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Monitoring company contribution to SDGs through sustainability reporting: a synthetic framework

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Abstract

All companies of various sizes and sectors are called to play a key role to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to 2030. To effectively contribute to meet the goals, companies need to pursue both durable competitive advantage and long-term benefit for society. In addition, companies are asked to be accountable to stakeholders, also fostering their constructive engagement to improve the overall corporate sustainability performance. With the aim to better seize the opportunities of the SDGs challenge, the present paper proposes a synthetic framework to guide companies to integrate SDGs into their strategic decision-making and sustainability reporting process. Based on the "SDGs Compass Guide" by GRI and on the "GRI Step Framework for corporate reporting", the framework synthesizes a path to effectively monitoring the company contribution to SDGs. The framework is particularly useful for SMEs that usually face difficulties to engage with and reporting against the SDGs.

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Sustainability Reporting, Corporate Sustainability, SMEs.

Database Directive 96/9/EC - effective database protection or overprotection

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Abstract

This paper analyses database legal protection as provided by the Databases Directive 96/9/EC and by a manner of emphasizing the distinction between two independent forms of database legal protection: copyright and sui generis protection. Sui generis database protection should provide new, innovative and effective protection of databases makers investments. Furthermore, it is a subject of necessity that regulations on databases legal protection should be harmonized. In order to provide comparative view on how the Databases Directive 96/9/EC is implemented in the EU countries' national legislation as well as Macedonian legislation, the appropriate questionnaire have been issued to EU countries national parliaments. Out from replies gathered the comparative assessment indicates that harmonized treatment of databases under copyright law and the sui generis right will provide relevant exclusive protection to the database makers. Consequently, sui generis right can be deduced to absurd by databases updating in continuity so eternal protection of database makers is secured. Alternatively, and in favor of data transparency and free access, more flexible method of permissible databases extraction and reuse may be more adequate. Solutions for these challenges depends on the reasonable balance to be established between database makers' investments protection on one side, and, permissible extraction and reuse of databases by users, on the other side.

Keywords: copyright, sui generis, database, database maker, Directive 96/9/EC

A comparative survey on Introverted and Extroverted Adolescence in Thailand building friendship bonds

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Abstract

Friendship has become a strong bond between each person, especially for the adolescence. During high school life, a teenager has explored various kinds of friends. Everyone has their personality and style which leads to a different building friend. Introvert and extrovert is a two type of personality traits distributed in every society including school. This study explored introverted and extroverted students' perception building friendship towards five factors: gender, age, nationality, personality trait (introvert and extrovert), and relationship (old friend and new friend). Introverts are referred to as people who are most comfortable interacting in small groups with one or two people. They are energized by focusing on their inner thoughts rather than the other external thing. Their personality type is characterized by traits such as thoughtfulness, self-awareness, and partiality to have a few friends but is very strong bonds. On the opposite side are extroverts, they described as extroverted people. They love being surrounded by people. It makes them feel energized. Their personality type characterized by sociability, enthusiasm, and avoided to be alone. A survey, collecting information from 120 students with a sample of 60 boys and 60 girls portioned in half introvert and extrovert for each, revealed that 100% of introvert are comfortable being a friend with others introvert and also the same result as an extrovert. This might connect to the "Birds of the feather flock together" theory. Most introverted boys and girls are more likely to make a friend who in the same age, gender, nationality, and relationship. Also the same result for the extrovert, but the gap difference is closer. In age factor, 90% of introverted boys and 93.3% of introverted girls preferred knowing friends in the same generation. Meanwhile, 53.3% of extroverted boys and 56.7% of extroverted girls preferred knowing friends in the same generation. This goes in the same tendency with gender, nationality, and relationship factors. In conclusion, the result shows that, under this circumstance, introverts' decisions seem to be leaned in the same way while extroverts' be divided in half. In contrast, respondents' gender has less effect and almost ineffective.

Keywords: Friendship, introvert, extrovert, adolescence, Birds of the feather flock together

The European Central Bank's discourse on populism: a brief analysis

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Abstract

Following the financial and sovereign debt crises, a growing literature on the changing role of the European Central Bank emerged. These studies looked into transformations in intergovernmental decision-making, policy agenda, communication strategies, and institutional order. A recent research explored issues related to the bank's legitimacy while facing both the economic crisis and populists. Against this background, I discuss a less studied aspect, namely, the way in which ECB Executive Board members refer to populism and populists in public speeches. Using discourse analysis, I examine the language used when mentioning populism. Together with content analysis, I investigate the wider political and economic context at the time the speeches were delivered. My findings indicate ECB officials do not differentiate between left or right populists. Rather, they use it as an umbrella term designating both movements and parties, but often associate it with nationalism and protectionism. At the same time, they tend to portray it as both a cause and a consequence of uncertainty and insecurity. Finally, I consider possible influences on their discourse such as the need to fend off criticism in the quest for legitimacy or the shift of ECB from a technocratic to a political actor.

Keywords: European Central Bank, discourse analysis, populism, politicization

Multi-criteria analysis to optimize the public procurement process

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Abstract

Public administration has a key role to play in providing services to the citizens of a country. The process of evaluating suppliers of the public procurement system is a key step in the function of any organization in the public sector. The aim of this paper is to point out that decisions in the public sector can be made on the basis of multi-criteria analysis that allows the identification of objective conditions related to the award of contracts in accordance with general social interests. The selection of the best bidder is recognizable as a multi-criteria problem that should include both qualitative and quantitative factors. The method of content analysis is applied in the paper. This research further leads to practical future steps that would serve as guidelines for greater efficiency in the management of the public procurement system.

Keywords: public procurement, process, optimization, multicriteria analysis, decision making

Application of AHP Method for Criteria Evaluation of a Public Procurement in Serbia

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Abstract

For organizations in the public sector, the procurement procedure is regulated by law. Nowadays, more and more researchers are dealing with the issue of public procurement. The focus is on the selection of criteria that includes their assessment in situations where the criterion of the lowest price is not applied, but the criterion of the most economically advantageous bid is used. The paper provides a theoretical overview of the development of AHP method as a decision-making tool, and then a case study method is applied based on which similarities and differences were compared with the actual outcome of the process. For efficient management of public procurement, it is important to ensure competitiveness among bidders. Multi-criteria methods increase the efficiency of management in public sector organizations, and at the same time affect corruption and abuse of the public procurement system.

Keywords: AHP method, public procurement process, decision making, recruitment process, contractors.

**Let me be there, know you, be you, and adore you!:
An analysis on transportation, parasocial experience, identification, and
worship processes of audience involvement with media characters**

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Abstract

The plethora of mass media sources during the past decades has cast an abundance of media characters, both real and fictional figures. The relationships individuals develop with media figures have received growing attention from communication studies scholars. Audiences spend a reasonable deal of their social interaction time conversing about media entities while describing their experience as a feeling of knowing. The immersion phenomenon into the virtual hiperreality occurs mediated by four processes: transportation, parasocial experience, identification, and worship. The purpose of this presentation was to examine the four processes through which audiences become involved with and affected by media characters, synthesize similarities and differences between them, and explore how these processes are interrelated. A detailed description has been presented on how media narratives and parasocial experiences lead to internalization of the attitudes, beliefs, and values of the object of identification by the person or group who is being influenced based on a self-defining relationship. Furthermore, symbolic emotional and cognitive dynamics have been discussed as predictors for the social influence through these processes. Familiarity, perceived realism, and perceived similarity have been identified for their potential as moderators on converting strong identification with media personae to the most intense form of psychological attachment described as worship. Conceptual framework highlights the need for future research on the development of parasocial experiences and perception of social reality driven by such one-side illusory relationships.

Keywords: Authenticity, Mass Media Effects, Media Figure, Parasocial Experiences, Social Change, Social Influence.

Analysis of the impact of cohesion policy on the competitiveness of SMEs in Romania benefiting from production/services financing

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Abstract

The competitiveness of SMEs is the main driver of economic and regional development, as a result EU financial instruments and policies are geared towards supporting the entrepreneurs. This study aims to highlight the effects of the implementation of cohesion policy financial instruments in Romania for the period 2007-2020 by carrying out a meta-assessment of impact assessments carried out for beneficiaries of production/services funding. The aim is to highlight the long-term effects of funding on the competitiveness of SMEs and to determine which are the factors that make some SMEs benefiting from funding more competitive than others.

Keywords: competitiveness, SME, cohesion policy, impact assessment

DISC personality: The analysis of strengths and weaknesses of each trait

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Abstract

There are several methods in identifying an individual's personality trait such as MBTI, five factor and DISC assessment which categorize different personality traits and are suitable for different use. This paper discusses the DISC assessment that is used for team-building strategy. The interpretation of DISC provides the description of four distinct personality types, which is D, I, S and C. The framework relies on a binary classification of two important traits: expression and emphasis. While expression can be divided into expressive and reserved modes, emphasis can be classified into people-oriented and task-oriented. Both D and I types share the expressive mode of expression. However, the D type is likely to be more task-oriented, whereas the I type is more people-oriented. Both S and C types are those whose expression is rather reserved. Their distinction is that S focuses more on people, while C concerns tasks as the priority. In a collaborative setting, each of the four types has to work together. This article therefore evaluates each personality type's strength and weakness to match with the suitable team role when collaborating with others according to the DISC assessment that is based on teamwork to establish a practical and effective team formation. It raises awareness about what people should focus on and what should be avoided. In addition, this paper also includes some fields that DISC personality assessment can be applied with other than using for teamwork.

Keywords: DISC personality assessment, Personality and assessment, Personality traits, Teamwork.

Who's going to take care of me?. An analysis of the effects of parental work migration on adolescents' school performance

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Abstract

Using in-depth interviews as a research tool and starting from the premise that migration inevitably leads to changes that affect the quality of life and the personality of families, with a focus on children, this paper analyzed the effects and the transformations generated by parental work migration as they are perceived from the children's own stance. The main research objectives of the present study were (1) to identify children's perceptions of the impact created by parents' departure abroad on their school performance; (2) to identify how the adolescent relates to those left at home, more or less with him in this attempt (from relatives and friends, to colleagues and teachers); (3) to establish how the relationship between parent and child is reconfigured following the territorial relocation of the parent. The results showed that the separation of families was a negative effect of migration, given the long-term change in its structure, dynamics and functionality. Children who were in a situation where one or both parents are working abroad remain, however, the most vulnerable and this had negative effects that are required to be carefully documented for a better understanding of how they could be limited in the future. Even if the parents' intention to emigrate (temporarily) aims to create a favorable environment to the child's development, its consequences are often unfavorable for any family member.

Keywords: parental work migration; adolescents' school performance; Romanian migrants; transnational families.

The Rights of the Defence in the Criminal Proceedings of the European Public Prosecutor's Office*

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Abstract

The establishment of the EPPO as a new body of the EU responsible for the investigation, prosecuting and bringing to judgement the perpetrators of and accomplices to criminal offences affecting the financial interests of the Union significantly changed the concept of the EU criminal law and opened a very sensitive issue of the rights of the defence of the suspects and accused person and their procedural safeguards in the criminal proceedings of the EPPO. EPPO Regulation defines three levels of protection of the rights of the suspects and accused persons: the general framework of rights set out in the EU Charter, the minimum scope of procedural rights set out in EU law and procedural rights under applicable national law. This procedural safeguard clause plays an important role in all activities of the EPPO. It is obvious that the legal regulation of the rights of the defence is fragmented, whereas the rights of the defence are regulated by both, EU law and national laws, where the scope of procedural rights can be different across Member States. The aim of this article was to analyse the legal framework of the rights of the defence of suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings of the EPPO and to answer the questions of whether this legal regulation is sufficient and provide a certain degree of coherence and equal treatment with all suspects and accused persons in the criminal proceedings of the EPPO.

Keywords: EPPO, rights of the defence, procedural safeguards, art. 41 EPPO Regulation, national law

The unfair transition to high school. Case study: high school admission in Bucharest (Romania)

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Abstract:

The main objective of this article is to analyze the interaction between the principle of proximity in the enrollment process to primary and secondary school and the high school admission mechanism, from an educational equity perspective. In regard with this objective, I carry out a case study in which I follow how the type of school graduated by a student in Bucharest influences the type of high school at which she will be admitted given the present system of admission/allocation. As such, I am interested to identify the measure in which the school where the student is enrolled (one which parents, at least in principle, cannot choose as it's dependent on the street where they reside) can represent an explanatory factor for the probability of a student to be admitted at a particular high school (a stage at which parents and students can manifest their preferences for a school/specialization).

Keywords: Romania high school admission system; educational equity; academic achievement; education inequality;

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A COMPARATIVE PAPER BETWEEN DIFFERENT METHODS OF TREATING PHOBIA AND ITS NEUROBIOLOGY COMPLEXITY

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Abstract

Phobias are prevalent, yet excruciating to mental and cognitive well-being. In the United States, based on the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), approximately 10% of people in the United States have been diagnosed with specific phobias, where 7.1% experienced social phobias, and 0.9% had agoraphobia. Therefore, patients will try to avoid the anxiety-provoking stimuli to any extent possible. As psychology is actively involved in resolving relevant public mental health issues, our objectives for this phobia research mainly focus on alternative procedures on the treatment and remedies, by means of the effectiveness of psychological treatments, involving pills intake and mind therapy. In addition, the advent of technology is linked prominently to the clinical approach towards cognitive ministrations. Virtual Reality, for instance, becomes an unconventional option for patients, in which, patients will experience computer-generated simulation. Up to the present moment, the most effective method of treating phobia is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), followed by pharmaceutical medication. The effectiveness of the newly-developed method of treating phobias, Virtual Reality, is said to be equally effective as CBT. Our research heavily relies on psychoeducation and supportive secondary therapeutic sources. Thus, a full set of investigations will come along with the concise analysis in this topic. In conclusion, this research paper will discuss and scrutinize the chemical and psychological mechanism of each treatment, along with an inference of effectiveness of each treatment.

Keywords: phobia, treatments, symptoms, antidepressants, beta-blocker, tranquiliser, psychotherapy, diagnosis, causes

Media Coverage in Times of Crisis. Intermedia Agenda-setting of COVID-19–related Topics¹

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Abstract

In times of crisis, the media play a crucial role in offering people information and updates related to the ongoing events. Thus, the media implicitly shape public opinion on the issues they cover and, as a result, influence public attitudes and behaviors. In this context, this paper aims at analyzing the media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, by means of quantitative content analysis ($N=1511$) conducted on both television and online news stories released during March 18-31 2020, this study sheds light on the agenda-setting effects of the media and the phenomenon known as intermedia agenda-setting. Main results show that, in spring 2020, both television and online news stories extensively covered COVID-19 topics, focusing on domestic issues such as decisions taken by the authorities in order to manage the pandemic, effects of the virus, and statistics. Furthermore, results show a relatively high intermedia agenda-setting effect within the Romanian media environment. Content published online (either in the form of social media content or online stories) is frequently “borrowed” and cited in both online and television news stories, leading us to the idea that digital media might have become mainstream information sources.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, media coverage, media visibility, media prominence, intermedia agenda-setting

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**(UN)OFFICIAL ACTIVITIES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.
CZECHOSLOVAK YOUTH UNION AT PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY IN OLOMOUC BETWEEN
THE YEARS 1946–1956.**

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Abstract

The study focus on extracurricular activities of students of Palacký University which were held under the patronage of the Czechoslovak Youth Union and were closely linked to the politics and ideology of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The Communists perceived the danger of uncontrolled spending of free time by university students, so they monitored their actions and eventually censored and restricted them. In the 1950s, students were offered activities supporting mainly socialist cohesion and Marxist-Leninist perception of the world, such as part time jobs, party trainings, competitions at faculty dormitories, thematic professional lectures, etc. Nevertheless, an active group of students gradually formed within the Czechoslovak Youth Union in Olomouc. This group promoted the gradual lifting of bans and supported a wider range of cultural activities that were closer to their real interests. These activities culminated in the years 1967 and 1968. The aim of this work is showing activities of students from Olomouc, which was often referred to as the cultural periphery of Czechoslovakia.

Keywords: University students, Czechoslovak Youth Union, Communist regime, Palacký University in Olomouc, 1946–1956.

Intellectual capital and innovative startups: a cross-sectional analysis of new Italian enterprises

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ABSTRACT

Given their entrepreneurial culture, intellectual resources, capabilities and know-how, startups are even more key contributors of innovative ecosystems. The Intellectual Capital (IC) is often referred to as intangible and knowledge-based assets, that can be distinguished into structural, relational, and human dimensions. Literature recognizes that IC is a source of competitive advantage that positively affects company innovation, firm performance and the development of business network. The purpose of this study is to analyze the startup IC's dimensions by means of a cross-sectional analysis. The sample is composed by 173 startups registered in an Italian business database of innovative firms. Findings reveal that as many as 75% of the analyzed startups presents the structural IC dimension. Such IC dimension, as codified experience within processes and procedure, primarily lies in key R&D, direct sales activities and in the ownership of intellectual property rights. Results about relational IC dimension show that it is held by the 48% of the analyzed startups. This dimension lies in external connections with different actors of the business ecosystem such as external marketing channels, incubators, collaborations with other private companies, public administration and universities. Moreover, the human IC dimension, characterized by extremely high qualified personnel, is present in the 21% of the analyzed startups. By providing insights on innovative start-ups' IC dimensions, the paper intends to derive some implications to encourage the development of innovation processes within business ecosystems.

Keywords: Innovative start-ups, intellectual capital, business ecosystem, new entrepreneurship.

The effects on mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

During COVID-19 pandemic, People have to change their lifestyles and activities in daily life. People have to depend their life on online activities and some outdoor activities have to be restricted and have to follow the policy for instance, social distancing. This makes people communicate less to each other and some notions and feelings have been expressed. This study explored people aged 13 years old and olders' effects towards mental health during COVID-19 : loneliness, stress, worries about vaccines, boredom, self-verbalization, powerlessness, negative vision, discouragement and anxiety. The study also asks for a person's personal information: gender, ages and occupations in order to get the precise results. There are 5 levels to evaluate which use number 1, 2 ,3 ,4 and 5 to represent the notions, number 1 strongly disagrees, 3 neutral, and 5 strongly agree. The study found that 58.7% of the example group are female and 31.3% are male. Age 16-18 years old is the majority while 26% and 22% are age 13-15 and age 24 or older respectively. The most example group occupation is student or college students. The result is that boredom is the category which people are facing while powerlessness is the least. Anxiety is the feeling which has the least deviation among other feelings.

Keywords: physiological during covid-19 pandemic, mental health, boredom, powerlessness, and anxiety

Food self-sufficiency in Slovenia – questions and dilemmas

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ABSTRACT

Food production and consumption have been revolutionized in recent decades, primarily driven by globalization. As a result, most of the world's populations today reside in countries dependent, at least in part, on imported food. In this paper, we discuss the level of food self-sufficiency in Slovenia, why it is important, the factors that influence the low levels of food self-sufficiency, and provide some examples of potential solutions on how to improve food self-sufficiency. In 1970, the level of self-sufficiency in Slovenia was over 70%, while in 2008 it was only around 50%, and it has further declined since the last decade. In 2020, there were particularly low levels of self-sufficiency with regard to fruit (36%), vegetables (48%), and honey (68%). On the other hand, Slovenia produces far more food of animal origin than its citizens consume. The highest levels of self-sufficiency are found in the production of meat (84%), eggs (95%), and milk (128%). Self-sufficiency in organic food is particularly low (5%), despite organic farming being the most sustainable agricultural practice. With local self-sufficiency, Slovenia would gain better food quality, the negative impact on the environment would be reduced, and the income of the local agricultural producers would increase. Furthermore, we note that technological development, decentralization of food production, and shifts in consumer and policymaker sentiments are crucial success factors to future-proofing the food system. We urge the food industry stakeholders around the world to participate in creating a much-needed shift towards making the food industry more resilient and sustainable.

Keywords: food self-sufficiency, agriculture, circular economy, sustainability, Slovenia

The Expectation in Education Degree Levels of Thai Students and Factors Affecting the Decision

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that influence the decision of studying in the degree level of Thai students. It is well known that in Thailand, education plays a vital role in our life. Having a good education gives students greater potential for both academic and creative thinking since students can use the knowledge that they have gained in career decision making according to their field of interests, abilities and aptitudes. It also results in a good occupation, financial stability and various opportunities in life. A survey conducted randomly with distributed online using social media platforms participated with a total of 214 respondents, aged between 10 - 24 years, which 80.7% are students and 19.3% are college students. The results showed that the majority of the students expected to complete a Master's degree, followed by Bachelor's degree and doctoral degree, by 49.1%, 34.2% and 16.7%, respectively, with different reasons or factors which affecting the decisions . The finding from our survey, which allowed the respondents to choose more than one option, illustrated that the majority factors of respondents are according to self-expectations, which is up to 88%, then 26.9% by social expectation, 24.5% by parental expectation and 2.3% by friend imitation. Some of respondents provide additional factors such as salary, future career progression and stability in life. In conclusion, according to the results of the survey, it shows that most students expects to complete a Bachelor's degree because of their self-expectations together with other factors that are included in this study.

Keywords: Education, Degree levels, Thai students, Adolescent, Factor analysis.

Thai People's Household Solid-Waste Management Method

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Abstract

As seen by the increasing usage of recycled materials as eco-friendly products as well as private companies' campaigns and governmental policies advocating the ideas of recycling, reusing, and reducing single-use substances, we can now ascertain that this is an indication of the world's changing actions and opinions regarding wastes. Throughout this century, Thailand has encountered countless issues due to inefficient waste management procedures, which has deeply deteriorated the environment and society. This study on Thai people's household solid waste-management methods conducted via an online survey displays the *different stances and practices Thais use on handling plastic, paper, and glass wastes*, all of which are the contributors to global warming and the piling wastes in landfills, ocean, and cities. According to the results obtained from the 130 responses, 99% of the respondents are well informed about recycling and its various advantages; however, more than 30% claim that they do not incorporate recycling into their daily waste-disposal approach. They instead discard them into a trash bin without separation from the other types of wastes. On the other hand, the respondents that do recycle their papers, plastics, and glasses either segregate the wastes and send them to recycling companies, or recycle and reuse them at home in assorted ways personally chosen by the respondents in the survey. From the 50 suggestions for an effective waste management method, approximately 48% of the respondents proposed that segregating wastes correctly is the key to functionally treating wastes so that ultimately lesser harm is done to the environment and society. Despite that, 28.5% of the respondents answered that they do not make efforts to sort wastes. In conclusion, Thais are mostly aware of the benefits of recycling, reusing and separating wastes, but there are still a number of people who do not embrace these acts both publicly and at home. Therefore, this survey-based research points at the difficulties in the current situation of gathering the Thai population as a whole to apply the effective waste management methods. Hence, we should further educate and find ways to raise cooperation or better even have the government implement a program that encourages households to manage their wastes correctly.

Keywords: waste management, recycling, reusing, waste segregation, Thais' waste management procedures

Medical Cannabis and its General Consensus in Thai Adolescents

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Abstract

In the modern medical world, Cannabis usage is attracting interests in many different fields of medicine. In Thailand, this flowering plant has been carved into the young minds as an addictive drug for generations. While it is true that the cannabinoids contain psychotic property, much research shows evidence that it can alleviate some health problems. The rising concerns are an obstacle to the advancement of applying Cannabis as an alternative treatment. It is hypothesised that the perspective of Thai students toward the use of Cannabis will lean toward a negative view. Thus, the purpose of this research is to discern the perspective of Thai teenagers towards the use of Cannabis and compare them with the factual information. Data were collected using a questionnaire asking about participants' usage, perspective, and knowledge on Medical Cannabis. Survey samples, including students in Bangkok, were randomly selected through a random sampling method with a total of 220 students (104 males, 109 females, and 7 others), with the age ranging from 10 to 20 years old. Based on the questionnaire, there are many teenagers who perceive Cannabis as a psychoactive drug which causes harmful effects and causes addiction (90 students, 40.9%). However, most of the students accept the usage of Cannabis for medical purposes (159 students, 72.27%) which can reflect that teenagers' minds are open to information about Cannabis rather than believing in old stereotypes. The result of this study can be further used to lessen the negative opinion on Cannabis or used to informatively educate Thai adolescents Cannabis.

Keywords: Cannabis usage, Cannabinoids, Medical Cannabis, Psychotic property, Addiction
