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# INSEAD Insights: November 2023 Research Picks



By [Lily Fang](#) , INSEAD

**Recent findings on human morality, publishing cycles, manufacturing in low-income markets, virtual assessments in acute care services and sarcasm.**

Fresh research by INSEAD faculty explores various aspects of human behaviour and decision-making, including the universality of puritanism, the dynamics of publication cycles, approaches to incentivising health product manufacturing, the impact of predictive technology on acute care operations, and the effects of sarcasm on perspective-taking.

## **1. Are we all implicit puritans?**

Earlier research suggests that Americans inherently value work and hold negative implicit views on sexual promiscuity due to their country's history. However, recent self-replication studies challenge this idea. **Warren Tierney**, [Wilson Cyrus-Lai](#) and [Eric Luis Uhlmann](#), all from INSEAD, find that puritanical work-related judgments are not exclusive to Americans and may reflect a general moralisation of work across various cultures.

The results suggest a dual-process view of cultural change and stability in puritan morality, indicating that implicit cultural evolution may lag behind explicit change, even in non-traditional cultures. In other words, puritanism might be universally present in human morality, though it might be hidden for some cultures and individuals.

[Read the full paper](#)

## **2. How information providers decide when to release their content**

Longer publication cycles can save money, but may result in less timely and less valuable information. In their research, [Lin Chen](#) and [Guillaume Roels](#), both from INSEAD, used a game theory model to see how firms should decide when to publish and at what price. Their findings show that even if firms start out on the same schedule, they end up publishing at different times. Lower fixed costs encourage shorter publication cycles, but they also increase competition, causing firms to publish even further apart.

If publishers have unique content, digitalisation encourages them to publish independently. Being the first to publish frequently has benefits, so this analysis suggests that publishers should proactively embrace digitalisation and adjust publication schedules accordingly.

[Read the working paper](#)

## **3. Increasing the supply of health products in underserved regions**

Health product manufacturers must be encouraged to expand production and distribution capacity in low- and middle-income countries that have limited payment capacity and higher demand risks. INSEAD's [Prashant Yadav](#) and his co-authors\* explore the effectiveness of new incentive methods being introduced by development finance institutions and philanthropies to address this issue.

Examining different scenarios, the study finds that the choice of approach depends on factors like payment capacity and budget. For instance, a sales subsidy is effective when payment capacity is very low, a total-capacity subsidy is preferable when payment capacity is low, and that other scenarios lead to nuanced choices.

*\*Burak Kazaz from Syracuse University and Scott Webster from Arizona State University*

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#### **4. Can predictive technology help improve acute care operations?**

This paper examines the impact of adopting virtual triage in acute care services, focusing on the challenges of patients' self-triage accuracy, which leads to overcrowding in emergency departments. Recent advances in predictive technology have introduced virtual triage tools that offer quick, cost-effective, and potentially more accurate triage recommendations.

[Jiatao Ding](#), [Michael Freeman](#) and [Sameer Hasija](#), all from INSEAD, developed a model to assess how virtual triage affects patient behaviour and system performance. Their analysis reveals a trade-off between information quality and patient compliance with virtual triage recommendations.

[Read the working paper](#)

#### **5. Why receiving sarcasm improves perspective-taking**

This study investigates whether sarcasm can actually help people better understand a speaker's point of view, even though sarcasm typically involves saying things that contradict the actual point. [Li Huang](#) from INSEAD and Adam Galinsky from Columbia University introduce the theoretical SHARP model, which explains how sarcasm can make recipients more motivated and mentally prepared to see things from the speaker's perspective.

Drawing on insights from psychology and sociology, the study suggests that sarcasm triggers two factors that precede perspective-taking: deliberate thinking and open-mindedness. It also discusses three factors that could diminish the positive impact of sarcasm, possibly even making it counterproductive.

[Read the full paper](#)

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