he could rain on your golden years.

AARP published an article on line in November 2022 and updated it in January 2024 listing 8 places to retire in Europe¹. The countries discussed that are on the Mediterranean Basin Include Spain, Greece, Portugal, France and Italy. The article addresses residency, property and health care. However, it does not discuss income taxes.

Portugal was the first European country that set up a special tax incentive to attract foreign retirees in 2009. They introduced a Non-Habitual Resident (NHR) tax scheme that allowed new tax residents to have a 0% tax rate for 10 years. They increased the rate over time and then decided to end the program after 2023. In 2019 Italy set up a program for pensioners that move to small cities in certain areas of the country to receive a 10% flat tax on all foreign income for 10 years. In 2020 Greece started a Pensioner program that allow new tax residents to get a 7% flat tax rate for 15 years with no restrictions on where you can live in Greece. Spain and France have not introduced any special pensioner tax programs.

The US taxes all worldwide income regardless of physical residence and each of these European countries have dual taxation treaties with the US. This paper will look at how these incentives and treaties impact the US retiree's future after tax cash flow if they move their tax residence to the sunny mediterranean basin.

ABSTRACTS

Navigating AI-Driven Disruptions: Strategic Human Resource Management Practices for Employee Skill Development

Sheena Metzger, Marshall University, WV

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of disruptive technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), on employee skill development and the challenge of skill obsolescence in modern organizations. The study explores how AI integration into business processes influences the need for skill development, including the perceived responsibility of organizations in providing training for their employees and the impact of training on job preparedness and stress.

Study Design and Methodology

Employing a quantitative research design, data will be collected through structured surveys from employees in US-based companies experiencing technological changes. The survey will measure constructs related to skill development, skill obsolescence, and job-related stress. Data analysis will be conducted using SPSS, which will include descriptive statistics and regression analyses.

Findings

The review of the previous literature suggests that the findings will support the idea that employees feel they need employers to support skill development training based on technological advancements.

Originality and Value

This research seeks to enhance the literature on optimizing strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices, offering valuable insights for academic researchers and business practitioners. The findings are expected to guide strategic decisions in digital transformation and inform SHRM strategies to foster a skilled, adaptable workforce amidst technological advancements and changes.

ABSTRACTS

Influence of Gender Diversity in Top Management Teams and the Impact Upon AI Investments, Ethics and Performance

Christina Clarke, Marshall University, WV

Purpose

Today's world and complex dimensionality, described as BANI (brittle, anxious, nonlinear, and incomprehensible), require greater organizational capabilities to thrive. The acceleration of A.I. promises advantaged decision-making processes, supply chain management, and customer relationship management (CRM). However, concerns have been raised about the potential implications of discriminatory A.I. and other A.I. ethical considerations, further the complexity of technology moving faster than human capacity. Top Management Team (TMT) theory provides a prominent framework in organizational research that focuses on the composition, dynamics, and impact of top leadership groups within companies. Top Management Teams that are advantaged through multiple diverse perspectives have been shown to have better creativity, decision-making, higher ethical behavior and organizational performance than homogeneous teams.

Study Design

For this research, organizational measures include business financial performance, I.T. investments, and gender diversity among the top management team. The Krijger model will measure A.I. ethics operational procedures within an organization.

Value

This paper expands Top Management Theory influence and Gender Diversity as a strategic competitive advantage by applying the lens of the accelerated and ambiguous environment that A.I. technology brings to a firm. A proposed research and framework model is outlined to further empirical research.

ABSTRACTS

Enterprise Performance Under Successive Shocks: The role of Digital Resilience Capability Maturity in Capital-Intensive Sectors

Yury Pukha, ESCP Business School France, FR

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of disruptive technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), on employee skill development and the challenge of skill obsolescence in modern organizations. The study explores how AI integration into business processes influences the need for skill development, including the perceived responsibility of organizations in providing training for their employees and the impact of training on job preparedness and stress.

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ABSTRACTS

Rules of Engagement for Cyber Crimes

Ralph McKinney | Eddie Fuller, Marshall University, WV

Purpose

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ABSTRACTS

How Effective Supplier Relationship Management Drives the Automotive Industry

James Kirby Easterling | Alexa Dickenson, Eastern Kentucky University, KY

Purpose: While the automotive industry has continued to evolve over the last ~130 years—heightened focus on safety initiatives, emissions controls/pollutant reduction, electric batteries, and autonomous vehicles to name a few—the reliance upon suppliers has been a constant. Automobile makers do not have the capacity, financial resources, or technological know-how to internally produce all the parts and subassemblies required to manufacture modern automobiles. Understanding how effective Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) drives the automotive industry is highly dependent upon the supply chain professionals (SCOR: source) who are primarily charged with not only supplier selection, but also supplier development and supplier retention (<https://www.ascm.org/corporate-solutions/standards-tools/scor-ds/>). Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) is a process in which the companies engage in ongoing collaborative planning sessions to streamline operations in driving operational improvement and cost efficiencies across multiple companies.

Study Design & Methodology: This study aims to examine the impact of collaborative supplier engagement. Companies that actively engage in SRM can be identified through a survey to automotive executives (possibly via LinkedIn) which examines the relationship between buying and selling companies in terms of scope/depth, duration, desired outcomes, and results. Survey findings (companies that do and do not actively engage in SRM) can then be compared (for publicly traded companies) to examine the association between firms that engage in SRM (IV) and supplier turnover (DV).

Findings: Our research question centers on the relationship between companies that actively engage in Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) and the effect on supply chain performance. These findings could be significant in terms of supply chain management research at both academic and practitioner (industry) levels as this topic is mostly theory-based and lacking quantitative analysis.

Value & Originality: Whether a specific type of material such as carbon fiber, or a particular component such as brake calipers, buyers must engage in constructive and mutually-beneficial relationships with companies that supply these inputs. The overall management of buyer-supplier relationships are the cornerstone to enhancing supply chain performance throughout the automotive industry.

ABSTRACTS

CASH VS CONTROL: THE BATTLE FOR PERFORMANCE BRAGGING RIGHTS

Elisabeth Arthur, Marshall University, WV

This meta-analysis explores the relationship between autonomy and salary as predictors of employee performance, highlighting the shifting motivations of the modern workforce. While salary has traditionally been perceived as the primary motivator, research indicates that beyond a certain compensation threshold, intrinsic motivators like autonomy and purpose become more influential in driving performance. I first examine the correlation between salary and job performance across various roles, including sales positions—where incentive pay significantly boosts motivation ($r = .62$)—and non-sales jobs, such as government roles, which show a negligible correlation ($r = .02$). In professional sports, the link between salary and performance is also modest ($r = .23$), suggesting that athletes may be more internally motivated. I discuss the benefits of using salary as a performance predictor, particularly in sales contexts, while also addressing its limitations, including the potential for supervisor bias and diminished collaboration. In contrast, autonomy—defined as the freedom and discretion in job tasks—emerges as a compelling alternative predictor. The paper highlights that autonomy can be implemented cost-effectively and aligns with employee desires for independence. Ultimately, I compare the two predictors, noting that while both can be adjusted by employers and lead to reduced turnover, autonomy offers distinct advantages, particularly in high-performance work systems, suggesting that strategic human resource management should prioritize fostering autonomy to enhance overall employee performance.

ABSTRACTS

Has DEI Left the Building?

Julia Graham | James Kirby Easterling | Kristen Wilson, Eastern Kentucky University, KY

Purpose

This research project proposal investigates the increasing closure of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) offices in businesses and universities, aiming to identify the underlying factors contributing to this trend. The purpose of the study is to analyze organizational dynamics, societal responses, and economic pressures that influence the sustainability of DEI initiatives.

Study Design and Methodology

Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research will combine qualitative interviews with DEI practitioners and quantitative analysis of funding trends and institutional demographics across various sectors. Public institutional data (e.g., of state universities) will also be examined to assess the existence, composition, and robustness of DEI offices and leadership. Data will yield trends and points for discussion on the shifting focus of DEI.

Findings

The expected findings are that many organizations struggle to demonstrate measurable outcomes, leading to diminished support for DEI initiatives.

Originality and Value

By contextualizing the closures within broader societal and economic frameworks, this research aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on diversity and inclusion, providing actionable recommendations for organizations seeking to maintain commitment to equity in an evolving landscape. Ultimately, the study aspires to inform policy and practice and foster meaningful change within institutions.

ABSTRACTS

The Hidden “I” in DEI

Jaylene Berrien | Alan Letton, Marshall University, WV

In a most recent study by Enterprise Strategy Group (DeMattia, 2023), DEI-leading organizations were 2.6x more likely to have beaten revenue expectations in their last fiscal year by more than 10%, and 86% of respondents would say the return on investment the organization has received from its DEI strategies is Positive (45%) or Very Positive (41%). Repeatedly, we see evidence that DEI initiatives improve overall organization performance financially as well as culturally. But often, DEI goals fall flat, leaving organizations adrift and unable to evolve into functional diverse organizations. A major challenge is the failure to address the “I” in DEI. Typically, we think of this as “inclusion” but inclusion has two perspectives; organizational inclusion of diverse communities but also the other “I” which represents one’s inner focus, their inner work.

While we are all likely familiar with the term DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), this presentation explores the other "I" in DEI, integrating aspects of ourselves we may not immediately consider when engaging in organizational communities. The inner “I” represents the self-work that has to be addressed as part of any DEI program. Each behavior, decision, and action within an organization either builds up or tears down the existing culture. Without this awareness, many of these behaviors subconsciously harm the culture we are working to promote. Utilizing a combination of the author’s professional and lived experiences and current research, the internal and external barriers preventing authentic connection within an organization, including self-representation of inclusion, will be discussed with recommendations for moving forward. This work will demonstrate that investing in this additional "I" can create an environment where the organization can thrive, allowing all team members (from frontline associates to executive leaders) the space to be their whole selves within the culture.

ABSTRACTS

Reversing the trend: For profit hospitals convert to non-profit status

Daniel J. West | Michael M. Costello, University of Scranton, PA

Purpose: This presentation examines the phenomenon of acute care hospitals transitioning from for-profit status (publicly-traded and private equity ownership) to non-profit status.

Study Design & Methodology: The co-authors have both had recent professional experience with conversions and have also used professional associations and national media accounts as additional sources of information.

Findings: Converting to non-profit status may ease some of the financial pressures associated with for-profit ownership.

Originality & Value: Eliminating federal, state, and local taxation, when combined with reductions in owner expectations of dividends and profit distributions, may free up additional funding for capital and expense coverage.

ABSTRACTS

SUPERHUMANITY AND FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION LAWS: LESSONS FROM MARVEL'S X-MEN

Casey W. Baker | Kevin G. Knotts | Ralph E. McKinny | Olen L. York, Marshall University, WV

The concept of personhood has been the subject of moral, ethical, and religious philosophies for centuries. These debates have granted legal rights of personhood to nonhuman entities, such as animals, natural landforms, and business entities. The evolution of artificial intelligence with increasingly human-like qualities presents a contemporary question of when human-made laws should extend to non-human entities.

This work considers the application of a specific range of laws—U.S. federal employment discrimination laws—to a specific set of fictional non-human beings—Marvel's X-Men superhumans. In doing so, the work highlights some legal applications protecting against employment discrimination in the most extreme circumstances. In addition, these examples can serve as teaching tools for instructors in the fields of law and human resources.

ABSTRACTS

Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Access to Timely Stroke Treatment through Telestroke Technology

Pavithra Gadiparthi | Dustin Baum | Craig Kimble | Kasi Gordi | Alberto Coustasse, Marshall University, WV

Purpose: This study aimed to evaluate the impact of telestroke services implementation in hospital settings on stroke diagnosis accuracy, hospital transfers, treatment times, thrombosis rates, and post-stroke mortality.

Study Design and Methodology: A qualitative literature review was conducted using PubMed, focusing on articles published between 2015 and 2024. The PRISMA method was employed, resulting in 13 articles for analysis.

Findings: The implementation of telestroke services maintained or improved stroke diagnosis accuracy, reduced inappropriate hospital transfers, decreased time to thrombolytic interventions, increased thrombosis rates, and lowered post-stroke mortality. Notably, access to timely stroke care increased from 20% to 96% between 2011 and 2019, largely due to telestroke services.

Originality/Value: This review comprehensively assesses the multifaceted impact of telestroke services, highlighting their crucial role in improving stroke care accessibility and outcomes. It provides valuable insights for healthcare providers and policymakers considering the implementation or expansion of telestroke services, particularly in rural areas lacking specialized stroke care.

ABSTRACTS

NAVIGATING DMCA ENFORCEMENT IN LIVE-STREAMING PLATFORMS: A LEGAL AND PRACTICAL OVERVIEW

L. Kevin Levine | Olen L. York | Kevin G. Knotts | Casey W. Baker, Marshall University, WV

The rise of live-streaming platforms such as Twitch and YouTube has introduced new challenges for content creators, particularly in relation to copyright compliance under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (“DMCA”). This research examines the complexities streamers face when navigating DMCA regulations, focusing on the ambiguous boundaries regarding the use of music, recordings, and other copyright-protected content in live broadcasts. Concerns about DMCA enforcement first arose when streamers received copyright strikes for playing recorded music without proper licensing. This issue has since expanded to include in-game background recorded music, leaving streamers vulnerable to copyright claims even in unexpected scenarios. Platforms like Twitch have implemented strict repeat-infringer policies, heightening the risks for creators who rely on these platforms for their livelihoods. A key concern is the lack of clear, actionable guidance to help streamers proactively avoid copyright violations. This research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of current DMCA policies, highlight common pitfalls in live-streaming environments, and propose best practices for streamers to remain compliant with copyright law, particularly fair use. Ultimately, the study emphasizes the need for clearer regulatory frameworks to protect both creators and copyright holders in the evolving digital landscape.

ABSTRACTS

Use of Lethal Force by Law Enforcement: The Role of Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation

Liam O'Neill, University of North Texas, TX

Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services, University of North Texas, Denton, TX., USA

Purpose: The aim of this study is to use hospital administrative data to identify the comorbid risk factors for an Officer Involved Shooting (OIS) incident.

Study Design and Methods: This study analyzed 7.5 years of hospital inpatient data obtained from the state of Texas. The study subjects ($n = 177$) were civilians who were shot during a legal intervention. Logistic regression models were used to identify predictors of an OIS incident based on a range of possible predictors.

Findings: About one-fourth (24.3 %) of study subjects were diagnosed with a mental illness. Six subjects (3.4%) were persons experiencing homelessness (PEH), and five subjects (2.8%) were disabled. The most significant predictors of OIS were suicide attempt (AOR = 43.1; CI: 16.5, 112.8), recent death in the family (AOR = 6.97; CI: 1.45, 33.5), schizophrenia (AOR = 2.66; CI: 1.51, 4.68), Methamphetamine UD (AOR = 2.47; CI: 1.48, 4.12), and suicidal ideation (AOR = 2.11; CI: 0.99, 4.50). The in-hospital mortality rate was 11.3%.

Originality and Value: This approach can be used to identify persons who are at greatest risk for an OIS incident and improve public health responses to this important issue. Schizophrenia and Methamphetamine U.D. were significant predictors of an OIS incident

ABSTRACTS

Enhancing Cybersecurity from Executive Leadership Roles in the Pharmaceutical Industry

Eddie Fuller | Ralph McKinney, Marshall University, WV

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to understand how executive leaders in the pharmaceutical industry can enhance their organizations' cybersecurity practices.

Study Design & Methodology

Although literature forms the underpinnings of this research, it takes an action research approach to understand the issues associated with implementing and enhancing cybersecurity protocols.

Findings

As this is a preliminary investigation, findings are not available at this time. Preliminary information suggests that leadership signals may change the organizational culture associated with cybersecurity practices.

Originality & Value

The research seeks to contribute to the literature on the practice of enhancing cybersecurity in the pharmaceutical industry.

ABSTRACTS

A Cross-Country Study on the Effects of National Culture on Opinion Shopping

Tim Bryan | Christin Kooti, Marshall University, WV | Ali J Kooti, Georgia Gwinnett College, GA

This study investigates the likelihood that a firm engages in opinion shopping in order to avoid receiving a 'going concern opinion' is related to the cultural values of the country in which the firm is located or headquartered. Opinion shopping has been a major concern for US regulators for decades, with many researchers attempting to identify determinants of firms engaging in the act. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether national culture dimensions are associated with a firm's decision to opinion shop on an international level. More specifically, a significantly positive association between a country's individualism dimension and opinion shopping is predicted since cultures with high levels of individualism tend to experience more flexibility in accounting. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that there is a significantly negative association between a country's uncertainty avoidance dimension and opinion shopping, since cultures with high levels of uncertainty avoidance will likely view opinion shopping as a riskier endeavor, thus opting to forgo engagement in the act due to the potential backlash that could arise. The findings of this proposed research study will be applicable to regulators by assisting them in their pursuit of curbing opinion shopping by continuing to minimize possible determinants.

ABSTRACTS

Exploring the Operational and Financial Impact of GLP-1 Agonist Reimbursements on Pharmacy Operations and Sustainability

Thomas Pile | Nick Adams, Marshall University, WV

Purpose

This study aims to investigate the financial and operational challenges pharmacies face due to below-cost reimbursements for GLP-1 receptor agonists, which are widely prescribed for diabetes and weight loss. The high acquisition costs along with low or negative reimbursements create cash flow issues for these pharmacies. This financial strain not only hinders their ability to dispense GLP-1 agonists but also jeopardizes their overall business operations.

Study Design/Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was employed, incorporating surveys and interviews with pharmacists. This methodology assesses the frequency and impact of below-cost reimbursements, and their downstream effects on overall business, referral, and retention strategies.

Findings

Preliminary results indicate that below-cost reimbursements significantly strain cash flow, forcing many pharmacies to redirect patients to competitors. This practice not only leads to lost business but also poses potential risks to patient care, particularly for those requiring diabetes management.

Originality/Value

This research highlights the need for policy reform in pharmacy reimbursements, broader implications for healthcare access, and the sustainability of pharmacies. GLP-1 receptor agonists have become the highest-grossing drug class in the United States. Insights from this study will be valuable to policymakers, pharmacy owners, and healthcare stakeholders concerned with pharmacy economics and patient care.

ABSTRACTS

The Effect of the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act on Small Business Lending

George Lu, Marshall University, WV

This study examines bank financial disclosures to gauge the effect of a major deregulation of bank capital requirements on the availability of credit. Through the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act (EGRRCPA), regulators enacted the Community Bank Leverage Ratio (CBLR) framework in 2020 to alleviate regulatory compliance pressures on community banks. Institutions that elect this framework are no longer required to meet risk-based capital requirements. Instead, they are considered well-capitalized for regulatory purposes through meeting one unweighted leverage ratio. Policymakers theorized that this framework would free up previously-restricted capital and incentivize banks to increase lending. They believed higher lending would boost opportunities for small businesses and, by extension, the economy as a whole. The implementation of the CBLR framework provides a novel setting to test the capital release hypothesis. Contrary to policymakers' beliefs, I find the law decreased bank-level lending in several areas, including commercial and agricultural lending. However, the results yield mixed findings about individual lending. Certain loans, such as automobile and consumer real estate loans, are higher among adopting banks. The results of this paper have implications for the ongoing debate about the EGRRCPA's role in reshaping the banking industry.

ABSTRACTS

#MeToo, Cyberbullying, and Patriarchal Structure: The Modern Struggles of an Industrial Saleswoman

Laura J. Hundley | Ralph E. McKinney, Marshall University, WV

Purpose

This paper investigates women's experiences in the industrial sales industry pre and post the #MeToo movement with a focus on how cyberbullying influences job performance.

Study Design & Methodology

This paper reviews the experiences of women through publicly available databases. Using literature to understand the environment of the industrial sales industry, instances of cyberbullying is examined through context analysis to understand how those experiences influence job performance. Participant data was not collected.

Findings

As this is currently in its exploratory phase, limited findings are presented. It appears that the industrial sales culture has instances of cyberbullying that needs to be properly addressed.

Originality & Value

Since the Women's Liberation movement of the 1970s, more women have been taking positions in jobs that were not traditionally considered "women's work" such as industrial sales. Prior research has been done to see the impact of women on this industry, but not how the #MeToo Movement and workplace cyberbullying has potentially impacted the women in these workplaces. This research adds to the current perspectives of women in industrial sales when more female employees are coming out about prior harassment experiences to stress the still prevalent issue of workplace harassment.

ABSTRACTS

Can AI Pass?

Stephen Shakelford | Julia Graham | Kristen Wilson | Marcel Robles, Eastern Kentucky University, KY

This study examines bank financial disclosures to gauge the effect of a major deregulation of bank capital requirements on the availability of credit. Through the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act (EGRRCPA), regulators enacted the Community Bank Leverage Ratio (CBLR) framework in 2020 to alleviate regulatory compliance pressures on community banks. Institutions that elect this framework are no longer required to meet risk-based capital requirements. Instead, they are considered well-capitalized for regulatory purposes through meeting one unweighted leverage ratio. Policymakers theorized that this framework would free up previously-restricted capital and incentivize banks to increase lending. They believed higher lending would boost opportunities for small businesses and, by extension, the economy as a whole. The implementation of the CBLR framework provides a novel setting to test the capital release hypothesis. Contrary to policymakers' beliefs, I find the law decreased bank-level lending in several areas, including commercial and agricultural lending. However, the results yield mixed findings about individual lending. Certain loans, such as automobile and consumer real estate loans, are higher among adopting banks. The results of this paper have implications for the ongoing debate about the EGRRCPA's role in reshaping the banking industry.

ABSTRACTS

Executive Leadership and Budget Model Selection: Understanding the Impact of Leadership Behaviors on Resource Allocation in Higher Education Institutions.

Timothy Shuey, Marshall University, WV

This study examines bank financial disclosures to gauge the effect of a major deregulation of bank capital requirements on the availability of credit. Through the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act (EGRRCPA), regulators enacted the Community Bank Leverage Ratio (CBLR) framework in 2020 to alleviate regulatory compliance pressures on community banks. Institutions that elect this framework are no longer required to meet risk-based capital requirements. Instead, they are considered well-capitalized for regulatory purposes through meeting one unweighted leverage ratio. Policymakers theorized that this framework would free up previously-restricted capital and incentivize banks to increase lending. They believed higher lending would boost opportunities for small businesses and, by extension, the economy as a whole. The implementation of the CBLR framework provides a novel setting to test the capital release hypothesis. Contrary to policymakers' beliefs, I find the law decreased bank-level lending in several areas, including commercial and agricultural lending. However, the results yield mixed findings about individual lending. Certain loans, such as automobile and consumer real estate loans, are higher among adopting banks. The results of this paper have implications for the ongoing debate about the EGRRCPA's role in reshaping the banking industry.

ABSTRACTS

Impact of User Cost of Money on Private Investment in US

Boniface Yemba, Marshall University, WV | Biyan Tang, University of Massachusetts, MA | Chang Dongfeng, Shandong University, CN

Our paper investigates the impact of user-cost of money or the forgone interest that is associated with Divisia Monetary Aggregates on aggregate private investments in the U.S. In our paper, we use a mixed frequency time-varying Factor Augmented Vector Autoregressive (MFTV-FAVAR) model with a large data set from January 1972 to September 2023. Our results (Impulse Response Functions) show that the impacts of money's user-cost are similar to that of the interest rate, represented here by Moody's Baa corporate bond yield. However, the impacts on private investment growth from the shock of user-cost of M2 growth rate are more persistent than Moody's Baa corporate bond yield growth rate shock. Hence, private investment is more responsive to the user cost than interest rate at any economic environment. Moreover, our results are consistent with the literature on the relationship between interest rates and private investments (Bernanke (1983b) and Chetty (2007)). In fact, our results confirm that when there is a low economic uncertainty (like during the great moderation), there is a significantly positive impact of the shock to interest rates or user cost of monetary aggregate growth on aggregate private investment growth.

ABSTRACTS

A New Kid on The LA's Block: An Exploratory Study of the Origins, Growth, and Awareness of Cricket in The U.S.

Steve Chen, Morehead State University, KY

Purpose

Cricket, the second most popular sport globally, originated in southern England during the late 16th century and was introduced to Americans in 1844. Since the 19th century, this sport has experienced fluctuations in popularity. Recent events, such as the U.S. national team's victory over Pakistan in the T-20 World Championship and the upcoming opportunity for hosting the 2024 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, have sparked renewed interest in cricket among Americans. This presentation discusses the developmental history of cricket and its potential growth in the United States.

Design and Methodology

This study utilized qualitative interviews with a focus group of 12 college-aged sports enthusiasts. We analyzed participants' awareness of the game, their willingness to watch matches, and their expected ticket prices for attending games.

Findings

Participants demonstrated limited knowledge of the game's rules and star players, and showed only mild interest in learning about, watching, or attending cricket events. The expected maximum ticket price was approximately \$60 USD.

Originality and Value

Research on Americans' perceptions of cricket is scarce. Our findings suggest that journalists may be overly optimistic about the sport's potential popularity, based on the insights from this small sample group.

ABSTRACTS

Reexamining Employee Selection Processes in the Major League Baseball (MLB) Amateur Draft

James Kirby Easterling | Beth Polin, Eastern Kentucky University, KY

Purpose: Employee selection and evaluation of performance have long been favored topics of both human resource management (HRM) and organizational behavior (OB) research, as selecting and developing the most effective employees are key components of any organization's long-term success. This is also true of professional sports teams that are tasked with selecting and developing amateur athletes. The Major League Baseball (MLB) amateur draft began in 1965 when Rick Monday was selected as the #1 overall pick by the Kansas City Athletics out of Arizona State University. Despite physical assessments, emotional intelligence evaluations, and multiple psychological analyses—components of a comprehensive pre-draft screening process—early round draft picks do not always have meaningful professional careers in terms of career statistics. Players drafted in later rounds often have a higher win above replacement (WAR) than players selected in earlier rounds, which is counter-intuitive to the logic of the draft itself. Referencing the 1988 amateur draft as an illustration, Mike Piazza, for example, was taken in the 62nd round (overall pick #1390), yet is widely considered one of the greatest catchers of all time, whereas nine (out of 30) 1st round draft picks from that year never played a single game at the MLB level (<https://www.baseball-reference.com/>). As such, this research initiative has high relevancy in examining the relationship between draft selection and actual player performance.

Study Design & Methodology:

Amateur athletes drafted in early rounds receive significantly higher contract values (including signing bonuses) than players drafted in later rounds. Because of this, there may be pressure by major league teams to achieve a quicker return on investment by pushing those perceived elite players more quickly into the major league than players taken in later rounds. Organizational culture plays a role in draft picks, too, since some teams draft “what is needed now” (in terms of a specific position) while others draft the “best player available,” regardless of position or current team need. Descriptive statistics and correlations will be used to examine the relationship between draft selection and long-term player performance (using WAR as a proxy for performance).

Findings: Our research questions center on the relationship between player draft status and subsequent career WAR. We expect to find a positive correlation between player draft status and career WAR, such that players who are selected later in drafts subsequently demonstrate a higher WAR. This relationship may be affected by team organizational culture (i.e., a team's tendency to select a talented player now versus a player that shows the promise of future talent after development).

Value & Originality: Sports teams are organizations, and as such, they demonstrate the same tendencies and outcomes as business organizations. Practically speaking, the findings here parallel organizational selection processes: businesses may want to not only consider selecting an employee who would be valuable “right now” but also an employee who shows great potential for heightened career success. Pedagogically speaking, students relate well to classroom examples that demonstrate critical management insights using an understandable context. Sports industry examples will resonate with students in lessons on selection, development, and performance.

ABSTRACTS

Opening of High-Speed Rail, Regional Market Environment and Foreign Firm Entry

Lei Li | Tianyu Wang, Nankai University, CN | Xiaojie Wang, Ocean University of China, CN | Yi Duan, Marshall University, WV

Purpose: China has set attracting foreign investment and building a national unified market as top priorities for its economic development. High-speed rail (HSR) has improved China's urban accessibility and facilitated inter-regional connectivity and economic integration. We examine the impact of HSR opening on foreign investment through the mechanism of weakening regional barriers faced by foreign firms.

Study Design and Methodology: Our data are from Enterprise Search website, Chinese Research Data Services, and Economy Prediction System database. We use a multi-temporal difference-in-differences model for the results.

Findings: We find that HSR weakens regional barriers to entry to increase foreign firm entry. This positive effect is widespread and does not vary across city status, geographic location and city size. This effect is concentrated in the service sector.

Originality and Value: To our best knowledge, our paper is the first to examine the impact of HSR opening on the entry of foreign firms. This paper also explores heterogeneous effects. We also highlight HSR network weakening regional barriers to entry to affect the local economy. Our findings have important policy implications on transportation infrastructure and market environment.