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Editorial

It is with great pride and excitement that we present this special anthology edition of the Phoenix Scholar in celebration of the 10th anniversary of our Knowledge Without Boundaries (KWB) annual research summit. Ten years may seem like a long time to some, however, it seems like just yesterday when we first introduced this summit to our academic community and industry partners as a way to showcase the meaningful and transformative research and scholarship being generated by our faculty, staff, students, and research center personnel.

Since then, we have endured environmental threats, geopolitical wars, and the aftermath of a seemingly once-in-lifetime pandemic. The world has changed dramatically in the last decade, not only with the advent of technology that has brought us closer together, but with situations and problems that require intricate and unique solutions which must be tested and examined. Enter the theme of the 2023 research summit: Thrive in a Brave New World.

Opening Day One of the 2023 KWB Summit, Dr. Cheryl Lentz, a former College of Doctoral Studies graduate, teacher, and entrepreneur delivered a powerful autoethnographical keynote. Day Two, University of Phoenix President Chris Lynne recognized the 2023 winners of the inaugural President's Award for Excellence in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging in the areas of research, scholarship, and dissertation research. Finally, on Day Three, College of Doctoral Studies Vice Provost Dr. Hinrich Eylers presented the 2023 Dissertation of the Year Awards.

Within this three-day, online venue, we provided attendees a chance to experience a wide array of presentations from scholars whose explorations into topical matters have broadened and expanded meaningful research and scholarship, documented complex issues, and presented new and innovative practices beneficial to higher education and industries. We engaged with a record number of attendees representing over 14 countries including the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Italy, Algeria, United Arab Emirates, Trinidad/Tobago, Philippines, Peru, Nigeria, Mexico, Japan, Jamaica, and Ghana. In addition to over 70 presentations, we had over five



hundred attendees, which made this one of the largest research summits in our history.

As we reflect on the last ten years and begin planning the next decade of the KWB Summit, we invite you to pause with us as we present this edition as a recognition of the research and scholarship excellence in the 2023 KWB Summit. In this issue you will find abstracts from the 2023 KWB presentations; an interview with the KWB Keynote Speaker, Dr. Cheryl Lentz; and an article from KWB presenters Elif Kalemдарoglu-Wheeler and Marty Hill. We look forward to seeing you at the next KWB Summit in October 2024!

Sincerely,

Hinrich Eylers, Ph.D.

Vice Provost, Doctoral Studies and Academic Operations
College of Doctoral Studies

Rodney Luster, Ph.D.

University Research Chair
Center for Leadership Studies and Organizational Research

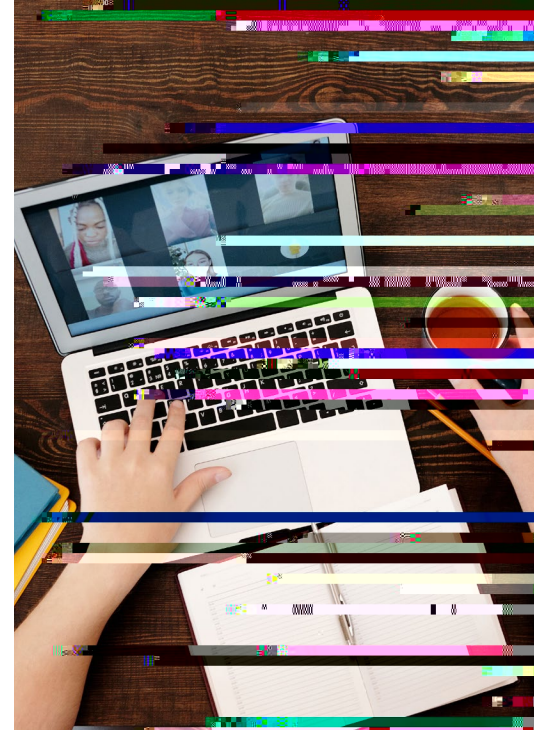
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2023 Knowledge Without Boundaries (KWB) Virtual Summit Proceeding Abstracts



Day One

Building Social Capital as a University Imperative

How Higher Education Leaders Can Help Students of Color Thrive by Building Belonging

Marlene Blake, Jessica Flores, & Patricia Battson

Recent trends in higher education point to challenges with building student belonging. Researchers report that a decline in student sense of belonging results in lower levels of perceptions regarding feeling valued, part of the community, and comfortable at the institution (Mueller et al., 2022; NSSE, 2021, Tice et al., 2021). The problem investigated in this study is that students of color may encounter exclusion experiences in educational institutions resulting in lower levels of sense of belonging (Lewis et al., 2021). Establishing a sense of belonging provides positive benefits for students. Specifically, researchers reveal the strong association of students' sense of belonging with academic achievement, university success, satisfaction, progression, and becoming more empowered to engage fully in the online or face-to-face learning community (Pickford, 2016; Smith et al., 2021; Thomas, 2012; Thomas et al., 2014). Thus, it is increasingly important for higher education leaders to investigate opportunities to intentionally implement practices to build belonging throughout the college community.

Transitioning from Employee to Entrepreneur During a Pandemic

Thureiyya Rodriguez & Sharam Moslehi Seisan

The “Great Resignation” during the COVID-19 pandemic shaped the future of the workforce. The great resignation involved employees voluntarily resigning from their company en masse during the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The shift in the economic stance greatly influenced the voluntary resignations. Throughout the pandemic employees were either on unemployment due to closure of a business, working additional hours with additional duties, or working from home. The pandemic caused a shift in how employers performed business, but it also shaped how employees began to view their current perspective working for someone else. The economy saw a spike in small business ownership and eventually led to a trend in becoming an entrepreneur. The closure of big corporations and the opening of small business does not always have positive outcomes. This study takes a look at the individual's perspective on the challenges and benefits of leaving an organization and pursuing entrepreneurship during the COVID-19 pandemic. A random sample within the United States was used to conduct a survey of each individual's view on the great resignation and how it affected their career choices. This study aims to provide a greater perspective on pursuing a career change during a pandemic and at what cost does change affect one's personal life.

Women's Advancement Lived Experiences in the Consumer-Packaged Goods Industry: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study

Karen Martin, Les Huffman, & Donald Munday

This dissertation presents a qualitative phenomenological study that explores the experiences of women who have achieved senior leadership roles in the consumer-packaged goods industry within the United States. Despite advancements in gender equality, women continue to be underrepresented in leadership roles in various industries. The purpose of this research was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and barriers women who have encountered in their journey to leadership and to identify common themes and patterns within their narratives. The findings of this research contribute to the existing literature on women in leadership and provides insight into the complex challenges faced by women aspiring to leadership positions. The identification and exploration of these barriers in

foundation for future research and advocacy aimed at breaking down barriers and fostering gender equality in leadership roles.

The Relationship Between Work Stress and Job Satisfaction: Organizational Stress Prevention Programs as a Moderator

Jason Stroman & Crystal Lupo

Work stress can lead to a host of issues including productivity reduction, lack of organizational commitment, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intent (Burnett & Pettijohn, 2015). The higher the organizational stress, the lower the organizational commitment (Ali & Kakakhel, 2013). Yang and Tseng (2022) identified job satisfaction one of the most significant predictors of organizational commitment. Job satisfaction has also been shown to mediate the relationship between work stress and turnover intent (Li et al., 2021). Organizational stress prevention has been shown to reduce workplace stress (Bakhuys et al., 2020; Maartje et al., 2020; Page et al. 2013). The problem is that the moderating effect of organizational stress prevention on the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction remains unknown.

Equitable Design of Virtual Leadership Development Programs for Remote Employees: Unveiling Insights from a Quantitative eDelphi Study

Kristy Tyson

Virtual leadership development programs for remote employees often need more equity, causing missed opportunities for executive leadership positions. The quantitative eDelphi study explored the level of consensus among talent development experts. The researcher aimed to identify equitable ways to design virtual leadership development programs for remote employees, leading to better opportunities and preparedness for executive leadership positions. The study consisted of three surveys, answering research questions focused on the consensus among the Association of Talent Development (ATD) talent development experts on equitable programs. The findings provide valuable insights into the most equitable ways to design and implement virtual leadership development programs for remote employees. The study revealed six essential traits for successful remote leadership: people management/supervision, teamwork/team compositions, communication, collaboration, cooperation, sharing experiences and knowledge, risk management, work intensification, job satisfaction, or burnout. Additionally, the coding projects have revealed that training and management systems are required for remote leaders, along with a company culture that embraces remote leadership. Active participation, open-mindedness to learning, and competency are necessary qualities for remote leaders. Though the world is changing, and businesses need to remain flexible, hiring remote leaders may be challenging.

Case Study of the Challenges of Creativity and Innovation in Virtual Organizations

Ken Murphy

As virtual workforce environments become increasingly prevalent, organizations face the challenge of nurturing creativity and innovation among remote teams. While virtual work offers flexibility and access to diverse talent, it also presents unique obstacles that hinder creative thinking and the generation of innovative ideas. This study explores the challenges to creativity and innovation faced by virtual teams and investigates strategies for overcoming them. By examining the barriers to innovation in virtual team settings, this research provides valuable insights into factors that impede creativity. The findings offer practical recommendations to unlock the creative potential of remote teams, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and success of virtual workforce environments. The study employs a case study approach, focusing on multiple virtual teams, to capture diverse experiences and perspectives. The identified challenges include communication barriers, limited social interaction, team dynamics and trust, and the absence of a physical environment. The study reveals that fostering effective virtual communications, creating virtual collaboration spaces, encouraging diverse

perspectives, and supporting continuous learning and skill development can overcome these challenges. The findings highlight the potential of video technology, virtual collaboration rooms, diverse teams, and continuous learning to foster creativity and innovation in virtual workforce environments. Organizational adoption of these strategies can promote a culture of creativity and innovation in remote settings.

Examining the Value and Utilization of Earning a Bachelor's Degree Among Women of Color

(ML) development platform to build, deploy, and manage a ML model for this purpose. Google provides many application programming interfaces (APIs) and software development kits (SDKs) for developers to prototype and build applications like what has been described. The concept described will be illustrated in process form along with status of the study at time of the KWB conference presentation. It is the author's hope to show a prototype of a SLR as an outcome of employing Google's cloud platform using Vertex AI for automating the research process in creating a generative AI literature review via a systematic approach. The potential of machine learning and generative AI can optimize researchers' work faster, more reliable, efficient, and convenient. This presentation will highlight the advantages and limitations experienced by the author using Google's cloud platform and Vertex AI.

Thrive in a Brave New World: The Role of AI and Possible Channels of Impact and Growth

Octavia Quarles

What is artificial intelligence (AI), and how might it help the healthcare revenue cycle? Artificial intelligence systems can evaluate medical information, find pertinent codes, and ensure proper reporting and invoicing. This automation relieves administrative employees of their load, allowing them to focus on other vital work and, as a result, speeding up the revenue cycle. AI can be applied in RCM in various ways, including claims processing,

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increased levels of cultural intelligence, which indicates an intercultural competence with a greater capacity for adaptability within highly diverse multicultural organizations (Fang et al., 2018; Matveev, 2017; Schlaegel et al., 2017). Vázquez-de-Príncipe (2021) investigated integrative facets of workplace culture change leadership, human intelligences, change management, and sustainable organizational transformations. The multidisciplinary research approach incorporated psychosynthesis and superconscious principles, which inspired a new framework for Work-Life Predictive Dynamics and Holistic Leadership Intelligence models (Vázquez-de-Príncipe, 2021) for reimagining the future of work/life constructs. The pandemic and civil unrest fractured the sense of civility and belongingness throughout all aspects of society, fostering a work-life unbalanced calamity evident from the high levels of stress-related burnout, mental health issues, quiet quitting/ f ring, and the great resignation/reshuff e challenges (Wigert & Agrawal, 2022). Henceforth, the research insights on culture highlighted work-life dynamics impacted by the chaotic state of the world, incorporating leadership, authenticity, grit, resilience, social-emotional skills, growth intelligence, and spiritual intelligence concepts (Vázquez-de-Príncipe, 2021).

Examining Leadership Styles as Predictors of Workplace Bullying

Alisa Fleming

While bullying has been found to occur at all levels of an organization, managers and supervisors were implicated in 61% of the bullying cases in the United States (WBI, 2017). Onorato (2013) positioned leadership as a major antecedent of workplace bullying and researchers have found the behaviors of leadership can either reduce (Ertureten, et al., 2013) or trigger (Dussault & Frenette, 2015) bullying in the workplace. A quantitative correlational and regression study was conducted to (1) examine the relationship between leadership style and bullying in the manufacturing industry; and (2) assess the extent to which leadership styles and age, gender, education, race, and tenure predict bullying in the manufacturing industry. To broaden views on the impact of workplace bullying, it is important to understand the influence of leadership in professions within the U.S. private sector and explore various cultural demographics in relation to this concept.

Women in Leadership in Higher Education: A Systematic Review

Ela-Joy Lehrman, Martha Zepeda, & Tiffany Lemmen

There are many factors expressed in the literature about the role of women in leadership and what societal, cultural, and organizational viewpoints affect the role of women in leadership. This systematic review aims to examine the literature to explore these viewpoints. The purpose of this research is to complete a comprehensive review of the current (2018 through 2023) published research literature to present an overview of the status of women across racial/ethnic groups in higher education leadership positions in the United States in the areas of Business and Technology, Education, and Health Care. The research methodology and design for the study will follow a systematic literature review research design that incorporates the 2020 PRISMA Statement Guidelines and will include a synthesis of current published qualitative and quantitative studies. Current research studies tend to include a specific under-represented racial/ethnic group of women as participants; there is a need to bring those research findings together into a comprehensive overview of the status of all women in higher education. Reviewed studies are limited to studies conducted within the 50 United States to avoid confounding factors found in foreign educational systems.

Day Two

The Implications of a Protein Named Fosb in Addictive Behavior and How to Challenge It

Rodney Luster

Addictive behaviors can manifest in the form of mood-eating, porn use, internet (doom-scrolling), sex, social

media, exercise, gambling, or psychoactive substance engagement such as stimulants, depressants, opiates, and hallucinogens (Gomez et al., 2022). Whatever form it takes, when a person develops an addiction, the brain's inhibitory response process (ability to stop) becomes greatly compromised, and thus, many succumb to their overwhelming emotional impulses. Thus is the inherent cyclical nature of addiction. However, recent research is beginning to uncover more about the functional aspects that contribute and reinforce the nature of addictive behavior. In fact, research concerning the role of an implicated protein called FosB expands our understanding of how the brain is further stimulated and learns to adapt in response to repeated behaviors, thus instigating the likelihood of compulsive engagement repeating itself the next time. One may consider the analogy of a stack of bricks (FosB protein), wherein each protein builds upon itself, thus creating denser layers of coded behavior. This engagement behavior to stimuli builds upon itself and reinforces the stability and strength of FosB, making it even harder to break the chain of compulsion. This workshop focuses on broadening our understanding and nature of FosB, how it contributes to "repeat behaviors" in addiction, how hedonic processing complements its formation, and how psychology might also understand the "unstacking" principle as a way to illuminate efficacious strategy that deals with the insidious properties of addiction and FosB.

Mitigating the Waste Management Problem In Haiti from an Entrepreneurial Standpoint

Madrid Francois

Abstract not available at time of publication.

Curriculum-Based Professional Development for Third Through Fifth-Grade Teachers: A Qualitative Exploratory Case Study

Iris Campbell & Courtney Campbell

The purpose of the qualitative exploratory case study was to explore third through fifth-grade teachers' perceptions of how being provided with curriculum-based professional development could influence instructional techniques and skills in the classroom. Two research questions guided the study. The questions focused on third to fifth-grade educators' perceptions of how the school district might improve its professional development plan and how their existing PDP influenced and addressed their professional needs in the classroom. The qualitative case study used a sample of 16 third to fifth-grade elementary teachers in an urban school district in northeastern New Jersey. Semi-structured interviews, qualitative questionnaires, and archival documents were used to collect data. Three themes emerged from the triangulation of the data tools: 1) Teachers want to have an active role in creating their professional development, 2) Teachers want the skills learned in professional development to apply to their classroom instruction, and 3) Teachers go outside the district for professional development to build capacity and classroom resources. Recommendations were made based on the study's results. Recommendations included creating a task force with educational and instructional leaders and teachers representing each grade level to develop and monitor support after professional development. Creating professional development committees of teachers of the same grade level was also recommended to express their concerns about skills and techniques needed to implement the curriculum effectively.

African American Male High School Student Persistence: An Exploratory Case Study

Zenovia Braham

The purpose of the qualitative exploratory case study was to examine how African American males who participate in the Boys and Girls Club in the Southeast region persist in high school. The study sample consisted of 20 participants, including mentors, teachers, and curriculum coaches. A purposeful sample method was used based on the criteria protocols. The data collection instruments used in the study consisted of a survey, phone interview, and document review. The data analysis consisted of categorizing the participant feedback into themes. The survey and interview questions were designed to assess vital information about the organization.

The analysis of the data revealed three emergent themes and sub-themes: (1) Harness Student Interest, (2) Academic Support Building, (3) Intervention for students learning. Subthemes were also identified and discussed. Based on the study results, recommendations for future research on how to help African American male to persist in school and reach academic success were provided to the leaders.

Considering Belonging: Making a Case for Allyship

Scott McCalla, Lisa Langford, & Alfreda Goods

Drawing on two significant studies, including the 2021 Culture Report by Achiever Workforce Institute and the 2023 University of Phoenix COI, this presentation will shed light on the lack of belonging experienced by marginalized groups in the workplace and the importance of allyship as a method to help mitigate deleterious effects of lack of belonging. The two interconnected ideas, belonging and allyship, are crucial for promoting inclusive and equitable environments, particularly in diverse communities and organizations. Addressing the systemic and hegemonic structures perpetuating discrimination is crucial to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) within organizations. This response requires an inclusive approach that goes beyond addressing ethnic and racial diversity but also incorporates measures to foster fairness and equity for people with disabilities, diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and other marginalized groups, as well as fostering allyship within the employee groups. Allyship can foster a sense of belonging. Individuals engaging in allyship help build inclusive and egalitarian environments, resulting in individuals from marginalized or underrepresented groups feeling appreciated, accepted, and supported. Employees are more likely to feel true belonging in an atmosphere where allyship is practiced because of the culture of respect, acknowledgment, and shared values that foster equity and inclusion. Fostering a sense of belonging is more crucial than ever in a world that is paradoxically becoming more connected while still feeling more alone. It is important to note workplaces with effective DEI programs still sometimes fail to provide safe environments for all employees. Overall, allyship and belonging are essential for creating principles of inclusiveness, equity, and respectful communities and organizations that value diversity. By adjusting organizational procedures and employee practices, including anti-discriminatory approaches, and cultivating a sense of belonging and allyship, organizations can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive work environment in which teams are cohesive, and employees are empowered and psychologically safe.

Improving Cultural Competency for Educational Best Practices

Paula Johnson

Education continues to increase in diversity as the population evolves in the United States. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2020), an increase of all ethnicities with the exception of white students increased between 1980-2022. This means that there is a multiplicity of races that are seeing the value of education and taking advantage of opportunities. With the increase in diversity, there should be an increase in the understanding of cultural competency and how it adds to the educational experience. As we now fail to cultivate,

individuals. The rise of the internet and subsequent proliferation of social media platforms empowered individuals to disseminate information promptly, circumventing gatekeepers and thereby influencing public perception on various subjects. Scholars introduced a theoretical framework for molding public opinion, while others delved into the potential skewing and partisanship of information. Nonetheless, these foundational approaches did not effectively define information bias in relation to the inherent partiality of principal sources themselves. Evaluation methods like Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, and Purpose (CRAAP) and Stop, Investigate, Find, Trace (SIFT), proposed as tools to gauge bias in information, fall short in addressing the initial step of what to scrutinize and how to categorize it. The absence of comprehensive literature dissecting the diverse biases can be a bewildering task. To address this, this paper suggests an initial methodology as the first stride in classifying information bias, regardless of its medium—be it analog or digital. It advocates grouping bias into seven significant sources, each inherently linked to its own yet broader impartiality. The subsequent sources of information bias will be discussed alphabetically: 1) academic, 2) for-profit, 3) government, 4) hidden agenda, 5) individuals, 6) nonprofit, and 7) watchdog groups. This presentation will share the particulars of each of the 7 sources and how ChatGPT sees itself among them.

A Review of Higher Education Institutional Policies and Practices in Response to the Use of ChatGPT

Sonja Lamppa, Yvette Ghormley, & Yuvonne Richmond

The recent implementation of ChatGPT, an AI innovative tool, has roused interest across the world due to its vast capabilities to create an awe-inspiring spectrum of results based on simple searches. This interest has been extended to higher education institutions to determine the possible values that ChatGPT offers to both students and instructors in online learning. The overall purpose of this study is to investigate how using ChatGPT transforms online education. This presentation will focus on a review of institutional policies and practices in response to the use of ChatGPT by students and faculty. In this analysis, thirty (30) institutions that serve both nontraditional and traditional students were reviewed. Using publicly available information, institutions were evaluated to determine the policies and guidance they have provided for faculty, students and administrators regarding the use of ChatGPT. In this presentation, we will present the findings of this review, highlight similarities and differences in institutional responses and offer recommendations for promising practices based on the analysis conducted.

Linkages Between Corporate Sustainability Practices and Corporate Financial Performance: A Systematic Review

Suchitra Veera, Samantha Bietsch, & Susan Jones

Environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and corporate governance (ESG) are becoming increasingly important as complementary efforts to improving corporate financial performance and achieving long term sustainability of global organizations. Prior empirical research of the relationship between corporate sustainability initiatives and financial performance has shown inconsistent results because of lack of clarity and consensus regarding the conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of corporate sustainability and its impacts. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the linkages between corporate sustainability and financial performance for medium to large companies. The drivers of sustainability and resulting financial impacts include internal drivers such as cost savings, CEO motivation, and Board member characteristics, and

Green practices benefit all members of society, and understanding the business benefits and target market relationships could promote a more widespread adoption of sustainable practices.

Helping Teachers of Color Feel Included: What Can K-12 Leaders Do?

Joy Taylor & Sandra Sessoms-Penny

Students of color perform better in schools when they have at least one teacher of the same race. The impact is so significant, that having just one African American teacher in elementary school reduces low-income male

to prepare teacher candidates as they actualize pedagogical practices in live K-12 classrooms (Livers, Baker, Guerra & Acosa, 2022). A scoping review was used to yield substantial information about the: (1) historical evolution of the definitions, roles, and responsibilities of university supervisors, (2) problems, models, and approaches to researching the topics, as well as (3) reveal best practices and recommendations from study findings for training university supervisors. Using a PRISMA approach and the Noodle Tools research platform, 89 references resulted from iterative filtering. Findings were organized in notecards built by capturing main ideas from each reference. The number of articles grew in number each decade, from 1952 through 2022. While 11 different journals were represented, the Journal of Teacher Education accounted for the majority of articles and also had the highest 5 year impact factor of those listed. Authors from around the U.S were represented. The studies varied in design but the vast majority were qualitative, mainly case studies. Methods varied greatly but the most popular involved analyzing journals, field notes, or interviewing and then using thematic analysis and/or coding. Many did not provide in-depth understanding of the process used. In the few quantitative studies, there were less than a handful of instruments employed, mainly based on disposition scales, and each one differed from the next. Focus ranged from metrics, i.e. number of visits or duration of dialogue to measuring styles and preferences. Theoretical frameworks also differed substantially and included grounded theory, Flanders Interaction Analysis, Kolb's learning cycle, and cognitive apprenticeship theory, among others. From the categorization of notecards, the history revealed a development of the definition, roles, and responsibilities of a university supervisor. The necessity of a supervisor was debated throughout the 1980s. Beginning in the 1990s, nuances of the behavior and psychology could be found in further explorations in the interactions, compatibility, and preferences between supervisor and student. As late as 2020, the consciousness of the supervisor was being explored (Burns, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2020). The basic definition of a supervisor remains consistent over the last 70 years. Yet the responsibilities have grown with an ever-deepening understanding of learning and engagement. The problems, too, remain consistent, that university supervisors feel undervalued, disconnected, and develop lower expectations of their role, fostering lower expectations for the student teacher. Among the recommendations gleaned for university supervisor training are: (1) Define the role, responsibility and relationship; (2) Emphasize and honor the role of the supervisor by providing opportunities to share vision and make connections; (3) Provide soft skill training on mentoring, coaching and dialogic discourse to prepare for frequent conversations with the student teacher; (4) Share the model, based on a sound theoretical framework as found in the literature, to provide a deeper understanding of what the educator preparation program and thus the supervisors, should represent; and, (5) Evaluate through action research to further develop one's training intervention and the whole student teacher experience.

Work-Life Dynamics Evolving Strategic Holistic Ecosystems Post-Pandemic: An Applied Organizational Development Perspective

Joanne Vázquez de Príncipe

The proposed presentation highlights the research concepts and principles introduced in a collaborative resource book publishing effort entitled *Measuring the Effectiveness of Organizational Development Strategies During Unprecedented Times* (Tennin, 2023). Príncipe's (2023) enclosed chapter explored the benefits of leveraging strategic tactics incorporating holistic approaches throughout cross-functional holistic ecosystems. This multidisciplinary research incorporated superconscious leadership principles, which inspired a new framework of Work-Life Predictive Dynamics and informed the ideation for the Holistic Leadership Intelligence (HLQ) Model (Vázquez-de-Príncipe, 2021). The conceptualized frameworks of the mixed methods doctoral dissertation research study discussed herewith emphasized a deep dive into core work-life dynamics associated with organizational effectiveness, culture transformations, and change leadership aspects impacting the evolution of the organizational development (OD) discipline (Príncipe, 2023). Businesses today are consistently undergoing rapid change triggered by the current volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) post-pandemic state of the world. To enhance organizational efficiencies and effectiveness, astute, resilient, consummate leaders have found it imperative to align long-term evidenced-based scientific OD strategies with

measurable people management and business outcomes. It is imperative post-COVID to align holistic mindsets by embedding them within leadership, education, and human-centered well-being ecosystems to ensure the sustainment of organizations that empower thriving multicultural communities. The key concepts in this chapter will inform best practices, deepen awareness at all levels, and establish an appreciation for holistic leadership mindsets, which can address challenges such as internal aspects of employee disengagement and external aspects of customer or stakeholder dissatisfaction. The doctoral dissertation study explored the influence of leadership and human-intelligences on impacting work-life dynamics toward fostering sustainable organizational excellence transformations. In Vázquez-de-Príncipe's (2021) study, organizational excellence was perceived as the capacity of professional practitioners to catalyze dynamic cultural enhancements towards serving as a precursor alignment construct for establishing sustained quality performance improvements.

The Relationship Between Employee Engagement and Perceived Mindful Leadership: A Quantitative Correlational Study

Carmen Vega-Stevens & Charles Elliott

There are many approaches to and styles of leadership. The research problem addressed the lack of positive leadership in the healthcare service industry resulting in poor employee engagement. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine if a relationship existed between mindful leadership and employee engagement, if there was a statistically significant relationship in how mindful leadership affects the engagement of a sample of nurses using moderating factors of years employed or the direct or indirect contact with a supervisor or manager. A total of 116 nurses participated by completing two survey questionnaires that determined presence and degree of mindful leadership and assessed employee engagement. The study was guided by three research questions. The research questions were designed to measure the impact of a specific aspect of mindful leadership on employee engagement. The Mindfulness Theory was the theoretical framework used in this quantitative correlational study. Linear Regression analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between mindful leadership and employee engagement of participants, years of experience moderated the relationship between mindful leadership and employee engagement, and the moderating variable of direct or indirect contact did not affect the relationship between how mindful leadership practices impact employee engagement. Healthcare leaders could use the results of this study to gain insight into what leadership actions increase healthcare worker behaviors positively and improve their quality of life. The results of the study may offer a platform for further investigation into job satisfaction moderated by mindful leadership, and its relationship to nurses' engagement.

Examining the Retention and Exodus of Women in Technology

Christa Banton & Tiefsa Jones

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and project-based learning lessons with students (Aydin, 2020). Scholarly literature has identified possible challenges for elementary STEM educators. What do elementary STEM teachers need to effectively integrate STEM practices? Our team is prepared to report on problems and recommendations in the literature about elementary STEM teaching practices and preparation. The Center for Educational and Instructional Technology Research (CEITR) provided an opportunity and ongoing support for this collaborative team to initiate a study related to STEM education. The purpose for this convergent parallel mixed methods study was to examine the lived experiences and perceptions of STEM educators in the preparation and planning needed to provide efficacious STEM teaching to K-5 classrooms. Instrumentation included the quantitative T-STEM survey and qualitative open-ended questions. Recruitment was done through social media and several challenges and solutions will be shared. Data analysis to include reliability tests, means calculations, and associations following coding. Our team will provide a first look at preliminary data. It is the hope of the researchers that this study will provide evidence and recommendations for teacher preparation programs and K-5 school leaders. Come join this conversation!

Solving Employers' Dilemma Through Academic-STEM Industry Partnerships

Louise Underdahl, Myrene Magabo, & Maureen Marzano

Existing literature validates a mismatch between STEM graduates' classroom acquired knowledge and skills versus those needed to perform tasks in the workplace. Most studies and curricular developments focus on improving discipline-specific content rather than soft skills such as willingness to learn, flexibility, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork. Graduates, in general, are less equipped or less prepared for real workplace tasks placing them mostly in entry-level positions for further company training. By identifying skills requirements of the STEM industry from STEM employers, this study provides actionable data for academic-STEM industry partnerships. A mismatch between the knowledge and skills graduates acquire at universities and the skills required by a dynamic and evolving labor market. Some studies contend that employers describe university graduates as not 'work-ready,' because academic training delivers discipline-specific content, rather than soft skills such as communication, learning ability, flexibility, critical thinking, time management, problem solving, interpersonal skills, and creativity. STEM graduates are expected to perform tasks that require systems design thinking, technology skills, critical and creative thinking, mathematical and problem-solving, and project management aptitude. Many students fail to utilize opportunities to develop employability skills because they assume coursework will adequately prepare them for successful university-to work transition. Contributing factors may include failure of curriculum development specialists to incorporate data management innovation, lack of active learning pedagogy and engagement in workplace activities, and suboptimal integration of career services with academic programs to stimulate graduates' perceived employability potential.

Student and Faculty Perspectives on Barriers, Challenges, Facilitators, Strategies, Determinants, and Connections for Progression and Completion of the DNP Degree

Patricia Finch Guthrie & Jamie Buchanan

Little is known about barriers and challenges Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students face or determinants predicting progression and completion. Withdrawals, failures, and failure to progress are costly for DNP students and institutions. This presentation presents an integrative literature review (IR) conducted to understand the experience of students, faculty, and programs and determine barriers, challenges, facilitators, connections, and strategies for student progression and completion as a basis to improve the newly developed DNP program at the University of Phoenix.



of calling, commitment, and community to create an engaging and sustainable organizational culture. Online educators do not inherently experience workplace spirituality due to their calling to education, but the calling

be sustained by avoiding the causal conditions that influence their employees' demotivation in work. Also, identifying the causal conditions for employees' motivation and adjusting the working environment to encourage these conditions can also promote employee motivation and enhance employee engagement in work.

Organizational Communication Through the Lens of Support Staff at Post-Secondary Institutions: Phenomenological Study

Pam England & Joann Kovacich

Companies and institutions that master organizational communication may increase organizational functionality, sustain goals, and preserve organizational associations and culture (Uslu, 2017). Transparent, efficient, and timely information sharing has a positive influence on job performance and satisfaction, promoting sustainable internal and external socio-economic growth. Unfortunately, many post-secondary institutions have deficient communication protocols resulting in costly time, knowledge, and production losses (Birx, 2019; Sharma, Lampley, & Good, 2015). Clear communication is essential in general for post-secondary education, but even more so for support staff tasked to provide services to stakeholders (Durnali, Akbasli & Dis, 2020). To gain a better understanding of the impact organizational communication has on student services support staff, this transcendental phenomenological study explored the perceptions and lived experiences of six participants representing admissions, financial aid, registrar, and advising departments. Guided by communication theory (Shannon, 1948), system theory of communication (Almaney, 1974), critical communication theory (Varey, Wood-Harper & Wood, 2002), and employee engagement (Curran & Prottas, 2017; Reissner & Pagan, 2013; Yadav, 2016;), purposive sampling was used to invite participants from six institutions located in the Southeast United States. Each participant was interviewed three times, allowing for greater reflection and in-depth data collection. Semi-structured interviews were recorded, transcribed, and member-checked before coding aided by NVivo12, software application. Data analysis followed Moustakas' seven-step modified van Kaam method for phenomenological inquiry (Moustakas, 1994). Three themes and six subthemes emerged from the data analysis: the definition and reality of day-to-day organizational communication, the impact of ineffective communication on support staff job satisfaction and performance, and recommendations for support staff inclusion in communication processes and protocols. Support staff identified accessing communication that impacted day-to-day tasks as challenging. Messages or directives often lacked clarity or precision, negatively impacting their ability to make informed decisions relevant to assisting students. Untimely or non-existent communication caused breakdowns in student services. In addition, the siloing of departments led to incomplete organizational communication access and handicapped execution of front-line employee job tasks. Participants often felt alone and unsupported, resulting in on-the-job frustration, work stress, job dissatisfaction, and productivity strain. Excluded from organizational decision-making discussions due to top-down leadership styles made frontline workers feel undervalued. To improve organizational communication, employee buy-in, and organizational sustainability, participants recommended cross-department collaboration, inclusion in job-relevant structural decision-making processes, and employee input in knowledge-sharing dissemination processes. In summary, this study demonstrated that support staff must be included in communication plans as the face of the organization. Organizational leaders who embrace relationship-building communication are better positioned to meet stakeholder needs, address change, and maintain a competitive edge. This study contributes to higher education, support staff, and organizational communication addressing the critical need for inclusive communication for organizational sustainability.

Beyond Optimism: Roadmaps for Career Progression

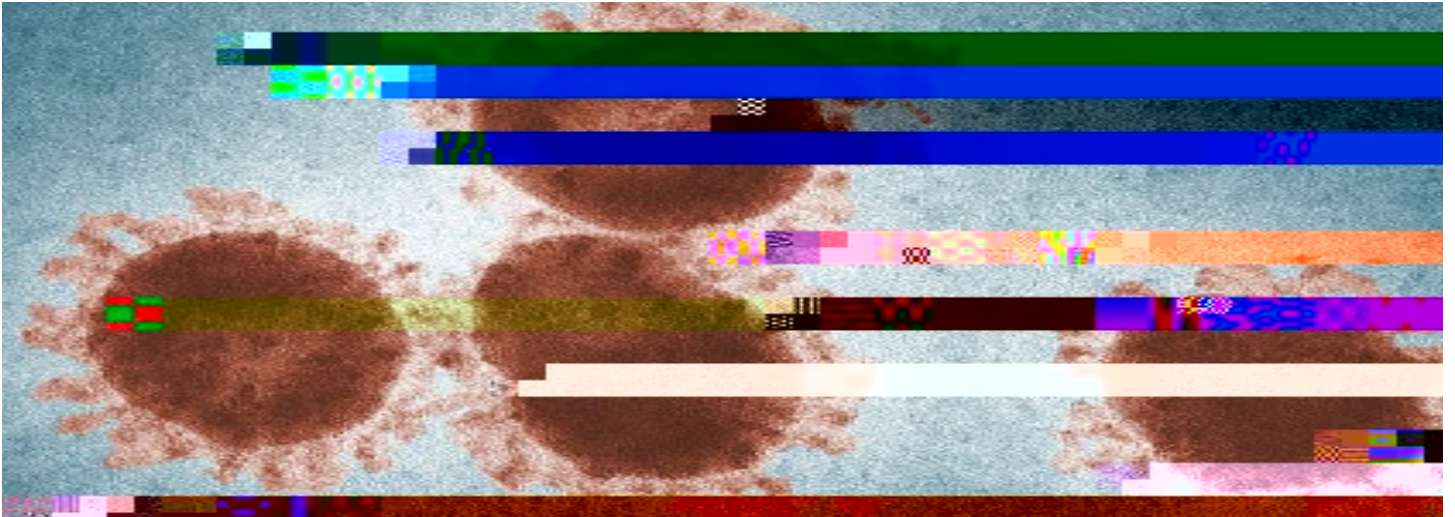
Louise Underdahl

Data validate significant gaps between what American workers believe their employers do to support them, and what employers themselves believe their companies offer employees. Building roadmaps for career progression can eliminate existing disconnects and help employers channel workers' optimism in their own abilities to

their current place of work. This white paper describes actionable strategies to align worker expectations with employer needs to benefit both businesses and their workforces. Widespread adoption of digital and automated work processes has necessitated large-scale reskilling and upskilling workforce initiatives by educators, employers, and policymakers. Industry 4.0 (I4.0), also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, encompasses digitization and automation, interconnectivity between cyber and physical processes, and utilizing real-time data to optimize decision-making and performance. Distinguishing between myth and fact, Tortorella et al. validated non-digitization leads to obsolescence. The World Economic Forum predicted 50% of all employees worldwide would need reskilling by 2025. Li offers a succinct assessment: “Industry 4.0 is about creating a unique life-long education system that ensures a future-ready workforce.” Evidence suggests digitalization is predicated on education and learning programs that infuse technology into content and integrate experiential activities to train, skill, reskill, and upskill the future-ready workforce. Education alliances between employers, educators, and governmental policymakers are a promising framework for adapting to economic uncertainty and change. Employers can use roadmaps to eliminate the disconnect between worker and employer perceptions of skilling opportunities. To create and preserve a competitive edge, workers must embrace a continuous process of learning, skill acquisition, and adaptability. To create an appropriate learning environment, educators are rethinking pedagogy and transitioning toward interactive, dynamic learning environments. Strategies include designing skills-aligned training curricula to bridge the skills gap between workforce knowledge and industry needs and use data to monitor implementation. By investing in employees’ professional development, mental health, mentorship, and deeper engagement within their organizations, employers can channel workers’ optimism in their own abilities to their current place of work, benefiting both businesses and their workforces. This study contributes to existing literature on the importance of training, skilling, reskilling, and upskilling by providing roadmaps to eliminate worker/employer disconnects, promote career progression, and create a future-ready workforce. Collaboration between educators and employers to align curricular, extra-curricular, and training materials with Industry 4.0 requirements can transform optimism into career progression.

modes of instruction, and testing conditions since COVID-19 school closures could affect test performance. Aligned with the problem was the purpose of the study to explore teachers' and administrators' perceptions

at one education conference. It was so sterile, like somebody belching in church. It was my EF Hutton moment (referencing the financial company's famous commercial tagline, 'When EF Hutton talks people



Full Article from KWB 2023 Presenters:
Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle and Higher
Education Entrance Exams Post COVID

entrance exams are The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Testing. SAT emerged in 1926, and its competitor, ACT, emerged in 1959 (Bennett, 2022; Zwick, 2019). Both tests are also used in making scholarship determinations and providing additional students once enrolled in HE institutions (Marcus, 2021).

Little is known if test score pollution from COVID-19-related issues impacts scores on SAT and ACT and if the tests can be considered reliable and valid sources of assessments to measure student aptitude. Although the pandemic presented multifarious challenges in education and testing, the composite scores for ACT remained relatively the same. In 2017, the mean score for ACT was 21, which was 20.3 in 2021. Contrarily, the mean score for SAT since 2017 remained relatively the same, with a slight decline in 2020 and an increase in 2021. The percentage of high school graduates taking SAT in the United States declined from 61% in 2019 to 41% in 2021. Similarly, the percentage of students taking the ACT in 2017 dropped from 56% to 35% in 2021 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021a; 2021b).

Disrupted learning modalities and opportunities brought on by the pandemic created content gaps within subjects and an academic gap between students (Lim, 2021). Such disruptions to learning and interpretations of test scores require analysis in terms of test validity. The loss of educational time based on the availability of resources and modalities should be considered a historical factor. The disparities and varied impact of the pandemic on students' economic, social-emotional well-being, educational abilities, and test administration changes may threaten the validity of the tests. Lastly, comparing students' scores to assessments prepared before the pandemic may raise bias issues.

In the spring of 2020, the COVID-19-related challenges of taking the college entrance exams prompted HE institutions to consider holistic admission processes (Arbuthnot, 2020). As a response, test-optional and test-free admissions for higher education institutions have increased since COVID-19 (Bennett, 2022; Marcus, 2021). Hossler et al. (2019) noted in 1983, 283 colleges and universities were test-optional. Shortly before the pandemic, the number of test-optional institutions was 1050. Currently, 1921 HE institutions offer test-optional admission, and 86 offer test-free admission (Hossler et al., 2019).

About the Authors

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Date	Time	Title & Presenter	Description	Details
03/02/24	10 AM (MST)	EDD Essentials	EDD Essentials Meetings are optional meetings for all Educational Leadership Doctoral Students. It is meant as an opportunity to present topics of interest to EDD students at the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix. The meeting will be 1 hour long (10:00 AM- 11:00 AM AZ) on the first Saturday of every month.	Via Microsoft Teams
03/09/24	9 AM (MST)	DHA Networking Call	An opportunity for DHA students to meet others along the dissertation journey, gather insights, and build a community of learning.	Register Via Google Form
03/16/24	9 AM (MST)	CDS Student Coffee Chat CDS Coffee Chat Team	The College of Doctoral Studies Student Coffee Chat (SCC) is a virtual, bi-monthly event aimed at fostering student success. Each session includes a lively discussion, with like-minded people, for inspiration and guidance as students advance within their programs and beyond.	Register Via Google Form
04/06/24	10 AM (MST)	EDD Essentials	EDD Essentials Meetings are optional meetings for all Educational Leadership Doctoral Students. It is meant as an opportunity to present topics of interest to EDD students at the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix. The meeting will be 1 hour long (10:00 AM- 11:00 AM AZ) on the first Saturday of every month.	Via Microsoft Teams
04/13/24	9 AM (MST)	DHA Networking Call	An opportunity for DHA students to meet others along the dissertation journey, gather insights, and build a community of learning.	Via Microsoft Teams
05/04/24	10 AM (MST)	EDD Essentials	EDD Essentials Meetings are optional meetings for all Educational Leadership Doctoral Students. It is meant as an opportunity to present topics of interest to EDD students at the College of Doctoral Studies at the University of Phoenix. The meeting will be 1 hour long (10:00 AM- 11:00 AM AZ) on the first Saturday of every month.	Via Microsoft Teams
05/11/24	9 AM (MST)	DHA Networking Call	An opportunity for DHA students to meet others along the dissertation journey, gather insights, and build a community of learning.	Via Microsoft Teams

