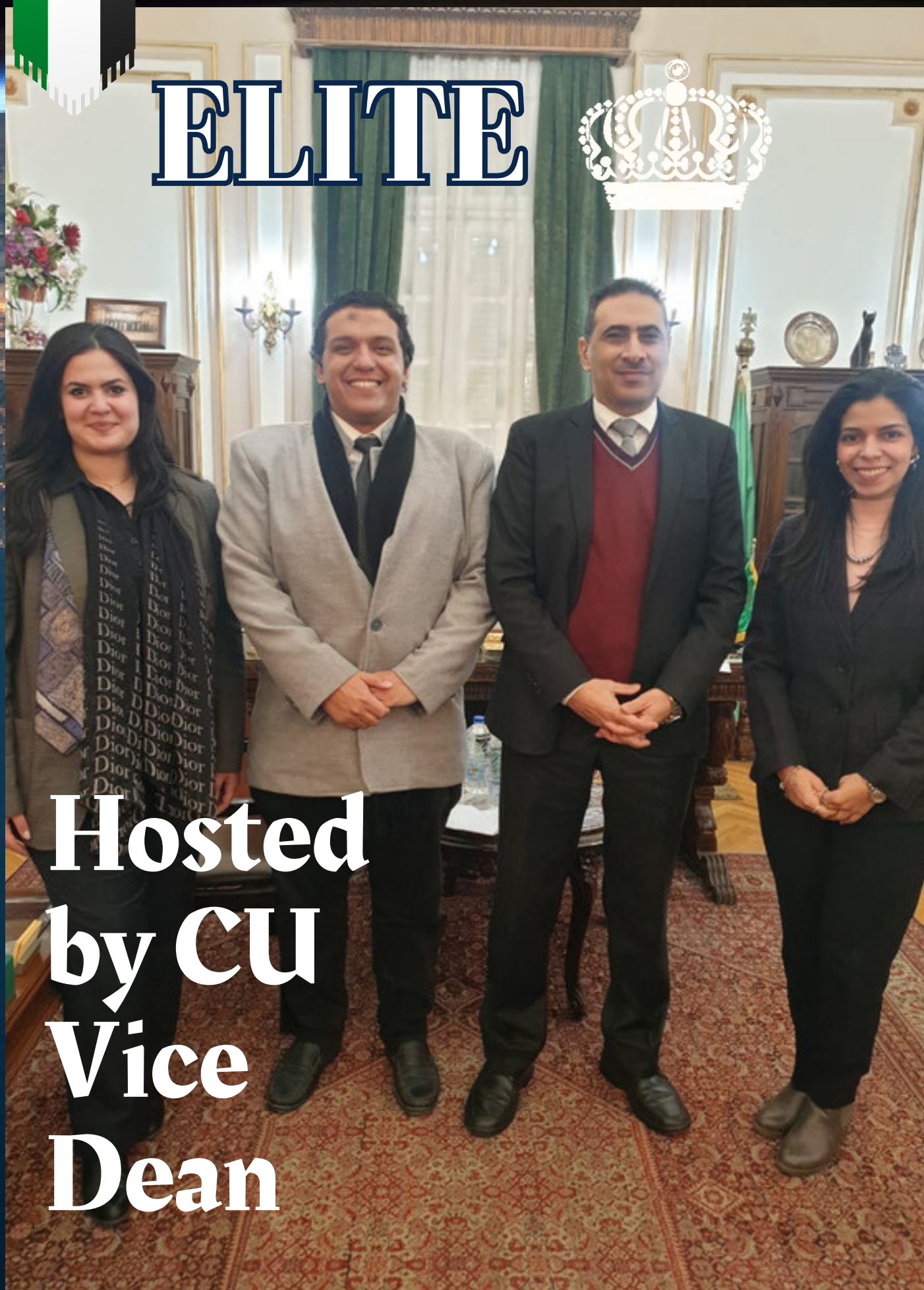




ELITE



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Dr. Ramy Magdy Ahmed

ELITE



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FEPS, WHERE ELITES ARE MADE

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Our dear present reader and who will browse our issues when we become a thing of the past, you may be confused reading that our “issue 61” was issued in November 2023, while the Hijri date is Shaban 1445, which parallels February 2024. What you read is correct, the “November 2023” issue was published in Shaban 1445 /February. 2024, and the reason for this is that we do not commit to offer issues strictly month after another, and due to our delay in some months. Also, our desire to produce content that expresses us and the passion of our authors liberates us from submitting to the sword of time. Therefore, dear reader, we always advise you to refer to the Hijri month if you are interested in knowing the exact date of the issue. Our sincere regards.

The Editor in Chief

Clarification for readers

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A SPECIAL INTERVIEW WITH: PROF. DR. MAHMOUD AL-SAID CU VICE PRESIDENT AND FORMER FEPS DEAN

DR. RAMY MAGDY - Ms. CAROLINE SHERIEF- ROSANNE EL FAYED - SALMA ELBUKHARY, NOOR KHALED

We start the sixth year of our magazine with an interview of an exceptional person on both an academic and professional level alongside their pivotal role in the journey of our magazine. Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Al Said, Vice President of Cairo University for postgraduate affairs and scientific research. He was our Faculty's - Faculty of Economics and Political Science - Dean for nearly six years and was the Vice Dean for Education and Students' Affairs before that. He was also the first chairman of our magazine's board of directors. He was ranked in the top 2% of the World's Best Scientists according to Stanford as he is a distinguished statistician with lead research in the field of quality control. He is an alumnus of FEPS and its loyal son and has strong Egyptian roots and an Alexandrian identity.

1- In the beginning? How did your relationship start with Faculty of Economics and Political Science and why did you choose it?

There is a story behind choosing FEPS; when I was in my senior year of secondary school, I was in the "Mathematics Section" and the direction of the students of that section was always engineering and faculties that are mathematics related; my first choice was the Faculty of Engineering in Alexandria University, but with a consultation from a dear friend of mine in the "Literary Section," he convinced me to write FEPS as my second choice while ranking my choices, and I did take his advice. I did not get accepted in the Faculty of Engineering, missing it by half a mark. I was reluctant to join FEPS at first, but I got attached to it on the first day. It has some kind of magic about it, anyone who passed it in their lifetime, would feel belonging to this institution. After the first year, I felt that it was the right place for me, especially when I happened upon the Statistics Department, which includes my favorite subjects such as mathematics and others, which encouraged me to stay and join the department.

2- Why did you choose the Statistics Department and how does it help in shaping personalities?

My choice of the Department of Statistics was due to my scientific background before enrolling in university, which was related to the department in terms of mathematics, etc., and therefore my scientific inclinations were the motivation behind my choice to join this department. By studying precise numbers and equations, how one thinks, changes to be more disciplined, and as a result you become disciplined in work, appointments, and others. I would like to add that statistic serves the rest of the existing sciences, so they depend on statistics and statistical reports in one way or another, and even within the research work itself, we find that it depends on data and access to the results of empirical analysis, for example. This gave me the opportunity to learn about the rest of these sciences and their principles, especially with regard to the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, that is, the principles of economics, political science, and public administration. Fortunately, I was in a department that was connected to the rest of the other departments.





As for my influence on the department, it came in later after my return from the United States, where I obtained my PhD, which was on a subject that did not exist in the department - "statistical control of production quality." Being the only one to obtain a PhD in this field, I transferred it to the faculty's Department of Statistics and thus a new field began to form, and many students joined it, such as: Dr. Nesma Saleh, Dr. Aya Anas and other distinguished students. During my later work as Dean and Vice Dean for Student Affairs, I was faced with work matters related to the Department of Statistics and the rest of the other departments, and I was determined not to discriminate between the departments despite my affiliation with the Department of Statistics. This was reflected in my keenness in my work as Dean or Vice Dean of the Faculty not to discriminate and to deal with all departments neutrally. This is also what I do as Vice President of Cairo University in not being biased towards the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at the expense of other faculties despite my loyalty to FEPS.

3-How were your relationships with the professors and what are incidents you distinctly remember?

It is interesting that my greatest influence from the professors was a professor of political science, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Youssef, despite being in the Statistics Department. In the first year, Dr. Ahmed Youssef explained the principles of political science in a way that I have never witnessed in the field of teaching social sciences. It was an easy, simple, and distinct way to convey information, and I still remember him explaining the difference between the federal and confederal systems in the form of a table. I consider him a genius in teaching, aside from the fact that he is a great scholar whom we are very proud of. There is also Dr. Hanaa Khairuddin, may God have mercy on her soul, one of the professors who influenced me a lot. She taught me econometrics. She was a professor who valued discipline and did not compromise on the disciplinary matters like the students' presence before the professor, and her timely presence in the lecture halls. In addition to this is her abundant knowledge, which we benefited from, especially since the one who taught the "section" with her was a great professor whom I consider to be one of those we lost in the Faculty of Economics and whom the American University gained - Dr. Zainab Hafez. Dr. Zainab Hafez, wife of Professor Sami Al-Sayed, former head of the Department of Economics, is a professor of statistics, and I learned a lot from her in econometrics.

I also benefited from Dr. Ali Al-Din Helal's approach and wisdom in managing matters calmly. He is a diplomatic and political figure who remains calm in managing any problem, reaching satisfactory consensus solutions for all, and his approach to administration intrigued me, and I resolved to apply it in my own style of administration. In addition to those previous professors, Dr. Nadiya Makari greatly contributed to my development. Dr. Hussein Abdel Aziz, who taught us in the first year, made sure to engage us in lectures to follow the content closely so that we could answer his questions.



As for incidents, there are many of them. One of the funniest were when I was in my first year looking for the tutorial hall, and we were divided from one to five or six. I asked a colleague of mine and a dear friend, the political analyst and writer, "Ahmed Al-Menisy," about Tutorial 5. He accompanied me to Hall 5, and I discovered while sitting in this lecture that it was for fourth-year students of a political science course. I was amazed at the content, of course, and after about half an hour. The professor noticed my amazement at the content of the course, and I confessed to him that I was a first-year student and was looking for Tutorial 5.

There is also another incident, which was at the end of my first year in faculty, taking into account that FEPS was not my first choice and that the subjects were of a nature closer to social sciences and had a different study method than mathematics, so I felt that the nature of the courses was different from my inclinations, and I intended to transfer from FEPS the following year. Coincidentally, a colleague came to the expatriate residence and was in Faculty of Dentistry. He asked me about my dissatisfaction with the faculty and told me in a moment of inspiration that he predicted that I would have a great future in this faculty, and he advised me not to transfer. His words encouraged me, and I continued to work hard in faculty until I became who I am now. He was one of the people who pushed me to rethink faculty without much effort on his part. He spoke spontaneously, and his attitude had a great impact on my life.





1-After a rich six-year journey in the deanship of FEPS, and among your many achievements, what ones do you consider to have the greatest effect on you, and what are the ambitions that you wanted to achieve but did not have enough time for?

More precisely, it is a journey of five and a half years. During this period, my principle for this faculty, which was managed by great academic figures with their own imprints and achievements, was my consideration of the necessity of completing their achievements and not demolishing what they had done and acting like I built everything we have achieved from scratch, because these are qualities of a failed administrator, so I completed building what was founded by Dr. Hala Al-Said. For example, Dr. Hala laid the foundation for the faculty's journal in English, and then completed it with the editorial board of the journal led by Prof. Dr. Heba Nassar and also with Dr. Rami Magdy, whom I am very proud of, Dr. Pakinam Fikri, Ms. Mona Nasr, and the rest of the editorial board, until we reached the journal as being the first social sciences journal with an international publisher in the Middle East region, then its entry into the Scopus and Clarivate Analytics rankings, an unprecedented achievement and what I consider to be one of the most important and best achievements during my deanship. That is, the faculty's scientific journal reaches the ranks of international journals found in the most important classifications mentioned above, especially since Cairo University rewards researchers who publish in the faculty's journal with international publishing rewards, and this has a great impact on me. In addition to many other achievements, for example, the establishment of important inter-professional programs such as the "Master's in Political Economy" program, from which we have graduated three batches so far, and which was very much in demand because we were working on isolated peninsulas: economists working in isolation from political scientists and vice versa. True, but the field of political economy is an important field, yet we did not find people specialized in this field. There was a political economy program at the American University in Cairo, and I believed that our faculty was deserving of such a program.

As a result, we also set out to create interface programs with state institutions, and it represented one of the most important achievements that others considered one of my most important ones because it contributed greatly to qualifying workers in these institutions to be better at performing their work. For example, we established a program in governance and anti-corruption in cooperation with the National Academy for Governance and Anti-Corruption. This program met with great success and tremendous influence with state leaders in the public and private sectors and those concerned with the field of governance and anti-corruption. It is a unique program and does not exist in other Egyptian universities, not even the American University or private universities. It qualifies these leaders in many important fields because it is an interdisciplinary program between three basic branches: economics, law and public administration, and it links them until it generates a research or scientific product specific to the idea of governance and anti-corruption. This gives leaders the opportunity to acquire knowledge and knowledge regarding governance and combating corruption in their field of work.



It is worth noting that it is an academic master's degree and not a professional one. It results in an academic thesis for each participant and an academic contribution. There are other interprofessional programs, such as the program with the Institute of Security and Intelligence Sciences affiliated with the Military Intelligence Authority and also the Nasser Military Academy (currently the Higher Military Academy), and all of these programs reflect the position of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science in serving society and in qualifying state institutions from a scientific standpoint.

There was another program that I wanted to offer in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was an Academic Master in Diplomatic Studies, but it was not completed due to many different procedures and delays. Finally, there is another program with the Military Academy that will be useful to the military units, and therefore, given the importance of the political and economic dimensions in the work of the Egyptian officer, such a program is supposed to lead to improving the efficiency of his work because most military conflicts have an economic or political origin, and therefore this program with the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, it is supposed to contribute to preparing officers to have a greater understanding of those dimensions. It is worth noting that the certificate granted by the program will be a military certificate granted by the Minister of Defense and not by the faculty or Cairo University. It is important to note that this is one of the faculty's roles in its contribution to building society.





5-We certainly congratulate you on assuming the position of Vice President of the University for Graduate Studies and Scientific Research. What steps do you aspire to achieve and the most important challenges that you intend to face?

When talking about Cairo University, we point out that it is the largest university in Egypt and the Middle East. It includes more than 270,000 students, 15,000 faculty members and supporting staff, and 15,000 employees and workers. What we call “Mega-University” and it has a great position in the Egypt and on a global level. the world. It is the university that graduated 3 Nobel Prize winners: Mohamed ElBaradei, Yasser Arafat and Naguib Mahfouz. It is a university whose head was Ahmed Lotfy Al-Sayyed, and Taha Hussein was the dean of the Faculty of Arts. It has graduated distinguished figures for the Egypt and the Arab world, and therefore I seek to preserve the value of this university. This value is measured by the extent of scientific research it produces, in addition to the level of education provided. Personally, I am interested in Cairo University maintaining its scientific level in international rankings with regard to scientific research, specifically because Cairo University is first in most rankings in the field of scientific research, but such ranking should not be guaranteed because we always need to develop, especially with many competing universities approaching over the course of the past few years have ranked close to Cairo University's rankings. Therefore, I believe that if we do not develop, we will not be able to maintain these high positions of the university with regard to scientific research indicators. Naturally, I am very interested in increasing scientific research at Cairo University in quantity and quality, and as a result we began establishing a unit to support researchers at Cairo University: the “Scientific and Linguistic Review Unit,” which is a unit that aims to review research and written dissertations linguistically and scientifically through Cairo University’s specialized professors and their contractors; this aims to improve the quality of research and overthrow the profit-making bodies outside Cairo University that work on these matters illegally, which has a very negative impact because it leads to a decrease in the quality of the research works submitted and the ease of submitting these works through these offices (specifically in Bain al-Sarayat). Therefore, we are trying to fight these for-profit offices through the work of the university and its improvement, which spoils the process of scientific research and education at Cairo University, and this is one of the most important axes that we are working on.



The second very important element in university rankings is the innovation element. We began working on the innovation unit and supporting innovators at Cairo University; supporting them financially, technically and otherwise, because Cairo University throughout its history, unfortunately, has only registered 33 patents, which is not appropriate for such an ancient university, and therefore we intend in the coming period that we will work to increase the patents issued by Cairo University. It was pointed out that everyone who belongs to Cairo University and has a patent is legally obligated to register Cairo University, but this does not happen due to the absence of this culture among people. Therefore, we are also interested in raising awareness in this regard, especially since the registrant’s right to the patent will not be diminished, as it is simply an acknowledgment of his affiliation to this edifice and his consumption of Cairo University’s resources, which works to support inventors and innovators with everything required to obtain a patent or a utility model. In addition, Egypt allocates large sums in its budget for research services, and some faculties do not benefit from these sums. Therefore, I began working with these faculties, including the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, in order to use these sums to support researchers in the faculty through these allocations.

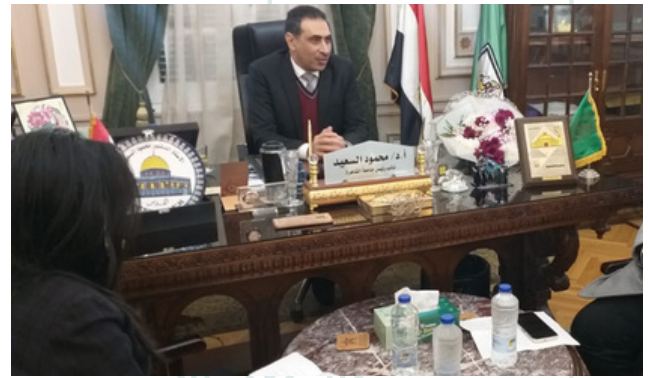
Our work on Cairo University’s scientific journals, which are 63 journals, of which only 6 are in the Scopus and Clarivate rankings, about 10%. Therefore, we work with the Egyptian Knowledge Bank to support scientific journals at Cairo University, seeking to include them in these rankings.



6- I had the honor, as editor-in-chief of Elite Magazine and a faculty member at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, to attend two sessions of the Faculty Council under your leadership. I noticed the nature of your decision-making and that when a decision is made, a comparison must be expected, taken into consideration, and expected. So, how do you see the challenges of your position as Vice President of the University and the resistance you will face?

First, in this university, which contains different scientific sectors: such as the social sciences and humanities sector, and the basic, medical, and engineering sciences sector, we may reach a decision that pushes the scientific research process forward and is more appropriate for one sector than the other. For example, it may be good for students pursuing a Master's degree learn how to publish and begin publishing their work so they don't struggle if they choose to pursue a PhD later on. Despite this, we find strong resistance from the social sciences and humanities sector. In addition to the fact that some of the specialties in this sector do not publish internationally, especially if it is in Arabic, for example. One of the most important challenges I face is dealing with different sectors, with some being easy to deal with and others difficult to deal with.

Secondly, there is another challenge, which is resistance to change, fear and habituation. As we enter a different era, the digital age and digital transformation in all fields, including education, we find those who resist the idea of e-learning and its continuation despite it being the basis for the educational future. Here I point out that I do not support the idea of canceling direct interactions between the subject teacher and the students, but I support integrating it and taking advantage of the possibilities of remote education. The professor learns how to deal with his students remotely because if he does not adapt, he will risk disappearing and falling behind in his level. But we are doing our best to challenge these ideas and push the wheel of change and development forward.



7- In the year 2020, you were ranked among the top 2% of scientists in the world in the Stanford ranking. In light of this, in your opinion, what makes a good researcher in the academic and research field?

I first point out the reason I entered this ranking and this list. It was based on indicators related to the number of researches and the number of citations to these researches. At that time, I was the publisher of more than forty papers in journals classified as Q1 and Q2, but the difference was that I published with my supervisor in the doctoral stage, Professor William Woodall, who is considered one of the greatest scholars in the field of statistical quality control and was editor-in-chief of an important journal in the field of statistical quality control "Journal of Quality Technology." I was therefore fortunate to meet this professor and scientist during my studies at Virginia Tech, and for him to be my supervisor, and the credit goes to him for that, especially with his participation in more than 75% of my research, him teaching me about scientific research, and his contribution in my field of specialization. I would add that he has great connections with various researchers from different countries of the world, which made it easier for these researchers to participate while I was staying in Cairo, and such participation contributes to enriching the value of the scientific research presented.

In order to be a good researcher and make a significant research contribution, you must first choose your supervisor carefully and with great awareness, and he must be distinguished in his field and have important scientific publications. Secondly, you must learn from him the principles of scientific research, that is, how to implement and master scientific research. Thirdly, it is important for you to participate in various research communities, for example "Research Gate", and to engage in discussions with various researchers from around the world, which contributes to enriching your information and creating different research ideas. In addition, the importance of participating in various scientific seminars and conferences. because it is an important opportunity to learn in the field of specialization. Finally, participate in various international conferences if the opportunity arises, because it will be a network that contributes to interacting with international researchers and working with them. I remember, for example, my participation in a conference in France in which I met a researcher from Greece, and through our research discussions, we published three research papers together.



8- You have written many articles and a book entitled “University and Development in Egypt” in which you discuss the status of scientific research and higher education in Egypt. In your opinion, what are the most important challenges facing higher education and scientific research in Egypt, and what opportunities should we seize?

I see the biggest challenge lies in making our universities smart and sustainable; hence, we must work on the elements of intelligence and sustainability. Regarding the intelligence component, we must work to obtain information quickly with the push of a button and get rid of the old way of recording information on paper, and so on. When referring to the “smart university,” it is not only limited to the electronic part of the courses and others, but it is also the reliance on modern technologies in university administration, with regard to the educational and research process, and that it provides qualified graduates who are able to deal with the future demands of the labor market, which will depend entirely on artificial intelligence and so on. As for our position in relation to these smart universities, we are far behind and we must work hard and intensely to reach this level during the coming period. As for sustainability, it is also very important because it is now linked to development on the economic, environmental and social levels, which the university must work to achieve through various activities. Sustainability is an idea that must be present in all aspects of life. For example, a director is keen to have ranks behind him for sustainability in the university’s existing competency process. There is also the issue of environmental sustainability, such as installing solar panels on the roofs of university buildings and benefiting from clean electricity, paying attention to the issue of afforestation, and the issue of taking care of people with special needs and their requirements.



As for the opportunities that must be seized, it lies in Egypt’s continued interest in transferring Egyptian universities to the ranks of international universities, which suggests its readiness to receive all ideas that contribute to achieving these goals. It has already supported many ideas in the field of smart universities and even issued an important report on the progress of all Egyptian universities on the issue of intelligence and its identification of the problems and challenges facing every university so that it can eliminate them. Likewise, with regard to the issue of sustainability, Egypt pays great attention to it from various ministries, such as the Ministry of Planning, and their willingness to cooperate with various universities in this regard, which is an important opportunity to benefit from it. In addition to this opportunity, there is the possibility of encouraging the establishment of technological universities. We find the establishment of 10 technological universities so far, with the state keen to increase the number of these universities that target job opportunities in the future labor market related to artificial intelligence, data science, etc., making room for many students, not necessarily those with a high school diploma, are given a vocational bachelor’s degree and prepare them to deal with the future labor market. These technological universities contribute significantly to improving the country’s education indicators worldwide.





9- Speaking of the challenges facing the development of scientific research in Egypt, which are not necessarily caused by people but by the social and legal environment, you referred to the issue of intellectual property and its problem, and also to the problem of the legal environment that manages the process of higher education and scientific research, while stressing the importance of exploiting corporate social responsibility and the roles of businessmen. In scientific research, what is your comment on these matters?

First, regarding the legal aspect, there is the Universities Organization Law that has governed the work of universities since 1972 until now, which established the full-year educational system. Then we moved to the two-semester system and finally to the credit hour system. We find that the aforementioned law does not take into account some matters related to the credit hour system at all, such as the idea of improvement that is not present in the law, along with some other matters that hinder the implementation of the credit hour system as it should be, especially since the law deals with the financial amounts paid to professors that are not compatible with the current times compared to its value in 1972. Therefore, work must be done towards issuing a new law to keep pace with current developments and not amending the 1972 law because the amendments do not solve the problems from the roots. There is also a need for a law that deals with the problems that resulted from the application of the 1972 law, such as the idea of a faculty member taking a leave to accompany a husband or wife and teaching abroad, and the university not benefiting from them in any way, is considered one of the most important challenges due to possible conflicts of interest that produce various conspiracy theories.

Secondly, with regard to the culture of intellectual property, it is unfortunately largely absent from Egyptian society because we have grown up with ideas that permit the transfer of ideas, whether from Google or others, and not to consider it theft. Therefore, we must work to change it, and we find the state's issuance of a document for preserving intellectual property rights and a strategy for publishing are of the utmost important steps that must be supported and implemented in schools and universities, and the importance of the child being raised to respect the principles of intellectual property rights from a young age, because when a child is raised to easily resort to parents who do his homework, this leads to him getting used to such actions. Therefore, children must be encouraged and raised to respect intellectual property rights. It is not an easy challenge because it has been rooted in society as something normal and has turned into an acceptable habit, which is not normal at all.

Finally, as for businessmen, they have a culture that views scientific research and education in Egypt as unimportant factors, and, thus, this is reflected in their failure to invest in these aspects. Here comes the problem of the education and scientific research sectors suffering from the lack of resources to support them, which leads to a deterioration in their level and thus a lack of interest from businessmen and so on. Therefore, such a culture must be changed, and the importance of their contribution must be spread in the two sectors because it will benefit them through the graduation of competent employees and scientific research that can improve the level of industry and productivity. I repeat, it is not an easy challenge either. All of these challenges can be eliminated over time thanks to the continued efforts of the university and the state.

10-In addition to being hosted by a high-caliber researcher and an important cadre of higher education cadres, we are facing a world interested in the nation's issues. In your opinion, what are the current challenges facing our nation, Egypt, regionally and internationally, and what capabilities should we rely on?

The biggest current challenge for the state is the economic situation. Egypt faces extremely difficult circumstances as a result of external shocks, with the inefficiency of the Egyptian economic structure for nearly half a century, which has led to our being severely affected by these external shocks. Over time, the Egyptian economic structure has become a consumer economy, not a producer, that depends on meeting consumer needs and importing from abroad, which exposes us to being greatly affected by any change in prices abroad, which has led to the difficulty of the crisis despite the beginning of financial economic reform through the International Monetary Fund loan in 2016, which led to a relative improvement in the distorted support system, where the support was not reaching those who deserve it, and thus the economic performance improved until 2019, but the economic structure itself was suffering from its consumption problem and therefore was affected by the repercussions of the severe Corona crisis, which is essentially economic in nature, which affected demand and supply, and with a surge in demand. In 2021, the inability of supply to respond to such demand led to significant price inflation. The Russian-Ukrainian crisis adds insult to injury, affecting tourism, energy and food prices, which is considered a fatal blow to the Egyptian economic crisis. Now the crises in the region increase the seriousness of the situation, with the war in Gaza, the crisis in Sudan and Yemen... etc. Especially with the Egyptian economy suffering from three problems: the (lack of) availability of foreign currency, outstanding debts that must be repaid, and finally, unprecedented inflation.

But there are many who have very good ideas to get out of this crisis in the short term and then transform the Egyptian economic structure into a productive structure in the long term by working on manufacturing, employment, and then exporting so that it is not as vulnerable to such external shocks and will lead to providing the necessary hard currency.





Regarding the political crises, we find Egypt to be the leading country in the region, especially with Egypt's role in the Palestinian issue and its clear position of its rejection of forced displacement and the liquidation of the issue; however, the humanitarian aspect remains in the face of the death of this number of victims, so Egypt is facing a difficult dilemma: whether to allow the entry of 2 million Palestinians in light of this economic crisis, especially with the presence of the current refugees from Syria, Sudan and others, which is considered a burden on the Egyptian economy, affecting the demand side greatly. Here, it must be noted that the world, especially Europe, must realize that if Egypt is affected by these current crises, they will be the first to suffer the consequences, with the risk of illegal immigration in numbers reaching millions if it cannot be controlled. The United States must also be aware that the stability of its interests are in the stability of Egypt. Therefore, we must find flexibility in repaying debts, and the availability of loans to repay loans over a longer term, especially with Egyptians abroad not transferring their money to Egyptian banks, which is an understandable position given the current economic instability and black-market activity. But, God willing, these circumstances will only be temporary and will be resolved quickly.

11- In the last issue, our magazine celebrated 5 years. The magazine was honored by its establishment in your deanship, and throughout the five-year journey that the elite went through, how do you evaluate that journey, and what is missing from it?

This magazine began as an idea in the fall of 2018 and a dream from Dr. Ramy Magdy, the editor-in-chief and current lecturer in the Department of Political Science, who was then an assistant lecturer. He presented it to Professor Dr. Hanan Hassan, the vice dean of the faculty at the time and currently the acting dean of the faculty. She was very enthusiastic about it and presented and me consulted on what matters this magazine will present it and could considered new to the scene. Then we turned to the writing talents possessed by many students, and despite the absence of exhibitions for these talents such as the wall magazine in the past, the idea of the magazine was as an opportunity to give these students a space to express their ideas and develop their skills regarding writing and what is related to work later. In the field of journalism, etc. But I did not imagine the extent of the success of this experience in this way at all, because we found distinguished young people in addition to teaching assistants, professors, and old faculty graduates who were enthusiastic and participated with articles and interviews with the magazine, especially with the importance of the topics presented in each issue. The French section was separate at first, as it had an independent version, but little by little the three versions, Arabic, English, and French, were unified, which had a positive impact on the unity of the faculty. We found names that shine thanks to the writing in the magazine from various male and female students, and therefore I wish this distinguished magazine continued success.



12- Finally, what is your advice to our faculty students and university students?

To the students of our faculty, I address to them the importance of preserving the excellence of the college, which is originally distinguished by its students, as it is "cream of the crop or crème de la crème" as we say, and therefore not to take any actions or exhibit behaviors that contradict or diminish this distinction. As for university students in general, I advise them to work on developing themselves during the education period and not to wait for the idea of obtaining an immediate job upon graduation from a particular college or another. Therefore, they must work on developing their skills, especially those related to the future labor market, in addition to strengthening foreign and Arabic language skills. Finally, I advise them to allocate time for academic activities because the four years of study are the most important years for a student that he must use to study besides university activities offered by faculties such as simulation models and social and sports activities.





THE MARGINALIZED OF EARTH

MARIAM ELSAFTY-SENIOR-POLITICAL SCIENCE

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When you search for any topic in political research, chances are you will find articles written by western scholars at the top of the results. Whether it is about Africa, the Middle East, or any other region, western voices seem to dominate the academic discourse. But is this a coincidence or a consequence of colonialism? And how does this affect the local researchers who study their own societies and cultures? Academia is not a fair game, but a system that reflects and reinforces the existing power structures and biases in the world. Colonialism may have officially ended, but its effects are still felt in the academic sphere, where western researchers have an edge over their non-western counterparts. This is not to say that western scholars are intentionally marginalizing others, but rather that they are part of a larger picture that favors them. One of the main factors that gives western researchers an advantage is the language of academia: English. English is the dominant medium of communication, publication, and dissemination of academic knowledge, which means that native speakers and those who can access English education and resources have a better chance of succeeding in the academic field.

On the other hand, non-native speakers and researchers from non-western countries may struggle with language barriers, such as proficiency, accent, writing style, and academic norms that may affect their credibility and quality of work. Another factor that shapes the academic landscape is the cultural and philosophical influence of the west. Western academic knowledge and values are often based on western traditions and worldviews, which may not capture or appreciate the diversity and complexity of other cultures and ways of knowing. Western countries, especially those in Europe and North America, have a long history of colonialism, imperialism, and global dominance that allowed them to build and expand their academic institutions, networks, and influence around the world. They also gained from the exploitation of resources, labor, and knowledge from other regions, especially the Global South. These historical legacies continue to affect the current academic situation, where western countries have more resources, funding, prestige, and power than others. Western researchers have more opportunities and access to publish in high-impact journals, attend and present at international conferences, collaborate with other researchers, and secure grants and fellowships.



Western scholars are the main producers and distributors of academic knowledge, which shapes how we see and understand the world. They are often the first and the most trusted sources of information and analysis on many issues, especially those related to political conflicts and crises. But are their views and visions reliable and fair? And what are the consequences for the people who are directly affected by these conflicts, especially the non-western researchers who study their own regions and cultures? The academic field is not a level playing field, but a system that reflects and reinforces the global power structures and biases that come from colonialism. Western researchers have an edge over their non-western counterparts as they can influence the academic debate and the public opinion in ways that may not match the reality or the diversity of the situations and the people they study. They may also push their own agendas and prejudices, deliberately or not, that may impact the outcomes and the solutions of these conflicts.

OPINION

Understanding the Middle East Through the Animal Kingdom

For example, in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, most the western scholars, like Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer, often portray Israel as a legitimate and democratic state that has the right to defend itself, while Palestinians are depicted as violent and irrational terrorists who threaten the stability and the security of the region. This narrative ignores the historical and political context of the conflict, the human rights violations and the oppression that Palestinians face, and the resistance and resilience that they show. It also marginalizes the voices and views of the local researchers who have a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the situation and the people they study. This is not an isolated case, but a pattern that can be observed in many other conflicts around the world, where Western academia plays a role in shaping the world's view of them. This raises the question of how free and informed we are when we rely on western academic knowledge and values to make sense of the world. And how fair and respectful we are to the non-Western researchers who are often ignored or dismissed, despite their expertise and experience, because they do not have the credibility or the authority that the Western researchers have. This is not to say that all Western scholars are biased or malicious, but rather that we need to be aware and critical of the colonial shadow of Western academia.



GREEN PROTECTIONISM THREATENS PROGRESS IN CLIMATE ACTION

ABDELRAHMAN SAKR- SECOND YEAR- ECONOMICS- ENGLISH SECTION

Though there have been recent milestones regarding climate action, like the foundation of the loss and damage fund in COP 27 and COP 28 pledge to a transition away from fossil fuels, there is still a long way to go. As per the most recent "Global Stocktake" report from the United Nations, there is a continued increase in worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, the commitments made by nations to reduce these emissions collectively are significantly inadequate to meet the target of limiting average global temperature rise to 2°C above pre-industrial levels, as outlined in the 2015 Paris agreement. Meeting the more ambitious goal of a 1.5°C increase seems even more challenging based on current pledges. To make it worse, countries are putting hurdles in each other's ways- our way, since climate change is a global challenge and its consequences are shared, albeit if unequally. Rising green protectionism across the world is threatening the already slow weak march against climate change. Tariffs, subsidies, and "friendshoring" are making the green transition needed costlier and slower by causing inefficiencies, raising costs, and decreasing innovation. They are mainly being pushed because of rising tensions and competition between China and the USA.

First, there are barriers to trade. In 2018 Trump started a trade war on China, imposing tariffs on different products. These tariffs covered 88% of the renewable energy (RE) goods and 76% of the cleaner road transport (CRT) goods. Most importantly, tariffs of 25% and 30% on electric vehicles (EVs) and solar panels respectively have been imposed. In response, China retaliated by imposing tariffs that covers 86% of the RE goods and 78% of CRT goods. These measures would curb climate action by slowing the adoption of green tech as customers find it more expensive to deploy. There is also fear of escalation as there are high chances that Trump returns to the White House, which would complicate matters furthermore. In case of escalation, most critical will be China's decision whether to ban exports of rare minerals needed in green industries, which it produces 60% of. Last July, China restricted gallium and germanium exports intended as a response to the U.S. restricting semiconductor manufacturing equipment and chip exports. While China's main aim was to punch U.S. semiconductor manufacturing, germanium is also important for low-carbon technologies like solar cells. Along with raising costs, the reconstruction of supply chains caused by U.S.-China trade war will increase global



emissions by 0.3%-1.8%, according to a study published in the Environmental Impact Assessment Review in January 2023. And not only do barriers to trade raise costs and increase emissions, but they also make it harder to cope with climate change and curbs efforts of adaptation. According to a report published by the World Bank Group in 2021, stronger export restrictions result in larger economic losses in cases of floods and extreme weather. Take a look back at what would have been lost if we did not have free trade before the trade war and you would get a grasp on what is at stake. According to research from MIT, approximately 40% of the reduction in solar power expenses can be ascribed to economies of scale, and economists from the World Trade Organization (WTO) have concluded that these scale advantages were facilitated, in part, by global trade and interconnected supply chains. A research analysis suggests that had restrictions on the trade of solar photovoltaic modules been tighter in the past decade, prices in China would have increased by 54% and in America by 107% by the year 2020. Additionally, in a scenario with less globalized supply chains, projections indicate that prices in 2030 could be 20-30% higher, leading to reduced deployment of renewables due to the elevated costs. Then comes subsidies and “friendshoring,” which means reconstructing supply chains in friendly countries. The USA Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), with subsidies of \$400bn-\$1trn over the next decade to support renewable energy, was introduced as a scheme to lower US dependence on China. There are also requirements of origin that encourage firms to buy domestic components to be eligible for green subsidies. For example, in order to access a subsidy of \$7500 for an EV, one half of the credit is available if the vehicle’s battery components are manufactured or assembled in America; the other half is based on the origin of the battery’s minerals.

Though such a scheme might encourage green transition in the US, it threatens to slow and raise the costs for the net zero transition on a global level. Recent research by the European Central Bank (ECB) has found that the IRA could slow the green transition at a global level as foreign firms lose economies of scale as they lose access to the American market and have few alternative markets to sell their goods at. Also, encouraging companies to purchase local components to qualify for green subsidies will lead to higher project costs. This, in turn, contributes to an increase in producer price inflation and results in a decrease in the actual amount of infrastructure that can be developed with the allocated funding. This approach would decrease the “carbon value for money,”- that is, to maximize emissions reduction per dollar spent. Another crucial factor is time. Building new factories and supply chains will surely take a lot of time, which the planet is already running short of. Innovation is important as well. As firms get protected by tariffs and requirements of origin, along with subsidies to support them, they have little need to innovate lower costs and higher quality technologies. Smaller players are getting protective as well. Interestingly, out of the thirteen nations participating in the Electric Vehicle Initiative (EVI), only Norway and Japan impose no tariffs on EVs, despite the initiative's intended goal of expediting the global introduction and acceptance of EVs. Furthermore, India, among the EVI countries, imposes the highest tariff, with a Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariff reaching as high as 125 percent for EVs. And since 2020, Indonesia has banned the export of nickel, of which it produces 22% of global supply, to encourage battery manufacturing at home. Politicians are trying to face a global issue by deglobalization measures! The current approaches of the USA and China is a zero-sum approach in which no one wins. And climate change is a global issue that needs global cooperation.



BRANDING



THE NEUROSCIENCE OF BRANDING

HANA BISHR - 4TH YEAR - ECONOMICS - HANA.BESHR2020@FEPS.EDU.EGL

An economist would say, how is this possible that a rational consumer would be willing to pay more for exactly the same thing? Consumers love to think about themselves as rational but that's not how it works. A very famous study done by colleagues at Duke University to two randomized groups of participants. The study found that after being subliminally exposed to the Apple logo compared to when you've been exposed to the IBM logo, participants performed better on creative tasks and the argument is that Apple has been telling you this story over and over again. Apple is a brand for hip, cool, fun, creative people. This is the true power of a brand. They can influence our behavior in ways that extend way beyond the point of sale. So, to what degree can the influence of brands weaken our ability to make rational spending decisions?

When consumers make choices about

different brands, I'm choosing to create an identity. When a consumer puts that shirt on with those shoes and those jeans, someone is going to form an impression about what I'm about. So, if I'm choosing Nike over Under Armour, I'm choosing a kind of different way to express affiliation with sport. The Nike thing is about performance. The Under Armour thing is about the underdog. I have to choose which of these different conceptual pathways is most consistent with where I am in my life. Once a consumer makes that choice, their relationship with a brand can deepen to the point where they identify with a brand-like family and once you identify with a brand, it can shape the way you behave. it's really interesting because if someone talks bad about that product, brand, or service, they will be the first to go out and defend because an attack on the brand is an attack on themselves. Michael Platt is a professor of neuroscience, marketing, and psychology whose research



demonstrates how our perception of brands influences our decisions. There's an idea in marketing, which is that we relate to brands in the same way we relate to people. Michael and his team observed the brains of iPhone users and Samsung Galaxy users with an MRI machine while they heard good, bad, and neutral news about Apple and Samsung. Apple customers showed a brain empathy response toward Apple that was exactly what you'd see in the way you would respond to somebody in your own family. Strangely, Samsung users didn't have any positive or negative responses when good or bad news was released about their brand.

The only evidence that Samsung users showed was reverse empathy for Apple

News, meaning if the Apple headline was negative, their brain reflected a positive response. It really shows us that Apple has completely defined the market here. Samsung customers, it seems from their brain data, are only buying Samsung because they hate Apple. Most people just don't realize that they are subconsciously choosing brands because those brands have some kind of self-expressive value. You Can see there's a lot of power here in terms of shaping consumers' decisions. As we learn more and more about that, we have to think much more deeply about the ethical, legal, and societal implications of our choices. The best thing consumers can do to make informed choices is to be aware of the influence that brands hold.





THE ECONOMICS SMACKDOWN: ROUND 1

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The Economics Smackdown is a fun little game that aims to introduce FEPSians to some of the most hotly debated economic questions and expose them to the different answers that various economic schools have managed to come up with throughout the years.

This way you (i.e., FEPSians) can get to think about the different perspectives from which an economic problem may be tackled, choose the economic school you agree with and maybe come up with your own answers!!!

The realm of economics is rife with debate, as different perspectives, ideologies, and methodologies clash in attempts to understand and influence complex systems.

One of the most highly debated economic issues is **the causes of income inequality**.

If we were to define income inequality as “the disproportionate distribution of total national income among households”, we would find that it exists in both developing and developed countries alike. So, what drives the continuously growing gap between the rich and the poor all over the world?

Different schools of thought attribute varied causes to the progressively increasing problem and today, with the help of Google’s AI chatbot, *Gemini*, we offer insights from 4 major economic schools: Neoclassical Economics, Marxian Economics/Marxism, Environmental Economics and Behavioral Economics.

However, before diving in, it is important to note that often times scholars belonging to the same school disagree on certain issues and thus this is not saying that these views presented are unanimously agreed upon. Also, it is important to highlight that sometimes schools don’t necessarily offer a singular perspective on the issues covered, but they might connect it to other issues deemed important to the school itself.

An example of this would be that while the environmental economics school doesn’t necessarily offer a singular perspective on the causes of income inequality, some economists from this school have highlighted how certain aspects related to the environment can contribute to income inequality.

Thus, it is essential that we keep in mind that not everything is black and white and that there is always room for debate.

Now that that is out of the way...



Read below, determine which answers make the most sense to you, Choose your Economic School and let us know your answer in the comments!!

Neoclassical Economics 1



Neoclassical Economics
[né-ō-'klā-si-kal, e-ka-'nā-miks]
A broad theory that focuses on supply and demand as the driving forces behind the production, pricing, and consumption of goods and services.

Investopedia

Emerged in the Early 1900s

- **Human Capital:** Differences in skills, education, and productivity lead to different wages. The higher the level of human capital, the more a person will earn.
- **Technological change:** Technological advancements generally require highly skilled workers, which contributes to increasing inequality.
- **Supply and Demand:** If there is a high demand for skilled workers with limited supply, their wages will be higher, and so will inequality.

Illus. © Notable Economists: Pareto

For more info about the Neoclassical Economics school, look [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Marxism 2



Marxism
[mārk-'si-zəm]
A social, political, and economic philosophy named after Karl Marx. It examines the effect of capitalism on labor, productivity, and economic development and argues for a worker revolution to overturn capitalism in favor of communism.

Investopedia

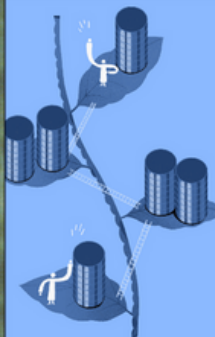
Emerged in the Late 19th Century

- **Exploitation of labor:** Capital owners pay workers less than the value their labor adds to goods, generating "surplus value", which is appropriated by the capital owners as profit. Thus exacerbating existing income gaps.
- **Power Disparities:** In Capitalism, private individuals own the means of production, not the workers who use them, creating a power imbalance that allows capitalists to control wages and working conditions, further contributing to unequal distribution of income and wealth.
- **Accumulation of Capital:** As capitalists reinvest their profits, this creates a snowball effect, concentrating wealth in the hands of a few and leaving the majority with stagnant or dealing incomes.

Illus. © Notable Economists: Karl Marx

For more info about the Marxism school, look [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Environmental Economics 3



Environmental Economics
[in-'vī-rā(n)-'men-tl̩, e-ka-'nā-n]
The study of the efficient allocation, use, and protection of the world's limited natural resources.

Investopedia


Emerged around the 1960s

- **Unequal resource distribution:** Access to natural resources and environmental burdens concentrates wealth and income among certain groups.
- **Externalities:** Unpriced environmental costs (pollution, climate change) disproportionately impact low-income communities, which further exacerbates existing inequities and health disparities.
- **Unsustainable growth:** Current economic models prioritize short-term growth over long-term sustainability, worsening inequality and environmental harm.

Illus. © Notable Economists: John Krutilla

For more info about the Environmental Economics school, look [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Behavioral Economics 4



Behavioral Economics
[bi-'hā-vyā-ral, e-ka-'nā-miks]
Combining economic theory and psychology explore why people make irrational decisions.

Investopedia

Began as a distinct field in the 1970s

- **Cognitive biases:** People make irrational decisions affecting income generation and wealth accumulation.
- **Social networks:** Access to opportunities and resources are unequally distributed through social networks, which exacerbates social divisions and inequalities.
- **Time preferences:** Excessive discounting of future rewards leads to lower investments in human capital and wealth creation, negatively affecting personal wealth and contributing to widening the income gaps.

Illus. © Notable Economists: R. Thaler

For more info about the Behavioral Economics school, you can look [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).