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UNIVERSITY OF BUSINESS AND
INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

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THEME:

**"SUSTAINABLE PATHWAYS FOR PEACE, GOVERNANCE,
AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA"**

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A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Research plays a critical role in helping transform and improve human lives, businesses, science and technology and communities. The SDD-UBIDS is focused on pursuing scientific scholarly research and research events such as the Research and Development Conference, which happens annually in the life of the University. I want to express my deepest appreciation to the Directorate of Research (DoR) and the entire Organizing Committee for their outstanding efforts in bringing the 2025 SDD-UBIDS Research and Development Conference to life. This conference is a testament to our institution's commitment to fostering a robust research culture and creating an environment conducive to collaboration and knowledge sharing. I encourage all participants to build upon the constructive feedback received during the conference and to continue contributing to scholarly discourse for the advancement of our society.

Professor Emmanuel Kanchebe Derbile

(Vice-Chancellor, SDD-UBIDS)

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH (DoR)



I want to seize this moment to convey the Organising Committee's heartfelt appreciation to all those who contributed by presenting their papers, whether they were completed works or works-in-progress, at the SDD-UBIDS Research and Development Conference in 2025. We sincerely appreciate your support as we take steps to inculcate a culture of research by creating a conducive environment for research, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. The papers showcased at this year's conference demonstrated a commendable level of quality. I encourage authors to use the feedback received to improve their work for publication in our institutional journals and other credible outlets of their choice. We look forward to receiving abstracts for the next SDD-UBIDS Research and Development Conference.

Professor Frederick Dayour

(Director, DoR)

EDITORIAL NOTE

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the 5th Annual Research and Development Conference, scheduled to take place in Wa from September 24–26, 2025. Over the years, this conference has attracted growing interest from academics, students, and development practitioners both within Ghana and internationally. This year is no exception, as we received an impressive total of 124 abstract submissions. Each abstract underwent a rigorous double-blind review process, and after careful evaluation, 115 were accepted. At the close of the conference registration deadline, 90 abstracts were confirmed for presentation. These 90 abstracts, representing diverse areas of inquiry, are included in this Book of Abstracts.

The abstracts presented at this conference cover a wide range of topics within the overarching theme. They include the following: Conflict, Peace, Security and Sustainable Development; Sustainable Social and Economic Development; Democratic Governance and Sustainable Development; Sustainable Election Financing; Electoral Violence, Resolution and Constitutional Development; Electoral Laws and Democratic Consolidation; Community Engagement and Sustainable Development; Communication, Media, and Development Discourses; Strengthening Governance and Institutions; WASH and Sustainable Development; Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainable Practices; Gender, Social Policy, and Social Protection; Population, Migration, and Sustainable Livelihoods; Sustainability, Green Business, and Innovation; Economics, Business, Finance and Sustainable Development; Urban Planning, GIS, and Sustainable Development; Health and Well-being; Sustainable Development Planning; and Manifestos and National Development.

To ensure smooth proceedings, 10 parallel sessions have been scheduled for September 25 and 26, 2025, where authors will present their research work and proposals. Each session will be chaired by a subject expert. The abstracts in this volume reflect high standards of scholarship within the Sustainable Pathways for Peace, Governance and Inclusive Development in Africa. One hundred and one (102) participants registered for the conference, and we are grateful for their engagement and contributions. On behalf of the editorial team, I would like to extend our gratitude to all the authors for their insightful submissions, as well as to the reviewers for their valuable feedback.

Editors:

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Collaborative Water Resource Governance in Rural Ghana: A Case Study of the Black Volta River in the Wa West District

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Abstract

Water governance is increasingly recognised as a critical issue due to the growing demand for water resources, driven by population growth and the increasing recognition of its ecological importance. However, studies indicate that water resource governance in Ghana faces numerous challenges that undermine its effectiveness and sustainability. These challenges arise from issues related to equity and access, conflicts between traditional and modern governance practices, power imbalances, and disputes over resource distribution, underscoring the need for inclusive decision-making processes and equitable dispute-resolution mechanisms. Despite extensive research on collaborative water governance, previous studies have primarily focused on challenges such as land use changes affecting river health, pollution from illegal mining and agrochemicals, structural changes within Ghana's water sector, and the role of traditional authorities in water management. However, there has been limited emphasis on institutional arrangements, actor networks, and the key factors driving stakeholder participation in collaborative water governance. This study addressed these gaps by showing a wide-ranging analysis of the practical application of collaborative governance in the management of the Black Volta River in the Wa West District. Employing qualitative research methods including observations, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs), this study explores the roles, relationships, and contextual factors influencing collaborative governance in the region. The research adopts a purposive sampling technique, selecting five communities along the basin in the Wa West District. Additionally, key stakeholders, including representatives from local communities, institutions, and civil society organisations (CSOs), were purposefully sampled. A total of 32 interviews were conducted using structured interview guides, alongside two FGDs. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis with NVivo software, following an inductive approach to identify key themes and patterns.

Keywords: Water Governance; Collaborative Governance; Stakeholder Participation; Institutional arrangements; Resource Management

The Influence of Organisational Culture on E-Procurement Adoption: A Quantitative Study of the Hospitality Sector in Wa Municipality, Ghana

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Abstract

The study exists because e-procurement adoption remains limited across the hospitality sector of Wa Municipality where Ghana is located, despite its known benefits for operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness and enhanced transparency. The main hurdles to adoption stem from both cultural resistance within organisations and poor leadership backing. This study investigates how three cultural elements - innovation orientation, leadership support, and risk aversion play their part in shaping e-procurement system adoption in organisations. This study used the TOE framework together with TAM and DOI theory as its foundation to analyse data using a quantitative research method. The authors collected data through structured questionnaires from 54 hospitality businesses to perform regression and correlation evaluations. Organisations with innovation-centred and collaborative work cultures produce substantial increases in user perception regarding the usefulness and ease of use of e-procurement systems. Leadership support functioned as a fundamental enabler for e-procurement adoption; however, risk-averse corporate cultures presented major challenges by causing resistance to change and generating uncertainty among staff. The implementation of e-procurement systems requires organisations to develop innovative adaptive cultures under leadership support for achieving success. Organisations should allocate funding to implement change-related training systems which require ongoing education. The government must establish a digital readiness infrastructure while offering benefits to promote digital readiness among businesses. The empirical findings from this research provide original evidence about cultural adoption factors in e-procurement solutions, which benefit both scholars and practitioners who want digital transformation in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: E-Procurement Adoption; Hospitality Sector; Digital Transformation; Leadership Support; Organizational Culture

Making Room to Meet Housing Needs: Intergenerational Claims and the Reconfiguration of Family Compounds in Urban Ghana

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Abstract

As urbanisation intensifies and the demand for housing in Wa, Ghana, escalates, traditional family compounds in the inner city are facing considerable spatial and socio-cultural transformations. This research examines how intergenerational claims to space within these compounds are contested, negotiated, and ultimately transformed in the context of urban density, housing demands, and shifting kinship dynamics. Employing a qualitative research approach, this study utilises a case study design involving in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with residents from eleven (11) family compounds across multiple generations (family heads and youth). It uncovers how family compounds are extended, the contestations encountered in these extensions, and the strategies employed by the youths, elders, and migrant family members to assert spatial rights within the compound. Additionally, it examines how customary inheritance norms influence who can "make a room" and how this occurs. The findings highlight extensions like add-ons for self-contained units, bathrooms, and kitchens as the most common forms of transformation. They also illustrate a complex landscape of informal negotiations, where the youth must initially make extensions for the family head before proceeding with their extensions. Competition for space among family members and between neighbours for extensions resulted in shifting boundaries that challenge formal planning logics while reflecting deep-rooted familial obligations. By focusing on everyday space-making practices and contestation, this study contributes to a nuanced understanding of inner-city housing transformation dynamics, emphasising the role of kinship ties and intergenerational claims in shaping urban housing trajectories in West African cities.

Keywords: Family Compounds; Contested Spaces; Negotiations; Extensions; Inner Cities

Agrochemical Knowledge, Perception, and Safety Practices Among Smallholder Vegetable Farmers in Lawra Municipality, Ghana

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Abstract

Knowledge levels of agrochemical handling, application, and disposal among smallholder vegetable farmers are gaining attention globally due to safety practice gaps, causing health and environmental concerns. This study examined agrochemical knowledge and practices among vegetable farmers in Lawra Municipality, Ghana. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed to gather responses from 266 smallholder farmers, using questionnaires, as well as 10 focus group discussions and one key informant interview with an agricultural extension officer. Descriptive statistics and chi-square tests were used to analyse knowledge levels, safety practices, and agrochemical selection criteria. Results show that most vegetable farmers are male (56.8%) with low education (48.9% no formal education), farming vegetables for consumption (99.6%), and income. Farmers used traditional methods (92.1%), chemical fertilisers (70.7%), and insecticides (76.3%) for pest control. While knowledge of agrochemical handling was high, adherence to safety practices varied significantly across the study communities ($p < 0.05$). Farmers prioritised environmental safety (93.6%), food safety (95.9%), soil improvement (97.0%), cost (98.5%), accessibility (97.7%), and effectiveness (99.6%) when selecting agrochemicals. Only 39.5% consistently used protective equipment, with 17.7% following the label instructions. Health issues reported included skin irritation (85.3%) and eye, nose, and throat irritation (56.0%). This study highlights the need for safety training, protective equipment access, and integrated pest management. The findings support transaction cost theory and the theory of reasoned action, emphasising economic and social factors in agrochemical practices. These insights inform policymakers and extension services to promote sustainable agrochemical use in Lawra Municipality.

Keywords: Smallholder vegetable farmers; Agrochemical knowledge; Safety practices; Lawra Municipality; Ghana

An Investigation into the Spatiotemporal Dynamics of Urban Land Use Change in Urban-Wa, Ghana

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Abstract

Urban land use/cover change is rapidly expanding, particularly in secondary cities in developing countries, where growth often outpaces planning capacity. These changes pose threats to ecosystem stability and sustainable development in urban areas. Urban-Wa, a typical secondary city in Ghana, exemplifies these pressures. Guided by the urban ecology and resource frontier theories, this study focused on the dynamics of spatiotemporal changes in land use/cover over a 33-year period. Landsat images from 1990, 2002, 2013, and 2023 were analysed using Environment for Visualising Images (ENVI) and Geographic Information System (GIS) tools through a supervised classification method to detect changes across five land cover classes. Additional context was provided through Participatory Geographic Information Systems (PGIS), household surveys, and ground-truth validation. Classification accuracy ranged from 86% to 94%. Results indicated significant transformations in land use patterns between 1990 and 2023; settlement areas expanded from 568 ha in 1990 to 5,760 ha in 2023, an increase of more than tenfold at the expense of close savannah, open savannah, water bodies, and bare land. These changes were most pronounced in the southern and southwestern zones. Fragmentation of close savannah vegetation was particularly severe, revealing growing ecosystem vulnerability. Analysis of the PGIS maps and household survey data validated the remotely sensed data. About 95.3% (n = 173) of respondents reported a decline in close savannah, while 75.1% observed a decrease in bare land. The research underscores the underestimated pace and impact of land use change in urban Wa. If current trends continue, further conversion of ecologically sensitive areas will likely increase. Integrated land-use monitoring systems, participatory planning and predictive geospatial modelling, are recommended to support future sustainability strategies in the study area.

Keywords: Land use change; Spatiotemporal dynamics; Landsat imagery; Urban-Wa; Ghana

Ten years of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: How have the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) been integrated into Ghana's decentralised development plans?

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Abstract

In 2015, the global community embraced the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and encouraged all countries to prioritise them in their development plans. As such, government ministries, departments, and agencies must not only prioritise the goals in their national and sub-national plans but also implement strategies to achieve them by the 2030 timeline. In this respect, local government authorities (Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies) in Ghana are required to prioritise the SDGs in their medium-term development plans and composite budgets. Yet, there is a lack of literature on the extent of progress made in implementing SDG-related programs in Ghana. To fill this knowledge gap, this study seeks to assess the level of progress made so far by local government authorities in the achievement of the SDGs. In doing so, it will conduct interviews and review the medium-term development plans of Sisaala East and Wa Municipal Assemblies spanning from 2016 to 2024. The results show that local governments in Ghana have not adequately captured and addressed the SDGs in their medium-term development plans, leading to doubts about achieving the SDGs by the 2030 timeline. Specifically, SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 13, although included in the plans, have limited evidence on the progress made towards the attainment of the goals and targets. It is recommended that local governments endeavour to substantially incorporate the SDGs and specify the indicators for measuring progress towards their attainment by the 2030 timeline.

Keywords: Local government; SDGs; Education; Agriculture; Climate Change.

Building Digital Resilience for Sustainable AI Integration: A Study of Higher Education Institutions in Ghana

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Abstract

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping various sectors globally, including healthcare, finance, agriculture, and notably, higher education. In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), AI tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, automated grading platforms, plagiarism detectors, and predictive analytics are revolutionising teaching, learning, administration, and research. While these developments offer significant benefits, they also introduce systemic disruptions, ranging from ethical concerns, data governance challenges, to pedagogical transformations, that can undermine institutional operations if not adequately addressed. To overcome these complexities, HEIs must cultivate digital resilience, which involves the capacity to anticipate, adapt to, recover from, and thrive amid digital disruptions. Digital resilience is not merely a technical adjustment but a strategic, organisational, and cultural capability that enables institutions to sustain core academic and administrative functions while integrating AI responsibly. Guided by institutional theory, which emphasises how institutional norms, rules, and pressures shape organisational behaviour, the study investigates how Ghanaian HEIs are responding to the challenges and opportunities presented by AI. The research will focus on the institutional level, examining AI use by both academic staff and students, as well as institutional policies and strategies to foster digital resilience in HEIs. Adopting a qualitative research approach, the study will utilise a multiple case study design involving selected public HEIs in Ghana. Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed thematically, enabling a rich, context-sensitive exploration of institutional experiences. Expected outcomes of the study include a context-specific framework for building digital resilience in HEIs, identification of institutional enablers and barriers to sustainable AI integration, and strategic recommendations for policy and practice. Among its key contributions, the study aims to extend institutional theory into the domain of AI and digital transformation in African HEIs, and also offer empirically grounded guidance for universities seeking to future-proof their systems against evolving technological disruptions.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Digital Resilience; Sustainable AI Integration; Higher Education Institutions; Institutional Theory; Qualitative Case Study

Institutional Quality, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Economic Growth in Africa: A Threshold Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines the role of Institutional Quality in the foreign direct investment economic growth (FDI) nexus using panel data from 48 African economies over the 2007 to 2021 period. The novelty of this work is the Quadratic effect (non-linear relationship) of foreign direct investment (FDI) and institutional quality on economic growth. This study employed secondary data to examine the nexus of variables across several cross-sections and periods to analyse the results of the selected African countries. For the quantitative data analysis, a panel data econometric model based on generalised methods of moments (GMM) estimation is used to highlight the Quadratic effect (non-linear relationship) of institutional quality and FDI on the growth of African Economies. This model is useful for studying the impact of variables that vary over time. The findings imply that attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) requires institutional efficiency. Therefore, improved institutional quality and a remarkable increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) are important influences on Africa's economic growth. The study finds that FDI inflows had a significant impact on economic growth in Africa and therefore recommends that, as countries embrace FDI flows, the government of these countries needs to ensure stability and quality of their institutions. Primarily, political stability and improvement of institutional facilities are needed to further attract and retain the inflow of FDI to attain the desired economic development. In furtherance, governments should ensure that foreign capital flows into other sectors of the economy, like the real sector, and not just extractive, to enhance domestic investment in Africa.

Keywords: institutional quality, foreign direct investment, generalised methods of moments, Quadratic effect, and economic growth.

State Agent Management of Small-Towns' Water Supply Systems: Displacement or Restoration of Community-based Ownership and Management for Sustainable Management in the North Gonja District, Ghana

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Abstract

Initially, the management of drinkable small-town water supply systems (STWSSs) in Ghana was centralised. However, due to decentralisation reforms in sub-Saharan Africa and financial burdens on the central governments in the 1980s, coupled with community-based ownership and management as a project approach of some donors and partners, these systems were decentralised to local government structures. In Ghana, they were decentralised to Metropolitan Municipal District Assemblies (MMDAs) and small towns with STWSSs. Recently, there was a policy advocating that the management of these STWSSs be given back to the central government due to some managerial challenges that some local structures face. This policy is severely contested. Due to this, there is a concern about what happens to the management and sustainability of these STWSSs in the present and future. It is on this backdrop that this study was conducted using a qualitative research approach with interviews from 53 purposively sampled participants. The data were thematically analysed. The results disclosed that there were political interferences with the STWSSs, illegal connections, familiarity and family ties, low technical capacities of the local management entities, and local management entities felt they were excluded from the STWSSs' affairs. The study concludes that the policy of the government directly managing the STWSSs is in the right direction because some local management entities have challenges managing and sustaining their STWSSs. However, there is a need for proper engagement with all stakeholders involved for a smooth transition; local management entities should not be coerced.

Key words: Sustainable Management; STWSSs; MMDAs; Drinkable Water; Ghana

Small Arms and Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Ghana

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Abstract

The gun culture in Ghana predates the colonial era. However, with the escalation in conflictual relations in the Sahelian region, coupled with the increasing tensions between smallholder farmers and nomadic herders, small arms have become a weapon deployed by feuding parties. This paper examines the role of illicit arms in the farmer-herder conflicts in the Kwahu Afram Plain South District and Atebubu-Amantin Municipality of Ghana. The study assesses the sources of these illicit arms, the motives for acquiring them and their uses in the communities, and how the presence of these illicit arms raises issues of community safety. Situated within the security dilemma theorisation, the study argues that both farmers and nomadic herders are entrapped in circuits of fear emanating from competition over natural resources, prompting them to acquire illicit arms for self-defence, which has exacerbated the already volatile atmosphere. This is an empirical study based on a qualitative approach that employs in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation in eliciting data from crop farmers, nomadic herders, traditional authorities and security agencies. The study found that the proliferation of illicit weapons in the study area originated from two sources: externally, through the porous borders and internally, from local manufacturers. The study further revealed that although the feuding parties' initial intent of acquiring illicit arms was to protect themselves and their property, the intensification of conflicts has now created the necessity for acquiring those weapons. This study has also demonstrated that the proliferation of illicit arms has led to the deterioration of security situation in the study area, not only among the feuding parties but has also intensified incidences of armed robberies. The study contributes to the literature on conflicts in Africa by highlighting how the infiltration of illicit arms into hitherto low intensity conflicts such as the farmer-herder clashes is worsening security situation, an aspect that has received limited attention in the literature. The study recommends public education and disarmament for peaceful coexistence.

Keywords: small arms; light weapons; farmer, herder; conflict; Ghana

A Scoping Review of Solid Waste Management and Its Effect on Community Health Outcomes in West Africa

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Abstract

Solid waste management (SWM) remains a significant challenge in West Africa, with improper disposal practices leading to adverse community health outcomes. This scoping review aimed to map the scientific literature on SWM and its impact on community health in West Africa between 2010 and 2024, focusing on the influence of public knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP). A comprehensive literature search was conducted using PubMed and Google Scholar databases, yielding 28 articles that met the inclusion criteria. The Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) was employed to assess the methodological quality of the selected studies. Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) techniques were used to identify key themes and trends. The findings revealed moderate to high levels of knowledge regarding proper SWM practices. However, negative attitudes and inadequate waste disposal behaviours, such as open dumping and burning, remained prevalent. Poor SWM practices were linked to significant community health risks, including an increased incidence of vector-borne diseases, respiratory illnesses, and gastrointestinal infections. The KAP model served as a useful framework for understanding the complex interplay between knowledge, attitudes, and practices as it predicted how SWM behaviours shaped health outcomes. This review highlighted the need for multi-faceted approaches to improve SWM in West Africa, such as addressing public education, infrastructural development, policy enforcement, and behavioural change interventions. We recommend that future research should focus on conducting empirical studies to compare the impact of SWM interventions on community health outcomes across West African countries and identify the best practices for the region.

Keywords: Solid waste management; Community health outcomes; West Africa; Knowledge, attitudes, practices; Scoping review

Radio, civic educator or political propagandist? A study of radio coverage of the 2024 election campaigns in Tamale, Northern Region of Ghana

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Abstract

Studies have shown radio's ability to increase political participation and promote informed decision-making at elections. However, there is also evidence of the use of radio for the propaganda that defines political discourse and undermines peaceful, free and fair elections. Using a qualitative case study design, this study examines the role that radio stations in Tamale, Northern Region of Ghana, played in educating voters and shaping the political discourse in the lead-up to the 2024 general elections. The prime news bulletins from 8th November to 7th December 2024 of seven selected radio stations in the Tamale Metropolis would be retrieved from the YouTube and Facebook pages of the selected radio stations and analysed using news framing analysis. The study is crucial because the election period in the Northern Region is often characterised by hate speech, which tends to trigger violence. It seeks answers to the following specific questions: in broadcasting news to what extent do radio stations satisfy political partisan interests at the expense of engaging in voter education? How neutral, balanced, fair and objective are politically aligned radio stations in their coverage of political campaign stories?

Keywords: Radio; civic education; political propaganda; development-oriented news; Northern Ghana

Decentralisation in Ghana: Noble intentions under harsh realities in the agricultural sector

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Abstract

In Ghana, decentralisation has gained significant importance as a strategy to foster participatory governance, enhance local development, and ensure effective service delivery. The Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462) as amended by the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936 in 2016) mainstreamed the Agriculture Department as an integral part of the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), with the underlying vision to foster an environment conducive to decentralize agricultural extension services, promoting self-reliance, local accountability, ownership, and sustainability in service delivery. However, suboptimal representation is made of the government's efforts in strengthening agricultural decentralisation and local governance in Ghana. Drawing on three major sources of data evidence: desk reviews, workshop plenary presentations and discussions, and in-depth interviews, the study utilised a qualitative research approach to gain insights into efforts by government and the harsh realities militating against agricultural decentralisation in Ghana. The study revealed that governments over the years have introduced institutional reforms and a legal framework to strengthen decentralisation and local governance. However, severe challenges, including insufficient and irregular funding, recentralization of central government procurement, poor human resource management, and low citizen participation in agricultural governance, still persist. Consequently, the study concludes that the expected outcomes of agricultural decentralisation to improve extension service delivery leave much to be desired. It therefore recommends digital revenue mobilisation strategies, regular disbursement of the District Assembly Common Fund (DA CF), and a moratorium on the creation of new districts until the provision of improved and guaranteed services at the Assemblies is ensured.

Keywords: Decentralization; Agriculture; Extension Services; Local Government; Ghana

Examining the Cognitive Impacts of AI-Enhanced Learning Environments

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Abstract

The expeditious integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into educational environments fundamentally reshapes how students learn, offering unprecedented opportunities for personalised instruction, adaptive feedback, and scalable access to knowledge. While AI-powered systems have demonstrated significant potential to enhance both cognitive and non-cognitive learning outcomes, there is growing concern about their cognitive impacts, particularly regarding memory retention, critical thinking, and creativity. Recent empirical studies suggest that, although AI can accelerate knowledge acquisition and improve learning efficiency, excessive reliance on these tools may lead to cognitive offloading, diminished engagement in deep learning, and a decline in independent problem-solving skills. This study aims to critically examine the cognitive effects of sustained use of AI-enhanced learning environments at higher educational levels in Ghana. The study will utilise a quantitative research design with a stratified sampling technique. Data will be collected via validated questionnaires and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). A rigorous assessment of the relationships between AI use, cognitive outcomes, and instructional strategies will be carried out. The findings will provide actionable insights for educators, developers and policymakers on how to responsibly integrate AI into curricula, ensuring that technological advancements support rather than undermine core cognitive development. By delivering an evidence-based framework for optimising the cognitive benefits of AI while mitigating its risks, this research will advance theoretical and practical understanding of AI's role in education, inform best practices for instructional design, and guide future research and policy on the responsible adoption of AI in learning environments.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence (AI); Cognitive process (CP); Memory retention (MR); Instructional design (ID); Critical thinking (CT).

The Impact of Climate Change on Smallholder Rice Farmers' Output and Income: Evidence from the Mampurugu Moaduri District in the North East Region of Ghana

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Abstract

Climate change poses a significant challenge to smallholder rice farmers, particularly in regions where agriculture is highly vulnerable to environmental variations. This study examines the impact of climate change on rice farmers' output and income in the Mampurugu Moaduri District of Ghana. A mixed-method approach was employed, utilising surveys to collect quantitative data from 370 rice farmers across 10 major rice farming communities in the District and interviews to gather qualitative data from 10 key informants, including three officers from the District Department of Agriculture. The findings reveal a strong relationship between climate variability and rice yields, with erratic rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, and extreme weather events significantly affecting production and income stability. Moreover, limited access to financial resources and adaptation strategies further exacerbates farmers' vulnerability to climate shocks. Despite these challenges, some farmers have adopted climate-smart agricultural practices, including drought-resistant rice varieties and improved usage of certified seed, to mitigate climate-related risks. The study, therefore, highlights the urgent need for targeted policy interventions to support smallholder farmers and recommends an investment in climate-resilient inputs, financial support mechanisms, and capacity-building programs to enhance farmers' adaptive capabilities. Strengthening these adaptation measures will be essential for improving agricultural resilience and ensuring sustainable livelihoods for smallholder rice farmers in Ghana, and goes a long way to contributing to the achievement of SDG 13. The results provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders committed to addressing the adverse effects of climate change on smallholder agriculture and fostering long-term sustainability in the sector, as well as contributing to the ongoing knowledge discourse about climate change in academia.

Keywords: Climate Change; Smallholder Rice Farmers; Agricultural Resilience; Adaptation Strategies; Ghana

Maternal Health Literacy and its Predictors among Pregnant Women: Implications for Improving Maternal Health Outcomes

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Abstract

Maternal health literacy (MHL) is women's cognitive, social abilities and motivations to access, assess, comprehend and utilise basic health information and services to make informed health decisions that protect and promote their and their children's health. Whereas the Maternal Health Literacy Inventory in Pregnancy (MHELIP) is the ideal tool for measuring MHL among pregnant women, limited studies have applied it to gauge MHL among pregnant women. This study, therefore, aimed to determine MHL among pregnant women and associated predictors. The study followed a cross-sectional descriptive quantitative approach, and 360 pregnant women were interviewed using a two-phase structured questionnaire to capture participants' personal and situational characteristics. In contrast, the MHELIP tool was used to measure MHL. Bivariate chi-square and multivariate logistic regression analysis were also used to determine association and predictors. The findings show that 33.6% of pregnant women had desired MHL. Bivariate analysis showed that age, religion, education, literacy, occupation, partner's employment status, average personal monthly income, household income, parity, membership of an identified association, access to a radio set, and internet use were significantly associated with maternal health literacy. Multivariate analysis showed that pregnant women aged ≥ 40 years, who attained secondary education or higher, and were literate, were more likely to have desired MHL. In addition, being a trader, the average personal and household income of $\geq$ GHC 2,000 had significant odds of desired MHL. Primiparous and multiparous pregnant women, access to radio and internet use also predicted desired MHL. These findings highlight the multi-dimensional nature of MHL among pregnant women. Economic and social deprivations such as unemployment, low education, and limited access to the media are associated with limited MHL. Economic empowerment and access to digital media should be promoted to improve MHL among pregnant women.

Keywords: Maternal; Health; Literacy; Pregnancy; Predictors

Maternal Health Literacy and Antenatal Care Utilization: Lived Experiences of Pregnant Women in Kumbungu District, Northern Ghana

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Abstract

Antenatal healthcare allows pregnant women to receive appropriate antenatal health information that promotes positive pregnancy outcomes. Pregnant women's maternal health literacy (MHL) influences their engagement with the health system for antenatal healthcare. However, limited studies have explored how pregnant women's MHL influences their antenatal healthcare experiences. This study aimed to explore how pregnant women's MHL influences their antenatal healthcare experiences. A qualitative case study design was used. An in-depth interview guide was used to collect data from 40 pregnant women attending ANC and 5 midwives from 5 selected health facilities. Data was analysed according to Braun & Clarke's six-step thematic analysis framework. The themes identified in this study were the initiation of antenatal healthcare services, screening services, medication, and time spent at health facilities during ANC, which were clustered to form the utilization of antenatal healthcare services. Sources of antenatal health communication, communication feedback and implementation of antenatal health communication were also clustered to form service provider–pregnant women communication. Finally, the attitude of health staff, the adequacy of health staff, and the infrastructure also formed the antenatal workforce and management. Generally, the study showed that health system factors adversely affect the MHL of pregnant women in the study area. Health system bottlenecks adversely affect pregnant women's ability to effectively access antenatal healthcare, understand antenatal health information and implement antenatal health prescriptions. There is a need to strengthen the national health insurance scheme, improve the antenatal medication supply chain mechanism and rooted antenatal health communication to improve pregnant women's antenatal healthcare experiences.

Key Words: Maternal; Health; Literacy; Antenatal; Utilization

Processes and Drivers of Environmental Policy Change in a Developing Country: The Case of Ghana's Forest and Wildlife Policy

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Abstract

The change of policy aimed at reducing the rapid spate of forest resource exploitation has not been successful in Ghana. The encroachment problems, excessive hunting for game, illegal logging, and mining in forested areas continue unabated. With this background, the following critical questions need answers: What factors accounted for Ghana's forest and wildlife policy change in 2012? And to what extent did the processes leading to the forest and wildlife policy change reflect the postulations of policy process theories? The study adopts the qualitative case study approach, which provides the opportunity to study the forest and wildlife policy change process in its real-life context. Additionally, the paper adopts the purposive sampling technique, with in-depth interviews becoming the main primary data collection method. The collected data, both primary and secondary, were thematically analysed. The paper found that factors that drove the changes in Ghana's forest and wildlife included, but were not limited to, socio-economic changes, pressure group campaigns, and the consequences of implementing the existing policies. Despite these, political leadership dominated the process. Furthermore, the empirical finding illustrating the process of change to a large extent reflects the postulations of the policy process theories of multiple streams and advocacy coalitions. The study therefore recommends that the process of policy change should be stakeholder-driven, and provide an opportunity to improve the content of a policy for maximum impact.

Keywords: Environmental Policy and Politics, Public Policy Change, Multiple Streams Framework, Advocacy Coalition Framework, Developing Countries, Ghana.

Pathways for Integrating the Fulbe into Ghana's National Development Agenda

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Abstract

Ghana stands as a beacon of stability in West Africa, anchored by the principles of democratic governance. The 1992 Constitution enshrines fundamental human rights for all citizens, irrespective of creed, ethnicity, or gender. Yet, for the Fulbe, these guarantees ring hollow. Systemic discrimination pervades their existence. Their political exclusion denies them a voice in governance, while structural barriers obstruct their access to healthcare, education, and critical resources like land, water, and pasture. Branded as criminals and blamed for all the violent crimes, including armed robbery, rape, and cattle rustling, they endure relentless stigmatisation. Even their cultural identity is under siege, with oppressive norms silencing their music and dance at public festivals. Despite these injustices, the Fulbe, who are estimated to be over one million strong, persist with unyielding resilience. They remain indispensable to Ghana's food security and public service, even as they battle political, social, economic, and cultural erasure. This paper, through key informant interviews and rigorous literature review, exposes the root causes of Fulbe marginalisation, dissecting the barriers to their full integration. To dismantle this exclusion, we propose urgent reforms: enforcing human rights protections, implementing inclusive education policies, and eradicating hate speech and stereotypes through zero-tolerance measures. The path forward demands not just policy shifts, but a national reckoning with entrenched prejudice.

Keywords: Fulbe; integration; citizenship; human rights; discrimination

Farmers' Perception of Weather Conditions and Agricultural Output in Ghana

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Abstract

Weather variability, characterised by fluctuations in temperature and rainfall, poses challenges for agricultural production. Understanding how farmers' perceptions of weather conditions for agricultural production relate to their crop output is crucial for farmers' adaptation strategies. This study, therefore, examines the connection between farmers' perceptions of weather conditions for agricultural production and their actual crop yields. The study utilises a cross-sectional design, using data from the AICCRA- Ghana Cluster Baseline Survey administered by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in 2022. The Cobb-Douglas production function serves as the theoretical framework, and the Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS) estimation approach is employed in the empirical analysis to address endogeneity concerns. This study focuses on the maize crop, which is the most widely cultivated crop in the study area. The results indicate a direct relationship between farmers' perceptions of weather conditions and actual maize yields. Farmers who hold a positive perception of weather conditions also experience increased maize crop yield at a 5% significance level compared to those with a negative perception. A positive perception of agricultural weather conditions correlates with a 2.7% increase in maize crop yield. Other significant factors contributing to higher maize crop yields include fertiliser application, access to credit, and the use of insecticides and herbicides. The study concludes that farmers possess a very good understanding of weather conditions and their likely impact on crop yields, as their perceptions of weather conditions directly correlate with agricultural output. Enhancing farmers' access to climate information services, particularly localised climate information, can improve their knowledge of weather conditions for agricultural production, which may increase their adaptive capacity and reduce their vulnerability to weather variability.

Keywords: Farmers, Weather conditions, Crop yield, 2SLS, Ghana

Building Back Better: Pathways to Inclusive and Sustainable Development for Communities Affected by the Akosombo Dam Spillage in Post-Disaster Recovery

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Abstract

This study examines the tension between rapid recovery and long-term sustainability in post-disaster planning. Using the Akosombo dam spillage in 2023, the research will explore how immediate recovery actions impact long-term resilience, environmental sustainability, and social equity in Ghana. Sustainable development planning is a holistic design approach that takes into account both a community's inherent social characteristics and external interventions, the most important of which are the environment, politics, and economy. In the wake of disasters, recovery efforts are often driven by the urgency to restore livelihoods, infrastructure, and essential services. However, these short-term interventions, while necessary, frequently overlook the broader goals of the opportunities' recovery brings in sustainable development. This study used mixed methods to analyse the planning processes, institutional frameworks, and community experiences that shaped recovery trajectories. The study is underpinned by the complex adaptive systems theory when actors fail to recognise how multiple issues and actors are interlinked, and larger specialised actors tend to focus on management capacity towards closing governance gaps. The study findings contribute to ongoing debates on disaster governance, resilience, and sustainable planning, offering recommendations for more coherent and future-oriented recovery frameworks. The study argues for a shift towards anticipatory and inclusive planning that aligns short-term recovery with long-term sustainable development goals.

Keywords: Dam spillage; sustainable community; development; post-disaster recovery; short-term interventions.

Determinants of Choice for Birth Companionship Among Expectant Mothers in the Wa Municipality, Upper West Region

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Abstract

Birth companionship is a crucial component of respectful maternity care that can improve maternal and neonatal outcomes. However, the prevalence of birth companionship and factors influencing this choice among expectant mothers in Wa Municipality are not well understood. This study aimed to determine the prevalence of desire for birth companionship, factors influencing its choice, and cultural determinants among expectant mothers in Wa Municipality. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted with 384 expectant mothers using a structured questionnaire. Systematic random sampling was employed to select participants from the three health facilities. Descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and binary logistic regression were used for data analysis. The result showed that approximately half (50.5%) of the respondents were aware of birth companionship, of which the majority (91.9%) desired it during their pregnancy. Physical (80.5%) and emotional (59.4 %) support were the main reasons for women desiring birth companionship. Spouses/partners (35.2%) and mothers (32.8%) were the preferred options for birth companions. Statistically, language and communication skills ($p=0.001$) and person availability during labour ($p=0.005$) were significant factors associated with choice of birth companionship. Most expectant mothers (63.8%) believed that cultural and traditional beliefs influenced their choice of companions, with mothers being the preferred choice because of cultural norms (43.8%). The prevalence of desire for birth companionship was high because of determinants such as effective communication, person availability during labour, and cultural beliefs. We recommend that healthcare providers and policymakers co-create to design and implement birth companionship programs that improve maternal care quality and outcomes.

Keywords; Birth companionship; Expectant mothers; Maternal health; Ghana; Determinants

Rethinking Everyday State Actors-Informal Traders' Encounters in Contemporary Urban Governance

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Abstract

The urban everyday politics of resistance that often occasion tension between state actors and informal traders in most African cities have been widely acknowledged. Contemporary scholarship has predominantly framed informal traders as nuisances and illegal actors who resist the state's quests to stamp out their activities through revanchist and exclusionary policies, which sometimes trigger violence. Yet, an in-depth analysis of informal traders' lived experiences reveals that this positioning glosses over their role in producing and regulating urban spaces in everyday city governance. In negotiating access to space, setting up and conducting trade in the city, informal traders shape the built environment and everyday governance through their presence, practices, and use of urban spaces. Drawing on a qualitative research approach in urban Ghana, including in-depth interviews with informal traders and city authorities, this paper sets out to make visible the vital yet diverse negotiation practices that informal traders deploy in securing and producing the urban space, and the everyday application and regulation of the urban streetscape. The paper demonstrates that informal traders utilised varied negotiation pathways to champion their individual and, at times, collective interests in the city, showing a collaborative rather than antagonistic relationship. The paper concludes that city authorities in their quests to maintain social order, and promote the right to the city grants informal traders' access to space to encourage their entrepreneurial skills, and at the same time harness their productive capacities to engage in legitimate sources of livelihood which becomes a critical source of revenue generation for both traders and the state. This study contributes to the broader scholarly debate on urban informality, everyday city governance, and socio-economic justice, particularly in the African context.

Keywords: Informal trading; State actors; Urban encounters; Urban governance; Ghana

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Approach to Drug Use and Wellbeing Among Galamsey Miners: A Human Capital Perspective to Galamsey

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Abstract

Galamsey, a labor-intensive, illegal, and unregulated small-scale mining in Ghana, has faced intense criticism and governmental enforcement despite being a critical source of revenue. In Galamsey, unlicensed and unskilled people use rudimentary tools to mine gold in dangerous conditions. South Africa and Ghana are major mining nations, but few studies have examined their mineworkers' substance use and health, especially in the illegal sector. Galamsey research in Ghana has primarily focused on environmental and pollution challenges, overlooking the health and human capital of mineworkers. Galamsey mineworkers are prone to drugs at Galamsey sites due to job demands and drug availability, causing health and human capital development issues. This research employed the job demands-resources (JD-R) model to study Galamsey and drug use, as well as their effects on mineworkers' well-being from a human capital theory perspective. Using a qualitative method, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with a random sample of 37 Galamsey rehab patients and 12 clinical personnel. Interviews and focus group discussions examined participants' experiences with Galamsey job demands, drug availability, and the consequences for health and human capital development. Data were verbatim translated and transcribed in NVIVO14 for qualitative descriptive analysis. After coding and recoding interview and focus group transcripts, inductive content analysis identified themes. The findings revealed that job demand (cognitive, emotional, pain, and sleep) difficulties lead to drug use. The desire for comfort and self-gratification leads to drug use. Availability of drugs and credit extensions for drugs at the Galamsey site increases drug use. Galamsey and drugs have harmful effects on mineworkers' health and wellbeing, with adverse effects on human capital development (education and skill progress). This novel study on Galamsey contributes to scholarship. By applying JD-R and human capital theories within the Galamsey industry, the study extends the applicability of these theories to drug use, health, and wellbeing beyond the routine formal legal organizational context to the informal and illegal economy of Galamsey. The results of this study demonstrate that immediate action is necessary to confront drug use among Galamsey mineworkers as the nation builds momentum to fight against Galamsey.

Keywords: Galamsey, drug use, illegal and informal, mineworkers, human capital, job demands-resources

Financial Resource Generation and Local Community Development in MMDAS: Study in the Wa East District, Ghana

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Abstract

This study examines the financial resource generation and local community development in MMDAs (a study in the Wa East District, Ghana). The study's primary objectives are to identify the elements that contribute to local community development in the Wa East District, assess the degree to which this development is influenced by the formation of financial resources, and examine the difficulties that arise from this process. A survey design strategy was chosen because it highlights the significance of the situation for comprehending and elucidating the notion of local government financial resources and its impact on native level growth in the Wa East area. The reading revealed that the majority of respondents believe that access to finance is the most important factor for community development. The study further discovered that excellent management is highly beneficial in promoting local community development. The study also showed that in order to encourage efficient and effective revenue mobilisation, the assembly should support public education on tax and toll payment. The regression analysis revealed that strategies to control budget deficit, limited investment opportunities, inadequate staff to monitor revenue mobilization and Bureaucratic procedures in the application of local revenue are the variable that are positively related to local community development as the dependent variable. The study makes a number of recommendations, some of which include the Assembly prioritizing the hiring of skilled and capable tax collectors and revenue superintendents to efficiently train and manage revenue collectors and the expeditious payment of statutory payments like the DACF, DDF, and other donor funds.

Chieftaincy Conflicts of Ghana. The Perspective of Traditional and Modern Authorities in the Bawku Conflicts

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Abstract

Chieftaincy conflicts persist as a significant challenge to peace and development in Ghana, particularly in diverse areas such as Bawku in the Upper East Region. This study presents a systematic literature review to examine the perspectives of traditional and modern authorities in the Bawku chieftaincy conflict. Adopting a qualitative research design, the study analysed secondary data from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, government reports and media publications sourced from academic databases including Google Scholar, JSTOR, ResearchGate, and Scopus. The review focused on literature published between 2000 and 2024. The findings revealed that the Bawku conflict is rooted in colonial-era decisions that favoured Mamprusi leadership, marginalising the Kusasi people and creating longstanding historical grievances. Traditional authorities from both ethnic groups maintain competing claims to legitimacy, complicating resolution efforts. Modern state institutions, including the judiciary and security forces, have attempted to manage the conflict but often lack community trust due to perceived political interference and partiality. Political actors have exacerbated the conflict by aligning with opposing factions for electoral advantage, undermining neutrality. While several conflict resolution strategies have been employed, such as mediation by the National Peace Council and civil society efforts, their impact has been limited due to deep-rooted mistrust and a lack of inclusive frameworks. The study recommends integrating customary dispute resolution mechanisms with state legal structures, strengthening peacebuilding initiatives and depoliticising the chieftaincy institution to foster lasting peace in Bawku and similar conflict-prone areas.

Keywords: Chieftaincy Conflict, Traditional Authorities, Modern Governance, Bawku Conflict, Political Interference, Conflict Resolution, Ghana

Transborder Agglomeration and Crime: Exploring the Nexus of Integration and Illicit Activity

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Abstract

Transborder agglomeration refers to the integration of urban regions across national boundaries through social, economic and infrastructural linkages. While such integration fosters development and regional cooperation, it also creates conditions conducive to cross-border criminal activities. This paper explores the intersection between transborder agglomeration and crime using a combination of theoretical analysis and case studies, including the Ghana-Togo border at Aflao-Lomé, Busia (Kenya-Uganda) and Ciudad del Este (Paraguay-Brazil-Argentina). The purpose of the study is to critically assess how these integrated regions enable both legal and illicit exchanges particularly in areas where legal systems, governance capacity and economic conditions differ. Drawing on Routine Activity Theory and Opportunity Theory, the paper identifies how weak enforcement, informal crossings and economic disparities make border regions vulnerable to crimes such as smuggling, human trafficking and cyber-related financial fraud. Qualitative methods were used, relying on policy documents, academic literature and regional reports. The study found that regions like Aflao-Lomé serve as vibrant trade corridors but also hotspots for unregulated movement of goods and people. The existence of informal routes, combined with under-resourced border security, has enabled the proliferation of fuel smuggling, irregular migration and tax evasion. Similar trends were observed in other agglomerations, such as San Diego-Tijuana and Ciudad del Este. The conclusion underscores the urgent need for coordinated governance, harmonised legal frameworks and community-based strategies to curb crime while preserving the benefits of regional integration. It also calls for targeted investments in socio-economic development to reduce the incentives for illicit activity.

Keywords: Transborder Agglomeration; Ghana-Togo Border; Cross-Border Crime; Smuggling; Regional Security.

Assessing Land Use and Land Cover Change Using GIS and Remote Sensing Techniques: A Case Study of Prestea Huni Valley Municipal

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Abstract

Ecological overshoot resulting from human demand surpassing nature's regenerative capacity drives land use and land cover (LULC) changes, with far-reaching consequences for climate, food security, and biodiversity. Globally, forest ecosystems are increasingly threatened by land use and land cover (LULC) changes, exacerbating environmental vulnerabilities. In Ghana's Prestea Huni-Valley Municipality, poverty-driven illegal mining (*galamsey*), agriculture, and deforestation have triggered severe ecological degradation and heightened disaster risk coupled with damning implications for SDG 15 (life on land). Using GIS and remote sensing techniques, the study analysed spatial-temporal changes (2002–2022) to quantify impacts on forests, water bodies, and bare lands, while evaluating implications for Sustainable Development Goal 15 (life on land). Key findings reveal a decline in vegetation cover from 898.88 km² (2002) to 882.43 km² (2022), while forested areas (including water bodies and protected zones) decreased from 226.21 km² to 216.99 km². Bare lands expanded dramatically from 223.33 km² to 365.96 km², and water bodies shrank from 299.57 km² to 122.11 km² over the same period. These trends are attributed to illegal mining, sand winning, alluvial mining, and deforestation, which have surged in the municipality. Agricultural land increased by 2015, likely due to population growth, but the conversion of forests to farmland has heightened flooding and erosion risks. The study underscores the urgent need for policy interventions, and recommends stricter regulation of illegal mining, restoration initiatives and controlled agricultural expansions to prevent further forest loss.

Keywords: Land use land cover (LULC); surface mining; deforestation; GIS and remote sensing; ecological overshoot

Public Policy Approaches to Countering Terrorism in the Global South: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

Although terrorist attacks in the Global South have a long history, the concept of terrorism only emerged and gained significance after the 11 September 2001 attack, which resulted in the war against terrorism. Since then, terrorism has often been considered a common global enemy. More so, the recent focus of terrorists on recruiting women and children into terrorist organizations makes terrorism a serious canker especially in the global south where it is on the rise. In response, countries have adopted different public policy approaches to countering terrorism. Although, some studies have explored these policies, they largely focused on public policy approaches of specific individual countries, thereby missing a holistic understanding of policy approaches targeted at combating terrorism in the Global South. The current study therefore sought to synthesize public policy approaches geared towards countering terrorism from various countries in the Global South. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) was the method used to guide the scoping review. The results indicated that the most widely used public policy approach for countering terrorism in the Global South is militarisation. However, militarisation was found to be largely ineffective in countering terrorism. The conclusion was that public policy approaches for countering terrorism in the Global South are inadequate. This implies a likelihood of counter-terrorism policy failures in the Global South. Therefore, the key recommendation is a blend of militarisation and awareness creation policies, in other words, both hard and soft policies, as a balance of both would most likely produce better policy outcomes.

Keywords: Terrorism; terrorist; public policy; approach; Global South

Impact of Globalisation on Public Policy in the Global South: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

Globalisation has significantly influenced public policy across the Global South, shaping economic, social, environmental, and governance frameworks. While globalisation fosters trade liberalisation, foreign direct investment, and international collaboration, it also presents challenges such as economic dependency, environmental degradation, and policy constraints. This study explores the nuanced impacts of globalisation on public policy by examining its sectoral influences—economic, social, environmental, and political—across the Global South. This review applied Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses. It emerged from the review that globalisation has informed public policy with respect to economic, social environment and governance and politics. The findings underscore the need for strategic policy frameworks that empower governments to negotiate equitable international terms, regulate foreign capital, and invest in sustainable development. This research contributes to the discourse on globalisation's role in shaping inclusive governance and provides insights for policymakers seeking to enhance resilience and autonomy in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

Keywords: Globalisation, public policy, Global South, social policy, economic policy.

Streetscape and Pedestrians' Safety in the Central Business District of Tamale

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Abstract

Pedestrian safety is a critical concern in urban environments, particularly in the Central Business District (CBD) of Tamale, where growing congestion and inadequate infrastructure compromise pedestrian mobility. As urban areas continue to expand, the safety of pedestrians becomes increasingly paramount to ensure a livable and accessible environment. This study aims to examine the safety perceptions, accident risks, and awareness of pedestrian laws among users in the CBD. Utilising a concurrent embedded mixed-method strategy, quantitative data were collected from a sample of 50 pedestrians across key locations in the CBD, while qualitative insights were gathered from in-depth interviews with 15 pedestrians, both in Tamale. The results revealed a significant concern regarding pedestrians' safety, with many respondents expressing feelings of vulnerability while navigating the CBD. This apprehension was often attributed to the inadequacies in pedestrian infrastructure, including poorly maintained sidewalks, lack of designated crossings, and insufficient signage. The qualitative findings emphasised a troubling lack of awareness regarding pedestrian laws, indicating that many individuals were uninformed about existing regulations designed to protect them. The analysis indicates a strong correlation between the perceived quality of infrastructure and pedestrian safety, highlighting the critical need for improvements. This study recommends enhancing pedestrian infrastructure, enforcing traffic regulations, and increasing public awareness campaigns to foster a culture of road safety in the CBD. By implementing these measures, local authorities can promote safer and more accessible urban spaces for all users, ultimately contributing to improved pedestrian experiences and reduced accident risks in the Central Business District of Tamale.

Keywords: Pedestrian Safety; Central Business District; Infrastructure; Road Safety, Public Awareness

Community Mobilisation and Development: The Case of Anakase Electoral Area in the Bosomtwe District, Ashanti Region

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Abstract

This case study focuses on Sharon Mensah, the Assemblywoman for Ankaase Electoral Area in the Bosomtwe District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It is underpinned by the Community Engagement Approach (CEA) of the Glenorchy City Council, that explores the intersection of gender and community mobilisation through Mensah's leadership. This approach aligns with participatory principles, ensuring that development initiatives are inclusive, sustainable, and driven by the community. The findings reveal that rather than imposing involvement, the Assemblywoman encouraged local actors to participate willingly, promoting a genuine sense of ownership and commitment. Hon. Mensah's approach to community mobilisation and development prioritises voluntary participation over coercion, thereby enhancing peaceful coexistence in the electoral area. Despite these successes, structural challenges persist, including limited financial support, an urgent need for adequate toilet facilities, and gendered social expectations. Furthermore, climate-related challenges, such as irregular and insufficient rainfall hinder farming and exacerbate hunger, a crisis that disproportionately affects women, who are primarily responsible for feeding their households. Mensah's model demonstrates how indigenous knowledge, voluntary participation, and gender-inclusive governance can foster sustainable development. The Assemblywoman's leadership responsibilities at the local level of governance have been recognised by many and need to be documented. Her leadership guides policymakers and practitioners striving for equitable political representation and community-driven change in Ghana and beyond. The study suggests a need for institutional reforms to amplify the impact of grassroots women leaders.

Keywords: Gender; grassroots mobilisation; community engagement; indigenous governance; women's leadership; sustainable development.

Gamification as a Driver of Financial Literacy and Savings Behaviour in Mobile Banking: A Study of Ghana's Developing Economy

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Abstract

Financial inclusion remains a challenge in Ghana, where many lack the access to traditional banking, particularly in rural areas. Mobile banking helps bridge this gap, but low financial literacy limits its effectiveness, as users often only perform basic transactions like money transfers. Savings features are underutilised due to complexity or lack of engagement. Using game-like elements such as rewards and progress tracking, gamification could enhance adoption, financial literacy, and savings habits. While studies link gamification to increased mobile banking use, research in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) remains limited. This study explores how gamified features (rewards, progress tracking, social elements) influence financial service adoption, literacy, and savings in Ghana. Grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Social Exchange Theory (SET), the research employs a mixed-methods approach. Surveys of 300+ mobile banking users will be analysed using PLS-SEM, followed by 15-25 qualitative interviews for deeper insights. Expected findings will highlight how gamification boosts app engagement, improves financial knowledge, and encourages savings. The study contributes to knowledge by integrating TAM and SET for digital financial inclusion and offering practical recommendations for FinTech developers and policymakers. Results will inform the design of more engaging, effective mobile banking solutions tailored to developing economies, advancing financial inclusion goals.

Keywords: Mobile Banking; Financial Literacy; Savings Behaviour; Financial Inclusion; Developing Economies.

A Review of Automata Processors in Machine Learning

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Abstract

The emergence of ‘the Micron’s Automata Processor’ (MAPAP) sparked interest in innovative architectures, influencing the growing need for hardware acceleration in the field of machine learning (ML). The MAPAP is a data-parallel, non-von Neumann co-processor which harnesses non-deterministic finite automata (NFA) for high-throughput pattern matching. Our systematic review assessed the Automata Processor’s potential in accelerating ML tasks, with a focus on classification, pattern recognition and sequence analysis. Tracy II et al. (2016) as pioneers demonstrated the first Random Forest implementation on the AP, and overcame floating-point arithmetic and dynamic data structure support through a pipelined automata technique. A comprehensive search was conducted across multiple databases, i.e. IEEE Xplore, ACM Digital Library, SpringerLink, and arXiv from 2015 to 2025 with relevant keywords. Peer-reviewed articles and conference papers that explored AP applications in Machine Learning were included, while we excluded studies that did not involve APs, non-English and papers without experimental results. We also evaluated included studies based on relevance to ML, technical depth, novelty and reproducibility to guarantee high-quality research, relevant, impactful, and reflective of the current state-of-the-art in the field. Our review presented the following findings: tasks such as the k-nearest neighbours, sequential pattern mining and rule-based classification, the APs' performance can gain up to 50× speedups. Despite some limitations such as programmability, energy efficiency, and applicability to complex models, remain per our study. Therefore, emerging trends like FPGA overlays offer potential for path optimization. Future research can focus on hybrid architectures and enhanced compiler support to enable more efficient and scalable solutions.

Keywords: Automata Processor; Machine Learning Acceleration; Pattern Matching; Hardware Acceleration; Non-von Neumann Architecture

A Novel Multicriteria Decision-Making Approach to Optimal Gold Mining Site Selection in Ghana

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify optimal gold mining locations in Ghana using a hybrid Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM) model that integrates the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) and a modified Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS). Given Ghana's significant role in Africa's gold production, selecting mining sites involves balancing multiple factors such as gold grade, ore reserves, operational costs, environmental and social impacts, health and safety risks, and legal compliance. AHP was used to determine the weights of these criteria, while the modified TOPSIS ranked ten potential sites in the Ashanti Region. The results were compared with those from other MCDM methods -WSM, WPM, MULTIMOORA, and TOPSIS—and validated through sensitivity and Spearman's rank correlation analyses. The study offers a robust, transparent, and inclusive decision-support tool that helps stakeholders make balanced choices that enhance financial returns while minimizing negative environmental and social effects.

Keywords: Multicriteria Decision Making, Mining Site Selection, Optimal Site Selection, Sustainability in Mining, AHP, TOPSIS.

Economic Growth and Health Outcomes in Low-and-Middle Income Countries in Africa: The Mediating Effects of ICT Development

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Abstract

An increasing number of studies examine the relationship between economic growth, technological innovation, and health indicators in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) because findings remain under-explored across regions in Africa and other developing economies. This study reviews a collection of 15 empirical and theoretical studies to assess the interconnectedness between economic growth, health outcomes, and information and communication technology (ICT) development in LMICs, with a particular emphasis on Africa. The aim was to synthesise emerging patterns, mediating mechanisms, and gaps in the literature to inform policy and research. Through taxonomic analysis, the studies were categorised according to their research objectives, methodological approaches, variable classifications, and findings. The predominant methodologies include panel regression models, Granger causality, system-GMM, autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL), and network meta-analyses using national and international datasets (e.g. World Bank, DHS, and ITU) across various periods and country samples. The results consistently reveal a significant positive long-term impact of health outcomes (e.g. life expectancy and child and maternal mortality) on economic growth, and vice versa, although the causality often varies by region and time frame. ICT indicators such as internet penetration and mobile connectivity emerged as critical mediators, significantly enhancing health outcomes and indirectly stimulating economic growth. However, the findings also indicate regional disparities and moderating effects from education levels, inequality, and governance quality. Based on this finding, we recommend that LMIC policymakers leverage ICT-driven health innovations, strengthen health and education systems, and promote inclusive economic policies that reduce inequality. In addition, future research should focus on identifying context-specific mediating pathways by evaluating specific integrated health-ICT economic development models that reflect the socio-political dynamics of LMICs.

Keywords: Economic growth; Health outcomes; Low- and Middle-Income Countries; Information and communication technology; Developing economies

Assessing the Impacts of Shea Value Chain Financing on Women's Adoption of Sustainable Shea Production Practices in the Savannah Ecological Zone

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Abstract

The shea value chain is a vital livelihood source for women in Ghana's Savannah Ecological Zone, a semi-arid area prone to erratic rainfall and land degradation. Despite its economic relevance, unsustainable harvesting and declining shea parklands threaten its long-term sustainability. This study examined how access to the shea value chain financing affects women's adoption of sustainable practices, including shea tree nursery participation, agroforestry and the use of protective clothing. A mixed methods approach was adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative data. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 380 women, shea cooperative members across 14 communities, selected using Yamane's (1967) sampling formula. Data were gathered through structured questionnaires, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Marginal Treatment Effect (MTE) model to estimate causal impacts, while qualitative data were thematically analysed and triangulated. The findings revealed that women with access to formal loans, VSLAs, and buyer pre-financing were more likely to adopt sustainable practices. Participation in shea planting and agroforestry increased by 39% among those with multiple financing sources ($p < 0.05$), while adherence to community by-laws and non-harvesting of immature trees rose by 28% and 32%, respectively. Use of protective clothing was 31% higher among women with formal loan access ($p < 0.01$). The study recommends improving access to inclusive, value chain-linked financing models to promote sustainable shea practices and enhance ecological resilience in the Savannah zone.

Keywords: Shea value chain, sustainable production, value chain financing, agroforestry, Savannah ecological zone.

Determinants and Health Impacts of Household Solid Waste Management Practices: Insights for Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Wa, Ghana

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Abstract

Emerging cities in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) face problems of increasing household solid waste generation and limited technical know-how to effectively manage it. However, basic sustainable household solid waste management (SHSWM) practices, cited in literature as the panacea to this problem, have received limited attention from households in the sub-region. Addressing the problem requires a deeper analysis and understanding of the household dynamics contributing to the conundrum. Grounded in RANAS (Risk, Attitude, Norms, Ability, and Self-regulation) theoretical model, this study utilised cross-sectional household survey (n=198) to explore the factors influencing five SHSWM (sorting, reuse, reduce, recycling, and composting) behaviours across three diverse neighbourhoods in Wa. The findings show that reuse (90%) and recycling (50%) are the dominant SHSWM indicators practiced by households. The remaining SHSWM indicators received low adoption: reduce (10%), sorting (15%), and composting (29%). Households using institutionalised waste bins show higher average health concerns (1.6) but reported lower environmental health sickness (EHS) rate (47.7%) compared to those using communal containers, who demonstrated low average health concerns (1.3) but reported higher average EHS rate (58.8%). Malaria is highly associated with households that practice open waste dumping (83%). Also, the multiple logistic regression shows that household-level variables: age, religion, education, income, health status, and residential class influence households' adoption of SHSWM indicators. The findings inform policymakers to use education and campaigns focused on addressing the interplay of households' dynamics towards increasing adoption of SHSWM behaviours.

Keywords: Sustainable solid waste management, Household characteristics, Waste sorting, Planned behaviour, Ghana

Navigating utility challenges in sub-Saharan African cities: A cross-sectional analysis of urban households' energy and water management strategies in Wa, Ghana

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Abstract

Rapid urbanisation and rising utility costs are mounting pressure on urban households in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This study examines energy and water management strategies among urban households in Wa Municipality, Ghana. Using a cross-sectional survey of 400 households, the study employed structured questionnaires and analysed the data with descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and Chi-square tests. Findings indicate that electricity and charcoal are the dominant sources of lighting and cooking, respectively. The average household spends GH¢261.75 monthly on energy and GH¢79.51 on water, with larger and older households incurring significantly higher utility costs. In response to rising costs, households predominantly adopt behavioural coping strategies such as staying out of the home during peak hours, reducing cooking frequency, and reusing wastewater. Electrical appliances ownership was generally low, particularly for high-consumption devices, reflecting financial constraints. Statistically significant associations were found between education level and the adoption of energy- and water-saving strategies, such as the use of energy-efficient bulbs, bulk washing, and modifying bathing frequency. These results underscore the influence of socio-demographic factors, especially education, in shaping conservation behaviour. The study concludes that while households demonstrate a willingness to manage utility consumption, financial and information barriers limit their adoption of more efficient technologies. Policy recommendations include promoting public education, subsidising energy cost, using energy efficient appliances, and integrating resource-use efficiency into school curricula. These efforts could support more sustainable utility management in rapidly urbanising settings in Ghana.

Keywords: Energy management, Water conservation, Urban households, Utility cost, Ghana

An Evaluation of Bed Business Studies Programme Under the Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) Model at University for Development Studies (UDS)

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Abstract

This study employed the CIPP model to assess the implementation of the B.Ed. Business Education Program at the University for Development Studies (UDS). In the process of training students in higher education, it has been revealed that business education programs still face many challenges related to the environment, insufficient lectures, insufficient teaching and learning resources, and insufficient involvement of stakeholders. As a result, this present study uses a cross-sectional survey design to collect data from 100 respondents, using simple random sampling to select 32 student candidates and 68 graduates, using a questionnaire and simple random sampling. Analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, Chi-square test and Spearman correlation at 95% confidence interval to identify significant differences and associations between groups on perceptions of B.Ed. The program across CIPP domains. Findings revealed that both student candidates and graduates positively viewed the B.Ed program's alignment with UDS's mission, suggesting effectiveness in imparting knowledge ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$). The CIPP analysis demonstrated significant positive relationships between the program's context, input, process, and product dimensions. Contextual changes such as the programme goal and objectives notably influenced inputs ($r = 0.539$; $p = < 0.05$) and processes ($r = 0.615$; $p = < 0.05$), which in turn affected program outcomes ($r = 0.729$; $p = < 0.05$). The weak positive relationship between input and product variables ($r = 0.461$; $p = < 0.05$) indicated that program resources had a less significant impact on perceived outcomes. The study highlights the importance of the University enhancing input factors to improve program outcomes by addressing resource limitations and fostering equitable access to facilities is recommended to strengthen the effectiveness of the B.Ed. Business Education Program at UDS.

Keywords: Evaluation; CIPP model; B.Ed. Business Education Program; graduates; students

Recasting Social Protection as a Needs-Based Policy: A socio-political analysis of the Leap Programme in rural Ghana

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Abstract

Reducing poverty remains a priority for governments globally. Ghana's Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme, launched in 2008, targets vulnerable populations through cash transfers and health insurance. Although many studies have analysed the socioeconomic effects of LEAP, this research presents a socio-political policy analysis that explicitly investigates the policy design framework and political factors influencing its implementation in rural areas using the Nadowli Kaleo District as an empirical case study. This research moves beyond general outcome assessments by critically evaluating LEAP's policy framework and how it enables or constrains political neutrality. Adopting a qualitative approach using a phenomenological design, the study engaged 56 purposively selected participants, including LEAP beneficiaries and implementation officers, through document reviews, interviews, focus group discussions, and observations carried out in Nadowli, Kaleo, Sankana, and Takpo. Anchoring the study on the patron-client theory, the findings reveal that vague policy guidelines, weak accountability mechanisms, and poor transparency create loopholes that enable political actors to influence the selection of beneficiaries. Many recipients see LEAP not as a statutory right but as a political favour, which reinforces patron-client relationships and undermines the programme's legitimacy. The current policy environment fosters a perception of benevolence rather than entitlement, especially in rural areas. The study demonstrates that effective poverty reduction must extend beyond service delivery to encompass governance quality and policy clarity. It recommends targeted reforms such as codified selection criteria, decentralised monitoring systems, and civic education campaigns to reposition LEAP as a needs-based and politically neutral intervention. This approach renders the study distinctive by providing a critical policy analysis that connects beneficiary perceptions to institutional design and political influence, thereby offering actionable insights for reforming social protection governance in Ghana.

Keywords: Social Protection; Political Clientelism; Needs-Based Approach; Beneficiary Perception

Exploring Youth Understandings, Perceptions, Motivations and Vulnerability to Violent Extremism in North-Western Ghana

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Abstract

The rising threats and realities of Violent Extremism (VE) is a challenge to global peace and security and also exposes the limitedness of the frameworks for preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism (PCVET). In a qualitative research approach, this study explores how youth narratives of thier understandings, perceptions, motivations and vulnerabilities of VE connects with ideologies and tenets of VE organizations so as to offer an all-inclusive and diversity tolerant perspectives to PCVET. Using critical discourse analysis, the study unpacks and synthesizes secondary data, and primary data from 48 key informants, 32 focus group discussions, and field notes from 16 border communities in North-western Ghana. The findings indicate that despite the absence of violent extremists' attacks in the vulnerable region, the youth demonstrated sound knowledge of the grievance narratives of violent extremists' groups. Whereas sound knowledge of VE could circumvent youth from accepting the ideologies and actions of VE organizations, it potentially fosters ideological indoctrination, internalization of victimhood, enabling cognitive dissonance and the pathway to radicalization and recruitment into violent extremist groups. Governments and development partners need to deliberately incorporate the lived realities of the youth in the design of practical community-led PCVET and resilience strategies.

Key words: Violent extremism, North-western Ghana, Youth, Peace and Security

Navigating Online Teaching and Learning: Obstacles and Paths Ahead at Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies in Northern Ghana

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of online teaching and learning at Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies (SDD-UBIDS) in Northern Ghana, a region characterized by socio-economic and infrastructural challenges. The aim was to examine how these challenges affect the effectiveness of digital education, assess faculty and student engagement, and evaluate the quality of online instruction. Anchored in the Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, the study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with students and faculty across multiple academic levels. Quantitative data revealed that while online lectures were widely adopted—particularly among graduate students—participation in formative online assessments was limited. Qualitative findings underscored persistent barriers such as inadequate internet infrastructure, limited access to digital devices, and insufficient pedagogical training. Although majority of faculty reported receiving training for online instruction, over a third struggled to adapt course materials due to unfamiliarity with learning management systems or perceived student unpreparedness. Despite these challenges, the majority of students reported consistent attendance in online lectures, with absenteeism largely attributed to external constraints like internet costs. The study concludes that online education at SDD-UBIDS reflects a cautious yet growing shift toward digital learning, shaped by contextual limitations and opportunities for innovation. To enhance effectiveness, the study recommends investing in robust digital infrastructure, expanding faculty development initiatives, and promoting student digital literacy. These measures are essential to support equitable and high-quality online learning in the region. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on digital education in Sub-Saharan Africa, offering practical insights for policy formulation and institutional planning aimed at fostering resilient, inclusive higher education systems.

Keywords: Online Teaching and Learning, Student Engagement, Technological Constraints, Pedagogical Development

Climate Change: The Role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Youth of North-western Ghana

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Abstract

The knowledge systems and practices of indigenous peoples or local communities play critical roles in safeguarding our planet, which houses the environment, which in turn houses man through sustainable practices. However, these relationships have been threatened because of the disregard for indigenous/local knowledge and sustainable practices with the resultant climate change, which has become a global issue on the environment. The environment is the lifeblood of our planet, providing essential resources for the long-term survival of humanity and thus the foundation on which life thrives. This study aimed at examining how indigenous knowledge systems contribute to climate resilience and how youth in the study area interpret, adapt and transform these practices into sustainable responses using Balawa community as a case study. The objectives were to evaluate the application of indigenous/local knowledge and to assess the extent of the indigenous/local peoples' application of this knowledge for the insurance of a healthy environment and thus mitigating climate change as well as the knowledge transfer through the youth for better future. The study adopted a qualitative approach, collecting and evaluating non-numerical data, drawing on participants' opinions and experiences. The study employed snowball sampling guided by saturation. Twenty (25) participants were used for the study. Summative Content Analysis was adopted for the provision of a richer understanding of the context. The findings showed that sustainable practices, such as traditional practices, crop varieties, and land management techniques that ensure the healthiness of the environment stemming from indigenous/local knowledge were in place. These findings were, however, only associated with the elderly compared to the youth. To overcome these challenges, re-orienting the youth to imbibe the interconnectedness of man to the environment and also the acceptance of indigenous/local knowledge as a relevant complement to climate change mitigation.

Keywords: climate change, environment, sustainable practice, indigenous knowledge, youth

Health, Economic, and Systemic Burdens of Neglected Tropical Diseases in Sub-Saharan Africa: A scoping review

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Abstract

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) continue to exert a heavy toll on health, well-being, and socioeconomic development in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), despite increasing global attention and public health interventions. This scoping review synthesises recent empirical and theoretical literature to examine the health, economic, and systemic implications of NTDs in SSA, with an emphasis on prevalence, access to care, financial hardship, mental health outcomes, surveillance systems, and environmental determinants. The purpose of this study was to understand the multi-dimensional burden of NTDs and identify strategic entry points for more effective intervention. Using a scoping and systematic review approach, 20 studies published between 2000 and 2024 were selected based on PRISMA and MMAT guidelines using thematic relevance, methodological rigor, and geographic focus, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research. The findings indicate that NTDs are strongly linked to structural poverty, inadequate sanitation, poor infrastructure, and weak health systems. Economically, NTDs significantly reduce national productivity, increase out-of-pocket healthcare spending, and induce catastrophic health expenditures, particularly among rural and low-income households. Mental health comorbidities such as depression and anxiety were reported to be prevalent among those suffering from NTDs like leprosy and lymphatic filariasis, compounding the burden of stigma and social exclusion. Moreover, surveillance systems in endemic countries, such as Kenya, were perceived as weak in terms of stability, flexibility, and data quality. Environmental factors, such as inadequate water and sanitation, further exacerbate cholera and other NTD outbreaks. The review recommends integrated community-based health interventions, improved disease surveillance infrastructure, and equitable access to diagnostics and medicines. In addition, policymakers should strengthen intersectoral collaboration, financing strategies, and the inclusion of mental health services in primary health care. This must be prioritised to build a robust healthcare system and context-sensitive programs to alleviate the health and economic burdens of NTDs and meet Sustainable Development Goal 3 in SSA.

Keywords: Neglected Tropical Diseases; Sub-Saharan Africa; Health, Economic and Systemic burden; Mental health; Environmental determinants

Smallholder Farmers' Perception of Climate Change and Adoption of Climate-Smart Agricultural Practices in Rural Ghana

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Abstract

Climate change poses a barrier to agricultural productivity in the rural part of Ghana, particularly for smallholder farmers who rely heavily on rain-fed farming systems. The study investigates smallholder farmers' perceptions of climate change and their adoption of climate-smart agricultural (CSA) practices to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change on rural farmers. A concurrent embedded mixed-method approach was used to gather quantitative data from 400 farmers across three rural communities (Takpo, Nyimbali, and Dambaa) in the Nadowli-Kaleo district, while qualitative insights were obtained from in-depth interviews with 10 farmers and 4 district extension officers from the district. The findings highlighted that most farmers are aware of the adverse impacts of climate change, particularly regarding erratic rainfall and rising temperatures. However, access to information on climate change is mainly through informal networks and the radio. The study identified CSA practices mostly adopted by farmers, including mixed cropping, crop rotation, and conservation tillage. These practices contribute to improving resilience to climate change and extreme weather conditions as well as maintaining soil health. Despite these efforts, the adoption of improved seeds and inorganic fertilisers is limited due to barriers such as their associated high cost and limited availability. Qualitative interviews indicated that farmers value sustainable practices for their long-term benefits in improving soil fertility and enhancing productivity. The district extension officers emphasised the need for continuous training and support for farmers towards sustained adoption of these practices. The study recommends the strengthening of extension services, improving access to agricultural inputs by farmers, and integrating CSA practices into national agricultural policies to enhance farmers' adaptive capacity to climate change and safeguard food security.

Keywords: Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA), Smallholder Farmers, Climate Change Adaptation, Agricultural Practices, Rural Ghana

Rising Indiscipline and Learning Challenges Among Senior High School Students in Northern Ghana

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Abstract

This study examines the rising incidence of indiscipline and its effects on learning experiences among senior high school students in Ghana's Northern Region. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the research adopts an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative data from six public SHSs. A total of 382 students participated in the survey, complemented by key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and structured observations. Findings reveal widespread student misbehaviour, with lateness, classroom disrespect, theft, violence, and substance use identified as the most prevalent infractions. The abolition of corporal punishment, overcrowded classrooms and dormitories, weak supervision, mass promotion policies, and shifting socio-cultural norms emerged as primary drivers of indiscipline. These factors have collectively eroded teacher authority, compromised school safety, and reduced instructional time, leading to diminished academic engagement and achievement. The study concludes that indiscipline in the Northern Region is not an isolated behavioural issue but a manifestation of interconnected policy, infrastructural, and socio-cultural challenges. It recommends context-sensitive reforms that strengthen non-punitive discipline systems, expand educational infrastructure, and foster collaborative efforts among schools, families, and communities to restore order and promote conducive learning environments in senior high schools in the northern region.

Keywords: Indiscipline; Senior High Schools; School Safety; Northern Region of Ghana

Gender-Based Stress Among Ghanaians

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Abstract

Gender-based stress represents a critical but underexplored dimension of public health and social development in Ghana. This review synthesizes empirical and theoretical literature on the prevalence, determinants, and consequences of gendered stress across four domains: intimate partner violence, workplace and economic stressors, educational experiences, and mental health outcomes. A systematic search of peer-reviewed databases and grey literature was conducted, with inclusion criteria focusing on Ghanaian populations or comparative studies featuring Ghana. Sixty studies met the eligibility criteria and were synthesized narratively. The findings reveal that intimate partner violence remains a central driver of stress, with more than one-third of women reporting experiences of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. Cultural practices such as bride price and patriarchal gender norms normalize IPV, intensifying women's psychological and physiological stress burdens. In the economic sphere, women face pay disparities, harassment, and precarity in informal markets, while men report stress linked to provider expectations and unemployment. Educational settings amplify gender-based stress through role conflicts for married female students, harassment, and peer pressures surrounding masculinity. Mental health outcomes include depression, anxiety, substance use, and maladaptive coping, with limited institutional capacity to provide gender-sensitive interventions. This review contributes to knowledge by situating gender-based stress within Ghana's unique sociocultural context while aligning findings with global evidence on stress and gender inequality. It highlights the urgent need for gender-responsive policy reforms, workplace equity, mental health integration, and cultural change to reduce stress burdens and promote equitable wellbeing.

Public Policy Responses to Health Challenges in the Global South: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

The Global South has limited resources, inadequate public policy responses, limited access to quality healthcare, inadequate infrastructure, and pervasive poverty issues which exacerbate the health challenges. Despite the context that necessitates effective public policy responses, a gap remains in the existing literature on the comprehensive overview of broader policy approaches and the effectiveness of their implementation. This review examines the existing literature on public policy responses to interventions that address health challenges in the Global South and their implications on health outcomes. The scoping review follows the methodological guidance of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA-ScR) framework. Key findings highlight that policy responses focus on the essence of strengthening primary health care, implementing targeted interventions (for example, HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB), addressing social determinants of health, and improving health financing and governance. While these interventions show a reduction of disease burden and health outcome improvement, significant gaps in inequitable access, implementation challenges, and the need for context-specific solutions pertain. The review underscores the need for policymakers to make significant investments in primary healthcare, addressing social determinants of health and the sustainability of health financing.

Keywords: Public policy, health challenges, Global South, primary healthcare; health equity

The Economic and Political Drivers Behind the Formation of New Regional Groupings and Their Influence on the Sustainability of ECOWAS

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Abstract

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has long been instrumental in fostering economic integration, political stability, and regional cooperation among its fifteen member states. However, the recent formation of the Alliance of Sahel States comprising Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger signals growing fragmentation within the region and raises critical questions about the continued relevance and sustainability of ECOWAS. This study investigated the political and economic underpinnings of these emerging regional realignments, with a particular focus on discontent over ECOWAS' interventions, divergent security interests, economic inequality, and shifting global alliances. Adopting a qualitative research design, the study relied on interviews and secondary data from scholarly literature, official communiqués, regional treaties, and policy briefs. In addition, key informant interviews with diplomats, political scientists, and policy analysts were conducted to validate and deepen the analysis. Content analysis was employed to identify patterns and themes related to political contestation, economic divergence, and the erosion of regional cohesion. The findings revealed that disillusionment with ECOWAS stemming from perceived political bias, economic marginalisation, and punitive responses to military-led governments have motivated certain states to seek alternative alliances. Moreover, the growing influence of global actors such as Russia and China has further complicated the regional geopolitical landscape. The study recommends a range of strategic reforms, including institutional restructuring for equitable representation, inclusive security dialogue, policies to reduce developmental disparities, pragmatic approaches to democratic transitions, and enhanced public engagement. While current challenges threaten ECOWAS' unity, they also offer an opportunity to redefine its mandate and reinforce its legitimacy in an evolving regional context. ECOWAS must adapt if it is to remain a cornerstone of West African integration and stability.

Keywords: ECOWAS, Regional integration, Political discontent, Economic divergence, Security cooperation and regional sustainability.

Non-Governmental Organisations and the Pursuit of Human Security: A Case Study of World Vision International in the Jirapa Municipality of Upper West Region, Ghana

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Abstract

This study examined the critical role played by World Vision International a Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) in advancing human security in the Jirapa Municipality in Ghana's Upper West Region, a geographically remote and socio-economically vulnerable area. Human security, encompassing protection from poverty, hunger, poor health, and personal insecurity, remains a pressing concern in the region due to limited state presence and persistent development gaps. The research investigates how NGOs, as key non-state actors, contribute to addressing these challenges through targeted interventions in areas such as economic empowerment, food security, healthcare, education, and community resilience. Guided by the human development and capability approach, the research adopted a case study research design, including semi-structured interviews with NGO staff, community leaders, and beneficiaries; semi-structured interviews; and content analysis of NGO reports and policy documents. This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of the strategies, outcomes, and limitations of NGO-led initiatives. Findings revealed that NGOs have made substantial contributions to human security by providing essential services, building local capacities, promoting awareness of rights, and facilitating grassroots participation in development. Their work complements state efforts and fills critical service delivery gaps, particularly in hard-to-reach communities. However, the study also identifies challenges such as resource constraints, weak coordination with governmental agencies, and sustainability concerns of NGO interventions. The study concludes that while NGOs are instrumental in promoting human security in the Jirapa Municipality in the Upper West Region, enhanced collaboration with government institutions and community stakeholders is vital for maximising impact. It recommends policy support for stronger NGO-government partnerships, capacity-building at the local level, and more context-specific, inclusive programming. This research contributes to the broader discourse on human security by highlighting the importance of locally responsive and collaborative approaches in fragile and underserved contexts.

Keywords: Human Security, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Development, Vulnerability and Service Delivery

Localisation of STEAM Education: Evaluating Generative AI's Efficacy in Creating Culturally Responsive Lesson Plans for Ghana's Multilingual Classrooms

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Abstract

Ghana's STEAM education faces challenges where language policies mandate local language instruction for grades K-3, while content remains predominantly in English, creating barriers to educational equity and access. This study evaluates the "Culturally Responsive Lesson Planner" (CRLP), a theoretically informed GPT tool available on OpenAI's platform designed for global use, to assess its effectiveness in generating culturally relevant STEAM lesson plans specifically for Ghana's multilingual educational contexts. CRLP is grounded in universal educational theories, including culturally responsive pedagogy, constructivism, and multilingual education frameworks. Its interactive prompt architecture guides users through structured questions about teaching context, student demographics, cultural elements, and language preferences, eliminating the need for prompt engineering skills. Expert reviewers from various STEAM subjects across different regions in Ghana tested CRLP's adaptability to local languages (Twi, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga) and cultural contexts. Generated lessons were compared with Ghana's NaCCA standard curricula using a validated rubric. Expert feedback was analysed using thematic analysis. The CRLP successfully incorporated Ghana-specific elements. Technology lessons integrated MoMo (mobile money) transactions and local cybersecurity concerns; Arts lessons featured traditional crafts like zong baskets, calabash engravings, and kente patterns; Science lessons used examples of shea butter processing, baobab trees, and local foods like pito. The tool attempted translations in local languages, though with varying accuracy (e.g., incorrectly rendering "Good morning" as "Tin zuyu" instead of "Dasibaa" in Dagbani). CRLP scored highly on cultural contextualization (4-5/5) but showed limitations in linguistic precision for tonal languages and addressing Ghana-specific educational competencies. Well-designed, theoretically-grounded AI tools can adapt to specific cultural contexts even without country-specific training. However, accurate local language integration remains challenging. Recommendations include developing Ghanaian language modules and country-specific supplementary frameworks to support the use of AI in Ghana.

Keywords: Generative AI; STEAM education; ChatGPT; language localization; culturally responsive teaching; Ghana; inclusive education.

Systematic Review of the Contribution of Wild Edible Plants to Household Food Security Within the Context of Climate Change

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Abstract

Global efforts through the sustainable development goals, particularly goals 2 and 13 points to the need to synergise nature-based foods like wild edible plants (WEPs) in climate change adaptation. The PhD thesis on *Uses of Wild Edible Plants in Climate Change Adaptation within Rural Northern Ghana* attempts to contribute to knowledge around how wild edible plants (WEPs) are used within forest fringe communities to cope with climate extremes. A systematic review was conducted online in November, 2024 on the topic using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) guidelines to retrieve 260 articles from bio one, 970 from Web of Science, 88 from Ovid and 35 from PubMed. Articles were exported to Endnote where abstracts and titles were screened, and duplicates removed from the list of articles. Further screening was conducted, which sorted articles into adaptation studies, WEPs studies and studies that were not explicitly clear but included aspects of adaptation and WEPs. The screening also excluded papers on biophysical aspects of adaptation and Studies without stated methodology. For this conference, the focus will be on *systematic review of the contribution of WEPs to household food security within the context of climate change*. Under this aspect of the study, a total of 41 WEPs articles and 10 other studies that were not explicitly clear but included aspects of adaptation and WEPs were included for final analysis. The results of the review show that WEPs are consumed, mostly by rural folks who live nearby forests, harvest and have specialised knowledge in WEPs using taste colour and smell. There are research gaps in the WEPs literature including corresponding reasons for use of WEPs and the specific socioeconomic factors that influence consumption of WEPs which are recommended for further research and policy redress.

Keywords: climate change; adaptation; wild edible plants.

From Solidarity to Shielding: The Dual Role of “Tigyaabonyeni” In Crime Dynamics in the Waala Traditional Area

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Abstract

This study explores the interplay between kinship ties and crime control in the Waala Traditional Area in the Upper West Region through the lens of the “Tigyaabonyeni” philosophy, which translates to “We Are All One.” Anchored in the constructivist approach, this qualitative research utilized unstructured and semi-structured interviews with ten key informants, including traditional leaders, law enforcement officials, and community members. The findings reveal that while Tigyaabonyeni embodies a spirit of solidarity and communal welfare, it has been subject to exploitation, often shielding wrongdoers and undermining formal crime control efforts. Despite its potential to foster collective action against crime, the philosophy has evolved, leading to a decline in community participation in crime reporting and a growing mistrust between traditional authorities and law enforcement agencies. The study identifies factors contributing to crime in the Waala Traditional Area, such as youth unemployment and the breakdown of extended family systems, which have exacerbated the misapplication of Tigyaabonyeni. The study recommends the rolling out of tailor-made interventions such as regular interface among community stakeholders, the setting up of community watchdog groups and vigorous public education that enhance community engagement in crime control and restore the original essence of Tigyaabonyeni as a tool for bolstering social cohesion. This research contributes to the discourse on community dynamics in crime prevention and highlights the need for further investigation into how traditional value systems can be effectively leveraged to combat crime in contemporary settings.

Keywords: Tigyaabonyeni; kinship; crime control; community participation; Waala Traditional Area.

Digital Technologies and the Resilience of Marginalised Enterprises

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Abstract

Digital technologies such as e-commerce platforms, mobile money, and digital marketing tools are reshaping the operations of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) worldwide. In Ghana, where SMEs make up over 85% of businesses and significantly contribute to employment and GDP, digital tools present opportunities to improve operational efficiency, expand market access, and foster business resilience. Yet, many marginalised enterprises, particularly those in rural and peri-urban areas in Ghana, struggle to adopt and leverage these tools due to systemic challenges, including limited infrastructure, low digital literacy, and financial constraints. While digital adoption is increasingly recognised as critical for enterprise resilience, there is still limited empirical research on the factors influencing adoption and their impact on resilience outcomes, especially in under-resourced settings. This study utilises the Technology–Organisation–Environment (TOE) framework and resilience theory to investigate the antecedents to marginalised enterprises' adoption of digital technologies and how such adoption fosters business resilience. Quantitative data will be collected from SMEs across rural and peri-urban areas and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to examine the nexuses between digital technology adoption and business resilience. The study contributes to the digital inclusion discourse by proposing context-specific strategies for promoting resilient, digitally empowered SMEs in Ghana. Insights will also inform policy and practice for supporting enterprise development in other sub-Saharan African contexts.

Keywords: digital technologies; marginalised enterprises; SMEs; TOE framework, resilience theory

Resurgence of the Cash and Carry System in National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) Accredited Health Facilities: Evidence from Wa Metropolis

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Abstract

Globally, health financing has undergone substantial evolution, shaped by social, economic, and political influences. In Ghana, direct out-of-pocket (OOP) payments were the primary method of healthcare financing between 1980 and 2003. The NHIS is bedeviled with challenges including escalating healthcare costs, sustainability issues, inefficiencies in managing funds, drugs shortages. The resurgence of the cash-and-carry system at NHIS-accredited health institutions signifies a significant regression in Ghana's pursuit of universal health coverage (UHC). Hence, this study seeks to unpack the perspectives of patients, caregivers and providers on the resurgence of the cash and carry system in NHIS-accredited Health facilities in Wa Metropolis. The study adopted a qualitative approach with the following underlying theories; the theory of planned behaviour, institutional theory, principal-agent theory and the system theory. A combination of multiple-stage, and purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to select study communities and participants. Multi-stage sampling was applied in Kpaguri, Kabanye, Mangu, Dobile, and Dokpong communities. A total of 97 participants partook in the study. Key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussions were employed to gather data.

Keywords: National Health Insurance Scheme, Accredited Health Facilities, Resurgence, Universal Health Coverage, cash and carry, & Caretakers.

Voices Unheard: Inclusive Education and the Experiences of Students with Disabilities in Wa Municipal JHS

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Abstract

Despite growing efforts to promote inclusive education, limited research in Ghana explores how inclusive practices are implemented in Junior High Schools (JHS), especially from the perspectives of students with disabilities. This study addresses this gap by assessing the experiences of students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms within Wa Municipal. It evaluates the level of inclusive education practices among teachers, the challenges these students face, the barriers to implementing inclusive education, and evidence-based interventions that promote an inclusive learning environment. Using a qualitative approach, the study engaged 20 students with disabilities and 4 teachers across all 14 circuits in Wa Municipal through stratified and purposive sampling. Data were collected via survey questionnaires and individual interviews and analyzed using Mean Item Scores (MIS) and the Relative Importance Index (RII). Findings show that teachers' participation in inclusive education is often influenced by personal beliefs, professional development, and transformative experiences. However, institutional and social barriers—including inadequate infrastructure, resource shortages, and communication challenges—significantly hinder effective inclusion. The study underscores the importance of support systems, highlighting the role of administrative backing, peer collaboration, community involvement, and access to assistive technologies. This research contributes to the existing literature by outlining the multifaceted obstacles to inclusive education and advocating for systemic reforms. Key recommendations include the development of targeted teacher training programs, provision of inclusive teaching resources, and stronger collaboration among teachers, parents, and community stakeholders. These measures are vital to ensure that students with disabilities receive the support they need to thrive in inclusive educational settings.

Keywords: Inclusive Education; Social barriers; Professional Development; Wa Municipality; Ghana

Social Media Usage and the Academic Engagement of Junior High School students in Northwestern Ghana

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Abstract

Social media use among youths has generated considerable academic attention. The extent to which this use has implication on educational outcome has also been investigated but with limited focus on how social media is pervasive among Junior High School (JHS) students in underserved area like the Wa Municipality of Northwestern Ghana. The study aimed to address this gap by investigating the prevalence of social media use among JHS students and its impact on their academic engagement, addressing significant gaps in existing literature. Current research has predominantly focused on older students, overlooking younger adolescents within educational settings and emphasising negative consequences over potential educational benefits. The study employed a case study design within the qualitative approach where 62 participants were recruited for the study using a maximum variation purposive sampling technique. Data were gathered through personal interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDS). Participants' consent was duly sought and issues of anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to throughout the data collection process. Collected data were analysed using an inductive thematic analysis. The study found that social media usage was prevalent among JHS students and that at some point it facilitated academic engagement but at many points, it got students distracted from academic activities. A significant number of students disclosed spending extensive time on social media daily, suggesting a profound impact on their academic engagement, balancing educational benefits with potential distractions. The study argues that social media has both positive and negative implications on students' academic engagement but unless regulated and guided, the potential benefits of social media may be overshadowed by its disruptive effects. The study recommends that the Ghana Education Service (GES) and school authorities implement comprehensive digital literacy programmes, involve parents in digital supervision efforts, and enforce policies that balance access with responsibility to enhance the academic engagement of students in a rapidly digitalising educational landscape.

Keywords: Social Media; Student's Engagement; Adolescents; Facebook; Wa Municipal; Ghana

Assessing Community Factors Influencing Neonatal Mortality in the Wa Municipality

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Abstract

Neonatal mortality remains a major public health concern in Ghana, particularly in rapidly urbanising areas such as the Wa Municipality. Despite the availability of health services, neonatal deaths persist due to a combination of socioeconomic constraints, cultural beliefs, and maternal health-seeking behaviour. This study assessed community-level factors influencing neonatal mortality, with a focus on maternal socioeconomic status, cultural practices, and the use of healthcare services. A mixed-methods approach was employed. Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaires administered to 166 mothers who had previously delivered. Descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted using SPSS version 27, including chi-square tests and logistic regression to identify significant associations. In addition, qualitative data were collected through interviews with key informants including health professionals, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and representatives of governmental and non-governmental organisations. Qualitative data was analysed thematically. Findings revealed that lower maternal education, limited household income, and delayed or limited use of formal healthcare services significantly contributed to neonatal deaths. Certain cultural practices, such as reliance on herbal remedies and home births, were also associated with increased risk. The qualitative data supported these trends, highlighting community norms and belief systems that shape maternal decision-making. The study concludes that neonatal mortality in the Wa Municipality is strongly influenced by a combination of cultural, behavioural, and socioeconomic factors. The study recommends strengthening community-based health education, improving maternal literacy, and fostering collaboration between traditional and biomedical health systems to reduce neonatal deaths.

Keywords: Neonatal mortality; maternal health; cultural practices; health-seeking behaviour; health services.

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Bridging the Gap in The Promotion of Mental Health Awareness Among University Leaders: The Case of Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a crucial role in fostering mental health awareness, particularly among university leaders who influence the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. This research explores how emotional intelligence enhances university leaders' ability to recognize, understand, and address mental health challenges within academic environments. By examining key components of emotional intelligence—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills—this study investigates their impact on promoting mental health initiatives, reducing stigma, and fostering supportive campus cultures. Through a mixed-method approach involving surveys and interviews with university leaders, the research identifies best practices and challenges in integrating emotional intelligence into leadership strategies. Findings suggest that emotionally intelligent leaders are better equipped to create inclusive, mentally healthy environments, fostering open dialogue and proactive mental health support systems. This study emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence training for university leadership, offering recommendations to bridge the gap between administrative decision-making and comprehensive mental health awareness.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Leaders, Mental Health, University, Students

Health Belief and Contraceptive Use in Ghana: Empirical Evidence from Ghana's Demographic and Health Survey

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Abstract

Maternal healthcare outcomes have become a growing global concern. Most countries have implemented measures, including the use of contraceptives, to reduce maternal mortality. However, its usage has been hindered by unmet needs, religious beliefs, healthcare accessibility, and other factors. One key aspect that has been overlooked is how women's perceived health status influences their use of contraception. Therefore, this study seeks to uncover the effects of health belief (self-perceived health) on contraception use among women of reproductive age in Ghana, using data from the Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS, 2022) and employing the conditional mixed-process estimator. The study found that health belief (self-perceived health status) significantly influences the use of contraception among women of childbearing age in Ghana. Additionally, the research identified that age, marital status, knowledge of the ovulatory system, information on family planning, religion, visit to a health facility, recent sexual activity, and lifetime sex partners significantly affect contraception use. It was found that health belief significantly affect the use of contraceptives by women of reproductive age. Therefore, the government and healthcare providers should design awareness campaigns to educate women of reproductive age about contraception as a means of maintaining good health not just for pregnancy prevention but also for enhancing maternal health, reducing stress, and improving quality of life; and routinely assess how women of reproductive age perceives health status during family planning consultations; this will help guide contraceptive advice.

Keywords: Contraception; health belief; Women; DHS; Ghana

Student-Teacher Interactions and Students' Academic Engagement

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Abstract

Studies have investigated various factors that affect students' academic engagement but with relatively little attention to how students' academic engagement is influenced by interactions with their teachers. This study aimed to address this gap by exploring the intricate relationship between student-teacher interactions and students' academic engagement in senior high schools. The study adopted a mixed methods approach, using an explanatory sequential design. Stratified, simple random and expert purposive sampling techniques were used to select 243 participants who participated in the study. Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and questionnaires. Quantitative data were analysed using Mean Item Scores and Pearson correlational statistics while qualitative data were analysed using an inductive thematic analytical technique. The study revealed a strong, significant positive relationship between students' positive perceptions of their teachers and their academic engagement. The study also found a substantial moderating effect of sociocultural backgrounds, indicating that students from different cultural and social contexts respond variably to teachers' behaviours and teaching styles, affecting their engagement levels. Qualitative data from interviews and FGDs corroborated these quantitative results, providing deeper insights into the contextual nuances of student engagement. The study highlights the importance of considering cultural and social diversity in educational settings to enhance student engagement effectively. It was recommended that the Ministry of Education should support professional development focused on enhancing teacher-student relationships. It was further recommended that heads of senior high schools should promote inclusive and culturally respectful environments; for teachers to engage in continuous professional development on relationship-building and culturally responsive teaching; and it was also recommended the students should take active roles in fostering positive interactions with teachers and advocating for inclusive practices. These recommendations aim to bridge the gap between student-teacher relationships and academic engagement, ultimately enhancing educational outcomes for diverse student populations.

Keywords: Students; Teachers; Relationship; Academic Engagement; Perceptions; Ghana

Predictive Modeling of Job Rotation Impact on Employee Career Development using Machine Learning

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Abstract

In today's competitive business world, companies are increasingly seeking ways to develop skilled and high-performing employees to achieve their goals. Career development is a crucial aspect of employee growth, and job rotation is a widely implemented practice that offers numerous benefits, including skills development, knowledge enhancement, and increased motivation and productivity. This study employs Random Forests, a robust machine learning model, to assess the impact of job rotation on employee career development and uncover actionable insights. Using a descriptive research method, primary data from 282 employees were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Random Forests for predictive modeling, alongside conventional statistical tools such as ANOVA. The application of Random Forests revealed a strong predictive relationship between job rotation and career development, achieving a correlation of 0.855 and an R-squared value of 0.731. The model's feature importance analysis identified testing skills and competencies (0.627), skills identification (0.566), and interest exploration (0.185) as the most influential contributors to career development. The findings emphasize the utility of machine learning in enhancing the understanding of job rotation benefits and predicting employee growth outcomes. This study provides a foundation for leveraging data-driven approaches to optimize job rotation strategies. Future research should explore the application of machine learning across diverse organizational contexts to further validate these results and refine predictive capabilities.

Keywords: Random Forests, Machine Learning, Job Rotation, Performance, Competency, Organisation, Career Development, Predictive Modeling

Cognitive Community Participation in Game Reserve Management: A Case Study of Gbele Game Reserve, Sissala West District, Ghana

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Abstract

This study examines cognitive decision approach in community participation in the management of Gbele Game Reserve in Sissala West, Ghana. The primary objective is to assess the impact of community engagement on the conservation and management of the reserve. A mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques was used. Simple random sampling techniques was used to illicit information from 354 respondents in the four selected study communities. In addition, key informant interview comprising of 60 key experts and stakeholders from different organizations and agencies was also used to assess cognitive game reserve management strategic decisions. Results indicated that the residents of Gbele, Dasima, Timmie, and Duwie are moderately dependent on the Gbele Game Reserve for their livelihoods, utilizing its resources for various needs. Despite general awareness of conservation regulations, significant barriers to effective participation were identified, such as inadequate information, economic constraints, and cultural conflicts. Interviews with key informants revealed concerns about the lack of community input in decision-making and the need for improved communication between reserve authorities and local residents. Recommendations include developing comprehensive awareness and education programs, providing economic incentives for participation, and integrating local cultural practices into conservation strategies. These recommendations aim to align conservation efforts with local needs, creating a collaborative environment that supports sustainable management of the Gbele Game Reserve. This study offers valuable insights into the complexities of community participation in game reserve management, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and culturally sensitive approaches. The findings and recommendations are intended to improve conservation practices in the Gbele Game Reserve and provide guidance for similar protected areas.

Keywords: Game Reserve; Eco-tourism; Wildlife; Livelihood; Agriculture; Community participation

Urbanisation and Parking Challenges in the Central Business District of Secondary Cities in Ghana

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Abstract

Urbanisation trajectories in the Global South increasingly position secondary cities as emerging growth centres. However, the requisite investments, infrastructure, and services needed to propel them into regional prominence and support broader national development are often inadequate. Wa, the regional capital of Ghana's Upper West Region, exemplifies this trend. Like many secondary cities, Wa's Central Business District (CBD) offers limited public parking facilities, creating significant challenges for car users. This study investigates the underlying factors contributing to the inadequate provision of public parking facilities in the CBD of Wa, the resulting consequences, and the coping mechanisms adopted by car users. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining field observations with interviews involving four (4) city officials and twenty (20) private car users. The findings reveal general dissatisfaction with the availability of parking facilities in the CBD. The shortage of parking space is attributed to the encroachment of designated parking areas, weak enforcement of zoning regulations, and lack of investment in infrastructure. In the absence of formal parking options, car users adopt informal strategies such as parking on road shoulders, in private spaces, or at distant locations outside the CBD. While these coping mechanisms provide short-term relief, they come with notable challenges, including vehicle damage, clamping of vehicles by city authorities, and the inconvenience of transporting goods over long distances. The study concludes that the CBD remains largely inaccessible to private car users, with adverse implications for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 11.2, which calls for safe, affordable, and accessible transport systems for all. It is recommended that city authorities explore public-private partnerships to develop parking infrastructure, alongside the enforcement and protection of designated parking zones.

Keywords: accessibility, cars, parking space, transportation, zoning

User Satisfaction with Intercity Bus Services in Wa, Ghana

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Abstract

Improving the quality of intercity public transport is a vital step toward improving urban mobility in rapidly expanding cities. Despite their role as a crucial link for commuters between cities, intercity public transport services in Ghana's secondary cities have undergone limited empirical examination regarding passenger satisfaction and the quality-of-service delivery. However, efforts to build inclusive intercity transport systems in Ghana must begin with a clear understanding of how passengers experience and evaluate bus services in the real-world setting. This study examines commuter experiences with intercity bus services in Wa, Ghana, focusing on the key service quality dimensions valued by passengers. Employing a quantitative, cross-sectional design, data were gathered from 399 passengers across six major transport operators in Wa. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted using principal component analysis to extract latent service quality dimensions from a structured questionnaire that measured multiple aspects of the travel experience. The analysis revealed three core dimensions of satisfaction: (1) Serviceability, (2) Onboard Experience, and (3) Trustworthiness, with Serviceability emerging as the strongest predictor. Passengers prioritised timely and accessible services, physical comfort, courteous staff, and a strong sense of safety and reliability. These dimensions collectively explain variations in satisfaction levels and underscore the multifaceted nature of service quality as perceived by users. Although the cross-sectional nature of the study prevents an understanding of seasonal or temporal variations in service quality perception, the findings offer evidence-based guidance for transport operators and policymakers aiming to enhance user experience, increase ridership, and support modal shift objectives. The paper concludes that targeted improvements in reliability, comfort, cleanliness, and safety can make intercity public transport in Ghana a preferred, trustworthy, and efficient option for everyday mobility.

Keywords: Service quality; Factor analysis; Secondary cities; public transport; User Satisfaction

Effects of Artisanal Small-Scale Mining Activities on Junior High School Enrollment Retention in Nadowli-Kaleo District

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Abstract

Enrollment and retention in basic schools in Nadowli-Kaleo District (NDK) is a challenge, particularly affecting the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4. These enrollment and retention challenges are severe in communities that host ASM activities as captured in the 2021 NDK education directorate report. However, it is not clear whether there is any relationship between pupils' engagement in ASM and their enrolment in basic schools. To explore the effects of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) on Junior-High-School enrollment and retention in the NDK. A mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design was used, involving a quantitative survey of 357 pupils and qualitative interviews with 24 key informants. Quantitative data on pupils' enrollment and daily school attendance before and during ASM involvement were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Chi-square tests at a 95% confidence level, while the qualitative data focused on reasons for dropout was analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that pupil's participation in ASM activities negatively impacted school attendance, with many pupils viewing mining as a source of livelihood, leading them to drop out. Statistically, the results show a significant difference of $\chi^2 = 141.323$, P value = 0.000 of pupils who dropped out of school and engaged in full-time ASM because they view ASM activities as a source of livelihood. The study concluded that ASM has detrimental effects on school enrollment and retention in the district. It recommends that stakeholders, including the Ghana Education Service and Parent-Teacher Associations, use media to shift mindsets on the long-term benefits of education.

Keywords: Artisanal Small-Scale Mining, Livelihoods, pupils' Enrollment, Enrollment Retention, Nadowli-Kaleo

Rent Dynamics in Housing Demand and Supply of Tertiary Students in Bamahu, Wa Municipality, Ghana

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Abstract

Access to affordable and adequate housing is a key determinant of tertiary student well-being and academic success. Today, student housing remains a persistent challenge. Though some studies have been conducted on students' residential accommodation, the literature is silent on the situation in peri urban communities. Since the establishment of the University of Business and Integrated Development Studies, which took its roots from the University for Development Studies in Bamahu, students' housing accommodation has gone through several transformations. However, not much has been documented on students' housing in Bamahu. This study explores how rent pricing, housing quality and location influence the demand and supply of student rental housing. Using a mixed method approach, data were gathered from 88 students and 5 landlords. Semi-Structured questionnaires were used to collect data on rent levels, housing conditions, proximity to campus, and amenities. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS Version 21.0 while qualitative responses helped contextualize student experience and landlord practices. Findings reveal that, students' willingness to rent is strongly influenced by proximity to campus, quality of housing, and access to private-use facilities. Houses located closer to campus with better amenities commanded significantly higher rents. Students, despite financial limitations, prioritized safety, hygiene, and reduced commuting time. Landlords responded to seasonal demand shifts by adjusting prices and selectively improving housing offerings. Tenancy agreements remain largely informal limiting enforceability. The study concludes that student housing in Bamahu is shaped by both market forces and behavioral factors. A students' housing policy should be formulated and implemented to strengthen rent control mechanisms, incentivize landlord maintenance, and promote formal tenancy agreements to enhance housing accountability and standards.

Keywords: Student housing, Demand, Supply, Rental price, Affordability

Determinants of Farm Credit Access by Cereal Farmers in the Ghanaian Economy using the Probit Model

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Abstract

Farm credit is one of the major boosters to agricultural productivity among cereal farmers. Cereals contribute immensely to the staple foods in Ghana. In view of this, higher productivity in cereal production addresses the food security issues in the country largely. Despite the impressive performance, yet Cereal farmers experience bottleneck issues in relation to farm credit. These further results in stifling cereal productivity in Ghana. This study seeks to underscore the importance of farm credit among cereal farmers in Ghana. The objective of this study is to identify the factors that influence cereal farmers' access to farm credit in Ghana. The study employed the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS7) of 8,520 households conducted in 2017 by the Ghana Statistical Services (GSS). The ordinary Probit regression was used to estimate the determinants of access to farm credits. The results revealed that farmers' age, marital status (married), religion (Christian), education (tertiary), residence (rural) are all significant positive factors that influence cereal farmers access to farm credits. In view of this, the study recommends that financial institutions disburse credits to Cereal farmers in Ghana based on the education of farmers to the tertiary level. Having said this, it is imperative for many unemployed graduates to venture into cereal farming particularly in rural areas since they are likely to acquire farm credits unlike cereal farmers in peri-urban areas.

Keywords: Farm Credits; Cereals Farmers; Access; Ghana; Probit model

The Effect of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on Economic Growth in the Ghanaian Economy Using Time Series Data

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Abstract

Foreign Direct investment (FDI) is one of the viable macroeconomic indicators that plays a crucial role in the economic landscape of every nation. FDI also has the tendency of influencing the economic growth trajectory of nations particularly among developing countries. Ghana is one of the thriving countries in Sub-Saharan Africa with promising economic growth. In the past years, Ghana's economy has maintained a sound momentum and strong economic growth but recent data shows a clear and visible downturn. FDI is a key factor in propelling economic growth. This study exclusively seeks to find answers to the nature and pattern, size and direction of FDI inflows in Ghana and ascertain whether these inflows have improved the economic growth? The study employs substantial time series annual data on FDI, GDP per capita, Inflation, Macroeconomic stability and exchange rate from 1980 to 2018 (38 years period) to evaluate the economic growth of Ghana. The secondary data was sourced from the World development Index (WDI) and UNTCAD. The methodology adopted for the study was the unit root test by the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) approach and the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multiple regression method. The results showed that the effect of exchange rate was the only significant variable amidst the other covariates employed for the study. Furthermore, the evidence underscores the imperativeness of exchange rate as a key component of FDI. A Sector analysis also revealed that FDI and its imperative nature in Ghana is largely concentrated in the mining sector at the expense of the fundamental drivers of Ghana's economic growth. The study also identifies challenges such as inflation and unfavorable government policies that may hinder FDI effectiveness. Recommendations include implementing favorable monetary and fiscal policies to attract more FDI, thereby stimulating economic growth and reducing poverty levels in Ghanaian economy.

Keywords: FDI; Economic Growth; Time Series; Unit Root Test; OLS

AI-Driven Learning Technologies: A Technology Acceptance, Use, and Continuance among Tertiary Students in Ghana

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Abstract

The influence of Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) is profound and transformative. It has enabled personalization, adaptability, efficiency, data-driven decision making, and accessibility in teaching and learning. This has facilitated uptake in AIED research in Higher Education institutions (HEIs). To date, most of these studies have underscored the need to support AI integration in academic curricular. Yet, there is limited exploration of the factors that influence the adoption of AI-driven learning technologies among tertiary students. As a result, the current research reflects on the acceptance, use and continuance usage of AI-driven learning technologies from the perspective of tertiary students in Ghana. The purpose of the study is to investigate the key determinants of AI technology adoption and continuance usage, using an extended model based on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) and the Task-Technology Fit (TTF) framework. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected from 385 students using a structured questionnaire instrument. Stratified random sampling ensured representation across various institutions and student categories. Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Primary findings show that task characteristics, technology characteristics, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and trust significantly influence students' behavioural intentions and continued use of AI-driven learning tools. The study also found meaningful moderating effects of demographic factors such as age and level of education. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of AI adoption in higher education within a developing country context and offer practical implications for educators, policymakers, and technology providers aiming to promote effective integration of AI in tertiary education.

Keywords: AI; education; technology; adoption; acceptance

Adopting Emerging Technologies in Ghana's Public Procurement and Supply Chain Management: Organisational Capability as Mediator and Institutional Environment as Moderator

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Abstract

The adoption of emerging technologies in public procurement and supply chain management (PPSCM) holds significant potential for improving transparency, efficiency, and service delivery in developing countries. However, the pace and pattern of technological assimilation across Ghana's public sector remain uneven and poorly understood. This study investigates the extent to which emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Internet of Things, Big Data Analytics, and Robotic Process Automation are being adopted and assimilated within Ghana's PPSCM landscape. It further explores how organisational capability mediates the relationship between technology adoption and assimilation outcomes, while assessing the moderating influence of Ghana's institutional environment. A sequential mixed-methods research design is employed, combining survey data from key public procurement and supply chain institutions with semi-structured interviews among procurement officers, IT staff, and policymakers. Quantitative data will be analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), while thematic content analysis will be applied to the qualitative data. Preliminary findings indicate that adoption levels vary significantly across ministries, departments, and agencies, with organisational capability particularly digital infrastructure and leadership support playing a crucial mediating role. The institutional environment, including regulatory rigidity and political will, moderates the adoption-assimilation relationship in both enabling and constraining ways. This study offers empirical insights to inform technology-led procurement reforms and provides a contextualised framework to guide digital transformation within Ghana's public sector. It also contributes to the broader discourse on technology adoption in public administration in developing economies.

Keywords: Emerging technologies; public procurement; organisational capability; institutional environment.

Gendered-Climate Vulnerabilities, Urban Livelihoods, and Adaptive Strategies in Northern Ghana

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Abstract

In Northern Ghana, climate change poses significant threats to urban livelihoods, particularly for women who handle climate-sensitive tasks like food production and water collection. Yet, gender-specific dimensions of climate vulnerability remain underexplored in policy and literature. This study aims to assess the gendered impacts of climate change on urban livelihoods in Northern Ghana and to explore the adaptation strategies employed by different gender groups to uncover how these strategies address climate impacts. A phenomenological research design was adopted, involving in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. Ten urban and peri-urban communities were purposively selected across Wa and Tamale Metropolises in the Upper West and Northern Regions. Data were collected from 30 household heads (15 men and 15 women), three focus group discussions (male-only, female-only, and mixed-gender groups) each, and five key informants each, including local leaders, institutional representatives, and women's group representatives. Findings revealed great gendered disparities in vulnerability. Female-headed households were more exposed to climate-variability due to the patriarchal systems that limit women's livelihood opportunities, weaken their social networks, and restrict their access to critical resources such as land and finance. These constraints reduce their ability to diversify income sources and recover from climate shocks. Men's dominance in resource access and decision making reduces their exposure and strengthens their capacity to adapt. Nevertheless, they often face psychological strain stemming from their inability to fulfill socially expected provider roles, a challenge exacerbated by climate-induced livelihood disruptions. To adapt, they diversify into alternative off-season livelihoods such as block molding, masonry, teaching, tricycle transport, livestock rearing and smock weaving. However, female-headed households demonstrated the less adaptive capacity compared to males. The study concludes that women are disproportionately vulnerable to climate variability in Northern Ghana and recommends that climate adaptation and agricultural interventions prioritize female-headed households through improvement in women's access to land rights and other critical resources, institutionalizing their participation in local climate decision-making processes, introducing flexible credit schemes to enhance financial access and supporting livelihood diversification initiatives to strengthen their resilience and empowerment.

Keywords Climate change; Adaptation strategies; Livelihoods; Gendered vulnerability; Northern Ghana.

Consumer Behaviour and Social Impacts on Reverse Logistics in Circular Economy: The Moderation and Mediation Role of Environmental Awareness and Perceived Social Benefits in Ghana

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Abstract

The transition from linear to circular economies presents significant opportunities and challenges, particularly in developing countries such as Ghana. Reverse logistics (RL) which enables the return, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling of products, is a critical component of circular economy models. However, consumer behaviour plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of RL systems, yet remains underexplored in the Ghanaian context. This study seeks to investigate the relationship between consumer behaviour and reverse logistics participation in Ghana, focusing on the moderating role of environmental awareness and the mediating role of perceived social benefits. Employing a mixed-methods design guided by the theory of Planned Behaviour, Value Belief-Norm Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Stakeholder Theory, the research will gather data from a cross-sectional survey of consumers in four major urban centres, complimented by qualitative insights. The Study will use Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the complex interrelationships among key constructs. Expected outcomes include a validated conceptual framework illustrating how environmental awareness and Perceived Social Benefits influence consumer engagement in reverse logistics activities, as well as insights into the social impacts of these activities in Ghana's emerging circular economy. The findings will offer theoretical contributions by extending consumer behaviour models to RL in developing economies, and provide practical guidance for policymakers, business, and civil society organizations aiming to design inclusive and effective circular economy strategies. Ultimately, this research seeks to support Ghana's transition to a circular economy that delivers environmental, economic, and social benefits.

Keywords: Social Impacts of Reverse Logistics, Consumer Behaviour, Perceived Social Benefits, Environmental Awareness, Effectiveness of Reverse Logistics

***“You See the Drug Itself and Your Heart Starts to Race”*: The Lived Experiences of Aphrodisiac Consumption Among Ghanaian University Students**

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Abstract

Aphrodisiac use among Ghanaian university students has become a significant yet understudied phenomenon, reflecting complex intersections of masculinity, sexual performance anxiety, and peer influence in contemporary youth culture. While epidemiological studies indicate high prevalence rates, scant research exists on the subjective experiences and sociocultural meanings attached to this practice. This qualitative study aimed to explore the lived experiences of aphrodisiac consumption among undergraduate students at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), examining motivations, usage patterns, substance types, and perceived consequences. Using a phenomenological approach, we conducted seven focus group discussions with 45 participants across all university colleges. Data were analyzed thematically, with findings interpreted through Social Cognitive Theory and the Social Ecological Model. Four key findings emerged: (1) performance anxiety and masculine identity reinforcement as primary motivators; (2) use of diverse substances from commercial products to improvised mixtures; (3) distinct usage contexts (habitual, preemptive, situational); and (4) paradoxical outcomes where sexual benefits coexisted with severe health risks including hospitalizations. The study highlights the need for multi-level interventions including comprehensive sexual health education, peer support programs, substance regulation, and gender-sensitive research. These findings offer culturally specific insights for public health practice in Ghanaian higher education while contributing to global conversations about youth sexuality and substance use.

Keywords: sexual enhancement substances; university students; youth sexuality; masculinity; public health

Escaping Modernist Planning Edeal? Anatomy of Resistance to Urban Redevelopment in the Age of Participatory Planning

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Abstract

In light of the limit of technocratic planning, urban planners have long been urged to adopt participatory and communicative approaches to response to the complex dynamics of urbanisation, especially urban redevelopment planning practice. However, critical urban planners following urban redevelopment experiences have shown how resistance by grassroot actors has become a complementary gene in urban redevelopment practices even when anchored in a participatory manner. However, urban studies dialogues barely paid attention to the anatomy of resistance, especially with a reflection on historical dynamic of urban planning practices. Inspired by participatory urban planning debates, we contribute to discourse in urban redevelopment planning practices in the Global South by unveiling the anatomy and patterns of resistance against urban redevelopment planning, taking the case of Wa – a metropolitan city in Ghana. We introduce the “everyday resistance” into urban redevelopment discourses as an explicit analytical framework for theorising the anatomy and patterns of redevelopment-induced resistance. In so doing, we (i) explore the ambitions and expectations for redevelopment planning projects; (ii) the repertoire of resistance; (iii) the actors’ relations; (iv) and the spatialisation and temporalisation of resistance and; (iv) offered reflections on the implications of resistance to historical dynamics of urban planning practices in the Global South. The findings showed divergences of imaginations of desired urban space making between planners, city authorities and the residents who were directly affected by the redevelopment planning project. The findings suggest that while city authorities and politicians desire to fulfil the dream of modernist city agenda, through redevelopment, such imaginations remained unimagined and invisible to the grassroots actors directly affected by the redevelopment project. We showed that the (dis)connections of motives, fancies, ambitions and interests between urban planners, city authorities, politicians and the local residents continue to revivify citizens’ resistance against urban redevelopment planning projects.

Keywords: Urban Politics; Urban Planning; Urban development; Participatory planning; Modernism

Teachers' Perception of the Common Core Programme Curriculum and its Implementation in the Wa Municipality

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Abstract

The perceptions of teachers about a running curriculum are key to educational success. The study focused on teachers' perceptions of the Common Core Programme curriculum goals, the teaching and learning resources available, and the professional development sessions for the implementation of the curriculum in Wa Municipality, Ghana. A concurrent mixed-method approach was used to survey 280 teachers. A stratified random sampling was used to survey the respondents. The study concludes that teachers in Wa Municipal generally perceive the goals of the Common Core Programme (CCP) curriculum positively. They regard these goals as clear, relevant, and well-aligned with students' learning needs, fostering critical thinking and holistic development. The professional development sessions for the CCP curriculum were also perceived as relevant, well-structured, and effectively facilitated. However, their limited frequency and lack of follow-up support were a challenge. However, there were mixed opinions regarding the feasibility of achieving these goals within the current school system, primarily due to overcrowded classrooms and limited teaching and learning resources. These findings highlight the need for the Ghana Education Service (GES) to provide updated textbooks and digital textbooks, and ongoing follow-up mechanisms by the National Teaching Council (NTC) to enhance teachers' professional capacity and facilitate the successful implementation of the curriculum.

Keywords: Teachers' perception, Curriculum, Professional development, Core competencies, Digital tools.

Modelling urban green space transition and surface urban heat island effect in a rapidly urbanising city, Wa, Ghana

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Abstract

In Ghana, the balance between urban green spaces (UGSs) and impermeable surfaces is occasionally disrupted by the unanticipated expansion of urban areas. Yet, limited knowledge exists regarding the dynamics of land use/land cover of UGSs and the consequential land surface temperature (LST) and urban heat island (UHI) effect. This study used multi-temporal Landsat TM satellite data to investigate changes in land use/land cover (LULC) and urban heat island (UHI) effect under rapid urbanisation in the city of Wa over a span of 16 years. The Landsat images were processed in ArcMap 10.8 and analysed using the maximum likelihood classification (MLC) algorithm including the computation of the spectral indices. The results show significant changes in LULC from 2007 to 2023, cropland diminished by 82.45 km²(26.4%) whereas developed areas expanded by 5.44 km² (3%). An examination of LST indicate that green spaces (30.73°C) and water bodies (29.49°C) were somewhat cooler whereas built up (32.98°C) and barren lands (31.94°C) exhibit the highest mean LST values. The proportion of high-temperature zones increased from 18.39% in 2007 to 19.65% in 2023, primarily in urbanised regions, indicating a strengthening of the UHI during the research period. The significant influence of LU alterations on thermal dynamics is underscored by these findings, which advocate for the integration of green infrastructure in urban planning to mitigate the impacts of UHI and enhance environmental resilience in Wa Municipality.

Keywords: Urbanisation, land surface temperature, urban heat island, land use land cover, Ghana

Junior High School Teachers Experiences in Teaching Non-Routine Mathematics Problem-Solving in the Wa Municipality

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Abstract

This study explored Junior High School (JHS) teachers' experiences in teaching non-routine mathematics problem-solving in the Wa Municipality of Ghana. Using a sequential explanatory mixed methods design, the research was conducted in two phases. The first phase involved the collection and analysis of quantitative data from 34 JHS mathematics teachers using structured questionnaires to assess their exposure, understanding, strategies, and challenges related to non-routine problem-solving. In the second phase, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with a purposively selected sample of teachers to explain and deepen the interpretation of the quantitative findings. The results revealed that although teachers reported frequent exposure to non-routine problems, many held misconceptions about their definition and exhibited limited confidence in teaching them effectively. Common strategies included peer collaboration, online resource utilisation, and seeking professional guidance. However, challenges such as insufficient time, unclear problem statements, and difficulty selecting appropriate strategies were prevalent. Qualitative insights further illuminated how institutional constraints, lack of continuous professional development, and limited access to instructional resources hinder effective teaching of non-routine problems. The study recommends enhanced training in non-routine problem-solving pedagogy, provision of instructional materials, and integration of collaborative professional learning communities. These findings contribute to a better understanding of how contextual and instructional factors influence the teaching of non-routine mathematics problems and suggest targeted interventions to improve mathematics instruction at the JHS level.

Keywords: Non-routine mathematics problem-solving, Junior High School (JHS) teachers, Teaching strategies, Challenges in mathematics education, Wa Municipality

Construction Professionals' Perspectives of Green Building Practices: Evidence from Wa, Ghana

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Abstract

Green building practices are crucial for mitigating the adverse impacts of construction on the natural environment, yet their adoption in developing countries remains slow. This study explores the adoption of these practices among construction professionals in Wa, Ghana. The study draws on the Institutional Theory to understand the drivers for and barriers to the adoption of green building practices in this context. A qualitative, phenomenological approach was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 53 purposively selected construction professionals, including 18 architects, 15 quantity surveyors and 20 building contractors with at least 6 years of experience. Findings reveal that awareness of green building practices among construction professionals in Wa is moderate to low, with many of the respondents having only a basic understanding of the principles while also acknowledging the environmental and socio-economic benefits of green building practices, including reduced energy consumption, improved health outcomes, and job creation. However, significant barriers impede adoption, including high initial costs, limited access to green materials, and cultural resistance to change. Additionally, the lack of institutional capacity to enforce building codes and regulations hampers implementation. The absence of localised green building standards further hinders the adoption of these relevant sustainable practices. The study concludes that enhancing awareness through tailored training programs, providing financial incentives, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and establishing localised green building certification standards are essential to promote the adoption of green building practices in Wa and similar contexts. The study findings contribute to the limited literature on sustainable construction practices in developing countries and offer practical recommendations for policymakers and industry stakeholders.

Keywords – Green building; construction professionals' perspectives; institutional theory; sustainable construction, developing countries

***‘Te zaabonyeni’*: Solidarity and resistance discourse in Northwestern Ghana**

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Abstract

Te zaabonyeni, literally translated as “we are all one”, is a social practice among the Dagaaba/Waala people in the Upper West region of Ghana. It provides a way of constructing, enacting, maintaining social relations, shared meanings, solidarity and neighbourliness while resisting divisive and normalising discourses. However, in bureaucratic arenas, *Te zaabonyeni* is criticised for fomenting impunity and undermining peace and social change. How do the practices of *Te zaabonyeni* in traditional and bureaucratic arenas create peace, solidarity, social cohesion and change in Wa municipality? The study employs qualitative methodology with interpretive design underpinned by discourse and power in relation to the principles of the sociology of knowledge approach to discourse, particularly, the social relations of knowing and the politics of knowing. Data will be collected from institutional documents, leaders of traditional and bureaucratic structures, using interviews and an archive search. In this way, the study situates *Te zaabonyeni* within the broader context of local knowledge systems, countering Western-centric ideals of social cohesion, punitive justice, and individualism. Instead, it offers an alternative framework that prioritises communal responsibility and relational accountability. Preliminary findings suggest that, despite its contested meanings, *Te zaabonyeni* embodies potentials for promoting solidarity, peace, social cohesion and transformation. More importantly, the findings of this study contribute to scholarship on indigenous knowledge systems and meaning practices and emphasise how cultural discourses serve as dynamic sites for fostering solidarity, peace, social cohesion and change.

A Chief who is a Woman: Discursive Constructions of Gendered Power and Women's Subjectivities in African Traditional Governance

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Abstract

This article examines how gendered power and women's subjectivities are discursively constructed within African traditional governance, focusing on *pognaa*—a female chieftaincy position in the Waala society of north-western Ghana. The study draws on decolonial African feminist theoretical perspectives and the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD). It explores how cultural, political, and institutional dynamics, as well as colonial legacies, simultaneously construct and complicate the identities and authority of women within the traditional political systems. Data was drawn from an ethnographic fieldwork in Dorimon over a period of 18 months, complemented with in-depth interviews with *pognamine*, chiefs, elders, men and women, as well as officials of relevant institutions. Four key findings are discussed. First, while some actors frame the *pognaa* as a recent bureaucratic innovation, others reclaim and assert it as a reinvigoration of a historically embedded female position of power that was part of Waala culture. Second, the *pognaa*'s identities and position, are often framed in diverse and contradictory ways by their interlocutors based on their positionalities. Third, this contested construction has significant effects, often placing the *pognaa* in a realm of cultural ambivalences—symbolically recognised and revered as position of authority, yet incessantly subordinated, creating an ambiguous and contested subjective positions. Finally, notwithstanding these contestations, *pognamine* assert and redefine their positions through both discursive practices and bureaucratic regimes. They draw on the interplay of histori-cultural schemes such as oral traditions, moral philosophies, and statutory enactments to redefine their status within the chieftaincy institution. Taken together these findings, we conclude that, despite facing cultural ambivalence and institutional subordination, the *pognaa* emerges not merely as a subject of power, but an active agent for pushing further the epistemic boundaries of gendered power within traditional governance. Based on this, we propose an intentional recognition and institutionalisation of the *pognaa* position in the chieftaincy structures. This will ensure their inclusion in decision-making platforms necessary for effective leadership.

Keywords: Gendered power; *pogona* institution; Traditional political governance; women's agency, north-western Ghana

Students' Enrolment and Learning Challenges Under Ghana's Free Senior High School Policy: Evidence From the Northern Region

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Abstract

This study critically examines student enrolment and learning challenges under Ghana's Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy, focusing on the Northern Region. Employing an explanatory-sequential mixed-methods design grounded in pragmatism, the research integrates survey data from 379 students with key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Findings reveal that the FSHS policy has substantially expanded access and gender equity, with female enrolment constituting 57.3% of respondents, particularly benefiting students from low-income households. However, the rapid growth in enrolment has outpaced infrastructural development, resulting in overcrowded classrooms and dormitories, inadequate sanitation, and resource shortages. Critical deficits in textbooks, science laboratories, ICT facilities, and qualified teachers were also identified, adversely affecting instructional quality and learning outcomes. The predominance of enrolment in General Arts and Home Economics programmes further indicates structural imbalances that limit the pipeline into STEM and agriculture-related fields. Situated within the Human Capital Theory framework, the study concludes that while FSHS advances educational equity, its transformative potential is constrained by persistent input gaps. It recommends targeted investments in infrastructure, teacher recruitment, and resource provision to sustain both access and quality in Ghana's secondary education system.

Keywords: Free Senior High School (FSHS); enrolment; learning challenges; Northern Region; Ghana.

Integrating AI-Driven Chatbots into Human Resource Information Systems for Public Sector Recruitment in a Developing Economy

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Abstract

This study investigates the integration of AI-driven chatbots into Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS) for public sector recruitment, focusing on their multidimensional impact on fairness and operational speed. While AI technologies have rapidly transformed recruitment processes in the private sector, their implementation in the public sector remains limited, constrained by unique organisational, technological, and environmental factors. Existing literature often emphasises technical capabilities, neglecting the socio-technical complexities and fairness concerns inherent in public sector recruitment. This research adopts a multidimensional analytical framework to explore how AI chatbots influence recruitment speed, operational efficiency, and perceptions of fairness among stakeholders. A quantitative, positivist approach is adopted, utilising a cross-sectional survey of HR professionals in the Upper West Region of Ghana, specifically Municipal and Metropolitan District Assemblies (MMDAs). Data will be collected using structured questionnaires and will be analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings aim to bridge gaps in empirical knowledge, inform policy development, and guide public sector organisations in responsibly leveraging AI-enabled HRIS for equitable and efficient recruitment outcomes.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI); AI-driven chatbots; Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS); public sector recruitment; fairness; speed

Flood Risk Management Among Landlords and Property Owners in Wa Township, Ghana: Patterns, Perceptions, and Preparedness

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Abstract

Flooding remains a persistent urban challenge in rapidly growing secondary cities across Sub-Saharan Africa. This study examines patterns, perceptions, and preparedness for flood risk management among landlords and property owners in Wa Township, Ghana. Using a mixed-methods design, data were collected from 65 respondents through structured surveys and open-ended responses across eight flood-prone areas in Wa. Quantitative analysis involved descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and the development of a Flood Preparedness Index, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic coding. Results show that over 60% of respondents have experienced flooding, with 72% having taken mitigation actions, and 89% expressing the need for stronger government collaboration. Significant associations were observed between age, property type, and property location with flood experience and mitigation behaviors. Key qualitative themes highlighted inadequate drainage, unregulated construction, policy gaps, and low community awareness as barriers to effective flood management. The Flood Preparedness Index revealed that only 37% of respondents were highly prepared for flood events. Findings emphasize the need for integrated, community-engaged flood governance and infrastructural investments in secondary urban centers. This study contributes to the discourse on urban resilience, offering practical insights for policymakers and urban planners working to enhance flood risk management in rapidly urbanizing contexts in Ghana and beyond.

Keywords: urban flooding, flood preparedness, landlords, property owners, community resilience, Ghana, flood governance

Challenges of Electronic Waste Management in Secondary Cities: Insight from Wa, Ghana

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Abstract

The surge in electronic waste (e-waste) generation poses critical environmental and public health challenges in secondary cities across the Global South, where infrastructure and regulatory frameworks are often underdeveloped. This study investigates the barriers to effective e-waste management in Wa, Ghana, employing a concurrent triangulation mixed-methods design involving household surveys (n=150), key informant interviews, and field observations across income-based residential zones. Results reveal that 84% of households lack access to designated e-waste disposal sites, with low public awareness and inadequate education on safe disposal practices exacerbating informal and unsafe disposal. Financial limitations, insufficient transport, and the absence of recycling facilities further hinder effective management. Waste segregation remains minimal, particularly in low-income areas, complicating data tracking and recycling efforts. Institutional challenges include inconsistent funding, limited technical expertise, and inadequate infrastructure within waste management agencies, while political interference and low prioritization of sanitation impede regulatory enforcement. The study highlights the urgent need for integrated strategies combining public awareness campaigns, investment in modern recycling infrastructure, and strengthened policy enforcement. Collaborative stakeholder engagement and institutional capacity-building are essential to establish sustainable e-waste management systems in Wa and similar secondary cities. These findings contribute empirical evidence for policymakers and development partners to address e-waste challenges while promoting environmental sustainability and public health in rapidly urbanizing secondary cities.

Keywords: electronic waste, e-waste management, secondary cities, Ghana, sustainability, environmental health, recycling infrastructure

Strategies Used by Basic School Teachers for Teaching Multiplication Facts Recall in The Wa Municipality

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Abstract

This study examined the strategies used by basic school teachers as effective for teaching multiplication facts recall and the challenges encountered in applying them. The study adopted a convergent parallel design involving 14 randomly selected basic schools from 14 circuits in the Wa Municipality, from which 84 teachers participated. Data collection was conducted using questionnaires and interviews, with both quantitative and qualitative analyses applied. The findings revealed that teachers adopted various strategies to enhance multiplication facts recall. These included simple repetition, differentiated instruction, mathematics games, pair work or ability grouping, as well as the use of teaching manipulatives and visual aids. Among the strategies, simple repetition, use of teaching manipulatives and visual aids were ranked as the most effective, particularly in engaging less motivated students. However, teachers faced several challenges in implementing these strategies. These ranged from inadequate access to the use of teaching manipulative and visual aids, frequent curriculum and policy changes by successive governments, and large class sizes, to low confidence among some teachers. The study recommended that teachers, head teachers, and the Municipal Education Directorate work collaboratively to ensure consistent access to teaching manipulative and visual aids.

Keywords: Multiplication Facts Recall, Teaching Strategies, Basic School Teachers, Perceptions, Challenges

Modelling Student Academic Growth Across Academic Levels: Evidence from Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies, Ghana

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Abstract

Understanding and modelling student academic growth across levels has become increasingly critical in evaluating the effectiveness of educational systems and guiding interventions that enhance academic achievement, which impact the cumulative acquisition of knowledge and the developmental trajectory of students. This study seeks to investigate the growth of students' academic achievements across four successive levels of study at Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies. A longitudinal research design and stratified random sampling were employed to retrieve the Grade Point Average (GPA) scores of 218 students across six faculties/schools. Gender, student mode of entry, faculty or school, internet usage, financial support, part-time work, parental educational status, residence type, and number of hours studied per week were used as independent variables. The results from the means plot of students' GPAs indicated a non-linear trajectory over ten trimester time points and peaks for all third trimesters. Profile plots suggest a trend of parallelism in some groups, such as gender, campus residency, family financial support, and hours studied per week. Females, residents on or near campus, and students who receive financial support from parents, on average, maintain higher academic achievement over time. Further tests using Multivariate Analysis of Variance confirmed a trend of parallelism on these variables but showed no significant difference in level (equal profiles). The findings suggest that educational stakeholders, academic institutions, parents, governments, and non-governmental organizations should develop more residential facilities and financial aid schemes to enable students to accelerate their academic excellence in tertiary education. The university should also consider reviewing all third-trimester assessments to avoid inconsistency across all third trimesters.

Keywords: Profile analysis, Students, Academic achievements, Multivariate analysis, Trend

From Inputs to Outcomes: Impact of Educational System Indicators on Inclusive Education Practices in Ghana's Marginalised School Communities

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Abstract

Inclusive development is intricately linked to equitable access to quality education, making indicators of the educational system crucial for promoting social equity and fostering long-term development. This study explored the impact of various inputs, including infrastructure, teacher availability, learning materials, and enrolment trends, on predicting educational equity in marginalized communities in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Utilizing a survey design, perspectives from 878 teachers who completed questionnaires via Google Forms informed our predictive inclusive education model for knowledge translation. Qualitative data were analysed through document analysis, while quantitative data were evaluated using percentages, means, and standard deviations. The findings revealed that serious disparities persist, although education access has significantly improved, particularly at the Junior High School level, due to expanded infrastructure and enrolment gains. These include uneven school distribution, teacher shortages, overcrowded classrooms, and insufficient support for children with disabilities, especially in rural districts such as DBI, Lambussie, and Wa East. While school completion rates and performance in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) have shown moderate improvements, gender and geographical inequalities continue to affect outcomes, with girls underperforming in core subjects despite achieving higher completion rates. The study concludes that these systemic challenges hinder inclusive development and advocates for targeted policy interventions aimed at equitable resource distribution, teacher deployment, and the creation of inclusive learning environments. These findings underscore the significant implications for the broader agenda of sustainable peace, governance, and inclusive development in Africa, emphasizing the essential role of education as a foundational pillar in achieving these objectives.

Keywords: Inclusive education; educational equity; infrastructure; teacher distribution; disparities.

Climate Change Adaptation Policies in Selected Vulnerable Communities in Wa West District

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Abstract

With climate change increasingly affecting the livelihoods and sustainability of rural communities, particularly in low-income regions, understanding the effectiveness of adaptation policies is critical. This study assesses the impact of climate change adaptation policies on selected vulnerable communities, focusing on communities in the Wa West District. Using a mixed research methodology, the study explores the extent of policy awareness, community engagement in policy development and perceptions of policy effectiveness among community members. Primary data collected through surveys, with respondents providing insights into their experiences with climate hazards, policy-driven mitigation efforts, and barriers to effective adaptation. Observations in communities in the Wa West District reveal that these communities are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, such as extreme weather events and altered rainfall patterns, resulting in changes in traditional seasons. While some adaptation policies have been implemented, their effectiveness has been limited due to factors like inadequate funding, lack of coordination, and limited public awareness. To build resilient foundations in these selected vulnerable communities, the study recommends strengthening community participation, focus on rapid and inclusive development, improving policy coordination, prioritizing poverty reduction, increasing public awareness, and access to primary services such as infrastructure, healthcare and social protection. To support adaptation, the study recommends the need for households and small-scale businesses to adapt by providing information, financing, and technology, while supporting innovation and access to best practices. These principles and frameworks can inform climate change adaptation policies in the Wa West District.

Keywords: Climate; Change; Adaptation; Policies and Vulnerability.

The Potential Application of Blockchain Technology in Blood Supply Chain Management at Tamale Teaching Hospital: The Mediating Role of User Acceptance

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Abstract

The availability of safe blood is essential to patient survival, yet inefficiencies in blood supply chain management (BSCM) continue to create shortages, wastage, and delays in many healthcare facilities. At Tamale Teaching Hospital (TTH), these challenges are compounded by inadequate traceability, limited real-time visibility, and weak coordination among stakeholders, ultimately affecting patient outcomes. Blockchain Technology (BCT), characterized by decentralization, immutability, and transparency, offers a promising solution to these persistent problems by enabling improved traceability, data security, and operational coordination within blood distribution systems. This study aims to explore the potential application of BCT in the blood distribution network of TTH and to examine the mediating role of user acceptance in its implementation. Guided by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the research adopts a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data will be collected through structured surveys from hospital staff, blood bank managers, and suppliers, while qualitative insights will be gathered through semi-structured interviews. Data analysis will involve descriptive statistics to summarize responses, inferential statistics such as regression and ANOVA to test group differences, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to evaluate the mediating role of user acceptance. The expected outcome is the development of an empirical framework that demonstrates how blockchain adoption enhances blood collection efficiency, inventory control, and distribution reliability when mediated by user acceptance. The findings will contribute theoretically by extending TAM research into healthcare supply chain contexts and practically by providing actionable insights for hospital administrators and policymakers seeking to modernize blood distribution systems in Ghana and similar healthcare environments.

Keywords:

Blockchain Technology; Blood Supply Chain Management; User Acceptance; Real-Time Visibility; Data Security and privacy

Examining the Effects of Blockchain Technology Adoption on Supply Chain Management: Evidence from the Agricultural Sector in Wa East District

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of blockchain technology adoption (BCTA) on supply chain management (SCM) in the agricultural sector of Ghana's Wa East District, focusing on transaction costs, supply chain transparency, and regulatory compliance. Using regression analysis, the findings revealed that blockchain adoption has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on supply chain performance, with an overall R^2 of 0.93, indicating that 93% of the variation in SCM outcomes is explained by blockchain integration. Results showed that blockchain significantly reduces transaction costs through automation and disintermediation, enhances transparency through secure, tamper-proof traceability mechanisms, and strengthens regulatory compliance by enabling real-time auditing and immutable records. The study confirmed the rejection of the null hypothesis, demonstrating a robust association between blockchain adoption and improved SCM outcomes. These findings align with existing literature that emphasizes blockchain's transformative role in enhancing efficiency, accountability, and governance within agri-supply chains. The study concludes that blockchain adoption offers a strategic pathway for addressing long-standing inefficiencies in agricultural supply chains, particularly in rural and fragmented systems, and recommends targeted investments in digital infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, farmer education, and collaborative partnerships to promote widespread adoption and sustainable impact in the agricultural sector.

Keywords: Blockchain Technology, Supply Chain Management, Agricultural Sector, Adoption, Wa East District

LIST OF ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. **PROF. FREDERICK DAYOUR (CHAIRMAN)**
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