Editorial: Digital banking governance, terrorism prevention policies, French New Public Management, digital resilience, smart city, and organisation trust

Since its establishment in 1990, the Hong Kong Public Administration Association (HKPAA) has been committed to promoting and enhancing the quality of research and practice of public sector management in Hong Kong and the broader region. It provides a forum for the identification and discussion of important issues in public administration and management, collaborating with local universities and overseas counterpart organisations to spark interest in the pursuit of best practices in public services and emerging themes through regular dinner talks, seminars, and conferences featuring renowned leaders from both public and private sectors.

The PAP journal was first published in print in 1992. Since 2018, it has been published online in open access on the Emerald Insight Platform. Currently, the Journal publishes three issues annually, including at least one special issue and around twenty-five articles per year. PAP has gained greater popularity and attracted large number of paper submissions. Since 1 January 2026, over 350 manuscripts have been received, and this figure should reach 600 by the end of 2026. Moreover, PAP has gained a 5-year Journal Impact Factor (JIF) of 1.7 (Clarivate), 257 Web of Science citations and a CiteScore of 2.9 (2026), and in Q2 under the category of Political Science.

In summary, PAP is abstracted and indexed by: Scopus, Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), CrossRef, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), EBSCO Discovery Service, Google Scholar, Health Research Premium Collection (ProQuest), Healthcare Administration Database (ProQuest), ProQuest Central, ProQuest Central Basic (Korea), ProQuest Central Essentials, ProQuest Central Student, Publicly Available Content Database (ProQuest), Summons (ProQuest), WorldCat, and The British Library. Academics and practitioners in public administration, management, public policy, and related fields are encouraged to contribute papers to this journal.

Summary of articles

This second issue of 2026 features eight articles spanning public administration, policy, governance, and organisational behaviour in public sector settings. The comparative analysis of digital banking regulatory governance across eight Asian jurisdictions examines how tailored licensing frameworks align with financial inclusion and market dynamics. The study on terrorism prevention in ten fast-growing countries adopts unit root tests to show that temporary terrorism shocks reflect effective anti-terrorism policy implementation. The critical analysis of French New Public Management reforms proposes a framework to explain why corporatisation yields uneven outcomes across sectors. Research on Finnish governance networks identifies institutionalised public-private collaboration as key to enhancing digital resilience under hybrid threats and economic uncertainty. The study on organisational readiness in Indonesian local government finds that gaps in innovation, resource, and strategic readiness constrain smart city programme implementation. The South Korean nurse survey shows that three-shift work raises turnover intention, with payment rewards failing to moderate this relationship. The Hong Kong study on organisational trust verifies that trust in

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supervisors and institutions shapes work-from-home effectiveness and job satisfaction through employee well-being and engagement. Finally, the Iranian Parliament study develops a five-type typology of legislative inaction to explain why public participation tools have not been adopted in the legislative process.

The following provides an overview of the key themes and contributions of these eight articles.

The first article, "A comparative analysis of regulatory governance of digital banking in Asia: licensing frameworks, financial inclusion, and market dynamics" by Sau-wai Law, explores the digital banking regulatory landscape in Asia, focusing on how tailored licensing frameworks promote financial inclusion and respond to specific market demands, while also examining the role of technology in future regulations. Using a comparative analysis of eight Asian jurisdictions including Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Taiwan, South Korea, Pakistan, and Japan, the study reviews regulatory requirements for digital-only banks, assesses market penetration, and details the operational status of licensed entities as of 2025. The findings highlight three critical implications: the deep technological dependencies of digital banks, shifting consumer-bank relationships, and new accountability paradigms for technology-only banking operations. The paper offers timely comparative insights for regulators, industry stakeholders, and researchers studying Asia's rapidly evolving financial ecosystem and its divergence from Western regulatory approaches.

The second article, "Effectiveness of public policies in preventing terrorism in ten fast-growing countries" by Ahmet Keser, Mehmet Vahit Eren, and Ibrahim Cutcu, assesses the effectiveness of public policies in preventing terrorism across ten fast-growing countries: Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, South Korea, and Türkiye. Using annual data from 2002 to 2021, the analysis applies unit root tests to determine whether the effects of anti-terrorism policies are permanent or temporary. The findings show that the terrorism variable is largely stationary across these countries, indicating that shocks from terrorist incidents tend to be temporary — a sign that anti-terrorism policies may be working effectively. Specifically, stationarity was observed in several individual countries at varying significance levels, and the overall panel results were statistically significant. The study fills a gap in literature by examining the stationarity of terrorism data and recommends consistent policy implementation, stronger international cooperation, and coordinated efforts to sustain these outcomes.

The third article, "New Public Management and corporatization in the French public sector: a critical analysis" by Daniel Simonet, Marie-France Waxin, and Omar Belkhodja, critically examines New Public Management (NPM) reforms in the French public sector, focusing on privatizations, target-based controls, and corporatization, and explains why outcomes vary across sectors, especially in healthcare. Using a theory-driven framework, the Reform-Cycle & Sector-Mechanism Fit (RCSMF) model, the study conducts a structured synthesis of peer-reviewed studies and official reports from 1990 to 2024. The findings show that while service delivery improved in some areas such as airports and telecommunications, NPM-driven corporatization led to higher operational costs, greater inequity, and declining quality in healthcare, water management, highways, and education. Performance metrics were often manipulated, market tools widened urban-rural gaps, and many quick-fix NPM practices were later reversed. French reforms followed a hybrid path of selective NPM adoption combined with strong state oversight, producing differentiated outcomes rather than a uniform shift toward marketization.

The fourth article, "How the Finnish governance networks enhance digital resilience under hybrid threats and economic uncertainty?" by Jukka Keinänen, studies how Finnish governance networks enhance digital resilience amid digital transformation, hybrid threats, and economic uncertainty. Drawing on 36 interviews with public-sector actors, NGOs, and SMEs in trade and economic governance, the research explores how multi-level governance, institutional coordination, and public-private collaboration shape adaptive and proactive resilience strategies. The findings show that governance resilience depends on institutional coordination, regulatory adaptability, and strategic foresight. Digital transformation requires aligning governance structures across global to regional levels. Hybrid threats and economic dependencies call for proactive risk management through scenario planning, resilience audits, and foresight practices. Public-private collaboration is most effective when institutionalised through structured dialogue, shared data, and joint investment, rather than ad hoc initiatives.

The fifth article is “Organizational readiness in local government for Smart City Program in Indonesia” by Ali Roziqin, Muhammad Kamil, Shannaz Mutiara Deniar, and Rifki Muhammad Bintang. It investigates the organizational readiness in local government for Indonesia’s Smart City Program, a strategic initiative aimed at promoting digital transformation. Using an exploratory qualitative approach in Malang City, East Java, data were collected from observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and official documents. The findings confirm that organizational readiness is a prerequisite for successful digital transformation and innovation in city governance. However, key aspects such as innovation readiness, resource readiness, strategic readiness, and a participatory and collaborative mindset were not fully met. The study suggests that greater organizational maturity could enhance the program’s impact. Its originality lies in providing a comprehensive analysis of how organizational readiness can optimize smart city initiatives at the local level.

The sixth article “Does payment reward moderate the relationship between three-shift work and turnover intention of nurses in South Korea?” by Sungchan Kim and Soyoung Park, explores whether three-shift work increases turnover intention among nurses in South Korea and whether payment reward moderates that relationship, based on the job demands-resources model. Using survey data from a large hospital in 2022 and OLS regression analysis, the findings show that nurses working three shifts report higher turnover intention. However, payment reward does not significantly weaken this relationship, suggesting that financial compensation alone is insufficient to retain three-shift nurses. While these nurses are essential for 24-hour care, they face physical, mental, and social challenges from their work schedules. The study concludes that hospitals need to consider other retention programs beyond payment rewards to motivate and keep three-shift nurses.

The seventh article “The impact of organisational trust on work-from-home experience and work outcomes: a study of the Hong Kong workforce” by San Yin-wah Lee, examines how organisational trust influences the work-from-home experience and work outcomes of Hong Kong employees, a context reshaped by the COVID-19 pandemic. Using survey data from 455 respondents and analysed through structural equation modelling, the research finds that organisational trust, comprising trust in the supervisor and the institution, significantly affects employee engagement both directly and indirectly, with the indirect effect mediated solely through employee well-being. Notably, trust in a supervisor has a stronger influence on well-being, while trust in the institution more strongly predicts engagement. Employee engagement, in turn, directly enhances job satisfaction. The study fills a gap in understanding remote work in Hong Kong, contributes theoretically by linking trust with WFH experiences and outcomes, and introduces validated instruments for measuring trust and WFH readiness for future research and practice.

The eighth article is “Why the Iranian Parliament has not adopted public participation tools in the legislative process?” by Hassan Danaeefard, Hossein Babaei Mojarad, Seyed Hossein Kazemi, Jafar Zinatbakhsh, and Mehdi Khosravi. It investigates why the Iranian Parliament has not adopted mechanisms for public participation in its legislative process. Using a qualitative inductive design with 23 semi-structured interviews of key stakeholders, the research identifies a typology of legislative inaction comprising five themes: calculated inaction (preserving legislative power and viewing lawmaking as too complex for public input); ideological inaction (paternalistic governance and protecting revolutionary values); imposed inaction (restrictive regulations and media narratives enforcing exclusivity); reluctant inaction (systemic deficiencies such as weak public demand and institutional incentives); and inadvertent inaction (cognitive biases, risk aversion, and unconscious institutional habits). The study offers a comprehensive framework for understanding legislative inaction in public participation.

I wish to thank all the authors for contributing their papers to this issue and the reviewers for their insightful and constructive comments, which have strengthened the quality of these papers. Finally, I thank Emerald and our dedicated editorial team, and the members of both the Asia Pacific Editorial Board and International Editorial Advisory Board for their unwavering support in making the successful publication of this issue possible. We hope this collection of papers will advance scholarly discourse and practical understanding in various critical areas such as digital banking governance, terrorism prevention policies, French New Public Management, digital resilience, smart city, and organisation trust, offering value to policy makers, scholars, and practitioners across Asia, Europe, and beyond.

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About the Editor-in-Chief

Professor Peter K.W. Fong, PhD (New York University), is President of Hong Kong Public Administration Association and Editor-in-Chief of PAP Journal. He teaches strategic management and supervises DBA students' dissertations of the University of Wales TSD. He also serves as Principal Consultant of the International Chamber of Sustainable Development and holds memberships of HK Institute of Planners & Planning Institute Australia. He was a Teaching Fellow of Judge Business School, University of Cambridge; Visiting Scholar, Department of Urban Studies & Planning, MIT; Founding Director of EMBA programme, HKU Business School; Founding Director, Centre for Executive Development, HKU SPACE; Associate Professor, Department of Urban Planning and Urban Design, HKU; Executive Vice President of City University of Macau; Honorary Professor, China Training Centre for Senior Civil Servants in Beijing; Studies Director, Civil Service Training & Development Institute, HKSAR Government. He was appointed as Advisory/Visiting Professors by Tongji, Tsinghua, Renmin, and Tianjin universities in Mainland China, and Chinese University of HK and HK Polytechnic University. He was Consultants of the World Bank and Delta Asia Bank. Peter K.W. Fong can be contacted at: fongpeter@netvigator.com