

SCHOLARLY SHOWCASE

Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy



Pengyu Zhu, Zining Wang, Renu Singh, and Xinying Tan. “China’s model of technology leapfrog: A case study of electric vehicle policies and the development of green technology.” *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 226 (2026): 116414.

Focus of Study

This study explores China’s technology leapfrogging model in the electric vehicle (EV) sector, analyzing how coordinated policy interventions transformed the country from a latecomer to the global leader in EVs (holding 58% of global sales by 2023). It identifies five key drivers of China’s EV strategy: energy security, climate goals, technological self-reliance, manufacturing capacity, and industrial transformation. The research traces the four-stage evolution of EV policies—demonstration projects (infancy), subsidy-driven growth (rapid expansion), subsidy phase-out and industrial restructuring (adjustment), and regulatory reinforcement with dual-credit policies (transformation)—and highlights how China integrated state guidance, R&D investment, domestic demand stimulation, and industrial ecosystem development to achieve leapfrogging, with a focus on core technologies like batteries.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers in emerging economies seeking green technology leapfrogging should adopt a phased, coordinated framework: launch targeted demonstration projects to test technology viability, use temporary financial incentives to scale market adoption, transition to market-oriented regulations (e.g., credit systems) to drive sustained innovation, and prioritize indigenous R&D in core components. Additionally, balancing openness to international collaboration with support for domestic firms can strengthen industrial competitiveness, while aligning policies with national strategic goals (e.g., energy security, climate targets) ensures long-term policy coherence.



Mede, Niels G., Viktoria Cologna, Sebastian Berger, ... **Tyrala, Michael**, and Ziqian Xia. “Public Communication about Science in 68 Countries: Global Evidence on How People Encounter and Engage with Information about Science.” *Science Communication* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study examines science information diets and communication behavior across 68 countries with 71,922 respondents, exploring cross-country differences and their associations with sociopolitical and economic conditions. It finds social media are the most used science information source in most countries, except those with democratic-corporatist media systems where news media dominate. Key patterns include lower outspokenness about science in collectivist societies, higher outspokenness among less educated populations, and limited digital media access correlating with participation in science-related public protests. The research also identifies GDP per capita and digital media access as key factors explaining variations in science information sources globally.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should tailor science communication strategies to regional media use patterns—prioritizing social media engagement in low-GDP and non-Western countries while supporting quality science journalism in nations with strong news media systems. Investing in museums and public science events can complement digital access gaps, and integrating science media literacy into education curricula can address misinformation risks, especially among less educated populations. Additionally, supporting scientists and journalists in regions with restricted academic or press freedom can safeguard public access to reliable science information.



Yingyu Huang, Shun Wa Tsang, Wai Hung Tsang, **King L. Chow**. “Mab2112 is required to promote cell proliferation in stylopods during early limb development.” *Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study uses conditional gene knockout models to explore Mab2112's role in early limb development. It finds Mab2112 is dynamically expressed in mouse forelimb buds (E10.5–12.5), with a critical function window of E9.5–10.5. Its deletion causes stylopod malformations (humerus shortening, missing deltoid tuberosity) and delayed endochondral ossification, due to reduced chondrocyte proliferation at E10.5 Policy .

Harini KANNAN, King L. CHOW. “Chemosensory Adaptations in *Caenorhabditis Males* during the Establishment of Androdioecy.” *Biology Letters* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study explores male chemosensory adaptations in *Caenorhabditis* during the transition from dioecy to androdioecy. It finds androdioecious males have heightened olfactory habituation and reduced mate exploration, while hermaphrodites produce less potent sex pheromones. Replacing the SRD-1 receptor's cytoplasmic domain reverts these traits, highlighting its key role in facilitating hermaphroditism.



James P. Evans, Davide Cassanmagnago, Tathagata Chatterji, Andrew Irvin, Benjamin Jance IV, Cathy Oke, Massamba Thioye, Gregory Patrick Trencher, Elvira Uyarra, and **Masaru Yarime**. “Grand challenges in sustainable cities: urban innovation for global climate and sustainability goals-from policy agenda to research needs.” *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities* 7 (2025): 1568701.

Focus of Study

This study explores urban innovation as a core strategy to address global climate and sustainability goals, examining its emergence as a key policy agenda and identifying critical research needs. It defines urban innovation as a place-based, systemic activity driven by cities to solve local challenges while contributing to global targets. The research highlights three central policy themes: governance (multilevel collaboration, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and experimental models like urban living labs), scaling (overcoming the “pilot paradox” through context-adaptive replication, cultural leverage, and innovative financing), and capacity building (skills development, data utilization, and cross-city learning networks). It also notes gaps, including underrepresentation of Global South contexts, undervaluation of informal and indigenous innovation, and limited research on “urban exnovation” (phasing out unsustainable technologies).

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should prioritize inclusive, context-sensitive governance for urban innovation, integrating formal and informal stakeholders. Deploy flexible financing (e.g., outcome-based contracts, blended climate finance) to scale successful solutions beyond pilots. Invest in digital infrastructure and cross-city knowledge-sharing networks to boost cities' analytical and adaptive capacities. Broaden innovation definitions to include frugal, grassroots, and exnovation strategies, ensuring alignment with local needs and global sustainability targets.

Veronica Qin Ting Li, **Masaru Yarime**, Vivi Antonopoulou, Henry Potts, and Carla-Leanne Washbourne. “Behavioural perspectives on personal health data sharing and app design: an international survey study.” *Data & Policy* 7 (2025): e66.

Focus of Study

This study explores factors influencing willingness to use personalised health apps and share sensitive health data, using the COM-B model and a survey of 2,322 respondents from London and Hong Kong. Key findings include that willingness is driven by data literacy, granular data control, comfort with sharing health/location data, health concerns, trust in medical expert advice (stronger than trust in AI-generated advice), and acceptance of data access by specific parties. Demographically, men are more willing to use health apps than women, and London respondents show greater willingness than those in Hong Kong. The research also highlights contextual differences, with Hong Kong participants more wary of data sharing with government agencies and private companies due to privacy and trust concerns.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should mandate granular data control features in health apps to empower users to manage data sharing. Co-create clear standards for AI-generated health advice to build public trust, with medical expert oversight. Enhance digital health literacy campaigns to clarify data use and privacy settings. Develop innovative governance models like data trusts for collective data management. Address gender-specific privacy risks in app design and enforcement. Strengthen data protection regulations to align with emerging technologies, particularly in regions with low institutional trust, and ensure transparency in data handling by public and private entities.

Miyana Yoshino, Benjamin Sadlek, **Masaru Yarime**, and Adnan Ali. “Knowledge absorption pathways for eco-innovation: an empirical analysis of small and medium-sized enterprises in the European Union.” *European Journal of Innovation Management* 28, no. 2 (2025): 426–453.

Focus of Study

This study explores the external knowledge absorption pathways that drive proactive eco-innovations (proactive-EIs) among SMEs in resource-intensive sectors of the EU, adopting a national innovation system (NIS) framework with micro-, meso-, and macro-level determinants. Using binary logistic regression on survey data of 6,188 SMEs, it finds that public environmental awareness (micro-level), national economic complexity (macro-level), and public sector R&D (macro-level) positively influence proactive-EI adoption. Conversely, external collaboration (meso-level) and intra-industry agglomeration (meso-level) have negative effects. The research addresses gaps in understanding external knowledge-based eco-innovation and heterogeneity across EU member states, focusing on collaborative, technology-intensive, and high-investment proactive-EIs linked to the circular economy.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen public environmental awareness campaigns to motivate SMEs' proactive-EI adoption. Increase public sector R&D investments targeted at resource-intensive sectors to provide accessible technical knowledge for eco-innovation. Leverage national economic complexity by supporting knowledge diffusion between high-tech and resource-intensive industries. Reorient meso-level policies: refine external collaboration frameworks to reduce coordination barriers for SMEs, and redesign agglomeration policies to avoid counterproductive competition in eco-innovation. Tailor interventions to EU member states' contextual differences to maximize the uptake of proactive-EIs and advance the circular economy.

Environmental Policy and Sustainability



Yatang Lin, Ziyang Chen, Ting Chen, Jin Wang. “The environmental cost of power outages: Evidence from Delhi.” *Journal of Public Economics* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores the environmental cost of power outages in Delhi, using high-frequency outage and air pollution data. It finds that outages increase hourly NO₂, NO, and PM10 concentrations by 0.4%, 1.3%, and 0.4% respectively, due to widespread use of polluting backup diesel generators. The research employs spatial DID and event-study methods to confirm causality, noting the environmental cost of outages exceeds private costs. It also evaluates Delhi’s outage penalty policy, showing significant welfare gains when environmental benefits are included.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should prioritize grid modernization and generation capacity investments to reduce outages. They should also promote clean backup energy (e.g., solar-battery systems) via subsidies, tighten diesel generator emissions regulations, and incorporate environmental costs into outage-related policy evaluations to enhance air quality and public welfare.



Jeffrey Chow, Tianle Liu, Coco Dijia Du, Rui Hu, and Xun Wu. “From research to policy recommendations: A scientometric case study of air quality management in the Greater Bay Area, China.” *Environmental Science and Policy* 165 (2025): 104025.

Focus of Study

This study uses scientometric meta-analysis to examine how institutional factors shape the role of scientific research in air quality policymaking in China’s Greater Bay Area (GBA), a region with distinct “One Country, Two Systems” governance (mainland China and Hong Kong). It analyzes 687 Chinese and English-language peer-reviewed articles (2000–2019) to explore funding sources, government co-authorship, and policy recommendations. The research finds that Chinese-language articles (focused on the broader GBA) have greater government involvement in funding and authorship, and tend to offer more cautious policy recommendations. In contrast, English-language articles (focused on Hong Kong) are less likely to involve government co-authors, more likely to propose new policies, but less critical of existing policies if funded by mainland or overseas governments.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should foster a balanced science-policy interface in the GBA by encouraging more transparent collaboration between researchers and government, while preserving academic independence to ensure diverse policy insights. Additionally, establishing formal mechanisms to evaluate post-implementation policy impacts (e.g., for air pollution regulations) and promoting data accessibility across the region can enhance the translation of scientific research into effective, evidence-based air quality management.



Mede, Niels G., Viktoria Cologna, Sebastian Berger, ... **Tyrala, Michael**, and Rolf A. Zwaan. “Perceptions of science, science communication, and climate change attitudes in 68 countries – the TISP dataset.” *Scientific Data* 12, no. 114 (2025).

Focus of Study

This study addresses the lack of robust global data on public perceptions of science by developing the TISP (Trust in Science and Science-Related Populism) dataset. It conducts a cross-sectional survey between November 2022 and August 2023, covering 68 countries and 71,922 valid participants, with the questionnaire translated into 37 languages. The research measures eight key constructs, including trust in science and scientists, science-related populist attitudes, perceptions of science’s societal role, science communication behaviors, climate change attitudes, and demographic characteristics. It features post-COVID-19 insights, representation of non-WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, Democratic) countries, and rigorous validation through pre-testing, attention checks, and psychometric assessments of core scales.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should leverage the TISP dataset to design targeted science communication strategies that address regional differences in public trust and populist attitudes toward science, while promoting open access to the dataset for researchers and educators worldwide. Additionally, integrating the dataset’s findings on climate change attitudes and media engagement into policy development can enhance public support for environmental initiatives and strengthen the science-society relationship.



Shiming Zheng, **Alex Jingwei He**, Yujie He “Authority Versus Competition: Intergovernmental Interactions and Subnational Policy Adoption in Climate Policy” *Review of Policy Research* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study investigates how intergovernmental interactions—formal authority interactions and informal competitive interactions—shape Chinese provincial governments’ climate policy adoption, using panel data from 31 provinces between 2003 and 2018. It constructs a two-dimensional analytical framework and finds that formal authority interactions (from central-municipal-provincial levels and interdepartmental collaboration) significantly promote policy adoption. Informal competitive interactions follow an inverted “N-shaped” trajectory (initial suppression, subsequent promotion, final suppression) with overall inhibitory effects, and they negatively moderate the positive impact of formal authority interactions, weakening and distorting policy adoption outcomes.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen the guiding role of formal authority interactions, such as optimizing central policy directives and interdepartmental coordination mechanisms. They should also rationalize informal competitive dynamics, align promotion incentives with climate policy goals, and establish formal learning channels to mitigate free-riding, ensuring intergovernmental interactions synergistically advance climate policy adoption.



Delina, L., Fuerzas, I., Dharmiasih, W., Tam, K. K-P., Dulay, M. J., **Ludovice, N.P.**, & Salamanca, A. "Climate Risks and Resilience in Southeast Asia's Culturally Significant Ricescapes." *Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding and Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific*. UNESCO, ICHCAP, IRCI, and IRDR (2025)

Focus of Study

UNESCO World Heritage ricescapes in Ifugao, Philippines and Bali, Indonesia face significant climate vulnerabilities from droughts and intense precipitation that reduce yields. Using mixed methods, this study examines how intangible cultural heritage—including community bonds, shared labor systems, and spiritual practices—strengthens resilience among rice farming communities. Findings reveal that social capital through cooperation and mutual support, alongside family networks and customary institutions, provides crucial intangible assets for coping with climate pressures while sustaining traditional practices. The research identifies transpersonal capacities shaped by physical, social, and spiritual environments as central to adaptive responses. Nine policy recommendations emerge: recognize intangible assets, support community-based traditional knowledge projects, facilitate knowledge exchange, empower local institutions, design disaster preparedness plans, improve government support, promote sustainable cultivation, invest in rural infrastructure, and encourage stakeholder collaboration to preserve indigenous rice farming traditions while building climate resilience.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should pursue culturally significant climate adaptation strategies for agricultural landscapes which integrate the recognition and strengthening of intangible assets—including community solidarity, traditional rituals, and indigenous knowledge systems—into formal heritage management frameworks, while simultaneously supporting community-based initiatives that sustain traditional knowledge through knowledge exchange platforms and empowered local institutions. In addition, governments should develop comprehensive support systems that balance formal disaster preparedness planning with informal community resilience mechanisms, invest in rural infrastructure that protects both ecological and cultural sustainability, and facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration that harmonizes local and national efforts in preserving indigenous rice farming traditions while building adaptive capacity to climate pressures.



Nicolo Paolo P Ludovice, Kira Matus, Stephane Redonnet, Xuan Zeng, Yawei Zhang, Ees Ther Loh, Yan Zhang, & Jeffrey Chow, "Towards a holistic and reflexive assessment of green buildings and technological landscapes in Hong Kong." *Energy Research & Social Science* 127 (2025): 104235.

Focus of Study

This study addresses the limitations of conventional green building technology selection models, which often prioritize technical and economic metrics while neglecting contextual nuances and stakeholder diversity. It develops a holistic and reflexive assessment framework that integrates technical, economic, environmental, and social criteria, and embeds perspectives of end-users and local regulators. Using Hong Kong as a case study—characterized by dense urban form, regulatory complexity, and subtropical climate—the framework is applied to evaluate a range of green building technologies (including insulation, paints, windows, lifts, and HVAC systems) across both retrofit and new construction scenarios. The findings demonstrate that context-attuned technology selection enhances technical viability, fosters social legitimacy, and accelerates adoption, transcending expert-driven models to offer an adaptive, user-centred approach.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers and urban planners should adopt the reflexive assessment framework to guide green building technology selection, ensuring alignment with local infrastructural, regulatory, and cultural conditions. Additionally, promoting stakeholder engagement—including end-users, industry partners, and regulators—in iterative evaluation processes can democratize decision-making and enhance the sustainability and social acceptability of technologies. For Hong Kong specifically, incentivizing the adoption of context-appropriate solutions (e.g., space-efficient insulation for retrofits, energy-efficient HVAC systems for high-rises) can advance decarbonization goals outlined in the Climate Action Plan 2050.



Social and Urban Policy



Bobo Hi-Po Lau, Eric Ngai-Yin Shum, Alex Pak-Ki Kwok, Ben Chi-Pun Liu, Alex Chi-Keung Chan, Rick Yiu-Cho Kwan, Steve Fu-Fai Fong, Gigi Lam, Chung-Kin Tsang, Daniel Dick-Man Leung, Johnson Chun-Sing Cheung, Jason Tak-Sang Chow, Paulina Pui-Yun Wong, **Stuart Gietel-Basten**. “Revealing the nuances of ‘Grey Digital Divide’ in Hong Kong: A latent profile analysis” *Plos One* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores Hong Kong’s post-pandemic “grey digital divide” using latent profile analysis (LPA) on 870 younger (18–54) and older (≥55) adults. It identifies three digital engagement profiles (Proficient, Intermediate, Novice), reveals significant intergenerational gaps, links socioeconomic status to profile membership, and finds profiles correlate with non-family social contact frequencies, aiming to inform targeted digital inclusivity interventions.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should prioritize grid modernization and Policymakers should design segmented support: subsidize devices for Novice, enhance skills training for Intermediate, and engage Proficient older adults as peer coaches. Expand community helpdesks and promote age-friendly tech design to narrow the divide while preserving offline options for non-users.



Li, Q., Wu, R., & **Zhu, P.** (2025). Quality or quantity of urban greenery: Which matters more to mental health? Evidence from housing prices in the Pearl River Delta. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 263, 105438.

Focus of Study

The study examines the relationship between urban green environments and mental well-being in Pearl River Delta, China, particularly about quality or quantity of urban greenery. The mediating roles of neighborhood ties and place attachment are studied. The results are that neighborhood ties and place attachment are important mediators between greenery and mental health; quality of greenery is more important than quantity. Interestingly, less wealthy populations enjoy better mental health improvements enabled by urban greenery, while neighborhood ties reduce the mental health benefits of greenery for the wealthy.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should improve the provision of quality green spaces in big cities. Attention should be paid to less privileged populations, such as those living in villages and public rental housing. It is important to implement mental health policies with integrated indicators for evaluating urban greenery among neighborhoods. Finally, the mediating factors of neighborhood ties and place attachment demonstrate that despite urban greenery different needs of different groups must be addressed, for example, facilities which can enable socialization and workout are essential for older populations.



Yan, Yifei, Alfred M. Wu, Biao Huang, and **Fangxin Yi**. “Policy Capacity Matters Differently Over Time: The Emergence and Persistence of Participatory Budgeting in China.” *Public Administration and Development* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores the emergence and long-term persistence of participatory budgeting (PB) in China’s Wenling County, challenging the conventional view that deliberative democratic practices can only thrive in liberal political environments. Utilizing Wu, Ramesh and Howlett’s policy capacity framework and data from interviews with local officials and stakeholders, the research analyzes the role of three core policy capacities—political, analytical, and operational—over time. It finds that strong political capacity (including elite political will and public participation willingness) was critical for PB’s initial launch in 2005. As political capacity waned in subsequent years, the gradual build-up of analytical capacity (specialized knowledge, data analysis, and stakeholder training) and operational capacity (fiscal resources, procedural standardization, and institutionalized policy tools) became pivotal to sustaining PB amid evolving institutional conditions. The Wenling case, with over two decades of PB practice, demonstrates how the relative importance of different policy capacities shifts across a policy’s lifecycle.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers seeking to initiate and sustain participatory governance reforms like PB should prioritize building political capacity (aligning elite vision and mobilizing public support) in the early stages. Additionally, investing in long-term analytical capacity (e.g., specialized training and data infrastructure) and operational capacity (e.g., standardized procedures and stable fiscal support) can enhance reform resilience, ensuring continuity even as initial political enthusiasm diminishes. For non-Western and developing contexts, institutionalizing these technical capacities can help overcome the vulnerability of reforms to political turnover.

Zhang, C., Meng, M., **Yi, F.**, Chen, Z. et al. Wavelength-specific urban nighttime light modulates expressed sentiment across China. *Nature Cities* (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44284-025-00384-x>

Focus of Study

This study demonstrates that artificial light at night (ALAN) has wavelength-specific effects on expressed sentiment across Chinese cities. Using multispectral satellite data and 4.2 million geotagged Weibo posts, it finds that emotional impacts vary by spectral composition, exposure distance, season, and nighttime hour. Importantly, simulations show that reducing brightness alone cannot fundamentally mitigate negative sentiment risk. Instead, spectral optimization, particularly reducing blue and green wavelengths, plays a decisive role. The combined strategy of brightness reduction and color-temperature adjustment achieves an average 90% reduction in negative sentiment risk, highlighting the importance of multidimensional lighting governance.

Policy Recommendations

These findings generate four key policy implications. First, urban lighting regulations should move beyond intensity-based standards and incorporate spectral indicators, such as limits on blue-light ratios or the spectral band. Second, cities should adopt spatially targeted, risk-based lighting controls informed by sentiment-risk mapping. Third, nighttime lighting should be integrated into public health and urban resilience frameworks, recognizing emotional well-being as a governance objective. Fourth, municipalities should promote adaptive and intelligent lighting systems capable of dynamically adjusting both brightness and spectral composition. Together, these measures support a shift toward human-centered, evidence-based urban nighttime governance.



Alex Jingwei He, Ling Zhu, Jiwei Qian. “Policy design and policy feedback in welfare retrenchment: A survey experiment in China.” *Policy Studies Journal* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores how different policy designs and individual proximity to reform shape heterogeneous feedback effects in China’s welfare retrenchment, using a 2020 survey experiment in Guangdong Province targeting the proposed medical savings account reform. Bridging policy feedback and policy design theories, it examines two designs—one preserving individual material self-interest (e.g., family benefit coverage) and the other emphasizing sociotropic gains (e.g., broader healthcare protection). The research finds moderate de facto retrenchment triggers public opposition, with policy designs and individuals’ past experiences with existing health insurance (e.g., account usage frequency) driving divergent attitudinal and behavioral responses.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should adopt policy designs preserving individuals’ material interests (e.g., family benefit coverage) to mitigate opposition. They should also consider citizens’ policy proximity (e.g., account usage frequency) when formulating and communicating welfare retrenchment reforms.

Liu Kai, **He Jingwei**. “Policy Synergy in Health Reform: How Does the Coordinated Reform of Health Insurance, Health Services and Pharmaceuticals Affect Healthcare Costs?” *Jilin University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study combines medical policy text data (nearly 460,000 municipal-level documents) with micro survey data from the China Family Panel Studies (CFPS) to explore how the policy synergy of “three medical collaborations” (medical insurance, medical services, and pharmaceuticals) affects personal out-of-pocket medical expenses. It classifies policies into expansion-oriented (e.g., improving medical insurance benefits, strengthening grassroots medical institutions) and constraint-oriented (e.g., DRG/DIP payment reforms, centralized drug procurement), finding that intra-system synergy between medical insurance expansion and constraint policies, as well as inter-system synergy across the three medical fields, significantly reduce such expenses, while a single medical insurance expansion policy without corresponding collaborative policies increases personal out-of-pocket medical spending.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen holistic governance, establish a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism, and give full play to the leverage role of medical insurance in resource allocation to promote synergistic development of medical insurance, medical services, and pharmaceuticals.

Qiang Wang, **Alex Jingwei He** “Central–local relations, accountability, and defensive administration: unraveling the puzzling shrinkage of China’s urban social safety net” *Journal of Social Policy* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study employs a principal-agent framework and difference-in-differences (DID) strategy, drawing on unique city-level panel data (2009–2019) covering 274 prefectural cities to unravel the puzzling shrinkage of China’s urban Dibao program. It finds that upper-level discipline inspections significantly reduce Dibao coverage, an effect reinforced by local anti-corruption intensity (measured by duty-related crimes per 10,000 public personnel). Local governments, driven by blame avoidance, adopt defensive administration—tightening eligibility screening and forcing unwarranted exits—leading to distorted welfare provision that unjustly excludes numerous deserving recipients.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen informational capacity (e.g., big data platforms) to mitigate principal-agent information asymmetry, balance central regulatory oversight with local implementation flexibility, and avoid campaign-style enforcement to curb defensive behaviors, ensuring social assistance programs like Dibao deliver targeted, equitable support.

Qian Zhang, Julia Shu-Huah Wang, **Alex Jingwei He**, Chenhong Peng, Aya Abe, Inhoe Ku, Irene Y.H. Ng, Xi Zhao “Providing financial protection in health for low-income populations: a comparison of health financing designs in East Asia” *International Journal for Equity in Health* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study comparatively explores health financing designs (SHI and MFA) and financial protection outcomes for low-income populations across six East Asian societies. Using the model family approach and simulating lung cancer-related catastrophic spending, it finds Taiwan and Hong Kong’s inclusive models offer the strongest protection, while mainland China’s minimalist model provides limited benefits, with near-poor groups facing higher catastrophic spending risks.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should expand MFA coverage and generosity, prioritize protection for near-poor groups, and reference inclusive models to optimize SHI-MFA coordination, enhancing equitable financial protection in health.



Wing Shan Kan, **Raul P. Lejano**, and Yu Cheung Wong. “Social work-led case management in Hong Kong: A relational analysis.” *International Social Work* (2025).

Focus of Study

The study evaluates factors that foster and impede interprofessional interaction within multidisciplinary teams for case management of older adults in Hong Kong. The research employs a conceptual framework based on Lejano and Kan's relational theory.

Policy Recommendations

The research highlights the need for in-service training for multiple professionals (social workers, nurses, PT/OT specialists) in interprofessional coordination, along with other institutional support for multidisciplinary teams.



Meerwijk, Maurits Bastiaan, and **Nicolo Paolo P. Ludovice**. “Health Messaging in the Philippines: Guest Editors’ Introduction.” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 73, no. 4 (2025): 413-420.

Focus of Study

This introduction traces the historical evolution of health messaging in the Philippines, from early 20th-century colonial “medical propaganda” to contemporary pandemic responses. It argues that health messaging has long served as a tool of persuasion and governance, intertwining communication, politics, and medicine by leveraging visual technologies and simplified narratives to normalize biomedical authority. The authors examine key continuities and tensions across eras—including colonial campaigns under American and Japanese rule, postcolonial developmentalist initiatives (e.g., the Marcos regime’s Nutribun program), and modern digital-era efforts—highlighting how such messaging has both advanced public health and legitimated power, while often obscuring complex realities like structural inequalities. The special issue’s contributing essays explore these dynamics through case studies on leprosy eradication, wartime propaganda, nutritional policy, social medicine narratives, and Covid-19 communication strategies.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers and public health practitioners should move beyond overreliance on simplified, spectacle-driven health messaging and instead cultivate a broader “epistemic repertoire” that acknowledges complexity, structural determinants of health, and diverse ways of knowing. Additionally, building trust in health communication requires addressing historical legacies of power imbalances and ensuring transparency, while countering misinformation by fostering critical health literacy rather than merely disseminating simplified directives.

Ludovice, **Nicolo Paolo P.** & Francisco Jayme Paolo Guiang. “‘More Calories, More Protein, More Progress’: The Nutribun and the Politics of Nostalgia of the Marcos Regime.” *Philippine Studies: Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints* 73, no. 4 (2025): 481-512.

Focus of Study

This study examines the Nutribun, a ready-to-eat meal developed by a United States Agency for International Development program, which became tied to Ferdinand E. Marcos when his administration claimed credit for its nationwide distribution through feeding programs. His children later used nostalgia for the Nutribun to cast the Marcos years positively, aiding their political rise. This study reframes nostalgia politics by tracing the Nutribun’s changing political and emotional meanings. It shows how the bun functioned as a symbol for reimagining authoritarian rule as a time of prosperity and national pride, and how nostalgic health messages were used to deflect attention from present problems. The study links public health communication, nutrition policy, and political memory to show nostalgia’s role in shaping historical narratives.

Policy Recommendations

Nutrition programs must be designed with transparent institutional frameworks that prevent political capture and ensure accountability through independent monitoring bodies, while simultaneously addressing the structural determinants of malnutrition rather than relying on supplementary feeding alone. Moreover, public health communication strategies should incorporate critical historical literacy components that equip citizens to distinguish between evidence-based health interventions and nostalgic political narratives, thereby strengthening democratic engagement with health policy while countering the manipulation of collective memory for partisan ends.



Economic Policy



Guillaume Marois, **Stuart Gietel-Basten**, Wolfgang Lutz “The Demographic Race between India and China.” *Population Research and Policy Review* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study explores whether India’s surpassing China as the world’s most populous country will lead to economic overtaking, using multi-dimensional demographic projections (age, sex, education, labor force participation) and the productivity-weighted labor force (PWLF) indicator. It finds China retains an economic edge for most of the next half-century due to better education and female labor force participation, while India’s potential depends on investing in these areas.

Policy Recommendations

India should boost educational access and female labor force participation. China should continue advancing education and adapt to aging via raising retirement age and automation, with both prioritizing human capital for long-term economic success.

Shuang Chen, **Stuart Gietel-Basten**. “Only Children and Low Family Size Ideals: Did the One-Child Policy Create a ‘Low-Fertility Trap’ in China?” *European Journal of Population* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study examines whether growing up as an only child reduces fertility ideals in urban China, using a fuzzy regression discontinuity design and China’s 1980 one-child policy as an exogenous shock. Analyzing data from the Chinese General Social Survey, it finds that being an only child significantly lowers the ideal number of children and the likelihood of desiring two or more, supporting the “Low-Fertility Trap” hypothesis.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should move beyond simplistic fertility incentives and prioritize institutional reforms (e.g., hukou, pension) to address population aging. They should also design holistic policies addressing young people’s family-formation barriers to avoid further fertility declines.



Yatang Lin, Ziyang Chen, Ting Chen, Jin Wang. “Building tall, falling short: An empirical assessment of Chinese skyscrapers.” *Journal of Urban Economics* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores the drivers and economic efficiency of state-led urbanization via China’s skyscraper development (2006–2014). It finds local governments offer average 40.1% land price discounts to commercial skyscraper developers, motivated by officials’ career incentives and the central government’s monetary easing. Using spatial DID and event study methods, it reveals unsubsidized skyscrapers generate localized spillovers (land price hikes, new businesses), while subsidized ones show negligible effects 5–10 years post-completion due to poor locations, unreliable developers, and inadequate infrastructure.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should avoid over-reliance on skyscraper subsidies for urban growth. They need to prioritize local conditions (e.g., location, infrastructure) when approving projects, strengthen oversight of developer qualifications, and increase complementary public investments. This ensures state-led urbanization initiatives deliver sustainable economic returns and avoid exacerbating local debt risks.



Chen, Xiaodong, Ding Li, and Pengyu Zhu. "Long-term impacts of historical education policy on wages in China: insights on over-education." *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications* 12, no. 959 (2025).

Focus of Study

This study examines the long-term impact of China's historical Imperial Examination System (IES, 1371–1905) on contemporary workers' wages, using Jinshi density (highest IES attainment) as a proxy. Employing 2SLS analysis with instrumental variables (access to study materials via river proximity to bamboo/pine forests, and transportation accessibility via the Grand Canal/Ming Courier Stations), it finds that a 1% increase in Jinshi density per 10,000 people raises current wages by 7.9–13.1% (equivalent to 1030–1710 CNY in 2004). The effects are stronger in labor-intensive and high-technology firms, and operate through two key channels: human capital (improved education levels, degree/technical title structures) and social capital (enhanced innovation, favorable firm capital structures, talent migration attraction). Additionally, the IES positively influences fringe benefits (welfare, medical insurance) and public services (hospitals, transportation).

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should leverage the persistent cultural emphasis on education shaped by the IES to further enhance human capital development. Invest in educational infrastructure and technical training programs in regions with historical IES success, as these areas exhibit stronger wage and productivity dividends. Strengthen social welfare and public service provision in these regions to amplify the positive spillover effects of accumulated human and social capital. Additionally, recognize and preserve the cultural value of historical education systems to sustain long-term economic and social benefits.

