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## **IAI Book of Abstracts**

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## KEY FACTORS AFFECTING MASK TYPE SELECTION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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### Abstract

Recently in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic Era, we have been depending our lives on face masks that come in disposable or reusable forms. Some may debate that disposable type is better than reusable, or vice versa. Previous studies showed that cloth masks (reusable) are not recommended due to moisture retention, the reuse of the cloth which may lead to some irritation, and poor filtration which may result in an increased risk of infection. Nevertheless, some people still use cloth masks. What could possibly be the factors that influence people to use their chosen masks? This research aims to reveal the major factors influencing face mask selection. The factors of interest include a). household income, b). masks' appearance, c). masks' thickness, d). ability to prevent infection, and e). acne condition that may arise in certain mask users. We specifically conducted a survey with a sample of 205 high school students from international schools and Thai schools in Bangkok, Thailand. Our questionnaire was cross-checked, inspected by three experts, and tested for internal consistency using the Cronbach's alpha. We found that the majority of our samples prefer using disposable masks. Additionally, according to the survey result, we ranked from the most affecting factor to the least affecting factor, starting from 1. protective ability, 2. parent's income, 3. acne condition, 4. thickness, and 5. appearance (including color and design). Our findings suggested potential factors influencing mask selection among high-school students who are required to wear masks all the time while in school. These data potentially benefit authorities who are in charge of selecting masks for such groups of students.

*Keywords:* COVID-19, Face Masks, Mask Selection, Moisture Retention, Coronavirus Pandemic

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## **The protection system built around the consumer - a possible threat to the efficiency of the European order for payment procedure provided by Regulation (EC) no. 1896/2006?**

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### **Abstract**

As it appears from all the provisions of Regulation (EC) no. 1896/2006, its object is to simplify, accelerate and reduce costs in cross-border cases concerning uncontested pecuniary claims by establishing a European order for payment procedure.

In this procedure, the judicial dialogue between the competent national court and the litigating parties is carried out exclusively by means of standardized forms, which also allow for the automatic processing of information.

In this study we will attempt to analyse the extent to which the European order for payment procedure is affected by the consumer protection system built by Council Directive 93/13 / EEC of 5 April 1993 on unfair terms in consumer contracts. The question to be answered is: is it possible in the European order for payment procedure to carry out an ex officio judicial review of the (potentially) abusive nature of the clauses relied on by the applicant in support of the claim?

*Keywords:* European order for payment procedure, consumer protection, abusive clause, judicial control

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# Modelling and Simulation in support of the Defence Acquisition System

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## Abstract

Modelling and Simulations have been applied in various engineering disciplines since the 1990s, especially in the area of defence. One of its applications domains is the defence acquisition system, which is recognized by many to be a very complex process being able to provide more affordable systems that meet the national desired military capabilities as a matter of national security. The complexity of current defence systems are increasing with the appearance of new technologies in a constantly changing environment, the time it takes to transform an identified need into the development of a new product is getting longer, and the costs associated with the development, production, use and support of the systems are increasing. In this context, modelling and simulation, as an engineering tool, have been essential to reduce the development time, resources and risks associated with acquisition, improving the final product outcomes. This research presents the complexities that exist in the defence acquisition specifically, the new product development process (R&D) under the systems engineering framework used in defence programs, additionally will be discussing how modelling and simulation have been a vital engineering tool in order the predict systems behaviour under their operational environment and finally how modelling and simulation have been integrated into the product development lifecycle stages.

*Keywords: modelling, simulation, defence, acquisition, systems engineering*

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# Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

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## Abstract

This paper highlights the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance of employees. An in-depth analysis of this relationship was conducted using case study approach, including 54 employees in the insurance company. Findings from this research confirm that insurance agents with higher emotional intelligence are more successful at work. Higher achieving employees demonstrate higher total emotional intelligence, intrapersonal skills, stress tolerance and adaptability. We argue the measurement of emotional intelligence should be included into selection process regarding employment decision. Findings of the research offer important insights in understanding why and how we need to include the training programs regarding emotional intelligence into the educational and skills development programs. The purpose of our research was not to create a new theory. Our intention was to help to expand and complement the existing theory with important managerial implications.

*Keywords:* emotional intelligence, performance, employee, case study.

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## Structural Modelling of Psychological Limiting Factors for Economic Growth

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### Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to develop a structural model of psychological limiting factors for economic growth. Specifically, the paper aimed to determine the psychological demographic characteristics, psychological environmental factors, psychological human behaviour and psychological economic factors those influence economic output in Kagera and Mwanza. The paper uses cross-section survey/data from Mwanza and Kagera regions. The sample size of the study was 211 individuals, sampled randomly. The data analysed by using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The study found that psychological demographic characteristics, psychological human behaviour and psychological economic factors have significant direct impacts on economic growth. However, the psychological environmental factors have a negative impact on the economic growth, but it is not statistically significant. Moreover, the study establishes the *quasi-sinusoidal theory of happiness timing*, which explains the nature and timing of happiness on boosting the economic growth, which responds to Easterlin Paradoxical paradigm. The study concludes that the economic output (GDP) in any production system is depends on how economic agents define their own “live value” (psychological well-being) and the level of psychological control of factor of productions (Subjective Well-being). However, the optimality of utility choices of the economic agents’ decision is enclosed by level of happiness (psychological outcome). Hence Kagera region is performing worse because of its low psychological well-being. The paper suggests the implementation of psychological booster strategies (PBS) such as the homing nurtures, mental balance exercises and youth economic support (YES) centre.

*Keywords:* Structural modelling, Psychological Well-being, Economic growth, subjective well-being, happiness model.

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# Open-source system for generation, optical recognition and assessment of written exams

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## Abstract

We present a system for generation, optical recognition and automatic assessment of written exams, implemented and used at the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ljubljana, since 2018. The system is developed and maintained on the basis of our own knowledge and experience. User (teacher) interacts with system through a web interface. The system has its own markup language to define the problems, and creates for each student a unique problem sheet of multiple-choice questions. Even if we use the same set of questions for all students, it shuffles the order of questions and possible answers for each exam. Problem sheets are printed and distributed among students. After the examination, filled sheets are scanned and their images are sent to the server. The server evaluates the answers and links them with students. If allowed, the students can see their assessed exams online and submit possible complaints. The protection of personal data is taken care off. Students response is positive, they prefer the objectivity and fast feedback. The faculty staff welcomes the decrease of cheating and the time saved with automatic assessment of the exams. What remains open is a broader systematic implementation. All the software is open source, which means that it is freely accessible to everyone to use, develop and further implementation. We describe the whole process from the generation of questions to the assessment and publication of students' results, as well as our practical experience with the system at the faculty.

*Keywords:* automation, higher education, LaTeX, Python, web interface.

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## Why to Kiss Sleeping Hero

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### Abstract

Academic scholarship and empirical observations indicate that the role of historical memory in forming separatist feelings of the ethnic group is still quite significant. We try to answer the question whether historical memory is something immutable in time and passes unchangeably from one generation to another or it undergoes transformation in accordance to the events occurring within the ethnic group or around it. Here comes the next question— who is initiator of the historical event or hero reemergence to transform memory, ethnic community or elite perceived by group as the carrier of ethnic collective preferences. Thus, political elite feels obligation to define ethnic group's political goals and uses sensitive history moments when needed to achieve them.

We investigate the case of Abkhazia, a breakaway region of Georgia, with the method of the semi-structured interviewing and gathered pertinent information to show when and why the political elite activates history. The interviewees were the former incumbents from both sides Abkhazian and Georgian, representatives of the universities and middle class, ordinary people, and IDPs. We analyze and interpret the perceptions of the respondents on the interethnic conflict eruption and proceeding issues. The answers are dicotomized into following categories: what events are remembered and what moments are forgotten. The elaboration of interview material demonstrates that the most memories associated with the cases and periods of oppression, repression and humiliation from the both sides are revived and instrumentalized by the political elite in the critical political moments. The major actors of the community trigger bottom-up and top-down motion of the recovered quintessential historical moments to transform group collective memory. With renovated narratives the political elite reaches easier the set goal in the isolated, small-sized society like Abkhazia. Additional factors, neighboring Russia and absolute dependence on it determine Abkhaz political elite's strategy when and why alter collective memory of secessionism with the renewed historical moments to nurture hatred toward Georgian ethnicity.

*Keywords:* History, Collective Memory, Political Elite, Secessionism, Abkhazia.

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# Bread in Georgian Culture: Meaning, Ambivalence and Symbolism

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## Abstract

Georgian territory settled by humans since ancient times is one of the earliest agricultural territory. The geographical environment and zonal system ensured the cultivation of wheat already in Neolithic and Bronze period. 5 endemics, 14 species of wheat, more than 150 subspecies of aboriginal breeds are spread in Georgia. Thus, it is not surprising that the bread is widely used staple food, which has regional variations according to form, taste, baking techniques, ingredients, functional meanings etc. Bread was/is served in various forms, as it has a social and emotional significance beyond its importance as nourishment. It plays essential roles in religious rituals and secular culture. The consumption arts were changing with time, but some certain attitudes or concepts were remaining the same. Bread as an object manifesting the interaction of economic and socio-cultural behavior was always highly involved in religious practices. The Christianity gave new symbolic meaning to it. Its prominence in daily life is reflected in language, where it appears in proverbs, colloquial expressions or in prayer. The article discusses the ambivalence of bread in Georgian culture through the diachronic analyses. The historical, ethnographic and linguistic data are investigated by the interdisciplinary approach. The research focuses on symbolic meanings of bread in everyday life of Georgians, which reveals the main cultural values and perceptions shared by the majority of ethno-cultural group.

*Keywords:* Georgia, Culture, Bread, Four to six keywords are to be provided for indexing purposes.

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