



# TELFER

# THESIS COMPETITION

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## 2020

Hosted by:



# AGENDA

9:00-9:05	Welcome and Opening Remarks from the Dean: Dr. Wojtek Michalowski
9:05-9:10	Message from the Vice-Dean (Research): Dr. Shantanu Dutta
9:10-9:15	Message from the TGRPSA: Andrew Scarffe & Mara Mihailescu
	<b>Student Presentations Begin</b>
9:16-9:26	Peyman Varshoei
9:27-9:37	Mary Valdes
9:38- 9:48	Marwa Solimon
9:49- 9:59	Shikha Shukla
10:00- 10:10	<b>Virtual Refreshment Break</b>
10:11-10:21	Nina Nesdoly
10:22-10:32	Amin Masoudi
10:33-10:43	Michael Le
10:44-10:54	Nadia Landry
10:55-11:05	Hamidreza Kavandi
11:05- 11:15	<b>Virtual Refreshment Break</b>
11:16-11:26	Monisha Kabir
11:27-11:37	Mariam Hussein
11:38-11:48	Meisam Hoseini
11:49- 11:59	Maya Dancey
12:00-12:10	Esra Benismail
12:10 PM	<b>Closing Remarks</b>

## EVENT MODERATORS

### Andrew Scarffe

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**PhD Student, Management (Health Systems)**



Andrew Scarffe is a PhD student in Management with a concentration in Health Systems at the Telfer School of Management and is supervised by Dr. Kevin Brand. His research is focused on the lay-public's perception of the weight of evidence process and standard of proof for public health threats.

Andrew is the (outgoing) President of the Telfer Graduate Research Programs Student Association (TGRPSA). He is also the recipient of the Ontario Graduate Scholarship and Mitacs Accelerate Entrepreneur Scholarship.

### Mara Mihailescu

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**MSc Student, Health Systems**



Mara Mihailescu is a MSc Health Systems student and is supervised by Dr. Ivy Bourgeault & Dr. Jennifer Dimoff. Her thesis is on the mental health and leave of absence experiences of early-career female physicians using qualitative research methods. Mara is the recipient of the CIHR Canada Graduate Scholarship-Master's.

She is part of the Gender, Work, & Health Lab and a research assistant on the Medicine Case for the CIHR-SSHRC Healthy Professional Worker Partnership. She also works with the Professional Practice team at the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT) focussing on mental health and wellness in the profession.

## QUESTION & ANSWER MODERATOR

### **Dr. Anoosheh Rostamkalaei**

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#### **Postdoctoral Fellow**



SMRG postdoctoral fellow at Telfer School of Management, Anoosheh Rostamkalaei received her Ph.D. in Management from Lancaster University, the UK with a concentration on entrepreneurial finance. Anoosheh's central research interest is in investigating the financing practices of SMEs. She has been also actively involved in exploring the link between financial literacy and the financial well-being of different groups of societies including self-employed individuals and immigrants. Supported by the SSHRC Insight Development Grant, her recent line of studies is concerned with the financing gap of

immigrant-owned businesses in Canada.

Anoosheh received SSHRC and Statistics Canada postdoctoral fellowships. She obtained her M.Sc. in Management from Telfer School of Management and her B.Sc. in Industrial Engineering from Polytechnic of Tehran, Iran. Her work had been published in high ranked journals in her field, including Small Business Economics and Journal of Small Business Management.



## JUDGES



**Dr. Jane O'Reilly**

Associate Professor  
Organizational Behavior / Human Resources



**Dr. Danial Khorasanian**

Postdoctoral Fellow



**Dr. Onur Ozturk**

Assistant Professor  
Business Analytics & Information Systems



**Dr. Qianru Qi (Cheryl)**

Assistant Professor  
Finance



**Dr. Wadid Lamine**

Associate Professor  
Management

## TELFER GRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMS STUDENT ASSOCIATION (TGRPSA)



**Andrew Scarffe**

President  
PhD Student, Management  
(Health Systems)



**Nina Nesdoly**

MSc Management  
Representative  
MSc Student, Management



**Mara Mihailescu**

Health Systems  
Representative  
MSc Student, Health Systems



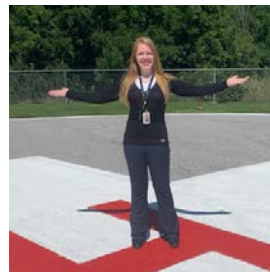
**Claire Liu**

Vice-President, Finance  
MSc Student, Management



**Ali Mahdi**

PhD Representative  
PhD Student, Management  
(Entrepreneurship)



**Katie McMillan**

Vice-President, Academic  
MSc Student, Health Systems

# STUDENT PRESENTERS

## Peyman Varshoei

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**PhD Candidate, Management (Health Systems)**

**Title of the project/presentation:** Optimization of Elective Hospital Admissions During COVID-19 Pandemic

### Biography:



Peyman Varshoei is a PhD candidate in Management specialized in health systems at Telfer School of Management, uOttawa. He is supervised by Dr. Jonathan Patrick and Dr. Onur Ozturk. Besides his doctoral studies, he works as a research/teaching assistant and lecturer.

Peyman completed his undergraduate studies in industrial engineering and obtained a master's degree in systems engineering in Iran. His research interests lie in the area of *advanced analytics* including operations research and simulation modeling, particularly in the area of health systems problems. In collaboration with his supervisor, Dr. Patrick, Peyman has published a paper on capacity planning for a community care network. He is currently pursuing his thesis research on elective patient admission scheduling during the COVID-19 pandemic and home care nurse scheduling and routing problem.

Peyman is 32 years old and lives in Ottawa with his wife who is also a PhD candidate at Telfer school.

## **Presentation Abstract:**

COVID-19 has severely affected elective procedures in hospitals across Canada. Recent evidence showed that around 400,000 elective surgeries have been canceled or postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. Hospital records show a substantial reduction in resource utilization while backlogs of surgeries and diagnostic appointments accumulated and could take several months to clear. There is an argument to be made that hospitals were emptied too much and too quickly that has resulted in unnecessary delays in elective procedures.

Research Question: How can hospitals moderate elective inflow into a hospital to ensure that it maintains the ability to quickly reduce utilization below a given threshold in the event of a new wave of COVID-19?

Method: Assuming that a hospital receives an  $m$ -day (e.g. 5-day) warning that  $n$  (e.g. 15) beds will be needed for COVID-19 patients, I developed a stochastic optimization model that provides hospitals with the ability to determine what proportion of elective procedures should be canceled every day during the warning period. This model ensures that, with  $p\%$  (e.g. 95%) confidence,  $n$  beds will be available after the warning period. The optimization model is developed in Java and solved by CPLEX solver, using an iterative heuristic approach. The model is tested using sample instances and the results are validated by a discrete-event simulation model in ARENA simulation software.

Results: The results suggest that the admission rates can accurately satisfy the bed utilization threshold at the given confidence level (less than 1% deviation from the given confidence level).

Contribution: This is the first stochastic optimization model to optimize elective admission rates considering target utilization and confidence level, in the presence of demand and discharge uncertainties.

Conclusion: By optimizing admission rates during pandemics, pressing elective procedures could be prioritized. Thereby, unnecessary cancellations will be avoided, and backlogs will be minimized.



# Mary Valdes

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**PhD Candidate, Management (Accounting)**

**Title of the project/presentation:** The Influence of Manager Characteristics on Management Control System Configuration

**Biography:**



Mary Valdes is an ANID Scholarship funded PhD student in Management, in the Accounting specialization. Under the supervision of Professor Cheryl McWatters, she is researching management control systems of small and medium-sized firms.

Mary is a public accountant, holds a bachelor's degree in Accounting and Auditing, a research-based MBA, and a University Teaching diploma, all achieved with the highest honours, including receipt of the President's Scholarship and the Ministry of Education Scholarships. She also has undertaken postgraduate

studies in tax auditing and in tax law.

Mary worked as assistant professor at Universidad Católica del Norte where she both taught and supported local entrepreneurs in tax and accounting issues through the University's social programs and other regional institutions. Mary came to Academia following a strong and diverse career in the private and public sector, including positions at CODELCO, as tax auditor for the Chilean government and as controller at ArcelorMittal.

## **Presentation Abstract:**

This thesis is aimed at understanding the influence of manager characteristics on the management control system (MCS) design and configurations in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). To inform our study, we will use upper echelons theory, which states that organizational outcomes, such as strategic choices and performance targets, are associated and partially predicted by managerial background characteristics (Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Hambrick, 2007). Four manager characteristics – the locus of control, leadership style, human capital, and cognitive style – are depicted, analysed, and juxtaposed with the MCS design chosen by the firm, which will be described using the Malmi and Brown (2008) controls package typology.

The research will be conducted as a qualitative cross-sectional field study. Using a mixed-methods approach, we will undertake narrative analysis to make sense of the statistical descriptive, causal inferences, and qualitative comparative data across the firms' participants. Data will be gathered using survey elements and in-depth semi-structured interviews with managers and accountants of 40 SMEs that operate as suppliers of the Chilean mining industry. Quantitative and qualitative information about the firms will be triangulated for data analysis.

The thesis will investigate the MCS package in SMEs and how the design reflects the influence of manager characteristics, both underexplored topics in this economic segment. The research will extend the management control literature by assessing the multi-faceted aspect of the MCS design using a holistic perspective, and also, converging the relation between management tools, control practices, organizational structures, and firm strategy. Moreover, it will provide insights into the accounting practices of firms operating under an asymmetric relationship in the global supply chain of the Chilean mining sector, which is a novel context. Results have practical and economic relevance for policy makers, managers in SMEs, and for the accounting professionals who provide advice on MCS configuration and implementation.

# Marwa Solimon

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**PhD Candidate, Management (Accounting)**

**Title of the project/presentation:** Political Uncertainty and Complexity of Narrative Disclosure

## **Biography:**



Marwa is a PhD candidate at the Telfer School of Management, in the Accounting specialization. She received a Bachelor of Commerce degree with a major in accounting in 2005 from Mansoura University in Egypt and holds a Master of Science (MSc) in accounting from the University of Memphis in USA. Her master's thesis investigates the effect of internal governance in mitigating earnings management practices. She also worked as a teaching assistant and accounting instructor at different academic institutions including Misr

Academy for Engineering and Technology, Mansoura University, and University of Ottawa. Marwa also has extensive teaching experience. She taught various accounting courses including Financial Accounting, Intermediate Accounting, Managerial Accounting, and Principles of Cost Accounting.

Her research interests include corporate governance, textual analysis, political uncertainty, and financial disclosure. Her work was accepted for presentation at internationally recognized conferences such as the International Accounting Section mid-year meeting at the American Accounting Association (AAA), European Accounting Association Conference, Canadian Academic Accounting Association (CAAA) annual meeting, and American Accounting Annual (AAA) annual meeting .

Marwa has been a Certified Management Accountant from the Institute of Management Accountants since 2012. She was also the recipient of Egyptian Government Scholarship for Graduate Studies, Graduate assistantship at the University of Memphis, and admission scholarship and Full international admission scholarship at University of Ottawa. Marwa holds the Lilian and Swee Chua Goh Doctoral Scholarship, the first admission scholarship created by donors for PhD candidates at the Telfer School of Management.

**Presentation Abstract:**

Firms may alter their disclosure behavior when facing uncertainty. As previous studies do not provide conclusive evidence about the impact of political uncertainty on disclosure quality, we need to understand further how the perception of political uncertainty shapes the complexity of the firm's narrative disclosures? On one hand, the political uncertainty may attract investors to scrutinize firm-level information and monitor the firm's performance closely. Accordingly, firms may choose to increase the quality of their disclosure to meet investor's demand for information. On the other hand, political uncertainty subjects firms to more uncertain future cash flows, resulting in lower quality of information to managers to assess expected firm performance. Hence, managers may choose to obfuscate disclosure to elude adverse economic consequences.

To discern whether complex disclosure during periods of political uncertainty is driven by a firm's operations or by managerial choice, I use Bushee et al., (2018) novel empirical approach to decompose language complexity into two latent components; information and obfuscation. Unlike previous studies that employ country-level or event-based measures of political uncertainty, I use a firm-level measure of political uncertainty, assuming heterogeneous perceptions of political risk across firms. Using a sample of 68,033 firm-quarter observations over the 2002-2018 period, I find a significant positive association between the political uncertainty and complexity of narrative disclosure. The results are more pronounced when managers have strategic incentives to obfuscate disclosure. For example, firms with poor performance, manage earnings aggressively, or pay more options-based compensation exhibit a higher level of obfuscation disclosure during periods of political uncertainty. However, I find that effective corporate governance could temper disclosure obfuscation. These results are robust to different measures of complexity and across different filing types. These findings support that disclosure obfuscation during periods of political uncertainty is driven by a managerial choice rather than an operational necessity.

# Shikha Shukla

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**MSc Student, Management**

**Title of the project/presentation:** The Unappreciated Contributions: Exploring Small Business Social Responsibility from the Perspective of Different Generations of Immigrant Entrepreneurs

**Biography:**



Shikha is a second-year graduate student in Management. In her Masters' thesis she is exploring how society and culture integrate to shape immigrant social responsibility behavior and contributions of different generations of immigrant entrepreneurs. She believes "Research in immigrant entrepreneurship and their contributions is committed and engaging for a better and more promising future of Canada." Her research is supported by SMRG fund from Telfer School of Management. The earlier conceptual framework developed for her thesis has been accepted for presentation at the CIFEPME 2020 conference in Nice, France. She holds MBA from UKTU, India. She has worked as Management Lecturer in private colleges and also volunteered as research assistant in Competition Commission of India, Government of India. She has published and presented conference paper on "Role of soft skill and Personality development in Managerial training and development."



## **Presentation Abstract:**

Objectives and research question: Immigrant businesses represent a very large percentage of SMEs in Canada. The objective of this study is to understand how society and culture shape immigrants' small business social responsibility (SBSR) behavior, with a focus on comparing first and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs.

Methods and theoretical foundation: Drawing from mixed embeddedness and cultural embeddedness concepts, I develop propositions about the influence of home country culture and host country environment on immigrants' SBSR behaviour and the potential consequences of differences in embeddedness on their contributions to the host country. I test my propositions using twenty in-depth interviews.

Results and theoretical contribution: Immigrants' SBSR behaviour is driven by their home culture and the extent to which they are embedded in the host country environment. While embedding in the Canadian context, first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs embrace host country-oriented SBSR practices while second generations' SBSR is more influenced by their networks in the host country. Immigrant SBSR represents one of the ways through which they help their co-ethnics achieve economic and social integration in the host country. Influenced by their cultural values of serving humanity, first-generation emerged as strong socially responsible entrepreneurs during the pandemic, who find ways to sustain their businesses by integrating the societal needs in their business model.

At the theoretical level, the mixed embeddedness approach has been augmented by applying it in the field of SBSR and by integrating the influence of the home country culture. In addition, the study fills a gap on second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs' SBSR behaviour.

Conclusion: The benefits of immigrant SBSR could be seen from a twofold perspective: benefitting co-ethnics and the wider community. The findings shed light on the uniqueness and specificities of immigrant-owned SMEs and show that insights from the non-immigrant businesses may not fully apply to them.

# Nina Nездoly

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**MSc Student, Management**

**Title of the project/presentation:** Mechanisms of Transformational Leadership's Influence on Employee Appraisal of Workplace Stressors

## **Biography:**



Nina Nездoly is a 2nd-year student in the M.Sc. Management Program, studying organizational behaviour. Her current research examines how employees make sense of workplace stressors and how leadership affects employee perceptions of stressors. Nina graduated from Carleton University with a B.Sc. in Neuroscience and Mental Health in 2019. She discovered her interest in research during her undergraduate and published her 4th-year independent study research in the Journal of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education. Nina's research interests combine her neuroscience background with organizational behaviour; she is interested in stress, burnout, motivation, and the neurophysiological processes underlying workplace experiences. Outside of academia, Nina volunteers facilitating virtual workshops for disadvantaged women entering or re-entering the workforce.

## **Presentation Abstract:**

This research develops and tests a theoretical model of the mechanisms through which transformational leadership impacts how employees make sense of workplace stressors. The management literature categorizes workplace stressors into two overarching types; hindrance stressors are defined as job demands that are typically appraised as threatening, and challenge stressors are defined as job demands that are typically appraised more positively, as opportunities for growth. Despite this formal categorization, employees can differ considerably in their appraisals. Some employees will appraise stressors typically categorized as hindrance (challenge) stressors as more or less threatening (challenging) than other employees. The current research seeks to better understand these individual differences by devoting concerted attention to the role of transformational leadership, a leadership style defined by inspiring employees to pursue challenges and addressing individual employees' personal needs. I propose that transformational leaders naturally engage in behaviors that positively impact their employees' appraisals of work stressors. Specifically, I posit that transformational leaders promote three psychological states among their employees; positive stress mindsets, psychological safety, and psychological empowerment. Positive stress mindsets encourage employees to embrace job demands, psychological safety reduces employees' fear of making mistakes, and psychological empowerment encourages employees to believe they can succeed in challenging circumstances. These three psychological states, in turn, will encourage employees to appraise hindrance stressors less negatively, and challenge stressors more positively. I will test my hypotheses in a 4-wave longitudinal survey study of approximately 400 employees. The findings of this research will have theoretical and practical contributions. First, this research will extend our understandings of how and why employees appraise and respond to workplace stressors differently. Secondly, it will provide managers with practical insights regarding which psychological states to encourage within their employees to promote positive challenge appraisals to and reduce negative hindrance appraisals.

# Amin Masoudi

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**MSc Student, Management**

**Title of the project/presentation:** A Deep Risk-Sensitive Reinforcement Learning Framework for Portfolio Management Problem

**Biography:**



I'm Amin and I'm a Master of Science student in Finance at Telfer School of Management. In my current research, I'm using Machine Learning and Deep Learning technology along with Risk Management and Operations Research algorithm to build a Risk-Sensitive Automated Trading System that can be deployed in financial markets. In summer, I was a Data Science Intern at a software company in Ottawa (Larus Technologies) and had a chance to develop software based on machine learning algorithms for a real-world business problem related to Forecasting and Optimization. Moreover, in my bachelor's, I studied Industrial Engineering at Sharif University of Technology and spent a summer as a Project Management intern National Iranian Oil Company.

## **Presentation Abstract:**

In Portfolio Management or Financial Investing, a general goal is to dynamically allocate a set of assets to maximize the return of the portfolio over time and minimize risk simultaneously. This research develops a Risk-Sensitive Automated Trading System that ensures robustness when learning the financial market by deploying advanced Machine Learning (ML) techniques and Operations Research (OR) algorithms.

For investors, it is essential to be able to invest in a portfolio that can satisfy their preset goals by building an optimal portfolio initially and subsequently rebalancing it optimally (Saud Almahdi, 2017). Recently, Machine Learning and, in particular, Deep Reinforcement Learning (DRL) approaches have shed new light on potential methods to optimize a portfolio and fully automate investment strategies which require an intelligent machine to take into account the risk and return of a financial asset in a continuous-time period to make profitable investment decisions. Moreover, risk-aware decision making plays a crucial role in many fields including finance. Thus, in this project, we aim to minimize the risk associated with each trading action and maximize the total return simultaneously (recognizing the inevitable trade-off). This project will be the first to develop a robust approach for Deep Reinforcement Learning agents in the context of Portfolio Management. We will deploy Coherent Risk Measures and Actor-Critic algorithms, a popular algorithm for Policy Optimization, to immunize the learning process of the artificial agent from the adversarial impact of uncertainty to develop a robust trading strategy.

Results from our initial risk-sensitive algorithms implemented on the REINFORCE algorithm (Actor-Only) show significant improvement in making robust decisions by the DRL agent in terms of both final return and risk-aversion of the agent. Not only this technology can be used by financial investors but it also is a major contribution to ML and OR literature.



# Michael Le

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**MSc Student, Health Systems**

**Title of the project/presentation:** The Effects of Policies on Family Medicine Career Choice

**Biography:**



Michael Le is an MSc Health Systems candidate. He has previously completed a BSc biochemistry at the University of Ottawa. His previous research experience included biostatistics, molecular biology, and concussion research. As a Health Systems candidate, he completed a research internship titled Stigma in Oral Healthcare. Michael's currently studies health policy and its effects on family physicians in Ontario.

## **Presentation Abstract:**

Objectives: Over the past decade, the healthcare landscape has shifted for family medicine physicians as the availability of practice and compensation models changed. The two most impacted populations would be family medicine residents and early career family physicians, who are directly interacting with the newer healthcare environment. The factors that drove these populations' choices of practice model were thus unclear in this context. Therefore, the research questions were:

1. What factors shape physician choice of practice and compensation models?
  - a. How do family medicine residency experiences influence practice and compensation models?
2. How do early career family physicians perceive practice and compensation models available in Ontario?

Methods: This study was a part of a broader, cross-provincial study examining family medicine resident and early career family physician practice patterns in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and Ontario. 19 early career physicians factors and policies affecting their (or in the case of administrators, residents') career choices.

Results: The major themes found in the data included the perceptions of practice and payment models, policy and external environment, residents' and early career family physicians' career preferences, and experiences throughout training.

Conclusion: Given that this research is exploratory in a new, updated family medicine context, these factors among others are meant to describe the current context of family medicine residents and early career family physicians. As a result, this research may help in the context of informed decision making when implementing new policies.

# Nadia Landry

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**MSc Student, Health Systems**

**Title of the project/presentation:** Using Simulation Model to Assess the Impact of Lung Cancer Screening Regimen on Downstream CT Imaging Resources.

**Biography:**



My name is Nadia Landry and I am currently completing my master's in Health Systems at the University of Ottawa. Prior to starting my master's, I have completed my Bachelor's degree in Science with a major in biochemistry and a minor in music. I am currently working under the supervision of Dr. Wojtek Michalowski and I'm currently using a simulation model to look at how the implementation of a lung cancer screening program will affect CT resources in the hospitals.

**Presentation Abstract:**

This research will evaluate impact of The Lung Cancer Screening Pilot for People at High Risk on the imaging resources in three hospitals within the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). A simulation model will be used in order to assess different possible policies. Administrative data from three hospitals will be collected in order to develop, populate and validate a simulation model. This project aims to use a discrete event simulation model in order to determine the impact the Lung Cancer Screening Pilot for People at High Risk has on the CT department of hospitals as well as to assess policies that can be put in place in order to mitigate this impact.

This research will attempt to answer the question: What are the impacts of lung cancer screening on CT imaging resources at The Ottawa Hospital, Renfrew Victoria and Cornwall Community Hospitals and what policies can mitigate that impact? The policies will be assessed by looking at the change in lung cancer related mortality based on the stage shift of patients who are diagnosed with lung cancer. The second way that the policies will be assessed is with the wait times of patients going for screening. We anticipate that this research will have contributions in two main areas, the first being that the simulation model that is developed will give us the ability to assess the impact that The Lung Cancer Screening Pilot for People at High Risk has on imaging and the second being having the ability to assess different policy options in order to determine the best possible way to implement a lung cancer screening program across Ontario.

# Hamidreza Kavandi

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**PhD Candidate, Digital Transformation and Innovation**

**Title of the project/presentation:** What are the challenges/issues that nurses face in relation to the use of HIT for the support of seniors' care in the community?

## **Biography:**



I began my undergraduate path through the electrical engineering program. Following two years of hard work in the industry, I returned to university for a Master's degree. My wife and I agreed to move to Canada as a migrant in 2013 to give my boy a better future. I noticed that I wanted more technical know-how to solve the challenges that I have faced. I returned to university for a Master's degree, where I won the Nicol internship and co-authored two papers. September 2017, I

started my Ph.D. study in Digital Transformation and Innovation. I won the best poster presentation on the 2018 Management Research Competition, delivered presentations at the 2018 and 2019 Caspher Conferences and Co-authored a paper in a peer-reviewed journal (Wiley). Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, I changed my subject of study problems raised by nurses working with seniors with teaching a health informatics course in the Fall 2020 semester.



## **Presentation Abstract:**

There is a growing number of seniors around the world, especially in North America. Health Information Technologies (HIT) presents opportunities for healthcare providers to support seniors' healthcare needs and care. In light of the COVID-19 crisis, the role of these HIT is becoming even more important. Hence the importance of understanding the factors and challenges that affect the adoption and use of these technologies from the perspective of the seniors and the health care providers.

A systematic review (SR) was conducted to critically appraise and synthesize the existing evidence on the factors that affect the adoption of HIT by seniors. Examples of these technologies include (e.g. telecare). The results of this SR were published in a peer-reviewed article<sup>1</sup>.

Yet, to date, limited information is available on the perceived challenges by health care providers in relation to the use of these technologies and the and change management issues that may be faced.

This research aims to contribute to this area of research. Specifically, a Delphi study will be conducted with nurses practicing at a long-term care facility to assess their perspective in relation to the challenges and barriers to the adoption of HIT to support the care of seniors. A panel of 15 nurses will be recruited for the purpose of this study. Three rounds (brainstorming, narrowing down, and ranking) will be conducted to assess the perspective of nurses in relation to the barriers and issues that they consider as most important in relation to using existing HIT (e.g. Electronic medical record) to support the care of seniors in this COVID-19 era. The results of this study will present an authoritative list of issues and challenges, from the perspective of nurses, and will inform the development of change management strategies to mitigate them.

<sup>1</sup>: Kavandi, H., & Jaana, M. (2020).

# Monisha Kabir

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**MSc Student, Health Systems**

**Title of the project/presentation:** Meeting Patients' and Family Caregivers' Needs: An Exploration of their Experiences and Sensemaking within Specialist Inpatient Palliative Care

## **Biography:**



Monisha is currently completing her MSc in Health Systems at the Telfer School of Management at University of Ottawa, and previously completed her BSc in Biology at the same university. Her research interests for her Master's thesis project involve exploring the experiences of patients receiving hospital-based specialist palliative care, and their informal caregivers (e.g. family members, friends).

For the past nine years, Monisha has been employed in various positions in healthcare and research with the Bruyère Research Institute, Cochrane Bias Methods Group, Health Canada and a family medical clinic. She is currently the Research Coordinator for clinical studies using 'LIFEView', a virtual travel and reminiscence program for palliative and end-of-life care patients, with the Division of Palliative Care at the Bruyère Research Institute. Over the course of four years with the Division of Palliative Care at Bruyère, she has also contributed to other projects on delirium prevention and management.

## **Presentation Abstract:**

Objectives: When facing life-threatening illness, patients and their family caregivers often have many questions. However, we know little about their experiences and information needs when receiving interprofessional care to improve symptoms and quality of life in inpatient palliative and end-of-life care settings.

Methods: To address this important gap in the literature, as part of my thesis project, I will: i) undertake a scoping review on patient and family caregiver experiences with inpatient specialist palliative and end-of-life care; conduct semi-structured interviews with patients and family caregivers receiving inpatient palliative care to comprehend how they experience and understand illness and care.

The following databases will be searched for the scoping review: Medline, Embase, CENTRAL, PsycINFO, CINAHL, Cochrane's Database of Systematic Reviews, and DARE. Grey literature will also be searched. Title and abstract, and full-text screening will be conducted in duplicate (MK, AG, SB). I will extract data from full-text articles. A random sample of these records will be verified by one of my thesis co-supervisors (AG/SB).

Interviews will last 30-45 minutes with patients and family caregivers receiving care on the Bruyère Continuing Care inpatient palliative care unit. The results of the scoping review may provide context for concepts that I will further explore in interviews. I will use an inductive thematic analysis approach to identify themes from the qualitative data.

Results: A comprehensive search strategy is being developed in consultation with a librarian (LS). Participant recruitment for interviews will begin in Fall 2020.

Conclusion: The scoping review will describe the nature and volume of literature on patient and family caregiver experiences of inpatient specialist palliative and end-of-life care. Interviews will allow for an exploration of how patients and family caregivers understand illness and care in this setting, and their associated information needs.

# Mariam Magdy Hussein

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**PhD Candidate, Management (Organizational Behaviour & Human Resources)**

**Title of the project/presentation:** An Integrative Model of Cultural Intelligence & Empathy For Cross-Cultural Communication in Health Care Contexts

## **Biography:**



Mariam Magdy Hussein is a doctoral student at the Telfer school of Management, University of Ottawa. Her concentration is in OBHR. Her dissertation project is focused on analyzing the enablers and inhibitors of experiencing positive, and inclusive intercultural interactions. Mariam's research is predominately qualitative and aiming to link theory on empathy and cultural intelligence.

Prior to joining Telfer, Mariam completed her Master's and Bachelor's of Management Technology at the German University in Cairo. She also worked at the GUC for three years as an Assistant Lecturer, and a RA where she actively participated in a governmental project aimed at analyzing the stigma associated with HCV in Egyptian organizations and how to alleviate it.

Outside of academia, Mariam enjoys taking long walks and reading. She is a proud mother of two boys. Mariam loves to read stories to them, and to watch Shrek movies with them. Donkey is her favourite character!

## **Presentation Abstract:**

The source of immigration to Canada has become increasingly diverse, creating challenges for the provision of healthcare services. The quality of providers' interaction with their patients is influential in the development of a healthy patient-provider experience, but research suggests that immigrant patients suffer "lapses" of empathy. Theory from the fields of cross-cultural communication (e.g., cultural intelligence), and emotions (empathy) on the cultivation of empathy in healthcare contexts is sparse.

My research asks: How is empathy acknowledged (by the receiver) to have been communicated in a cross-cultural health care setting, verbally & nonverbally? What are the antecedents and consequences of this process? How is empathy understood to have been communicated (by the source) in a cross-cultural health care setting, verbally & non-verbally? What are the antecedents and consequences of this process? Methodologically, I conduct a systematic literature review on empathy and a mixed methods empirical study. The empirical study involves semi-structured qualitative interviews with Arab-speaking immigrant patients and their healthcare providers, and quantitative methods using cultural intelligence data.

Little has been studied about empathy in cross-cultural communication. Research has analyzed the myriad, often overlapping, definitions given to empathy, and measured them from the source's (provider's) perspective, drawing distinctions with constructs such as compassion and sympathy.

Unlike previous studies, this research investigates whether providers' efforts to convey empathy have been successful. It further diverges from earlier research by devoting concern to the recipient's side, investigating how they perceive those experiences as empathic and contribute to broader pragmatic implications for themselves.

By depicting empathy as a bi-directional verbal/nonverbal communication process, where senders and receivers play important roles, it will inform cultural training interventions. Healthcare-provider trainees can learn to proactively detect and convey empathic verbal & nonverbal cues whilst interacting (e.g., with Arab-speaking immigrant patients), positively influence the patient-provider relationship, and, ultimately, patients' wellbeing.



# Meisam Hoseini

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**MSc Student, Management**

**Title of the project/presentation:** Impact of Analyst Forecast Accuracy and Coverage on the Complexity of Public Firms' Disclosures

**Biography:**



Meisam is a Master of Science in Management student at Telfer School of Management, specialization in Finance. He has a Bachelor's in industrial engineering followed by 4 years of work experience in capital markets. He is also following Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation.

**Presentation Abstract:**

This study examines whether more analyst providing earnings forecasts for a firm proves that the firm has higher complexity, which is unfavorable for any firm and its management in the long run. Between adding to the complexity of the financial statements and leaving it plain and readable, the management should lean toward the latter.

Financial analysts are important intermediaries in capital markets who help the efficiency of the markets by their forecasts and recommendations reports. They collect information from several sources including financial disclosures, conference calls, news outlets, as well as discussion with the firms' management, etc. (Clement, 1999; Gleason & Lee, 2003). The outcome of their work includes issuing earnings forecasts, growth prospects, target price, and buy/hold/sell recommendations (Schipper, 1991).

Literature shows that analyst forecast inaccuracy and the number of analysts following a firm are positively impacted by the level of complexity of the firm's financial disclosures (Rahman, 2019). Highly skilled management teams might prefer making their company's financial statements more complex, claiming skilled analysts should have no problem reading and processing these reports. Using extensive databases from IBES, CompStat, and Execucomp for 2010 to 2019, I show that, unlike what part of the literature shows, complexity is a function of analysts' coverage and forecast error and management ability is a less significant factor. No matter how skilled the management team is they should strive to lower the complexity of public companies' financial statements. This move is in their best interest since they rather have higher analyst coverage and lower forecast error for their firms.

# Maya Dancey

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## MSc Student, Health Systems

**Title of the project/presentation:** A Media Analysis of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Framing of Youth Mental Health in Ontario

## Biography:



Maya Dancey is a MSc in Health Systems student at the Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa, under the co-supervision of Dr. Tracey O'Sullivan (Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences) & Dr. Agnes Grudniewicz (Telfer School of Management). Her thesis topic focuses on the portrayal of youth mental health in the media throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Maya has been participating in scoping review projects with members of the EnRiCH Research Lab at the University of Ottawa since 2019. She is also currently working with an interdisciplinary research team from the University of Toronto on projects related to mental health services provided by family health teams in Ontario. Maya graduated from the University of Ottawa in 2018 with an Honours

Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences and a minor in Psychology. Her research interests include interdisciplinary health research, specifically in the areas of pediatric and youth health.

## **Presentation Abstract:**

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented event that has heavily disrupted the lives of Canadians. Governments took swift action to help prevent the pandemic's spread, including extensive closures throughout the country, and schools needing to move classes online. These disruptions affect youth's access to services to fulfill basic needs (e.g., social networks, shelter, primary caregiving) and routines, resulting in greater risk of mental health issues for this population. Throughout the pandemic, the public has relied on news media as a primary source for daily information regarding changes in healthcare provision, the economy, and public health guidelines.

Objectives: I am conducting a media analysis to understand: 1) how journalists portray, frame, and disseminate information about youth mental health in news articles during the COVID-19 pandemic; and 2) how the media portrays and identifies youth mental health supports and psychosocial services.

Methods: Using a discourse analysis, in my thesis I will examine how news media discourse portrays mental health, and the resulting intended or unintended outcomes. Data will be analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis methods as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006, 2019). News articles will be retrieved through the ProQuest Canadian Major Dailies database that were published between January 1 and August 31, 2020 in The Ottawa Citizen, The Windsor Star, or the Toronto Star.

Results: The results of this thesis will provide a better understanding of the psychosocial impacts on youth mental health and importance of psychosocial services in health emergency and disaster risk management.

Conclusion: Media portrayal and dissemination of information regarding youth mental health can influence perceptions and actions towards the development of specific mental health care and supports.

# Esra Ben Ismail

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**MSc Student, Health Systems**

**Title of the project/presentation:** IVR Technology Use by Patients with Health Failure: Utilization Patterns and Compliance.

**Biography:**



Esra Ben Ismail is a second year MSc. Health Systems student. She holds a bachelor's degree in science with an honors in biology from Carleton University. Esra's main research interests involve the use of technology in health care and investigating how technology would help evolve the health industry. Her masters research investigates the compliance use of interactive voice response (IVR) technology by patients with heart failure at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI). Not much is known about what type of patient IVR works best on which may be associated with the effectiveness of the technology. Esra's research aims to explore the characteristics of HF patients that result in an increase in

IVR compliance and a decrease in hospital service utilization.

**Presentation Abstract:**

Interactive voice response (IVR) is an automated telephony system that leverages existing telephone lines for monitoring patient recovery. Limited evidence exists on how IVR contributes to heart failure (HF) patient behavior compliance. It is important to minimize unnecessary HF related hospitalizations, as HF is the leading cause of cardiovascular morbidity, mortality, and health care use in Canada. This study aims to explore the pattern of IVR use by HF patients enrolled in the IVR program at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI). The aim of the study is to describe patient characteristics based on IVR patterns of use, as well as, investigate the different compliance behavior (i.e. medication compliance, diet/fluid restriction) and service utilization (i.e. hospital readmission) by the patients.

The sample used in the study consists of HF patients enrolled in the IVR program at the UOHI during the years 2010-2019. Data collection is done using the IVR system, implemented by UOHI which works using a specific algorithm protocol, calling patients 10 times in 6 months asking a list of predetermined questions. A quantitative approach will be used to analyze the data, focusing on the statistical relationship between patient IVR use, compliance behavior, and service utilization.

IVR has been found to be effective in promoting medication adherence but not in therapy behavior compliance due to lack of research. It is not known what type of patient IVR works best on, which may be helpful in utilizing the technology. This study aims to fill the gap by characterizing HF patients that IVR appeals to and investigating behavior compliance.

The increase in IVR use in remote patient monitoring will allow for a cheaper and more accessible form of at home recovery. IVR allows for early detection of deterioration and timely interventions, resulting in lower health care costs and hospitalization rates.



# THANK YOU

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announcing the  
winners at the *Fall  
Celebration* on  
November 6, 2020.**

**See you there!**