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The Role of Financial Analysis in Business Decision-Making

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Abstract

Financial analysis is a key tool in the process of making business and financial decisions. This paper explores how financial analysis provides the foundation for informed decisions that lead to long-term business success and financial sustainability. It identifies how financial analysis is used to assess a company's financial health, identify trends, predict future performance and assess risk. Well-informed decisions based on financial analysis can contribute to a company's competitiveness and long-term success in a dynamic business environment.

Keywords: information, financial analysis, decision making.

The Role of Artificial Intelligence in the Development of Accounting

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the most advanced technologies in the world. The development of technology has initiated strong changes in the practice of the accounting profession. The advent of innovative technology is revolutionizing numerous facets of our lives. We are experiencing a profound era of transformation, with projections suggesting that artificial intelligence will exert influence over every aspect of human life in the years to come. This paper attempts to point out the support that AI has for the improvement of accounting. New technologies bring various challenges and opportunities to the accounting profession and the education of accounting personnel.

Keywords: accounting, artificial intelligence, development, benefits

The potential for development of green information and communication channels

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the application of the Internet of Things (IoT) in education, the public sector, and the economy. IoT enables inter-device communication and data collection, offering numerous benefits, including improved education, sustainability, and economic advantages. Models of IoT platforms have been considered for implementation in medical education and other fields. Education is crucial for the development of sustainable practices, and IoT stands out as a tool that can assist in environmental education. Gamified learning, digital content, and remote access are components of modern education supported by IoT. IoT also provides benefits for the public sector and the economy, enabling more efficient decision-making and data monitoring.

Keywords: IoT, green ICT, education for the environment.

Evaluating Competitiveness of Tourism Destinations: Insights from Marketing and Experience Indicators

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Abstract

Various indicators were employed to gauge the competitiveness of tourist destinations. Among them, marketing and experience indicators stood out as pivotal factors, emphasized by numerous authors and established theoretical models. Nonetheless, merely possessing robust marketing strategies and memorable experiences didn't guarantee true competitiveness in the tourism market. It was imperative to leverage these indicators effectively to entice travelers to the locale. This article clarified the existing methodology utilized in the TOURCOMSERBIA initiative for continuously evaluating the status of Serbia as a competitive tourism spot, with a specific emphasis on marketing and experience indicators and their impact on tourist appeal. The development of this model occurred across four stages, encompassing extensive literature review, expert consensus gathering, initial testing, and final model verification. Within the TOURCOMSERBIA research, a comprehensive examination of literature pertaining to the competitiveness of the tourism industry was conducted, revealing marketing and experience as prominent indicators, which were underscored within this article. This research endeavored to emphasize the significance of utilizing marketing and experiential indicators to improve the allure of a tourist destination within the global tourism sector. As we delved into the results of the TOURCOMSERBIA exploration, we underscored the pivotal function that marketing and experience indicators played in shaping tourists' perceptions and decisions. By understanding and harnessing these indicators effectively, destinations like Serbia could enhance their competitiveness and stand out in the global tourism market.

Keywords: tourism destination competitiveness; marketing and experience indicators; Serbia; TOURCOMSERBIA model

This research was supported by The Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia, GRANT No. 7739076, Tourism Destination Competitiveness - Evaluation Model for Serbia -TOURCOMSERBIA.

Building a Personal Brand: Personal branding strategies and their impact on the professional success of students

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Abstract

This paper presents the process of building a personal brand. Personal branding represents the creation of a unique and recognizable identity with the intention of making an individual more distinctive primarily in the labor market. Creating a personal brand includes elements such as a consistent visual identity, effective representation of yourself and your values, as well as active engagement with the public on social networks and events.

This paper focuses on Generation Z, and the research was conducted on first-year students of the Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies (BAPUSS). The main goal of the research was to determine how familiar students are with the concept of personal branding, then to determine the importance of personal branding for the respondents, as well as familiarity with the process of creating a personal brand. Since Generation Z is the first generation to be born and grow up in the digital age, particular emphasis is focused on examining how much students use social media to build their personal brand. Since the students have attended the Management and Marketing courses, which dealt with SWOT analysis, setting goals and building plans, students were asked whether they use the acquired knowledge in order to build their personal identity.

Based on the obtained results, the authors concluded that they should present the process of personal branding to students in more detail as part of the Marketing course in order for them to be more competitive on the labor market.

Keywords: Personal branding, Generation Z, social media, labor market

Environmental Standard - Environmental Performance Evaluation (EPE)

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Abstract

This paper refers to definition, explanation and implementation of environmental standard - environmental performance evaluation – ISO 14031. Environmental Standards, so called ISO 14000, are a series of international standards designed to meet the needs of governments, industry or business. ISO 14000 refers to standards such as environmental management systems (EMS), environmental labels and declarations, environmental performance evaluation, life cycle assessment, vocabulary, environmental communication and others. Environmental performance evaluation – ISO 14031 has to facilitate management decisions regarding an organization`s environmental performance by selecting indicators, collecting and analyzing data, assessing information regarding environmental performance criteria, as well as reporting and periodically reviewing and improving.

Environmental performance evaluation (EPE) refers to environmental policy, objectives, and indicators that reflects an organization`s environmental performance goals. ISO 14031 has been implemented according to the same Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model. Regarding planning, standard ISO 14031 must be based on significant environmental aspects and specified criteria for evaluation of environmental performance. ISO 14031 uses relevant performance indicators including environmental performance indicators (EPI) and environmental condition indicators (ECI), both of which involve the collection, analysis, assessment, reporting and review of relevant data.

In this paper we will point out that it is necessary to improve monitoring of environmental standards, especially ISO 14031. Also, Environmental performance evaluation (EPE) standard contributes to the Sustainable Development Goal regarding Climate Action (SDG 13).

Keywords: Environmental standards, Evaluation, Indicators, SDG 13

Examining the Relationship Between Organizations Technological Development and Job Characteristics Model (JCM)

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Abstract

The study aims to explore the effects of technological development on job characteristics, with a specific focus on skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. In the ever-changing improvement of technology, organizations are increasingly integrating new technologies and digital tools into their work processes, which has consequences on the nature of work and employee experiences. Through a comprehensive literature review and empirical research with the help of surveys, this paper provides valuable insights into how technological advancements shape job characteristics. The findings add to the body of knowledge by explaining the complexities of the interaction between technology and job qualities and providing businesses with useful advice for maximizing these aspects. By understanding the impact of technological development on job characteristics, organizations can create work environments that foster employee satisfaction, motivation, and overall organizational success. This research serves as a valuable resource for practitioners, researchers, and organizational leaders seeking to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by technological advancements and create meaningful work experiences for employees.

Keywords: technology, development, job characteristics model, performance, motivation, effectiveness

Strengthening Economic Security: The Essential Role of Forensic Accounting

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Abstract

In recent times, fraud detection has become increasingly crucial in the accounting profession. The dual need to protect market capital and safeguard the reputation of the accounting profession necessitates a stronger focus on enhancing the capacity of forensic accounting. This paper explores the crucial role of forensic accounting in strengthening economic security. By uncovering fraudulent activities and pinpointing weaknesses in financial systems, forensic accounting acts as a cornerstone in preserving financial integrity. Through a thorough examination, the study emphasises the importance of integrating forensic accounting methods into economic security strategies. Utilizing these techniques enables stakeholders to combat financial crimes, ensure regulatory adherence, and foster trust within financial markets.

Keywords: forensic accounting, economic security, financial fraud

The Managerial Role of Pharmacist in the Contemporary Business Environment

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Abstract

In today's swiftly changing healthcare area, pharmacists assume a pivotal managerial role within the business area of pharmacy practice. The trend of pharmacies being owned by multiple contractors has been consistently growing for more than a decade. Consequently, many pharmacies are managed by pharmacists who are employed as managers, a role that has become well-established within the industry. The research aims to point out important roles for managers in pharmaceutical organizations. Namely, pharmacists have responsibilities of pharmacists as managers, encompassing areas such as financial management, human resources, inventory control, and strategic planning.

Keywords: manager, pharmacy, roles, competencies

Civil Society and Societal Security. Examining the Dynamics within the Republic of Moldova and Romania Against the Backdrop of the Contemporary Geopolitical Landscape

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Abstract

Over time civil society has played an important role in holding governments accountable for their actions and informing the public. Moreover, it has been a critical contributor to preserving democratic developments and to promoting the rule of law. On the other hand, societal security is a core component of healthy societies and it cannot be achieved without strong civic support. The existing literature extensively covers both topics (civil society and societal security), but the nexus between them has not been thoroughly examined.

This research delves into the intricate relationship between civil society and societal security, examining the dynamics within the Republic of Moldova and Romania against the backdrop of the contemporary geopolitical landscape. The study is driven by the need to understand *how civil society functions as a critical factor in shaping and safeguarding societal security*, particularly in countries exposed to unconventional threats. The qualitative analysis is based on publicly available data sets (focusing on democracy, civil society, identity and security), and the main analysis method is process tracing. The hypotheses are formulated based on the following indicators: identity resilience, societal resilience, community cohesion, addressing threats and public engagement.

Therefore, the focus of this research is on observing the influence of the civil society on societal security in the Republic of Moldova and Romania based on a comparative assessment of these two states.

Keywords: civil society, societal security, identity, community cohesion, Republic of Moldova, Romania

Measuring Hospital Efficiency: Evidence From European Union Countries

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Abstract

This research uses a specific set of inputs and outputs directly tied to the hospital system. Its objective is to assess the hospitals' efficiency in the member states of the European Union. The non-parametric DEA input-oriented (Data Envelopment Analysis) method of calculation was employed to realise the study's initial purpose, utilizing data from the EUROSTAT database and from the national healthcare databases for 22 European Union countries for the period 2013–2021.

Furthermore, this research considers some exogenous factors related to the efficiency level under examination, which are unique to the nations in question and may influence the technical efficiency examined through the use of censored Tobit regression.

The results of the Tobit analysis indicate that the population served by the medical service, gross domestic product, utilisation of hospital capacities, and hospital ownership (public or non-public) have a significant impact on hospital production efficiency.

In conclusion, it can be stated that hospitals remain a highly complex system that is sensitive to social, economic, or even epidemiological crises (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic). In light of the mounting challenges and pressure on the hospital systems of various countries within the European Union, it is of paramount importance to ensure the optimal utilisation of available resources and to study the most effective country models to provide an appropriate service to the population (potential patients).

Keywords: Hospital Efficiency, DEA Model, Tobit Regression, European Union.

Predicting the effects of combination anti-cancer drugs on neoplastic cell lines

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Abstract

Cancer is now the second cause of deaths in the world and one of the most difficult diseases to prevent, treat and cure. Characterized by an abnormal proliferation of immature cells, which refuse to die and keep on living, this disease shows an ever-increasing need for precise medications with high efficacy and fewer side effects. Continuous dosage and concentrations increase, huge risks and low favorable results have made it mandatory to find alternatives or better combinations to combat cancer cells. Our work is focused on assessing the toxicity risks, and level of inhibition of a number of anti-neoplastic and two anti-inflammatory (prednisone and dexamethasone) drugs on leukemia cells. This prediction is based on a silico approach, with no risks to patients, net zero cost and the results have been promising. The usage of these drugs approved by both EMA and FDA, accompanied by their effects ranging from dosage and molecular weight to toxicity class made it possible to create multiple achievable combinations to inhibit cancer cells. The concentrations used for the combinations were 20 μ M for the anti-neoplastic drug (drug A), and 1 μ M for the anti-inflammatory drug (drug B) which showed the best results. These combinations were used on three different leukemia cell lines, and the cytarabine/prednisone, cytarabine/dexamethasone combo showed the highest level of proliferation inhibition, whereas the lowest results were seen in the imatinib/prednisone conjunction.

Keywords: anti-neoplastic, drug, combination, prediction, cell line

Sustainability of the Financial System: The Risks of the Eurodollar Market

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Abstract

The sustainability of the current fiat money-based financial system faces many challenges. One source of risks comes from the Eurodollar market, which includes liabilities denominated in US dollars placed with banks outside the United States of America. Another risk factor comes from the constantly rising debt ratios. The Eurodollar market began to develop in the 1960s, and today the size of the dollar market outside the US is almost the same as that inside the USA. Despite the relatively large size of the market, these assets are unregulated and are out of the control of the Federal Reserve. Due to the lack of regulations, these dollar-based loans have somewhat lower interest rates, and therefore more attractive for emerging countries. Underregulation also entails risks, especially in unfavorable global economic conditions, when debt financing and sustainability face difficulties. The US monetary policy and the development of the USD exchange rate may also present important challenges to the countries concerned, especially since the dollar-denominated external debt ratios have grown rapidly since 2008. A possible increase in the ratio of non-performing loans implies serious financial risks, which is reinforced by the fact that today's economies work on a debt-based monetary system. The aim of the research is to identify the related and underlying risk factors and emphasize possible spillover effects. The focus is on emerging countries and the period after the Covid-19 crisis.

THE RESEARCH IS SUPPORTED BY THE ÚNKP-23-4-II-NKE-94 NEW NATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM OF THE MINISTRY FOR CULTURE AND INNOVATION FROM THE SOURCE OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION FUND.

Keywords: external debt, Eurodollar market, financial sustainability

Professional practice in Teaching bases as the beginning of students' professional development

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Abstract

Students' participation in professional practice during their studies is important for the beginning of their lifelong learning and professional development. While a study program provides foundational theoretical knowledge and the development of generic and specific competencies, professional practice enables learning through work and gaining real-world experience. Teaching bases serve as venues that allow learning in authentic situations, helping students develop the skills necessary for future workplace success. For students in social sciences and humanities, it is essential to develop sensitivity to the needs of others, self-initiative, and openness to collaboration and self-assessment. To examine how students use professional practice for personal and professional development, a focus group study was conducted with mentors at teaching bases, mentors at the faculty, and students who attended teaching bases. The results indicate that participants value students' personal attributes and attitudes, and their motivation for self-education and improvement, but also highlight that students demonstrate insufficient self-initiative and lack of understanding of the importance of reflection. Participants particularly emphasize the need for more significant structuring of professional practice and more frequent collaboration with faculty mentors.

Keywords: evaluation, reflection, professional practice, teaching base, focus group.

Nutrition in Traumatic Brain Injuries

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Abstract

The provision of adequate nutrition support for patients with traumatic brain injury (TBI) has been a clinical challenge for decades. The primary and secondary injuries create unique metabolic derangements along with accompanying issues such as optimal timing and route of nutrition, appropriate fluid and electrolytes, drug administration, rehabilitation, and dysphagia. Enteral nutrition is clearly established as the preferential route of nutrition support for this population vs parenteral nutrition. There appears to be a consensus on early initiation of enteral nutrition, but less definitive are recommendations on advancement timing and formula components. Nutrition therapies should include exact fluid resuscitation goals specific for TBI and strict electrolyte monitoring to avoid extreme fluid, electrolyte, or glucose shifts that could be detrimental to the patient. While the critical care patient often tolerates small bowel feeding, the long-term rehabilitation patient should transition to and tolerate gastric feeding. Drug-nutrient and adverse drug reactions such as diarrhea should be routinely evaluated in patients receiving enteral nutrition. Monitoring for dysphagia, is critical to avoid the costly negative aspects associated with aspiration and to capitalize on quality of life and appropriate oral nutrition. Emphasizing the priority of early nutrition support within a multi-disciplinary team may be the critical key for successful provision and tolerance of nutrition support in the TBI population. In our ICUs, generally, not only in units that treat TBIs, the problem of nutrition is underestimated. The reasons are multiple. But for my opinion is the complete absence of the means of assessment and provide the appropriate nutrition, and not the knowledge about this field of medicine science.

Keywords: Craniocerebral trauma; Brain injuries; Nutrition therapy; Nutritional support; Enteral nutrition; Parenteral nutrition

A Study on The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Product Evaluation & Online Conformity

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Abstract

The rise of social media influencers has added a new dimension to marketing communications. With the conventional marketing efforts, the new age digital technology-based branding, like social media marketing has supplemented brands' marketing efforts and gained importance to influence consumer purchases.

This study examined the impact of social media influencers' reputations on the consumer purchase journey. Particularly the study focused on two areas of purchase decisions –the effect on product evaluation, and the mediating role of informational influence on online conformity

The hypotheses on the impact of social media influencers on product evaluation & online conformity were empirically tested. Multiple linear regression and structural equation modelling methods were used to analyze the results. It was found that there is a significant impact of social media influencers on consumer decision-making. The findings imply that taking into account an influencer's reputation before signing up for any endorsement is valuable for the effectiveness of a communication campaign, and is also cost-effective.

Keywords: Marketing communication; Consumer purchase influence; Social media influencer; consumer decision-making; significant impact; Product evaluation; Online conformity

Tales and sport involvement – UEFA Disney Playmakers program in Hungary

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Abstract

Introduction

Women soccer is becoming increasingly popular today, with a growing number of women players and a widening range of football-related opportunities. The further development and constant quality of adult women soccer at the high level requires, in addition to competitive football, the creation of a recreational and youth base and the development of a high level of training for girls' football.

Material and methods

One of the latest programs of UEFA is the Disney Playmakers program, which targets the youngest age group, girls 5-8 years. In this paper we discuss the practical functioning of the program in Hungary (in 2023 in 34 clubs) based on interviews with coaches working in the PM.

Results

Disney Playmakers creates the joy of playing sport, learning the basics of football and experiencing a sense of belonging in a safe environment through stories. The interviews showed that the program works well in a wider range (grades 1-4, boys and girls mixed) and that the PM coach himself is more of an animator than a coach, and the soccer aspect is less important. The feedback from the coaches suggests that there are fundamental differences in attitude between boys and girls.

Conclusion

Based on the interviews, the initiative itself and the basic program are positive, the coaches consider it a good idea and the training is well structured, but the practical operation and the future of the program raise questions.

Keywords: women's football, youth sport, sport involvement, Disney Playmakers

NAVIGATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: ALBANIA'S PATH TO GREEN, CIRCULAR AND BLUE ECONOMIES

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Abstract

Albania stands at a pivotal juncture in its socio-economic trajectory, grappling with the complex dynamics of environmental sustainability, economic growth, and legislative frameworks, particularly in the realm of the blue economy. The aim is to provide a comprehensive overview of Albania's efforts in integrating green, circular and blue economy principles into its national development agenda, with a specific focus on the challenges, opportunities, and implications for sustainable growth. The objective of this work is twofold: firstly, to analyze Albania's transition towards a circular economy, exploring the country's commitment to sustainable economic growth, environmental stewardship, and alignment with regional and EU frameworks. Secondly, to assess the development of Albania's blue economy, examining the legislative framework governing maritime activities and resource management, and highlighting the potential for sustainable development in coastal and marine sectors. Challenges posed by economic growth and environmental degradation necessitate a strategic national approach to the green transition, with regulatory frameworks and action plans guiding the process. Albania's coastal resources hold significant potential for blue economy development, including tourism, fisheries, and maritime transport. Legislative measures governing maritime activities play a crucial role in ensuring ecological sustainability while fostering economic growth. Alignment with EU directives and policies presents both challenges and opportunities for Albania as it progresses towards EU accession. Through continued alignment with EU directives and robust implementation, Albania is poised to realize the full potential of its coastal and marine assets, unlocking economic prosperity while safeguarding environmental integrity. However, addressing key challenges such as waste management, marine pollution, and climate change adaptation remains imperative for Albania's sustainable development journey.

Keywords: sustainable development, legislative frameworks, policy initiatives, economic growth, environmental stewardship, regional integration

Reforms undertaken on the implementation of International Auditing Standards for High Audit Institutions as an added value in strengthening the principle of transparency and accountability - Evidence from Albania

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Abstract

In Albania, the creation of the legal framework for public auditing is an extremely important step for the independence and competences of public auditors as persons who carry out the auditing process and for the Supreme State Control as the Supreme Audit Institution, in fulfillment of the principles of the Declaration of Lima, October 1977 Peru, this act that changed the world of the highest state audit; as well as the requirements of the INTOSAI international auditing standards. The main purpose of the paper is to document the current state of development and implementation of auditing standards in Albania, as well as to evaluate the local legal basis and the requirements of integration and globalization in relation to the implementation of auditing standards for the development of the auditing service as an added value in the principle of transparency and accountability.

All public sector units, as administrators and users of public funds, have the obligation to develop their decision-making and implementation activities within a certain legal and regulatory framework. The concept of compliance (compliance) takes on a special importance in conditions where the demand for performance in the public sector is ever increasing, and obtaining security referring to compliance with laws and regulations is considered a vital dimension of accountability in governance. Based on a literature study, an empirical analysis and the collected data, it will be aimed to present an evidence of Albania's journey on the implementation of SNASPs, evidencing the importance of the audit service in the public sector as an instrument of accountability, transparency.

Keywords: Audit, International Audit Standards, public sector, transparency, accountability.
JEL codes; M41.

The Experience of Corporal Punishment in Schools

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Abstract

The use of corporal punishment in schools is a serious pedagogical issue. Many studies worldwide have highlighted the negative consequences of corporal punishment and its harmful effects on children. The present study aims to explore the experience with corporal punishment in schools within the context of the Czech Republic. Despite international obligations to protect children from physical and mental violence, some Czech teachers may still use corporal punishment due to legal ambiguities and wide societal acceptance especially in child rearing by parents. The study's findings indicated that over one-third of participants had personally experienced corporal punishment at school, and more than two-thirds had witnessed it occurring. The study also revealed the emotional responses to these experiences, which were predominantly negative, and provided insights into the respondents' contemporary opinions on the use of corporal punishment in educational settings. The findings underscore the need for clearer legal frameworks and increased awareness to protect children from corporal punishment in schools.

Keywords: corporal punishment; educational settings; the Czech Republic; personal experience; emotional responses

ISO QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: BASIS FOR SERVICE ENHANCEMENT

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Abstract

Education institutions, particularly public higher education institutions (HEIs) or state universities and colleges (SUCs), are directed to deliver excellent education to students, in-depth knowledge, ensure academic development aligned with national development demands, and contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on quality education. Despite the success of some institutions, the failure of others underscores the necessity for HEIs to adopt quality management practices, satisfy customer needs, and remain competitive. This study investigates the implementation of the ISO quality management system (QMS) in public HEIs. It examines the level of awareness of implementers and their level of agreement on the perceived challenges that they encountered, including the benefits of implementing the ISO QMS in terms of the specific deliveries of public HEIs, which are on dimensions of Instruction, Research, Extension, Administrative Support, and Resource Generation services, including Market Responsiveness. This study used descriptive quantitative approach using survey questionnaires to 441 service-provider employees, with or without designations. Findings reveal that implementers, mostly female non-teaching staff aged 26–35 with 11–15 years in service, are fully aware of the ISO QMS but face significant challenges, notably lack of understanding of ISO 9001 benefits. Awareness levels vary significantly by age, job classification, years in service, and position, while perceived challenges differ by sex, years in service, job classification, and position. ISO certification proves moderately to highly beneficial in all service delivery. The study recommends continuous training and development for implementers, enhanced communication from top management, and further research to guide other HEIs considering ISO QMS certification.

Keywords: ISO QMS, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), sustainable development goals, Awareness Challenges Benefits.

Impact of Household Size and Community Structure on the Dynamics of Infectious Disease Transmission:

A Multiplex Network Approach

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Abstract

Population structure and social behaviours play key roles in the dynamics of infectious diseases transmitted via close-contact interactions. Network-based epidemiological models offer significant flexibility in capturing the various types of interactions between individuals and the heterogeneities in social contact patterns, providing powerful tools for deeper understanding the disease spread dynamics and optimising intervention strategies to mitigate epidemics. In this study, present a multiplex contact network model for describing interactions within households and external contacts in the wider community, aiming to explore how different types of connections and the population structure influence the transmission dynamics of infectious diseases. We are based on a modified version of the classical susceptible-exposed-infected-recovered (SEIR) epidemiological model where infected individuals are divided in two categories: symptomatic (Is) and asymptomatic (Ia). This model is used to simulate the spread of a close-contact infectious disease through multiplex contact networks by varying the household mean size and the maximum size of social communities. Additionally, we simulate epidemic propagation in the presence of mitigation measures such as stay-at-home protocols for symptomatic cases and limitation on daily contacts per individual. Our results demonstrate that changes in household mean size have a significantly greater influence on epidemic size, peak prevalence and epidemic duration compared to changes in the maximum size of social communities, especially when stay-at-home policies are implemented.

Keywords: Epidemic spreading, SEIR model, Multiplex networks, Community structure, Household structure

Quality of life in adult patients with Acne Vulgaris

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Abstract

Acne vulgaris is one of the most common dermatological diseases which affects mainly adolescents and young adults. It can have a significant impact on patients suffering from acne. The aim of this study was to assess the impact of acne on the quality of life of adult dermatology patients. Seventy six patients, 58 females (76.3%) and 18 males (23.6%) aged 21-35 years were included in this study. The mean age was 25.5 ± 3.46 . Global Acne Grading System was used for assessing the severity of acne. Cardiff Acne Disability Index (CADI) was used to assess quality of life. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Chi-square test was used for statistical analysis. P-values ≤ 0.05 were considered statistically significant. Out of 76 patients, 43 (56.5 %) had mild acne, 29 (38.2 %) had moderate acne and 4 (5.3 %) had severe acne. The duration of acne in 18 (23.6%) patients was less than 2 years, 2-5 years in 25 (33%) of them and above 5 years in 33 (43.4%) patients. CADI score showed that 6 (7.8%) cases had no impairment, 25 (33%) had mild impairment, 41 (54 %) had moderate impairment and 4 (5.2 %) had severe impairment. The mean CADI score was 7.0 ± 3.1 . The current study showed that acne vulgaris had a moderate impact on quality of life. Age, gender, disease duration and acne severity did not correlate with quality of life in adult patients with acne vulgaris.

Keywords: Acne, Quality of life, CADI, Impairment

Clinical aspects in Pityriasis versicolor and prophylactic therapy with zinc pyrithione shampoo

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Abstract

Pityriasis versicolor is a superficial fungal infection which may affect individuals in all age groups. Antifungal medications are effective in treating pityriasis versicolor, however recurrence of the infection is common in many patients. The aim of this study was to evaluate the clinical aspects of Pityriasis versicolor as well as the effects of 1 % zinc pyrithione shampoo as a prophylactic therapy to reduce recurrence rate. One hundred and five patients who were diagnosed with the infection at the private dermatological clinic "Dermovita", were included in this study. Among them, 56.2% were male and 43.8% were female, with an age range of 14 - 59 years. The majority of the cases (54 %) belonged to the age group 21 - 30 years. Diagnosis was based on clinical observations and Wood's lamp examination. Hypopigmented macules were present in 53% of the patients. Most common affected site was the upper trunk (62%). Patients were treated with antifungal medications based on the dissemination of the lesions. At the end of the treatment, patients were recommended to continue using the 1% zinc pyrithione shampoo as a long - term maintenance therapy. Among the 105 patients, 92 % of them had no recurrence of Pityriasis versicolor within a 12 month period.

Keywords: Pityriasis versicolor, recurrence, zinc pyrithione, hypopigmented

Practicing ESP reading skills in the academic environment: A case study at Ovidius University of Constanta - students' perspective

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Abstract

English for Civil and Mechanical Engineering is a rather understudied and less explored facet of English for Specific/Academic Purposes, yet one that is still in emergence. When it comes to English for Specific Purposes, one of the most crucial skills is the ability to read professionally-oriented materials. This paper attempts to provide an overview of why reading, among all the skills, is so important when teaching ESP. Forasmuch as reading is unanimously considered a cognitive process focusing on language acquisition, communication, and exchanging information and ideas, ESP teachers now have a distinctive viewpoint on the importance of reading in the language classroom and the types of texts that can be used in instruction. Since language education and ESP, in particular, adopt a communicative approach, we think that our recommendations could be useful, flexible enough to fit into, or even modified for different purposes. A case study focusing on the observation and evaluation of student's academic performance was part of the research method. Students were questioned concerning their educational backgrounds, reading comprehension skills, and reading motivation. To create a well-designed curriculum, we started by assessing our students' needs, wants, and lacks through a questionnaire and by attempting to manage the intricacy of civil and mechanical engineering sciences to gather data that might aid in the creation of a powerful, meaningful ESP course.

Keywords: reading skills, needs analysis, English for Specific Purposes, Theme and Tasked-based learning, computer-networked

Disinformation and the role of the media

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Abstract

Disinformation refers to perceived and deliberate distortions of news in order to affect the political landscape and exacerbate divisions in society. The first occurrence of fake news was reported in the 16th century. Disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation pollute the information space worldwide and the trend of manipulating facts continues to disrupt public communication and, consequently, democratic processes in societies. Disinformation is false information deliberately fabricated to harm a person, a social group, an organization or a state. The fight against the spread of fake news by the media should involve regulatory and self-regulatory bodies and civil society actors, who should work together to prevent such wrongdoing of the media. Social media is the main source of spreading disinformation. Fact-checking is a method for bringing true information to the public. No strategy or regulation to prevent fake news should be implemented at the expense of restricting freedom of speech in any society or country. Global strategies to prevent and fight the spread of fake news should be established to prevent political leaders in non-democratic societies from using the fight against fake news as a reason or justification to restrict freedom of speech in their societies.

Keywords: Disinformation, misinformation, fact-checking, democracy, strategy, control
