



Masters International R&D Center

MIRDEC & GLOBECOS 2021

MIRDEC & GLOBECOS – 4th
International Academic Conference
Contemporary Issues and Social Science Studies
(Virtual/Online conference)

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Rome 2021, Italy

Conference Proceedings

Book of Abstracts

Editors
Slagjana Stojanovska
Antonio Focacci

Rome, Italy
26-27 May 2021

MIRDEC-GLOBECOS 4th -Rome 2021 - International Academic Conference on
Contemporary Issues and Social Science Studies
26-27 May 2021, Rome, Italy
Masters International Research & Development Center
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Masters International Research & Development Center

MIRDEC International Academic Conference

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Prof. Slagjana Stojanovska is Full Professor at the Integrated Business Institute (IBI), and Integrated Business Faculty (IBF), both in Skopje, North Macedonia. During her teaching career, she has prepared dozens of authorized lectures on Marketing management, Global marketing, Promotion strategy and Consumer behaviour. She is author of the books Creation of Competitive Business in Macedonia, A Marketing Plan Guide and Consumer Behavior & Marketing aspects. She has travelled and lectured extensively at several Universities throughout Europe and India and was a Plenary Speaker at numerous academic and business conferences. She is a Conference Head of Masters International Research & Development Center (International Academic Conference) – MIRDEC (www.mirdec.com), Editor of several Conference Proceedings, Member Editor in FOCUS: Journal of International Business (www.journalpressindia.com) and a reviewer of more than twenty articles. Through the years, she has worked in several companies as Planning Analysis Manager, Journalist and TV Show Editor, Marketing Director of a Business Journal and as a Founder and Director of a Consulting Company. She has successfully incorporated her knowledge and practical experience from the business sector in the preparation and implementation of numerous national and international projects, where she was engaged as project manager, consultant and trainer. As an expert and a researcher she was working on the market research, marketing strategy and the preparation of business plans for many companies in the country. Her focus has been and still is the company's competitiveness.

Antonio Focacci

Bologna University, Italy

Dr. Antonio Focacci is a senior lecturer at Bologna University in Italy. He has publications and presentations in various international journals and conferences. He is invited member of two international Journals Editorial Bords and served as a referee for many others. His research interest have covered different fields in economics and in management with specific reference on: sustainable economics, economics of commodities, economic cycles, investment assessment, energy and renewables, models for evaluating CSR and strategic positioning of business, etc.

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Business & Enterprise: Business cycles, business planning, supporting SME, policies to promoting SME, e-commerce, women entrepreneurs education and development, strategic integration between innovation & entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship in developing countries, corporate and social entrepreneurship, leveraging digital skills for innovation in the society, high-tech, R & D, enterprises.

Demography & Population: Migration studies, demography, population studies.

Economics: Microeconomics, macroeconomics, economic growth, fiscal and monetary policy, finances, public regulations, sustainable development, agro-economics, climate change.

Environment: Environment economics, fiscal policy for protecting environment, green production, sustainable growth, natural resource, management, climate change, macro-micro issues in environment studies.

Education: Research & development in education, technology and education, education strategies for different age groups, life time education, pedagogy, learning and teaching, educational psychology, curriculum and instruction, e-learning, virtual learning, global internet courses, blended learning, flipped, pathway, enabling, work integrated learning, executive training, training and development, educational leadership.

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Health: Public health, health policies, hospital management, public and private health services, economic, social and political aspects of health services.

International Business: Culture and business, regional-global business, entry modes, strategy, expansion, mergers & acquisitions, trade, franchising strategies.

Internet & Social Media Studies: Social media, internet, future of communication.

Management: Human resources, cultural problems in labor mobilization, international human resource, mobility of human resource, business, cross cultural, corporate governance, financial resources, gender issues, technological resources, natural resources, knowledge.

Marketing: New media, social media marketing strategies, international, consumer research, market research, policy research, sales research, pricing research, distribution, advertising, packaging, product, media.

Philology, Language & Translation Studies: Historical study of language, aspects and research of speech production, transmission reception, linguistics, translation studies.

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Tourism: Developing sustainable tourism destinations, tourism and heritage preservation, tourism economics, tourism policies, hospitality, tourism management and marketing, tourism planning and regional development, protected areas and tourism.

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Thanks to all our participants for their academic and social contributions.

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OANA CALAVREZO¹, LEWIS HOUNKPEVI², FLORENCE JOURNEAU³ AND MARIE-HÉLÈNE NGUYEN⁴

**USE OF FRENCH-SHORT TIME WORKING SCHEME DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS:
AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS FOR THE PERIOD MARCH THROUGH MAY 2020**

Abstract

In France, the short-time working scheme has been one of the main responses to the Covid-19 crisis in order to safeguard jobs, making the country one of the most frequent users of this approach in Europe. As a temporary solution, which is generally countercyclical, short-time working enables businesses to adjust the number of hours worked to fit with fluctuating levels of activity, while seeking to avoid actual lay-offs. In this descriptive paper, we analyze employers' use of this solution during the period of the first French lockdown, based on exhaustive administrative data. One of the key aspects of our study is the comparison between current short-time working practices and those prevailing prior to the health crisis, including during the economic recession of 2008-2009.

Keywords: Short-time working, Covid-19

JEL Codes: J68

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SOVIK MUKHERJEE¹

ANTITRUST ISSUES IN THE CONTEXT OF PLATFORM MARKETS: EFFECTIVENESS OF REGULATIONS IN INDIA

Abstract

Platform based markets or two sided platforms refer to a market situation where two distinct groups with each other by means of a common platform. Digitalisation and globalisation waves have increased the induction of platforms in our country and the growth of such platforms has made names like Flipkart, eBay, Snapdeal, Amazon, OLA, Uber, etc. familiar in every household. Along with their development, implications for analysing anti-trust and regulatory policies on anti-competitive strategies have simultaneously cropped up. Concentration of power, abuse of dominant position in relevant geographical market and predatory pricing has been common allegations on these platform markets, India is not an exception. Competition Commission of India as the sectoral regulator receives and decides on cases related to platform markets and their anti-competitive practices. Dynamics of platform markets are high and the regulator has to keep pace with the changing times. In this paper, case analysis and the decisions of the Competition Commission of India (CCI) will be discussed in the light of the theoretical Industrial Organisation (IO) model involving buyers, sellers and a dominant platform. The model has been developed to analyse the approach of the regulator and highlight the cross-roads of competition given the global pedagogy of growth and the multiplication of two-sided markets in generating a large share of contribution to any economy's growth.

Keywords: Antitrust, market power, monopoly, platform competition, two-sided markets

JEL Codes: K21, L12

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PELLEGRINO MANFRA¹

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ANTONINE PANDEMIC IN 165 AD THAT POSSIBLY CAUSED THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Abstract

The Antoinine Plague of 165 to 180 AD, was an ancient pandemic brought to the Roman Empire by troops who were returning from campaigns in the Near East. Ancient sources agree that the plague appeared first during the Roman siege of the city Seleucia – near modern day Baghdad in the winter of 165–166. The severe devastation of the pandemic was reported that the plague spread to Gaul and to the Legions along the Rhine. The total death count has been estimated at 5 million, and the disease killed as much as one third of the population in some areas and devastated the Roman army. It was reported that as many as 2000 people died daily in Rome. Other estimate sources estimate that about 10% of roman empire population died. If the pandemic did not cause the destruction and the devastation of the Roman Empire it certainly weakened the empire – particularly in the east. The Antoinine plague probably was the first pandemic in world history in a globalized scale. This paper shows how the pandemic weakened for the first time the Roman Empire that possibly caused the inevitable decline and fall.

Keywords: Roman Empire, Antoinine Plague, Seleucia

JEL Codes: N00

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PELLEGRINO MANFRA¹

AN ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL STOCK MARKET BUBBLES FROM THE DOT.COM TO COVID 19: WILL BITCOIN BE NEXT?

Abstract

The 3rd millennium started with a massive stock market bubble – the so called the dot.com bubble followed with an even greater one - the housing financial bubble in 2007. Subsequently covid 19 crisis arrived and that was the pin that pricked the financial bubble in 2020. The question at this point is will bitcoin be next? What is peculiar with all these bubbles - were all initiated by the Federal Reserve System (FED) – with expansionary monetary policy. Given the historical precedent in financial bubbles from Dutch Tulip Mania to South Sea bubble - bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies mania are bound to be the next financial bubble. Bitcoin started in 2010 virtually free to over \$60,000 in March 2021. Analyzing the graph and the digital framework bitcoin is in bubble territory. The term bubble came into official use with the passage of the “Bubble Act” in 1720 by the British Parliament where the England granted the South Sea Company the right to take over its war debt and speculators quickly inflated the share prices of South Sea.

Since last year bitcoin has surged more than 1000% and a market cap is over \$1 trillion - this is a bigger and faster increase than the famous bubbles such as the dot-com bubble in the year 2000 or the housing financial bubble before 2007. Some wise economists have warned that the entire cryptocurrencies market might be in “the mother of all bubbles”. Looking at its price one can conclude that is behaving irrational and speculative. Using various data, this paper examines the causes of financial bubbles and will try to predict the next bubble.

Keywords: Federal Reserve System, expansionary policy, Dot.com bubble, Dutch Tulip Mania, South Sea Bubble, Bitcoin

JEL Codes: G20

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MARIA LIASHENKO¹

NEURODIVERSITY AND MEASURING SUCCESS VIA HUMAN VALUES

Abstract

In recent years there has been a positive shift in attitudes towards a neurodiversity paradigm. Despite some significant changes showing higher employment rates of neurodivergent people (ND), the ways to measure their progress have not changed. Often questionnaires to measure progress are designed around neurotypical needs and involve processing challenges for ND users. This small-scale research is aimed at developing a new ND friendly tool to assess the progress based on core values that are fundamentally important to reflect personal progress. The research is underpinned by Human Values Framework proposed by BBC as a new approach to measure success. The project is a participatory research which is conducted in collaboration with the service provider whose aim is to support ND learners through training and offering employment opportunities. The research design is underpinned by a logic model Impact Value Chain which is used to visualize the components of the impact process. Following this model, the research process was organized as a five staged research strategy. The data was gathered using firstly an online questionnaire to identify the priority values for ND people. After that, a focus group of ND learners was interviewed to clarify specific values and access needs. The findings are used to identify priority values for ND learners and the ways to make a progress assessment tool more inclusive for them. The paper presents the intermediate findings that are used to create a conceptual progress assessment tool. The further research will be directed to evaluation and refinement of the proposed tool using Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). As a result, the tool is expected to be used by the service provider to measure the progress of the service users.

Keywords: Neurodiversity, neurodivergent people, a service provider, human values framework, a participatory approach, autism, a progress assessment tool

JEL Codes: M00, Z00, Z10

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ADAM PAWLICZ¹

UNDERSTANDING SHARING ECONOMY DATA SOURCES: A SUPPLY SIDE PERSPECTIVE

Abstract

A sine qua non of sound research is undoubtedly reliable data, and the short-term rental market is no exception. As this part of the hospitality market is not usually part of official statistics, academics, industry players and government officials need other data sources to assess the basic market indicators of capacity and occupancy. The second-best solution are the publicly available websites of intermediaries. Although the number of research papers in the area of the short-term rental market is growing, there is a paucity of discussion on the advantages and limitations of various data sources. To fill this research gap, a grounded approach is used based on a literature review. In this paper, the pros and cons of all data sources are analysed within a proposed framework that consists of three levels: intermediaries, web scraping, and source-specific. This paper may be of help in identifying the right source of data.

Keywords: Hospitality market, supply side perspective, data sources, accommodation market, tourism, sharing economy

JEL Codes: Z30, Z31, Z39

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JORGE HERNANDO CUÑADO¹

**INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON CURRENT GLOBAL ISSUES: ENVIRONMENT,
ECONOMICS AND POLITICS**

Abstract

This article studies current problems regarding environment, economics and politics using the Institutional Theory. First of all, there is a definition of institution and an explanation of how institutions change over time. Institutions can also be understood as systems where there are feedback loops among environment, economics and politics. Concerning environment, the market is an institution that for a long time has not taken into consideration environmental outcomes. Nowadays there is more environmental concern to change from a “linear economy” to a “circular economy”. In economics, there is an increasing trend to inequality in developed countries which led to institutional deterioration through less inclusiveness. In politics, there is also institutional decline due to several factors such as corruption, lobbies or tax avoidance.

Keywords: Institutional theory, global governance, environment economics

JEL Codes: Q50, O44

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TANU M. GOYAL¹

**TECHNOLOGY UNCERTAINTY AND INCOMPLETENESS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS:
REFLECTIONS FROM THE DESIGN OF INDIA'S BILETERAL AGREEMENTS
COVERING SERVICES**

Abstract

International trade agreements are incomplete contracts. The international environment is non-stationary, and technological progress affects both the nature of services and modes of service delivery. This creates uncertainty about future developments in technology-based services. In the presence of transactions costs and due to limited foresight, it is difficult to specify all contingencies within trade agreements ex ante, resulting in contractual incompleteness. This article investigates the design of India's services agreements to assess the approach followed while listing the ex-ante commitment and its implication on technology-based services. It also discusses the ex-post mechanism under these agreements to address the gaps in the commitments with respect to new services, and the enforcement mechanism to facilitate the inclusion of these services. It is found that India's bilateral agreements leave the inclusion of services that may not be technically feasible, ex ante, at the discretion of the trading partners, ex post. Some of India's agreements also institute a governance mechanism for facilitating this inclusion. The article argues that there is a need for addressing the issue of technology uncertainty both at an international-trade-policy level and under bilateral agreements. Internationally, efforts are underway for a technology-neutral classification of services. Bilateral agreements must include a robust mechanism within the scope of the Agreement for filling gaps that may arise with technological advancements. For furthering the objective of trade agreements, these mechanisms must be backed by sound governance structure.

Keywords: Technological uncertainty, international trade, preferential trade agreements, WTO, GATS, international law and economics

JEL Codes: L80, L84, L86, F13, K33, F53, F55

¹ The author is a Consultant with the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and can be contacted at tgoyal@icrier.res.in; This paper is published in Foreign Trade Review (Sage Publications) in January 2021. The full paper is accessible at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0015732520981511>.

SANDRA RIBEIRO¹ AND BEATRIZ MACHADO DUARTE²

FINTECH - THE IMPACT IN THE INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL ECONOMY

Abstract

In a world where the key to change belongs to innovation, where people are always in constant search of the most technologically advanced product and service, the organizations that give priority to this will have a comparative advantage and will prosper, while others will not be able to adapt and will be left behind.

The same will apply to people. Even if we cannot predict the future, we can already say that if we are not able to adapt, not interested in learning, not open to the future, we will easily get behind. There's a real analogy, if you think through it, proving that everything that will be explained and predicted in this article is happening at the moment.

In this paper, is explained what is fintech and how it is changing the world in the most positive way. If the idea was analyzing fintech as a hole, we could obviously expose the difficulties and entrance barriers in companies, and what it could do badly to finance, but the idea of showing the changes that we already can prove and how it is evolving in the society from an initial opportunity to an almost essential move in finance, lead us to the conclusion that besides the risks, and besides what can go wrong, we must be unafraid of the new if we want to be better and grow.

Fintech is changing the world as we know in big steps, making the called impossible more real than we could imagine. There's a worldwide change caused by technology, leaving us with the duty to learn and understand the impacts, as we all adapt to be better.

Keywords: Fintech, international economy, global economy

JEL Codes: F00, F60

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GUILLAUME VERMEYLEN¹ AND LOREDANA CULTRERA²

AN EVALUATION OF SELECTION TECHNIQUES FOR BANKRUPTCY PREDICTION MODELS: ANALYSIS OF THE POSITION IN THE GLOBAL VALUE CHAIN

Abstract

This study introduces a comparison analysis in the application of statistical and artificial intelligent techniques to solve the bankruptcy prediction problem faced by small and medium size firms. Accordingly, the selection techniques are grouped in the following families: statistical techniques, with (i) backward and (ii) forward procedures, and artificial intelligence techniques, with (iii) the lasso machine learning technique and (iv) the ensemble technique called classification and regression trees – CART analysis. Relying on a comprehensive bankruptcy database of 7,104 Belgian SMEs, we show that intelligent techniques yield superior prediction performance when predicting bankruptcy. Interestingly, our empirical results are sensible to the position of the firm in the global value chain (GVC), with prediction performance of key variables being lowered for firms behaving upstream in the production process, providing support to upward contagion effects of bankruptcy along the GVC.

Keywords: Accounting ratios, artificial intelligence, variable selection methods, bankruptcy prediction, global value chains

JEL Codes: G33, M41, C53, C23

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HUDA ALHAJJAJ¹

WHY DO WE NEED SOCIAL WORKERS IN JORDANIAN SCHOOLS: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOCIAL WORK AND COUNSELLING

Abstract

The interviews were transcribed and later entered into a qualitative software program (Nvivo) for

This was a qualitative exploratory study that intended to explore the differences between school social worker and the school counselor. It aims to determine the perceptions of school social workers. This study also intends to determine the role of social workers in schools and the services they could provide for the students. A semi-structured interview was developed by the researchers. Subjects were interviewed using a semi-structured process.

The basic questions for this study were: Is there need for school social workers? What are the roles of school social workers? What are the differences between the counselor and the school social worker? What are the common problems in schools that require a school social worker? Overall findings from the three groups indicated that school social workers have multiple roles, including intervention and integrating students with their classmates in the school, especially those who come from different groups like refugees. Also, their roles based on the participants' perspective involve linking the school with the resources in the community. Moreover, the role involves cooperation with all members in the school to solve students' problems and improve their academic achievement.

Also, participants indicated that there could be differences between the school social workers and counselors based on their roles since the social worker role is deeper and more comprehensive for the students' issues than the counselor. Some indicated there is no difference between the two roles while some did not recognize that a member in the school was called the school social worker.

In summary, the problems that require a school social worker are many but the same in most schools. The basic problems are dropouts, drug use and smoking, low academic achievement, and behavioral and emotional problems. The challenges and barriers that limit the existence of school social workers in the Jordanian community are many. All three groups agreed that policymakers did not pay attention to the importance of school social workers because of the economic factor. Most participants agreed that our culture has been changed and developed, and that parents nowadays are more aware of their children's school problems and they need someone professional to help deal with these problems.

Keywords: School social work, schools, social worker, counselling

JEL Codes: I10, I18, I20, I21, I24, I28, I29

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SLAGJANA STOJANOVSA¹

HOW THE PANDEMIC CHANGE CUSTOMER BUYING PRACTISES

Abstract

There's no doubt, COVID-19 had impact on society for time of lockdown so that many people have established new-found habits built around the digital world more than ever to support all aspects and consequences of isolation. The global lockdown has accelerated the shutdown of physical stores and direct sales to consumers through mobile and digital channels are increased and have forced consumers who had previously been reluctant to shop online. Although online shopping was prevalent long before the emergence of a global pandemic there is an important shift from traditional retail to e-commerce. According to the findings of some reports worldwide e-commerce sales an increase of 18% (\$3.5 trillion in 2019), compared previous year. In addition, online search and online ordering have dramatically impacted the way we buy and consumer products and services. Since the start of the current pandemic, there have been numerous reports and literature on how Covid-19 has accelerated those trends. As well as that consumers are adopting new habits, behaviors and experience that many anticipate will continue in the long term. The purpose of this research paper is to analyse the transformation of consumer buying practices and behavior in time of Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Consumer buying practices, behaviour, habits, new experience, buy online

JEL Codes: M10, M20

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SANDRA SPIROVA¹ AND ANETA VASILJEVIC-SHIKALESKA²

AIR POLLUTION: AWARENESS AND PRACTICE IN THE SCOPE OF HOUSEHOLD HEATING

Abstract

Air pollution is a concern which poses threat to human health and likewise greatly impacts the ecosystem and the environment. By its broader definition, the air pollution is described as increase in the rate of harmful gases and particles in the atmosphere.

Understanding the awareness of air pollution and support for environmental protection from the public is essential for its appropriate solution.

The aim of this study was to analyse the state of public awareness in the field of air pollution in Skopje, particularly focusing the attention on the household heating as one of the major sources of ambient air pollution in the city.

A survey on 142 households was conducted in order to obtain information about the ways of residential heating and the willingness of households to use more environmentally friendly heating technologies. The survey was carried out on the territory of the city of Skopje, given that it is on the top of the list of most polluted cities in Europe.

Furthermore, the existing regulations and environmental and economic measures, as well as implemented practices for reducing the air pollution in R. of North Macedonia, and particularly its capital city, were also reviewed.

The results showed that most of the households (about 66%) are aware about the air pollution, but they still use firewood as it is the cheapest mode of heating. The previous is of particular importance and decisive for the low-income households. It was also observed that the respondents were familiar with the possibility for using wood pellets, as more environmentally heating mode, but there was a lack of information concerning the possibility of governmental subsidizing for replacement of the existing firewood with wood pellets system.

The households that have already started to use wood pellets, have increased monthly costs (10 - 40%), but nevertheless they still recommend the use of pellet stoves due to the efficiency of heating, maintenance, cleanliness, and less pollution of air on the long run.

Summarizing, the choice of heating with firewood is more due to the lower monthly incomes and rational cost planning of the households, and less to the lack of awareness of citizens for utilizing more efficient and more environmentally friendly heating technologies.

Keywords: Air pollution, firewood, wood pellets, household heating, awareness, public

JEL Codes: Q53, P46, D19

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