

SOWI-Research-News

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Institutional corruption in higher education: diving into indicator-based funding and employment conditions in Austrian universities

Corruption in higher education, particularly institutional corruption, is increasingly recognised as a critical issue, though its manifestations remain underexplored. This study uses the case of Austrian public universities to explore how indicator-based funding and the employment arrangements adopted by universities under the collective agreement, which sets the framework for various employment relationships, including tenure-track positions for academic staff, encourage institutional corruption. The study uses a deductive approach to analyse the effects of these institutional designs to identify potential gateways to corruption. Findings reveal that the unique nature of university outputs and the discretion granted to scientists make funding metrics less effective and prone to conflicts. Furthermore, the predominant reliance of universities on precarious employment conditions exacerbates inequalities in indicator incentives, particularly for young academics. The study calls for re-evaluating the indicator-based funding and the collective agreement to better align with the broader purposes of the higher education sector.

Sommersguter-Reichmann, M., & Reichmann, G. (2025). Institutional corruption in higher education: diving into indicator-based funding and employment conditions in Austrian universities. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322969.2025.2489953>

Ranking: IF: 3,8

A paradigm shift? Changes in HRM after the Covid-19 Pandemic in Six CEE Countries

This study addresses changes in human resource management (HRM) practices of six Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries during the COVID-19 pandemic by highlighting similarities and differences across the countries. We indicated the growing significance of the human factor while also pointing out significant differences between organisations and contexts. COVID-19 intensified changes affecting individuals, organizations and society—especially in the field of HR which may signal a paradigm shift in HR operations.

Poór, J.; Tóth, A.; Kálmán, B. G.; Kovács, E. I.; Szabó, K.; Kőműves, Z. S.; Hirt, C.; Bešić, A.; Pató Gáborné Szűcs, B.; Szeiner, Z.; Kerekes, K.; Szabó-Szentgróti, G. & Rahimić, Z. (2025). A paradigm shift? Changes in HRM after the Covid-19 Pandemic in Six CEE Countries. *Journal of East European Management Studies*, 30(1), 39443. <https://doi.org/10.31083/JEEMS39443> (registering DOI)

Ranking: Journal Impact Factor (JIF): 0.5, H-Index: 22, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR): 0.227

WZ Volkswirtschaft

Adam Smith's Pluralism and the Limits of Science

In recent decades, scholarly work on Adam Smith clarified important aspects of his multi-faceted account of human agency. However, the relevance of his view of knowledge and agency for political economy as science of the legislator has not been clarified sufficiently. It is contended here that Smith's view of human agency in socio-economic contexts is linked to a kind of pragmatic pluralism, emphasizing the role of the knowledge made available by scientific "systems", but also their limitations and incompleteness. Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments, his discussions of the mercantile system and honesty in commerce are considered as examples of pragmatic pluralism reflecting such limitations, while opening up horizons of reasonable disagreement and problem-responsive reform avoiding technocratic fallacies and reckless experimentation.

Sturn, R. (2025), Adam Smith's Pluralism and the Limits of Science, *Homo Oeconomicus*, 41, 3 – 27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41412-024-00145-6>

Ranking: EF = N/A ; JIF = 0.2; SJR = N/A

Growth, Inequality and Declining Business Dynamism in a Unified Schumpeter Mark I + II Model

I develop a Schumpeterian agent-based model where the entry and exit of firms, their productivity and markup, the birth of new industries and the social structure of the population are endogenous. I use this model to study the causes of rising inequality and declining "business dynamism" since the 1980s. My hybrid model combines features of i) the so-called Schumpeter Mark I (centering around the entrepreneur), ii) the Mark II model (emphasizing the innovative capacities of firms), and iii) Cournot competition, with firms using OLS learning to estimate the market environment and the behavior of their competitors. A scenario which is quantitatively calibrated to US data on growth and inequality replicates a large number of stylized facts regarding the industry life-cycle, growth, inequality and all ten stylized facts on "declining business dynamism" in the US proposed by Akcigit and Ates (AEJ:Macro, 2021). Counterfactual simulations show that antitrust policy is highly effective at combatting inequality and at increasing business dynamism and growth, but is subject to a conflict of interest between workers and firm owners, as GDP and wages grow at the expense of profits. I further explore how technological factors interact with "Mark I" and "Mark II" in my model to shape dynamics of growth, inequality and business dynamism.

Mellacher, P. (2025), Growth, Inequality and Declining Business Dynamism in a Unified Schumpeter Mark I + II Model, *Industrial and Corporate Change*, forthcoming. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icc/dtaf012>

Ranking: EF = 66 ; JIF = 2.8; SJR = 1.28

Business Analytics and Data Science-Center

Automated Machine Learning in Research – A Literature Review

Machine learning (ML) has become increasingly popular among researchers and is used to analyze large and complex data sets to gain novel insights in various domains. This trend is further boosted by the introduction of automated machine learning (autoML), empowering researchers without extensive data science or ML expertise to use ML methods in their research. Several studies focus on the use of traditional ML in research and have identified reproducibility and ethical issues as major challenges. Despite the significant uptake by researchers, the use of autoML in research remains mostly unexplored. This literature review aims to close this gap and investigates 49 papers focusing on the opportunities and challenges of autoML in research. As a result, we identify five challenges and three opportunities associated with autoML in research. Finally, we propose a research agenda with five major action points for future research.

Haberl, A. und Thalmann, S. (2025): Automated Machine Learning in Research – A Literature Review, in: Bui, T. (Hrsg.): Proceedings of the 58th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS-58), 2025, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Honolulu, S. 7524-7533, PID: <https://hdl.handle.net/10125/109751>.

Ranking: N/A

A Maturity Model for Data-Driven Service Innovation

One application of AI in the context of entrepreneurship is in Data-Driven Service Innovation (DDSI) processes. However, it is not yet clear how organizations utilize data-driven technologies in general and AI in particular to enhance their service innovation processes. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate capabilities needed to implement a DDSI process successfully. We identified three maturity levels and propose a DDSI Maturity Model. The first two maturity levels, which involve the use of data-driven technologies to trigger the service innovation process and to develop services, respectively, can be found in practice. The third level represents the next step that examines how a DDSI process can support the generation of high-potential service innovations such as data-driven business models supported by Artificial Intelligence. On each maturity level, we defined the required data-driven innovation capabilities. We found that the three maturity levels require different capabilities for their successful implementation.

Jesenko, B. und Thalmann, S. (2025): A Maturity Model for Data-Driven Service Innovation, in: Bui, T. (Hrsg.): Proceedings of the 58th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS-58), 2025, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Honolulu, S. 4706-4715, PID: <https://hdl.handle.net/10125/109413>.

Ranking: N/A

AI in digital sports coaching - a systematic review

Purpose: The adoption of AI in sports coaching is increasingly promising, presenting new opportunities and challenges for service providers and athletes. Although research on AI in sports coaching has largely focused on specific aspects or technology case studies to date, there is no comprehensive overview available yet. This paper aims to address this gap by examining the current state of literature regarding AI in digital sports coaching. **Methodology:** A structured, 3-step literature search according to Webster & Watson was conducted. 125 papers are screened, and 40 papers are analyzed in detail applying a structured content analysis.

Findings: We identify the core functions of digital sports coaches, and the challenges associated with their implementation. Our findings reveal a lack of attention to managerial aspects and a need for more empirical studies on the use of digital coaches (DCs) in sports. Based on these findings, we propose a research agenda to guide future research on AI-based coaching in sports. **Practical implications:** Coaching functions supported by AI and the core adoption challenges are identified. **Research contributions** This study contributes to extending our understanding of AI in digital sports coaching by proposing a research agenda.

Originality: Although research on AI in sports coaching has largely focused on specific aspects or technology case studies to date, there is no comprehensive overview available yet. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by examining the current state of literature regarding AI in digital sports coaching.

Jud, M. und Thalmann, S. (2025): AI in digital sports coaching - a systematic review, in: Managing Sport and Leisure, pp. 1-17, doi: 10.1080/23750472.2024.2449016 [15.01.2025]

Ranking: SJR (2024): 0.596; JIF (2023): 1.9

Datafied ageing futures: Regimes of anticipation and participatory futuring

With this paper we join others in their call to resist and challenge regimes of anticipations that suggest our futures are inevitably linked to certain imaginaries about data-driven systems. The future is not simply happening but is made now – through regimes of anticipation that shape our expectations, imaginaries, visions and hypes, and define what is thinkable and desirable. Who or what is able to claim the future is an exercise of power and a matter of social justice. However, current anticipations circulating about datafied futures are often determined by powerful social actors such as states or technology companies. In this paper, we explore how we might open up futures-making to different people in relation to futures of ageing. Central is the question of whether and how we can actually think (and imagine) outside of powerful anticipation regimes around the increasing spread and relevance of data-driven systems and/or ageist assumptions about how to 'fix' the problem of demographic ageing. We draw on data from a series of design fiction workshops with older adults, civil society organisations and civil servants in Germany, Austria and the UK. Our analysis explores how participatory futuring might allow participants to question their own assumptions and anticipations about the futures of data-driven technologies in ageing societies but that, due to 'discursive closure', this may not lead to radically different futures imaginaries.

Jarke, J. und Manchester, H. (2025): Datafied ageing futures: Regimes of anticipation and participatory futuring, in: *Big Data & Society*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 1-15, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/20539517241306363>

Ranking: SJR (2024): 2.207; JIF (2023): 6.5

Who said only military officers can deal with uncertainty? On the importance of uncertainty in edtech data visualisations.

AI-powered predictive systems have high margins of error. However, data visualisations of algorithmic systems in education and other social fields tend to visualise certainty, thus invisibilising the underlying approximations and uncertainties of the algorithmic systems and the social settings in which these systems operate. This paper draws on a critical speculative approach to first analyse data visualisations from predictive analytics platforms for education. It demonstrates that visualisations of uncertainty in education are rare. Second, the paper explores uncertainty visualisations in other fields (defence, climate change and healthcare). The paper concludes by reflecting on the role of data visualisations and un/certainty in shaping educational futures. It also identifies practical implications for the design of data visualisations in education.

Macgilchrist, F. und Jarke, J. (2025): Who said only military officers can deal with uncertainty? On the importance of uncertainty in edtech data visualisations, in: *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, pp. 1-20, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2025.2467365> [03.03.2025]

Ranking: JIF (2023): 1.7; SJR (2024): 0.740

Situierte Daten. Wie Datenspaziergänge unser Verständnis von Daten in der Praxis verändern können

In den letzten Jahren haben Katja Mayer und Juliane Jarke zunehmend Data Walks in ihrer Lehrpraxis eingesetzt, um spezifische Aspekte der Digitalisierung anschaulich zu vermitteln. Ihr Fokus liegt dabei auf Prozessen der Datensammlung und -verarbeitung. Die Autorinnen argumentieren dafür, dass die DataWalk-Methode eine umfängliche Erfahrung von Datafizierungsprozessen ermögliche, indem Teilnehmende mittels Geolokalisierungs-Apps, mobilen Sensoren etc. einerseits selbst Daten sammeln und andererseits deren Aneignung im Entstehungskontext reflektieren. In ihrem Schreibgespräch skizzieren sie zunächst Chancen und Grenzen der Methode, ehe sie ihre Überlegungen an den theoretischen Zusammenhang kritischer Datenpädagogik aus Sicht der Science and Technology Studies anknüpfen. Sie zeigen schließlich nachdrücklich auf, wie Datenspaziergänge unser Verständnis von Daten in der Praxis – auch über Hochschulbildung hinaus – verändern können.

Mayer, K. und Jarke, J. (2025): Situierte Daten. Wie Datenspaziergänge unser Verständnis von Daten in der Praxis verändern können, in: Hofhues, S. und Schütz, J. (Hg.): *Plattformen für Bildung*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, S. 301-314, doi: <https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839475164>

Ranking: N/A

Founding team gender diversity and social entrepreneurship: implications for venture growth and equity acquisition der Publikation

Purpose: This study addresses the intersection of team gender composition, social entrepreneurship and new venture performance, aiming to understand the unique dynamics shaping these areas. The authors discuss why female and diverse founding teams often gravitate toward social ventures and explore the relevance of this phenomenon. By investigating the impact on new venture performance, this study examines the effect of team diversity in the context of social entrepreneurship.

Design/methodology/approach: The study is based on a survey among new ventures in Austria. Data from 326 new ventures were analyzed using linear and logistic regression analysis. Drawing on gender role theory, the effect of diverse and female founding teams on the amount of acquired external capital was tested, emphasizing how social goals may serve as a signaling mechanism to investors.

Findings: In line with gender role theory, the study confirms that female and diverse founding teams are more inclined to establish social ventures. While the authors find empirical support for this assertion, there was no evidence found for a second assertion by the gender role theory stating that social entrepreneurship can specifically reduce gender bias with respect to external equity funding of new ventures. Contrary to expectations, the tendency of female and diverse founding teams to prioritize social goals hinders their ability to secure external equity. Furthermore, this research indicates that gender-diverse and all-female teams achieve lower levels of employment growth compared to all-male teams. These results provide insights into the relationship between team composition and venture performance.

Originality/value: Adding to gender role literature, this research expands the current understanding of how team gender diversity and social entrepreneurship affect venture performance. The study indicates a high prevalence of social entrepreneurship among gender-diverse teams and highlights specific challenges faced by female and gender-diverse founding teams. The findings underpin the need for a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by female and gender-diverse teams in the entrepreneurship area. By addressing these dynamics, the study offers valuable insights and recommendations for policymakers, investors and entrepreneurs, laying a foundation for future research into promoting gender equality and fostering inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystems.

Taferner, J. and Leitner, K.-H. (2025): Founding team gender diversity and social entrepreneurship: implications for venture growth and equity acquisition, *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, Vol. 31, No. 11, pp. 92-113. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-02-2024-0164>

Ranking: Journal Impact Factor (JIF): 4.5, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR): 1.353, h-Index: 91, CiteScore: 10.2, SNIP: 1.85, VHB-JOURQUAL 3: B