2023

Business PHD Research Conference

November 24, 2023

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Conference Program

Supported (in part) by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Alberta

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2023 Committee Members:

Mehri E. Baloochi	Arjang Nikbakht	Linfeng Tian
Cindy Grappe	Soroush Sadeghi	Xin Yang

Master Schedule

2023 Business Ph.D. Research Conference
November 24, 2023
Business Building Room 5-04

TIME	EVENT
8:30-8:45 am	Welcome and Opening Remarks
8:45-9:15 am	Presentation 1 – Bijit Ghosh, Marketing
9:15-9:20 am	BREAK
9:20-10:00 am	Poster Session 1
10:00-10:05 am	BREAK
10:05-10:55 am	3MT Presentations Session 1
10:55-11:00 am	BREAK
11:00-11:30 am	Presentation 2 – Ke Feng, Accounting
11:30 am-12:00 pm	Poster Session 2
12:00-12:15 pm	Pick up lunch in Lobby
12:15-1:05 pm	Lunch Panel
1:15-1:50 pm	Poster Session 3
1:50-2:05 pm	Celebration of PhD Accomplishments with Cake!
2:05-2:35 pm	Presentation 3 – Weisu Yu, Finance
2:35-2:40 pm	BREAK
2:40-3:30 pm	3MT Presentations Session 2
3:30-3:35 pm	BREAK
3:35-4:05 pm	Presentation 4 – Natalie Eng, SMO
4:05-4:15 pm	Closing Remarks

Detailed Schedule

Welcome and Opening Remarks **8:30-8:45 am**

Cindy Grappe (Conference Chair)
Vikas Mehrotra (Dean)
Sarah Moore (Associate Dean PhD and Research)

Presentation 1 **8:45-9:15 am**

Bijit Ghosh (Marketing) Page 9
The Effect of Flat Asks on Rounding-up Change

BREAK

Poster Session 1 (Alphabetical Order by surname, numbers correspond to table numbers) **9:20-10:00 am**

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Companion Selection: The Impact of Expertise on Co-consumer Recruitment

2. Logan Crace (SMO) Page 11
Agents of Destruction and the Dynamics of Immoral Markets

3. Bo Han (OIS) Page 12
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4. Usama Malik (Finance) Page 12
Does optimism influence the dispersion effect?

5. Yunjung Pak (SMO) Page 13
Transforming from Proof-of-Work to Proof-of-Stake: how governance moments reconstruct technology affordances of the Ethereum blockchain

6. Erfan Rafieikia (OIS) Page 13
Express public transportation: A study on the integration and optimization of novel mass transit shared services by ride-hailing companies

7. Qingning (Nancy) Wang (Accounting) Page 14
Corruption, political connection, and earnings management

8. Xin Yang (Accounting) Page 14
Environmental covenants in supply contracts

BREAK

3MT Presentation Session 1 — **10:05-10:55 am**

BREAK

Presentation 2 — **11:00-11:30 am**

Poster Session 2 (Alphabetical Order by surname, numbers correspond to table numbers) **11:30-12:00 pm**

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Firms' voluntary disclosure during Russia-Ukraine War

2. Lance Gregory (Marketing) Page 15
Thank You: When Expressing Gratitude Backfires

3. Leixing Jiang (Accounting) Page 15
Managerial learning in pharmaceutical industry

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Artificial or Intelligent: How AI Chat Agents' Language Use Affects Consumers

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Influencer Marketing 2.0: The Role of Realism in Virtual Influencer Endorsements

6. Soroush Sadeghi (OIS) Page 17
Investigating the Paradox: Increased Nursing Services and Reduced Patient Length of Stay

7. Linfeng Tian (Finance) Page 17
The Role of Gender in Earnings Conference Calls Information Environment

LUNCH

Lunch Pickup in Lobby **12:00-12:15 pm**

Lunch Panel **12:15-1:05 pm**

Topic: Addressing Real World Problems With Business Research

Moderator: Julian Faid

Panelists:

Robert Fisher (Marketing)

Armann Ingolfsson (OIS/ABA)

Dev Jennings (SEM)

Runjing Lu (Finance)

Bohan Song (Accounting/ABA)

BREAK

Poster Session 3 (Alphabetical Order by surname, numbers correspond to table number) **1:15-1:50 pm**

CELEBRATION of PhD Accomplishments with cake! **1:50-2:05 pm**

Presentation 3 **2:05-2:35 pm**

BREAK

3MT Presentation Session 2 — 2:40-3:30 pm

BREAK

Presentation 4 — 3:35-4:05 pm

Closing Remarks — 4:05-4:15 pm

Xin Yang (BDA co-president and BRC Committee) and Sarah Moore (Associate Dean PhD and Research)

15-Minute Presentation Abstracts

Bijit Ghosh (Marketing)

The Effect of Flat Asks on Rounding-up Change

Bijit Ghosh, John Pracejus

8:45–9:15 am

This research investigates the impact of presenting flat donation requests, such as specific dollar amounts, on customers' willingness to round up their change for charitable contributions at the point of sale. The study finds that customers are more inclined to round up their change when offered a flat donation request, notably $1. This aligns with established research in consumer behaviour, which suggests that providing multiple donation options fosters flexibility, ultimately driving charitable giving. Surprisingly, the effect holds for flat asks smaller than the change too (for example 5 cents), due to greater perceived impact. These findings guide retailers in choosing the best donation options to present alongside rounding up change, based on the change's value, to boost donation rates.

Ke Feng (Accounting)

Proxy advisory firms and information processing

11:00-11:30 am

The close correlation between proxy advisory firms' recommendations and shareholders' voting records raises the concern that shareholders base their voting decisions on an inadequate set of information. I study a market entry strategy for a proxy advisory firm and an information processing decision for a group of symmetric shareholders. I show that a proxy advisory firm enters the market only if it has a chance to create controversy. Facing contentious proxy advisors' recommendations, shareholders respond by intensifying their information-gathering efforts, aiming to resolve the uncertainty. I contend that proxy advisors' services do not necessarily compete with nor displace shareholders' private research efforts.

Weisu Yu (Finance)

Superstar CEO and Super Acquisitions

2:05-2:35 pm

Does CEO's social status help to explain merger decisions? Each year a few CEOs receive CEO awards from business media and CEOs who receive such awards become instant celebrities, that is, superstar CEOs. This study examines the role that a CEO's social status plays in an explanation of mergers and acquisitions during the period 1992-2019. Using the propensity score matching techniques, I hypothesize that bidders led by superstar CEOs are more likely to conduct mergers, where the odds of superstar CEOs making an acquisition are 57% higher two years after winning an award and 70% higher three years after winning an award. Moreover, the market reaction is more negative than for non-superstar CEOs, both in the short run and long run, as superstar CEOs tend to overestimate their ability to generate returns.

Natalie Eng (SMO)

We're Building the Plane While We Fly It: The Role of Collective Organizing in Institutional Field Development

Natalie Eng, Madeline Toubiana (University of Ottawa)

3:35-4:05 pm

Institutional fields, arenas where organizations interact frequently and fatefully, play a crucial role in shaping organizations. Although the concept of fields is central to institutional theory, the mechanisms driving their evolution from nascent, fragmented entities to cohesive spaces with shared norms remain unclear. We focus on the role of Field Configuring Organizations (FCOs) in catalyzing this transition. Through an inductive process study of a Field Configuring Organization (FCO), we introduce and explore the concept of 'centripetal practices.' Our research identifies the deployment of 'centripetal practices' by FCOs as a pivotal force in field evolution. These practices effectively draw actors together, fostering dense interactions and collaboration, shaping field-level norms and structures. They also combat centrifugal forces that fragment the field and threaten its development. We demonstrate how FCOs use these centripetal practices to facilitate a shift from a dispersed to an established, coherent field. This study contributes to the understanding of field dynamics in organizational theory, highlighting the instrumental role of FCOs and their practices in field configuration. Additionally, we offer practical insights for organizational leaders and policymakers on fostering cohesive industry or sector ecosystems.

Poster Presentation Abstracts

Poster Session 1

9:20-10:00 am

Natalie Bolen (Marketing)

Companion Selection: The Impact of Expertise on Co-consumer Recruitment

Natalie Bolen, Gerald Häubl

This project addresses a significant gap in the existing literature by exploring the underexamined realm of companion selection in experiential events. Focusing specifically on consumers' criteria for choosing companions, this research concentrates on the pivotal role of expertise as the primary characteristic influencing these decisions. The study aims to unravel the complex dynamics of how consumers assess and choose companions for joint experiential activities. Multiple pathways will be examined including self- and other-focused mechanism which become prevalent during specific sets of circumstances. The conditions under which a consumer chooses a companion based on expertise over social-relational benefits will be identified. By delving into this unexplored territory, this research project seeks to contribute valuable perspectives that will influence academic thought and enhance our understanding of consumer behavior in the context of shared experiences.

Logan Crace (SMO)

Agents of Destruction and the Dynamics of Immoral Markets

Stigma scholars have generated a multitude of insights on the improbable persistence of core-stigmatized organizations and the wide array of management strategies used to survive and thrive in such market settings. These same clever tactics may also ensure the survival of markets such as conversion therapy, private prisons, plastics, payday loans, and many others that have detrimental social impacts. Immoral markets are perceived by some audiences as so evil and morally reprehensible that they should be completely eliminated and these demonizing audiences are motivated to put substantial effort into achieving this end. In this paper, I invoke the theoretical language of Schumpeterian creative destruction to explicate a morality infused version of this process that unfolds in contexts of extreme stigmatization. Fundamentally, creative destruction speaks to the way in which market-based social systems are able to evolve over time. In classical cases of creative destruction such as the displacement of the typewriter, the primary mechanism has generally been value-creating innovation that incidentally leads to destruction as the act of resource recombination produces both winners and losers. However, in the process of moral creative destruction the primary goal of the audience is destruction in and of itself which adds complexity to the situation. I theorize the role of “agents of destruction”, audiences who actively facilitate the destruction of immoral markets, particularly as it relates to the strategic manipulation of other audiences.

Bo Han (OIS)

Multi-layer Transportation Networks for Urban Planning

Networks play a pivotal role in the functioning of various societal sectors, including power grids, transportation systems, social sciences, and communication networks. Transportation networks are integral to everyday life, facilitating commutes and route planning for the general public. Our research has evolved from examining the single-layer transportation networks to exploring the multi-layer networks. This shift has empowered us to assess the feasibility of inter-layer connections, including those within reasonable walking distances and facilitating direct transfers. Building on this foundation, we aim to leverage multi-layer transportation networks to develop methodologies for planning new routes and stations. This approach aims to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of public transportation systems, offering a forward-thinking perspective on urban transit development.

Usama Malik (Finance)

Does optimism influence the dispersion effect?

The tendency of stocks with higher dispersion in analysts' earnings forecasts to earn lower subsequent returns (the dispersion effect) is well documented. Among different explanations for this relation, Diether, Malloy, and Scherbina (2002) suggest that it is due optimistic investors and market frictions, Johnson (2004) argues that firms with high levels of forecast dispersion have higher option value, and Scherbina (2005) and Hwang and Li (2018) propose that analysts tend to self-censor their low forecasts which causes the negative relation. In this paper, I attempt to determine whether analysts’ optimism induced skewness plays a part in causing the negative relation. If dispersion in forecasts increases with optimism and this optimism appears as skewness, then dispersion and returns should have a negative relation.

Yunjung Pak (SMO)

Transforming from Proof-of-Work to Proof-of-Stake: how governance moments reconstruct technology affordances of the Ethereum blockchain

Yunjung Pak, Tim Hannigan, Michael Lounsbury, Dev Jennings

This study investigates how the Ethereum blockchain's transition from Proof-of-Work (PoW) to Proof-of-Stake (PoS) reflects changes in technology affordances through governance moments. Building upon technology affordance theory in information systems, we explore the interaction between IT materiality and social context, emphasizing the role of institutional logics in shaping community IT usage patterns. We focus on Ethereum's significant forking event, the Merge, which achieved the transition from PoW to PoS. This archival study utilizes structural topic modeling on media discourse from mainstream and blockchain-specific outlets, examining discussions around Ethereum's Merge from 2020 to 2022. Findings suggest that the PoW to PoS transition in Ethereum was more than a technical shift; it required nuanced consensus-building among various stakeholders, including miners, developers, and investors. This process was driven by governance moments where critical issues and organizations were intertwined to control the expectations and perceptions of internal and external stakeholders, balancing the need for technological transition with the preservation of Ethereum's hybrid market-community logic. While blockchain media mainly discussed the impact of the transition on scalability and security, environmental sustainability predominantly resonated with mainstream media under high regulatory pressure on institutional adoption of blockchains. This study contributes to organizational studies by extending the concept of technology affordance and highlighting the crucial role of governance in the evolution of technology affordances. It underscores the significance of media discourse in shaping these affordances and the complex interplay between technology, institutional logics, and governance processes.

Erfan Rafieikia (OIS)

Express public transportation: A study on the integration and optimization of novel mass transit shared services by ride-hailing companies

Erfan Rafieikia, Borzou Rostami

This study investigates the complex relationship between trust and power in autocratic regimes, using a 35-year historical analysis of Iran's movie industry as a case study. Contrary to the prevailing view that trust and power imbalance are mutually exclusive, our findings reveal their coexistence. This challenges the traditional definition of trust as a willingness to be vulnerable based on positive expectations, and while previous studies have predominantly emphasized the

extensive benefits of trust, particularly in the context of institutional trust, our research diverges from this perspective and reveals a darker side of trust. Accordingly, distancing from the widespread apprehension regarding the decline of trust in institutions, our research highlights the negative aspects of trust in institutions, particularly how it enables institutional guardians to exploit trust without resistance, leading to constituent disempowerment. Our results shows this is facilitated by a self-fulfilling cycle of trust and the presence of unwavering institutional advocates. Further, our analysis shows a cyclical pattern of trust and distrust, with long-term negative effects persisting beyond the dissolution of trust.

Qingning (Nancy) Wang (Accounting)

Corruption, political connection, and earnings management

This paper studies whether political connected firms in more corrupt areas raise reported earnings by altering discretionary accounting accruals. I expect that in more corrupt areas, bureaucrats have more power and control over connected firms because they can better bend rules and transfer resources.

Xin Yang (Accounting)

Environmental covenants in supply contracts

Using a sample of long-term supply contracts collected from SEC filings, this study investigates whether and how public environmental enforcement affects customers' monitoring of suppliers and the propagation of ESG practices through the supply chain. This study also examines the effectiveness of such monitoring and the propagation of ESG practices. I measure public environmental enforcement intensity as the average number of environmental inspections and enforcement actions per manufacturing facility. I capture monitoring along the supply chain using environmental covenants in supply contracts. Customers facing more intense environmental regulatory enforcement are more likely to include environmental covenants in their supply contracts, and this effect is expected to be moderated by the relative bargaining power between the supplier and customer. This study also provides evidence that environmental covenants reduce suppliers' toxic chemical releases.

Poster Session 2
11:30-12:00 noon

Qi An (Accounting)
Firms' voluntary disclosure during Russia-Ukraine War

This research examines the voluntary disclosure practices of US firms during the Russia-Ukraine War. The Kyiv School of Economics (KSE) is actively monitoring the actions of foreign firms engaged in business with Russia as of 2023, categorizing them into four groups: exited, leaving, waiting, and staying. Voluntary disclosure statements released by these firms following the outbreak of the war are manually collected for analysis. Preliminary evidence suggests that private firms are more inclined to adopt a 'wait and stay' approach in Russia compared to their public counterparts. Furthermore, among public firms, those categorized as 'exited' tend to issue more statements than firms in other categories.

Lance Gregory (Marketing)
Thank You: When Expressing Gratitude Backfires

"Prior work finds that expressing gratitude brings a myriad of benefits to the expresser. We hypothesize, however, that the effects of expressing gratitude are more nuanced and that under certain circumstances, expressing gratitude may bring negative, unintended consequences to the expresser. Specifically, we believe that an expression of gratitude can signal that the expresser has received more surplus from a transaction than if the expresser had not expressed any gratitude. Importantly, we believe that this signal is perceived most negatively by the receiver when a grateful expression takes place in a context where there appears to be a fixed pie of resources divided between the receiver and the expresser, such as in distributive negotiations."

Leixing Jiang (Accounting)
Managerial learning in pharmaceutical industry

This study investigates whether managers can extract valuable insights from the stock market to guide their investments in drug development projects using regulated voluntary disclosure. The study may extend the current literature stream by showing that managerial learning is enhanced when voluntary disclosure is regulated. Leveraging clinical trial-level data, the study explores whether the stock market's reaction to a regulated voluntary disclosure of a clinical trial influences managers' decisions to either persevere or discontinue their investment in the respective trials. In addition, I will further investigate what kinds of information managers may learn from the stock market when they make regulated voluntary disclosure - science or market.

Feyzan Karabulut (Marketing)

Artificial or Intelligent:
How AI Chat Agents' Language Use Affects Consumers

Feyzan Karabulut, Sarah G. Moore, Paul R. Messinger

AI agents are increasingly employed to administer online chat customer service. We explore how AI agents' language use affects consumers. We specifically focus on AI agents' use of phatic communication in online chat interactions and examine two phatic cues: channel-managing (e.g., greetings) and small talk (e.g., personal inquiries). We find that AI agents' phatic communication can have positive or negative effects on consumers, depending on how authentically these cues represent AI agents' relational- and normative-social abilities.

Ozan Ozdemir (OIS)

Influencer Marketing 2.0:
The Role of Realism in Virtual Influencer Endorsements

Ozan Ozdemir, Paul R. Messinger, Feyzan Karabulut

The prevalence of virtual agents across various sectors has led to the emergence of virtual influencers on social media platforms as computer-generated alternatives to human social media influencers. This research sheds light on the factors influencing virtual influencers' effectiveness in brand endorsements by examining three types of realism and the interplay between them. Four experiments show that form realism, behavioral realism, and product domain realism affect virtual influencers' effectiveness as brand endorsers. All else being equal, virtual influencers with high (vs. low) form realism generate more positive brand outcomes because they are perceived by consumers to have higher social presence and to be more trustworthy. However, there are no differences in brand outcomes for high (vs. low) form realism when virtual influencers display low behavioral realism. Furthermore, when virtual influencers with low (vs. high) form realism endorse products belonging to domains characterized by low realism (i.e., the digital world), they generate more positive brand outcomes due to stronger influencer-domain fit perceptions. This research contributes to the literature by examining an emerging influencer type within the brand endorsement context. This research also offers practical implications for retailers regarding selecting the right influencer and crafting effective endorsement content.

Soroush Sadeghi (OIS)

Investigating the Paradox: Increased Nursing Services and Reduced Patient Length of Stay

Soroush Sadeghi, Saied Samiedaluie, Mohamad Soltani

This research project scrutinizes the relationship between the duration and incidence of discretionary nursing services and the length of stay (LOS) in patients at the Stollery Children's Hospital's short stay unit in Edmonton, Alberta. Traditional healthcare management practices in high-congestion units often lead to expedited processes and the elimination of non-critical discretionary services to decrease patient LOS. Contrary to these conventional approaches, our study proposes that dedicating additional time and services to patients could paradoxically result in a reduced LOS. By focusing solely on the services within the nurses' control, our research aims to identify the impact of these services on patient outcomes. Utilizing a log-transformed linear regression model with Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), we examine the effect of the selected services' incident rates and durations on the LOS, adjusting for control and fixed effect variables present in the dataset provided by the hospital. The objective is to determine if enhanced service delivery, which intuitively seems counterproductive, can actually streamline patient flow and reduce hospital stays. This research could revolutionize the approach to patient care in short stay units by demonstrating that improving service quality and delivery does not necessarily lead to increased LOS, but may in fact optimize efficiency and patient satisfaction. The findings could provide a compelling argument for re-evaluating patient care strategies in pediatric healthcare settings.

Linfeng Tian (Finance)

The Role of Gender in Earnings Conference Calls Information Environment

This study investigates the role of gender in shaping the information environment of earnings conference calls. Preliminary results based on quarterly earnings conference call transcripts and I/B/E/S analysts' information suggest that female analysts are treated differently during the Q&A sections of earnings conference calls. Regarding analysts' latest reaction after the calls, female analysts experience lower forecast accuracy for the next quarter, indicating a deteriorated information environment for female analysts. Moreover, I document that the gender composition of the executive team has a significant moderation effect on gender difference in the information environment of earnings conference calls.

Poster Session 3
1:15-1:50 pm

Bandita Deka Kalita (SMO)
Remaking Worth: Theorizing the Transformation of Institutional Values

Bandita Deka Kalita, Joel Gehman (George Washington University)

How can industries transition towards newer conceptions of good, and consequently, more sustainability outcomes? From a historical, inductive case study of Alberta's oil and gas industry between 1938 and 2019, we examine how values constituted the incumbent extractive institution's transformation. Using process theoretic methods and topic modeling, we theorize how this transformation transpired via an axiological motor consisting of two sets of opposing processes that remake "worth" across two dimensions. We conceptualize worth as a register, or measure, infusing "the good" in institutional values. Our theory of remaking worth primarily contributes by furthering "a constitutive approach" to institutional analysis, advancing institutional scholarship beyond overly cognitive explanations of change and maintenance. Second, it also explains how the remaking of worth, in driving values transformation, anchors the construction of grand challenges.

Likang Ding (OIS)
Translating empirical state-dependent service times into queueing models

Likang Ding,Bora Kolfa, Armann Ingolfsson

Recent empirical work has shown that customers and servers for a broad spectrum of service operations behave adaptively, which suggests that the corresponding queueing models should be state-dependent. Within this literature, we focus on models in which workload impacts server performance. Findings regarding the magnitude and the direction of workload impact are usually obtained from empirical service time patterns, but a state-dependent queueing model could be specified either in terms of service time distributions or service rates. To understand whether findings regarding server performance from service times are correctly understood, we investigate both service time-based and service rate-based state-dependent queueing models and relate their service process to empirical settings. We show that depending on the model type, it is sometimes incorrect to use service times to measure changes in the server performance in different states. Furthermore, an empirical finding that state-dependent mean service times move in one direction does not necessarily imply that state-dependent server speed moves in the opposite direction.

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Cindy Grappe (Marketing)

Losing Yourself to Others: How Morally-Incongruent Everyday Purchases for Others Impact Consumers and their Relationships

Cindy Grappe, Jennifer J. Argo, Sarah G. Moore

While consumers often make everyday purchases for their close others, no research has explored how morally-incongruent buys, such as buying meat for a partner while being vegetarian, affect the self and relationships. We show that it negatively impacts the buyer's moral emotions, which in turn damages feelings for the partner. These negative impacts are alleviated by frequency of purchasing such morally-incongruent products. However, identity-incongruent everyday small purchases for close others, such as buying a feminine item for a partner while identifying as male, result in positive individual and relationship emotions. This is proposed to be due to the fact that in such a context, consumers mostly focus on beneficial relational outcomes by adopting a shared identity, rather than on felt self-discrepancies.

Samira Jafari (SMO)

Socialized to run firms differently? How the masculinity and femininity of entrepreneurs affect key strategic aspects of their ventures

Samira Jafari, Jennifer Jennings, Dev Jennings, Kimberly Eddleston

Inspired by the recent resurgent interest in the personality characteristics of entrepreneurs, this paper investigates two related yet distinct considerations that have gone under-examined thus far: a founder's degree of masculinity and degree of femininity. We hypothesize that male and female founders will differ in gender-stereotypic ways on these two characteristics, which will contribute to noticeable differences in key strategic aspects of their ventures; specifically, the firm's long-term orientation, aggressive strategic posture, and commitment to an exploration strategy. The findings from our multivariate analysis of primary survey data collected from 272 US entrepreneurs reveal some intriguing departures from our theorizing. These departures possess noteworthy implications for future research on gender-based differences and inequalities in the domain of entrepreneurship.

Jennifer Sloan (SMO)

Assemblage Thinking in Organizational Practice: A Deleuzian Approach

Jennifer Sloan, Vern Glaser

This research introduces a fresh direction in Practice Theory by integrating Deleuze and Guattari's Assemblage Theory, shedding new light on organizational dynamics. Firstly, this integration emphasizes fluidity and adaptability, challenging the conventional view of static practices and advocating for a perspective of continuous change. Secondly, it reimagines the role of technology and human elements as a unified human-machine assemblage, deepening our understanding of their interplay in organizational settings. Thirdly, this thinking highlights the often-overlooked importance of temporality and spatiality in shaping practice creation, maintenance, and transformation. Moving beyond theoretical discussion, this work provides innovative, practical insights for the analysis and application of practices in organizations. Our goal is to expand Practice Theory's reach, emphasizing Assemblage Theory’s vital role in unpacking the complexities and dynamics of organizational practices.

Masoumeh Talebi (OIS)

Physician Rostering Problem

Masoumeh Talebi, Armann Ingolfsson, Björn Gunnarsson

In this project, we address the critical importance of physician rostering and optimal workforce utilization, aiming to prevent physician overexertion while ensuring fair rosters for all. To achieve this, we employ mathematical modeling techniques and leverage R programming to develop and solve an efficient rostering system. Through our presentation, we will delve into the intricacies of our approach, sharing insights gained from conducting sensitivity analysis. Additionally, we will discuss potential avenues for future research in this domain.

Kieran Taylor-Neu (Accounting)

Professional Expertise & Corporate Boards

In the domain of corporate governance, boards play a pivotal role in providing management oversight and safeguarding stakeholder interests. To be effective, boards should employ members with distinct yet complementary skillsets. This research explores how boards develop, distribute, and demonstrate expertise within the board of directors (BoD) and associated ancillary committees such as the audit committee (AC). Specifically, my current research delves into how professional expertise, as demonstrated by professional credentials is used to justify the composition of the BoD and the AC of listed companies. The study utilizes a comprehensive Canadian dataset of Annual Information Forms (AIFs), encompassing approximately 13,000 AIFs spanning 2000-2020, obtained from SEDAR through the intermediary Avantis AI. The period under study has witnessed significant regulatory evolution, particularly following well-documented accounting scandals in the early 2000s. In response, North American regulators have enacted laws aimed at strengthening board governance. For instance, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX) requires that all publicly listed companies establish an audit committee with independent members, including at least one financial expert. In a similar vein, Canadian National Instrument (NI) 52-110 introduced requirements for audit committee members to be independent and financially literate. The introduction of this legislation marks a key point in the dataset, offering a chance to assess changes in board compositions through investor documentation before and after these legal enactments. Analyzing these documents, which detail the evolving structures of corporate BoDs and ACs, the research seeks to yield insights for organizations striving to build effective boards in an increasingly dynamic business landscape.

Huijun (Janice) Yan (Finance)

The Spillover Effects of Environmental Initiatives and the Influence of ESG Funds

This study explores the spillover effects of positive environmental events and the role of ESG mutual funds in shaping the behaviors of Chinese public manufacturing companies. I hypothesize that such environmental events lead to significant increases in stock prices, reflecting the market's valuation of environmental practices. Using a peer-matching approach based on product type and production processes, I further hypothesize that these effects spill over to peer firms, which, motivated by a desire to not fall behind, similarly adopt proactive environmental actions. Additionally, I propose that peer companies with holdings by ESG funds or those under frequent scrutiny by these funds are more likely to engage in proactive environmental strategies. This research aims to underscore the synergy between positive environmental impacts and ESG investing in enhancing sustainable corporate practices.

Sihan Zhang (Finance)

Stocktwits and OTC stock trading

On November 22th, 2020, a trading application 'Stocktwits' allows OTC stocks to have $TICKER streams. This study aims at investigating the effects of Stocktwits on OTC stock trading activities. It is known that OTC stocks are less liquid, small and volatile relative to exchange stocks. But introduction of OTC stocks on Stocktwits may alter some stock characteristics and I examine it from two perspectives. 1. Whether return and liquidity of stocks whose cashtags are available on Stocktwits differ from the rest. 2. Whether posted messages on Stocktwits are informative.

3-Minute Presentation Abstracts

3MT Session 1

10:05-10:55 am

Arash Asgari (OIS)

Model development and validation for the call centre of a non-profit organization

Arash Asgari, Armann Ingolfsson, Saied Samiedaluie

We study the operations of a call centre for a non-profit organization, in which the on-duty agents might become unavailable (at times that are not recorded) because of after-call work, meetings, or breaks. Our goal is to develop a model that reproduces the empirically observed average wait times and abandonment proportions for this call centre. First, we investigated the Erlang-S model, which allows for variability in the agents' availability by expanding the parameter set of the commonly used Erlang-A model. The Erlang-S model outputs were closer than the Erlang-A model outputs to the empirical outputs. We obtain more valid results by extending the Erlang-S model to allow an agent's unavailability period to have two phases: a short period (e.g., due to wrap-up) followed by a longer period (e.g., going on a break). We use a customized expectation-maximization (EM) algorithm to estimate the model parameters. The customized algorithm incorporates new formulas, which significantly reduce computation time and memory requirements.

Turan Bayramli (Marketing)

Rude brand communication

Turan Bayramli, Sarah G. Moore

Consumers go through different emotional states in their day-to-day lives while searching for, purchasing, and using products or services. Nevertheless, the emotional consumption literature (which focuses on unveiling how various emotional states impact consumers' purchasing behavior) contributed to the field with their revelations, the effects of brand communications on these emotional states are yet to be researched deeply. Precisely, how the mean/rude communication used by brands in the form of advertisements and branding could trigger sad feelings to tap into consumers' compensatory consumption by inducing self-esteem-threatening thoughts. Moreover, our analysis of the mean/rude communication used by brands would reveal consumers' preferences for hedonic products versus utilitarian products when compensatory consumption behavior is activated.

Ailin Chen (Finance)

Institutional investors and firms' ESG activities: evidence from China

This research studies the heterogeneous effects of different institutional investors on firms ESG performance and disclosure behavior. Two questions are examined in the paper: (1) Do institutional investors impact firms' ESG disclosure and performance score? (2) Do multiple large institutional investors impact firms' ESG disclosure? We also conduct a cross-section analysis to test whether the impact of institutional ownership on firms' ESG activities varies between state-owned enterprises (SOE, hereafter) and non-SOEs, and between firms lie in regions with different levels of marketization.

Tim Derksen (Marketing)

Designing the Mood: Social Exclusion Leads to a Preference for and Co-creation of Negative Affective Products

In 2023, Spotify named its summer playlist the "bummer summer" as listeners searched for and listened to sad songs (Spotify 2023). The apparent choice of consumers searching for products that up-regulate negative emotions and down-regulate positive emotions, or negative affective products, is contrary to the majority of research that demonstrates consumers typically seek products that provide hedonic benefit (Chen & Pham 2018; McCrae & Gross 2020). Further, the Spotify example demonstrates how consumers co-create a new product (i.e. the "bummer summer" playlist) based on prior choices. Prior research demonstrates that the choice for sad songs can be driven by feelings of loneliness, isolation, or lack of social support (Lee et al. 2013). The increasing availability of customization and product design may further extend these choices for negative affective products and result in a preference for products and companies that offer such products. Through three studies, I demonstrate that consumers that feel socially excluded co-create negative affective products, like those products more, and are more likely to use that customization tool again in the future. These findings contribute to our understanding of mood regulation through consumption and consumer co-creation. This demonstrates that mass customization and the ability to generate designs through such easy to use tools as generative AI may lead to further creation of negative affective products and carries implications for consumer well-being.

Amir Faghihinia (Marketing)

How do new ratings shape consumer product evaluations?

Amir Faghihinia, Katie Mehr, Alexander B. Park (Indiana University)

Consumers rely heavily on online reviews in their product/service evaluations. There is substantial literature on this type of word-of-mouth. However, less is known about how new ratings provided by returning users (vs. new users) influence consumer evaluations. Through controlled experiments and secondary data, we discover that the source of a new rating affects product evaluations. Indeed, our findings indicate that when a returning rater provides a new, worse rating, consumers tend to evaluate products more negatively compared to receiving such ratings from a new rater. There is supporting evidence in our secondary data indicating that consumers find new worse reviews from returning users more useful in contrast to reviews by new raters. This research has substantial implications for how consumers perceive new ratings depending on the source type.

Arkadiy Lenchak (Finance)

Conductus cum cauda: predictive power of the language for CEO turnover

This research explores the predictive power of the language for CEO turnover. The basic premise behind this idea is the hypothesis that the CEO might learn about her own upcoming dismissal before the official announcement to the market. To measure the risk of CEO turnover, I analyze the transcripts of managerial interactions with financial analysts during the Earnings Calls. My findings show that the language can predict the upcoming turnover on top of and, in some cases, better than commonly used performance variables. The results suggest that the emotional color of words is a better indicator of the future CEO change than the business sentiments. Moreover, voluntary and forced dismissal are preceded by different language patterns.

Qiao Liu (Marketing)

Scheduling for self vs. others

Qiao Liu, Gerald Häubl

This paper examines people's choice of schedules that differ in intensity when they are choosing for themselves vs others. It is hypothesized that people will be more likely to choose a compact (expansive) schedule for themselves (others).

Niusha Safarpour (Marketing)

Binge watching and Reconsumption

Niusha Safarpour, Sarah G. Moore

Binge content consumption, a widespread yet complex behavior, is often misunderstood and overpathologized in research. While many studies treat it as a passive, maladaptive, and addictive activity (Hirschman, 1992; Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Schweidel & Moe, 2016), Pittman and Steiner (2011) argue that this oversimplification leads to misconceptions. This behavior, predominantly analyzed in the context of TV content, is rarely examined similarly for activities like book reading or podcast listening, hindering a comprehensive understanding of its cognitive processes.

Volitional reconsumption, another content consumption pattern, involves viewers enjoying and rewatching familiar content for nostalgia or specific outcomes (Russel, Levy, 2012; Gitlin, 1985; Tannenbaum, 1985). Research in this area is limited, especially regarding how binge and non-binge experiences differ and their respective impacts on affective, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes, particularly in marketing (Walton-Pattison, Dombrowski, Presseau, 2018; Merikivi et al., 2020; Nanda & Banerjee, 2020). Understanding these nuances is crucial for marketers to effectively leverage content formats, as platform design can influence consumption behaviors (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Schweidel & Moe, 2016; Rubenking and Bracken, 2018). Some platforms encourage binge-watching by releasing entire series simultaneously, while others promote episodic viewing. Further research could inform policies for content platforms to enhance user experience and impact (Flayelle et al., 2020; Nanda & Banerjee, 2020).

3MT Session 2
2:40-3:30 pm

Mehrnaz Behrooz (OIS)
Last-mile delivery with lockers and local crowd-shippers: The Study of TELUS Data for Good

Mehrnaz Behrooz, Borzou Rostami, Saleh Farham

Crowd shipping, a revolutionary paradigm in last-mile delivery, harnesses the power of local, non-professional couriers to efficiently transport packages to customers' doorsteps. This innovative approach offers a multitude of benefits for both retailers and consumers by optimizing private vehicle capacity, providing flexible and swift deliveries, and reducing overall costs. The potential benefits of crowd-shipping go beyond those directly involved, positively impacting the broader society.

Despite its advantages, crowd shipping faces challenges such as effective crowd-shipper matching, instances of missed deliveries, and concerns related to trust, safety, and privacy. Addressing these challenges is paramount for crowd shipping to fully realize its potential in enhancing the sustainability and efficiency of last-mile delivery, particularly within the rapidly expanding e-commerce landscape.

To tackle these obstacles, our research focuses on developing a novel network design for local crowd shipping in the City of Edmonton. Leveraging TELUS mobility data, our approach involves crowd-shippers seamlessly integrating parcel deliveries into their daily commutes between work and home. This not only promotes an eco-friendly and cost-effective solution but also empowers local individuals to actively participate as crowd-shippers, fostering a sense of community engagement. Our research endeavors to advance the evolution of crowd shipping as a robust and sustainable last-mile delivery solution. We aim to offer valuable insights and strategic approaches to surmount current challenges, with the overarching goal of amplifying positive impacts on local communities and enhancing the overall resilience of the delivery ecosystem.

Teddy Carter (SMO)
What is your place?: Self-location method in business research

In much organizational scholarship researchers express their knowledge creation from a placeless non-location. Such personal detachment has traditionally been seen to signify objectivity and truth in research. That being said, some business scholars, particularly those who conduct organizational ethnographies and participant observation as a part of their work, challenge the validity of researcher objectivity claims. These scholars have shown that self-reflexivity in research can allow them to connect their own emotional journeys to their observations of the studied organization, reveal the intersubjectivitive co-creation of knowledge between researcher and studied organization, and highlight or challenge the power dynamics at play between researcher and researched organization. Further, looking to other social science disciplines, claims of neutrality can actually be seen as problematic, or even impossible, since no one person is truly placeless. Claims of neutrality may be seen as particularly problematic when dealing with marginalized participants and organizations, since unexamined biases may be expressed unconsciously in scholarship (for example, through choices made while theorizing or doing data analysis), with the potential to exacerbate systemic forms of oppression against the groups studied. Indigenous methodologies point to researcher self-location, or positioning, as an important method to shine light on researcher bias, with the aim of reducing reinscription of oppressive systems in research. In this study I explore self-location as a research method that can reveal researcher bias by examining current self-location trends in business research, and connecting my findings to Indigenous thought on positioning in research.

Maggie Cascadden (SMO)

Communities' Telltale Hearts: How Communities Survive Erosive Closures

Scholars have explored how institutional infrastructure is built, but less is known about how it erodes. I am conducting a multi-year qualitative study, based on observations, interviews and over 2000 media articles and reports, to better understand the process of deinstitutionalization and the role of institutional infrastructure in this process. So far, I have spent two years studying the response of a small Albertan community, Wabamun, to the closure of all nearby coal power plants and mines and dissolution of their town government. In my work, which includes joining a community bowling league and interviewing former mayors and long-time residents of the now-hamlet, I try to understand how institutional infrastructure is utilized, or not, to bridge the gaps left by eroding institutions in and around this community.

Early data analysis suggests that institutional infrastructure plays an important role in the deinstitutionalization process. There are different mechanisms that expedite and hinder erosive processes. Interim findings suggest that erosion may be perpetuated through faux-ignorance: the failure to acknowledge a closure will cause erosion, resulting in perpetuation (and sometimes catalyzing) of further erosion. At the same time, two reactionary processes may occur in an attempt to fill holes caused by erosion: internal rebranding and external dissent. Internal rebranding is reactionary and attempts to fill these holes in real time, but the interim infrastructure is not always ideal. External dissent is resistance to using non-community infrastructure to patch holes, which paradoxically unifies the community.

Mehri E. Baloochi (SMO)

Unmasking the perils of trust: Insights from an understudied context

This study investigates the complex relationship between trust and power in autocratic regimes, using a 35-year historical analysis of Iran's movie industry as a case study. Contrary to the prevailing view that trust and power imbalance are mutually exclusive, our findings reveal their coexistence. This challenges the traditional definition of trust as a willingness to be vulnerable based on positive expectations, and while previous studies have predominantly emphasized the extensive benefits of trust, particularly in the context of institutional trust, our research diverges from this perspective and reveals a darker side of trust.
Accordingly, distancing from the widespread apprehension regarding the decline of trust in institutions, our research highlights the negative aspects of trust in institutions, particularly how it enables institutional guardians to exploit trust without resistance, leading to constituent disempowerment. Our results show this is facilitated by a self-fulfilling cycle of trust and the presence of unwavering institutional advocates. Further, our analysis shows a cyclical pattern of trust and distrust, with long-term negative effects persisting beyond the dissolution of trust.

Arjang Nikbakht (Marketing)

Patent pricing for an asymmetrical duopoly game

Arjang Nikbakht Bora Kolfal, Paul R. Messinger

Firms implement patents for benefits like cost advantage, and our objective is to theoretically model which firm from an asymmetrical duopoly has more willingness to pay for an available patent. The firms' decision processes are based on comparing the change in their profits under two scenarios: one where they buy the patent and another one where they let the competitor buy it. We have firms competing on price and we let the source of asymmetry extend to market base as well as the technological cost advantage brought by the patent. We find that for both simultaneous and sequential move games, the firm with the market base advantage or the leader among the two identical firms has more incentive to buy the patent in all conditions. These findings contradict with the current literature but are consistent with observed industry patent trades in which the leaders are the patents' primary target market. The final patent price decreases as the market base advantage of the buyer increases, even though its willingness to pay increases. We also find that as products of two firms become more substitutable, the price of the patent increases. Since a follower role is preferred by both firms in the Stackelberg game, if we allow for a role change after buying the patent, there is a significant drop in patent price when firms' market bases are close.

Shuhan Yang (Marketing)

Fairness revisionism: Reducing discrimination for future generations reduces perceived unfairness in previous discrimination experiences

Shuhan Yang, Tito L.H. Grillo

While concrete advancements in combat against the unfair treatment of marginalized groups have clear benefits for newer generations of these groups, it is unclear how they affect those who have already suffered discrimination and will not directly benefit from these advancements. History cannot be rewritten, and the unfairness that afflicted people in the past cannot be undone. We examine how victims of discrimination respond to signals that new members of their social groups will receive fairer treatment than they themselves received in the past. We propose that these fairness advancements increase their perceived fairness in their own experiences–despite these experiences remaining objectively the same. We term this phenomenon fairness revisionism. Five studies (N = 1,760) evidenced fairness revisionism in women (Studies 1-3, 5) and immigrants (Study 4) regarding how the treatment received by society in general (Studies 1, 2) and in an experimental scenario focused on the work environment context (Studies 3-5). We also find evidence of in-group experience sharing as a mechanism underlying this revisionism (Studies 2, 5): the victims internalize the gains for younger in-group members as part of their own experience. Accordingly, observers assessing out-group individuals' experiences don't exhibit fairness revisionism, and neither do victims when fairness advancements benefit out-group members. In sum, inter-cohort fairness advancements can attenuate perceived fairness in subjective experiences. This pattern can be a double-edged sword: these advancements buffer the "pain" of unfair experience, but they might also undermine the motivation to further pursue the action against discrimination.

Shuo Yuan (SMO)

The emergence, spread and variation of Chief Wellbeing Office (CWO)

In the previous practices, emotions are primarily portrayed as micro-level motivators for instigating and implementing institutional change. While these studies provide valuable insights, macro-cultural foundations of emotions, alongside the heterogeneous efforts exerted by spatially dispersed and diverse activities of various actors, are crucial in new practice creation and variation. We are fascinated with the broad social wellness movement that redefines happiness and wellbeing, and how this affects organizations. Specifically, we find that organizations staff a new practice, Chief Wellbeing Officer. We are particularly interested in understanding how this role emerged, how it spread, and variation in this role.

Yasser Zeinali (OIS)

Predicting demand for wildfire suppression resources

Yasser Zeinali, Ilbin Lee, Mostafa Rezaei

Between 2011 and 2022, more than 8000 wildfires occurred annually, burning an average of 2.2 million acres per year in Canada. As a result of the significant costs and damages incurred by these wildfires, there is immense pressure on wildfire management agencies to devise a more effective resource allocation strategy for fighting wildfires. However, a model predicting the demand of firefighting resources in the coming days has not been developed in literature. We propose a newsvendor formulation and quantile regression models to generate distributional forecasts for the demand. Our results indicate that the proposed models outperform baselines mimicking the strategy currently in use.

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Discussion & Feedback Guidelines

A key objective of the Business Ph.D. Research Conference is to allow students to learn about the broad range of business research topics being explored by their colleagues. Students are encouraged to provide feedback and think critically about other presenters' research.

To encourage interdisciplinary engagement with business research, all students are encouraged to view all posters and provide constructive feedback via the QR code. Students whose submissions are being discussed are expected to be in attendance to answer questions, receive feedback, and engage in active discussion of their work.

The **Presentations** will consist of a 15-minute talk followed by 15 minutes of discussion, with opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

The **Poster Sessions** will allow attendees to wander among posters and interact with authors and their research.

The **3MT presentations** will have 2 minutes allocated after each presentation for a question from the audience, or you can find the presenter at one of the tables around the room in the 10 minutes immediately following the session, and talk with them further.

All attendees are reminded that while attending the conference all university guidelines and policies, such as those in regard to respectful and inclusive conversations, should be followed.

Resources for Health and Wellness:

- https://www.ualberta.ca/business/student-services/wellness.html

Resources for Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity:

- https://www.ualberta.ca/business/about/equity-diversity-inclusivity.html
- https://www.ualberta.ca/equity-diversity-inclusivity/index.html