

Bill Law Memorial Award

16th July 2026



Agenda

- 17.00 Welcome and getting started
- 17.05 'Key-note' – Dr Emma Bolger
- 17.25 7 x 3 mins from finalists
- 17.50 Winner announcement & close



Finalist presentations

1. Dean Mazhawidza
2. Francesca Harvey
3. Sarra Jenkins
4. Ash Mukherjee
5. Anastasiia Fedchuk
6. Hope Fogg
7. Jenny Sloan



NICEC

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Dean Mazhawidza PhD Candidate Stellenbosch University

When Context Matters: Revisiting Social Cognitive Career Theory in
Unequal South African School System

THE PROBLEM WHEN **CONTEXT** MATTERS IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT



South African schools are highly **unequal**.



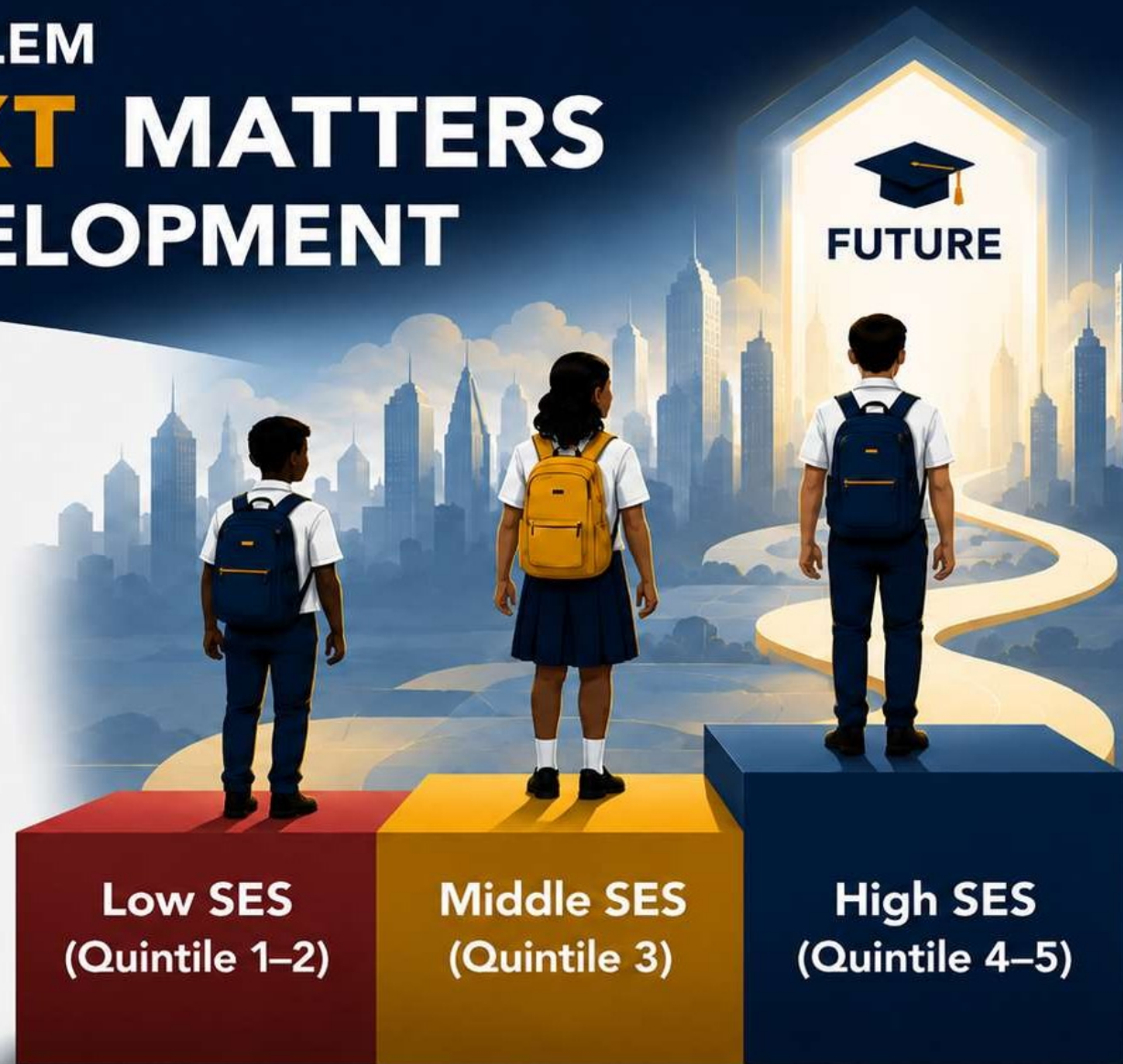
Quintiles shape access to resources, opportunities and career guidance.



SCCT recognises context, but often underplays structural inequality.



Career development does not happen in **equal** conditions.



THE STUDY

One **SCCT-informed** intervention
across three school contexts.



3 SCHOOLS

Low SES
(Quintile 1–2)



GRADE 10 LEARNERS

n = 240

Middle SES
(Quintile 3)



MIXED METHODS

- Quasi-experimental design
- Action research approach
- CMI + CDMSE
- Qualitative feedback

High SES
(Quintile 4–5)

Sample size: 240 learners

SCCT FRAMEWORK



Self-efficacy



Outcome
expectations



Goals



Context

KEY FINDINGS

THREE PATTERNS OF IMPACT

The same intervention produced different developmental effects depending on context.



Same intervention. **Different** developmental effects.

WHY IT MATTERS



Career guidance is **context-sensitive**, not neutral.



One-size-fits-all interventions are **insufficient**.



Educational policy must address **structural inequalities** that shape career development.



Guidance programmes should be **differentiated** across school contexts.



Effective career guidance requires **psychological development** alongside **systemic support**.



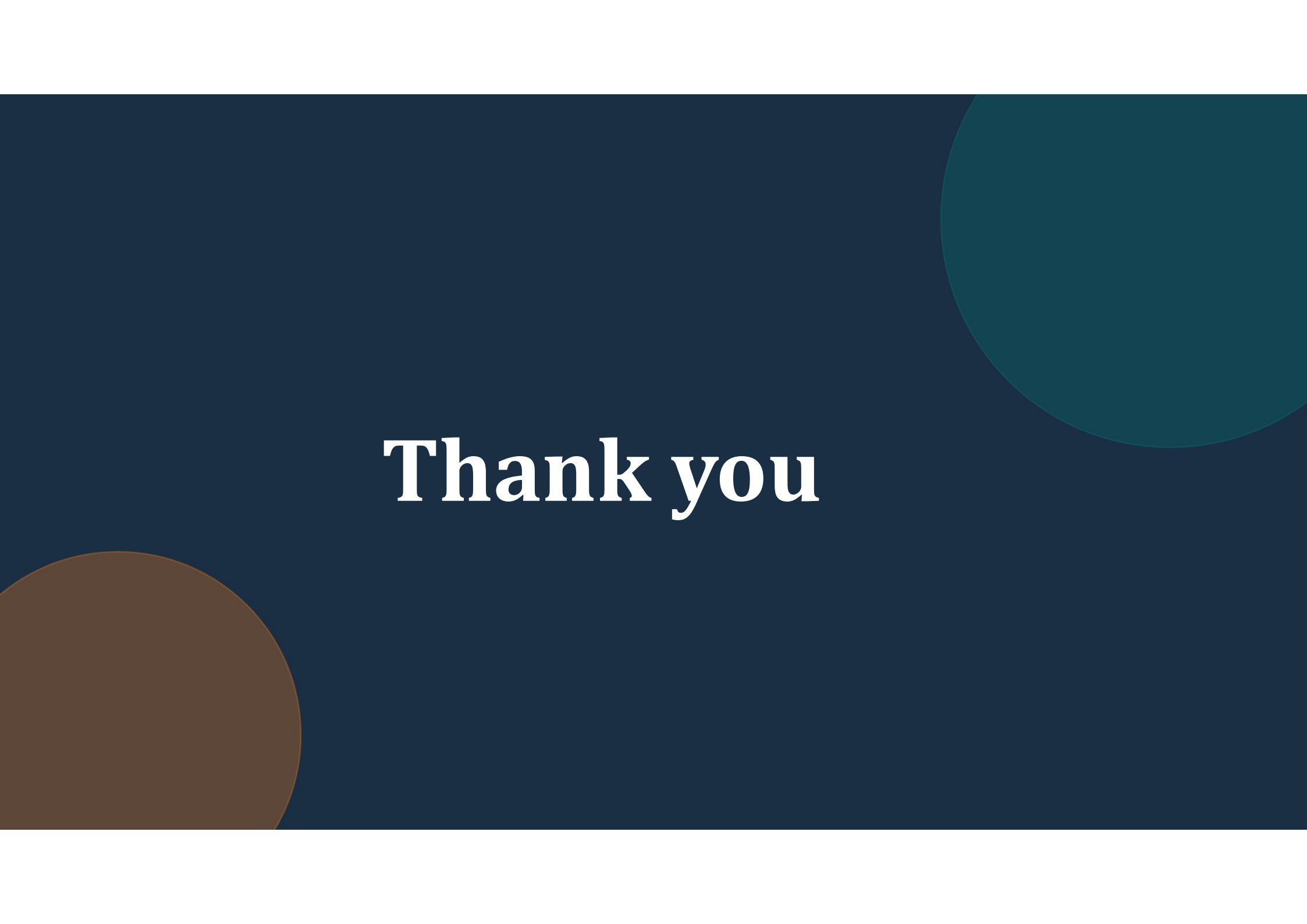
POLICY IMPLICATION

Equity-focused career guidance should be embedded within South African education policy.

“

*This study shows that career guidance is not simply about helping learners choose futures, **it is about ensuring that context does not determine whose futures are possible.***”





Thank you

Bill Law Award | 2026

“SUCH A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION TO HAVE”
A FEMINIST-BASED EXPLORATION OF THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF
PERINATAL BABY LOSS ON WOMEN’S CAREERS

Francesca Harvey

Trigger warning: discussion of perinatal baby loss

Francesca Harvey, MSc Career Coaching

Research Rationale, Approach and Methodology

"Invisible at both an individual and an organisational level" (Boncori & Smith, 2018)

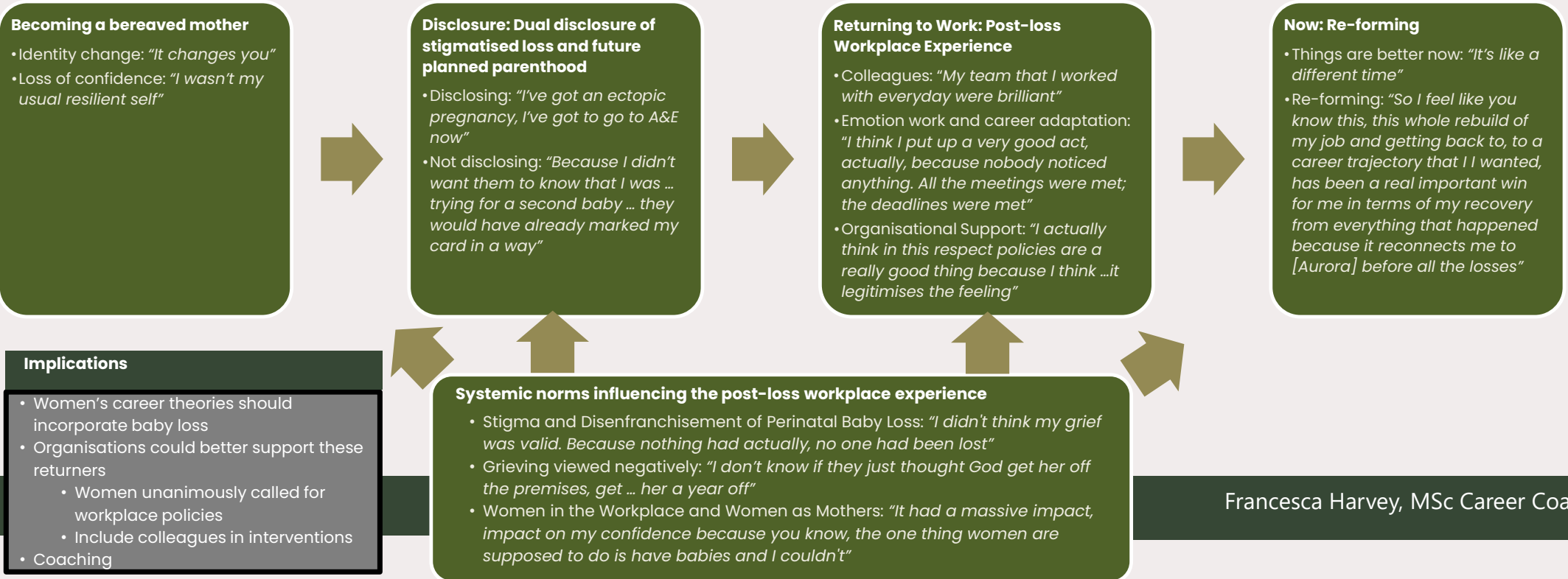
- Background**
- Estimated that more than 300 babies are lost each day in pregnancy in the UK (Tommy's, 2025)
 - 'Disenfranchised grief' (Bento, 1994)
 - Little literature, predominantly focuses on later loss (see Meunier et al., 2021). Difficulties returning to work owing to intrinsic and extrinsic factors.
 - Women's career theories focus on women as mothers but no mention of baby loss. Careers impacted by gendered organisational aspects.
- Theory**
- **Theory of Gendered Organizations** (Acker, 1990): the masculine workplace
 - **Systems Theory Framework** (McMahon and Patton, 1995): individual careers are viewed within a "dynamic and complex" system
- Research Aims**
- Listen** to the voices of the women who have experienced early loss – a "doubly disenfranchised" (Hazen, 2003) and stigmatised (Gilbert et al., 2023) group
- Feminist standpoint:** critically explore women's careers in wider context, applying Acker's (1990) Theory of Gendered Organisations
- Reduce the silence** and **gain knowledge**, such as could promote change

- Methodology**
- Feminist research** – *"ethics of care and collaboration"* (Lumsen, 2024, p. 198)
- Qualitative, abductive, inclusive approach
- Emotionally demanding research** (Kumar & Cavallaro, 2018)
- Research on sensitive issues and relating to personal experience of researcher
 - The ethical approval process for the project required stipulations to be put in place to protect both the wellbeing of my participants and my wellbeing as researcher
- 11 women**
- Analysis via **Voice-Centred Relational Framework** (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998), four listenings focused on different levels: individual, interpersonal, organisational and societal

1. Which factors do women consider when deciding whether to disclose baby loss in the workplace?
2. How do women experience returning to work following baby loss?
3. Which factors do women consider when reflecting on the impact of baby loss on their careers?

Findings and Implications

- Baby loss impacts on women's careers both in the short-term and longer-term based on a complex mixture of individual, interpersonal, organisational and societal level aspects
- Findings are best understood within the context of disenfranchisement of baby loss and of women in the workplace and society, supporting the Systems Theory Framework of Careers (McMahon & Patton, 1995) and Acker's (1990) Theory of Gendered Organizations: "[Policies] would go some way to ... making you feel like ... your career isn't going to be over just because you're having a baby or thinking about trying to have a baby" (Valeria)



References

- Acker**, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & Society*, 4(2), 139–158.
- Bento**, R.F. (1994). When the Show Must Go on: Disenfranchised Grief in Organizations. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 9(6), 35–44.
- Boncori**, I. & Smith, C. (2019) I lost my baby today: Embodied writing and learning in organizations. *Management Learning*, 50(10), 74–86.
- Gilbert**, S. L., Dimoff, J.K., Brady, J.M., Macleod, R. & McPhee, T. (2023). Pregnancy loss: A qualitative exploration of an experience stigmatized in the workplace. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 142, 1–18.
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- Kumar** S. & Cavallaro L. Researcher Self-Care in Emotionally Demanding Research: A Proposed Conceptual Framework. *Qualitative Health Research*. 2018;28(4):648–658.
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- Mauthner**, N. S. & Doucet, A. (1998). Reflections on a Voice-Centred Relational Method of Data Analysis: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices. In Ribbens, J. & Edwards, R. (Eds.) *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research: Private Lives and Public Texts*. Sage. 119–144.
- McMahon**, M., & Patton, W. (1995). Development of a systems theory framework of career development. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 4, 15–20.
- Meunier**, S., de Montigny, F., Zeghiche, S., Lalande, D., Verdon, C., Da Costa, D., Feeley, N. (2021) Workplace experience of parents coping with perinatal loss: A scoping review. *Work*, 69(2), 411–421.
- Tommy's** (2025, 23 February). *Baby loss statistics*. <https://www.tommys.org/baby-loss-support/pregnancy-loss-statistics>

Support

Organisation	Contact details	Details
Cruse Bereavement Support	www.cruse.org.uk Tel: 0808 808 1677	Cruse Bereavement Support provide help to for anyone who is grieving. Telephone support is available 9:30am to 5pm Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and from 1pm to 8pm on Tuesday.
Five X More	www.fivexmore.org	Five X More is campaigning to end the disparity in pregnancy outcomes for Black women, compared to white women, in the UK. They work in partnership with Tommy's and Petals to provide bereavement counselling.
Hope Bereavement Support	www.hopebereavementsupport.com	Hope Bereavement Support offers culturally sensitive miscarriage and pregnancy loss support groups.
LGBT Mummies	www.lgbtmummies.com	LGBT mummies provide a community for support and guidance for those wishing to build families and have a miscarriage and baby loss support group on Facebook.
Miscarriage UK	www.miscarriageuk.org Email: info@miscarriageuk.org Tel: 0303 003 6464	Miscarriage UK (formerly The Miscarriage Association) provides support and information to anyone affected by miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or molar pregnancy. Telephone and online chat support as well as details of groups can be found on their website.
Petals	www.petalscharity.org	Petals, the Baby Loss Counselling Charity, delivers a free specialist counselling to people affected by trauma related to pregnancy loss, provision of which is dependant upon geographical location.
Sands	www.sands.org.uk Email: helpline@sands.org.uk Tel: 0808 164 3322	The Sands National Helpline provides a safe, confidential place for anyone who has been affected by the death of a baby. Telephone support is available from 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday and 6pm to 9pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings.
Saying Goodbye	www.sayinggoodbye.org Email: support@sayinggoodbye.org Tel: 0300 323 1350	Saying Goodbye provides information and support to anyone who has lost a baby in pregnancy, at birth or in infancy.
Tommy's	www.tommys.org Email: midwife@tommys.org Tel: 0800 0147 800	Tommy's is the largest UK charity researching the causes and prevention of pregnancy complications, miscarriage, stillbirth and premature birth. Telephone support is available free from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Contact



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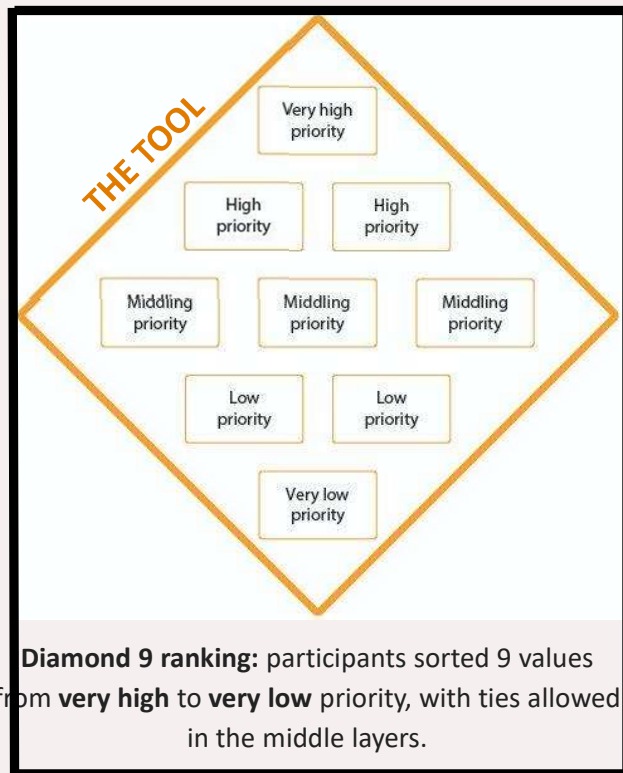
Sarra Jenkins

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Aspiration and Constraint

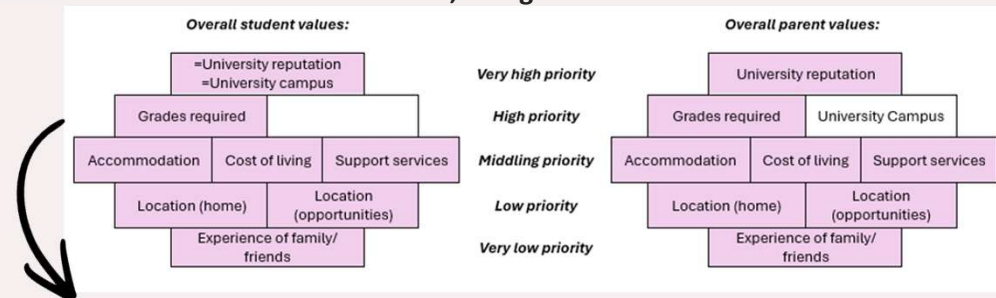
THE RESEARCH Where choice suggests openness in relation to a psychology of preferences, **decision-making alludes to both power and constraint** (Ball et al, 2002)



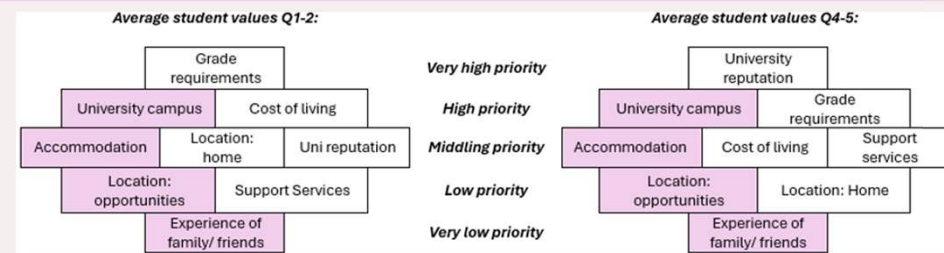
Whose values impact a student's decisions about university?

THE FINDINGS

Same tool, two generations



Overall, 8 of 9 values matched almost exactly but that agreement isn't shared equally: it's strongest in advantaged families, and weaker in less advantaged families...



THE CONCLUSION There is a shared value between demographic groups of what values within the framework of this decision matters and where that information is drawn from.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE: Value transmission is socially stratified.
Values elicitation must be a precondition for guidance, not an assumption.

Sarra Jenkins
MA Careers Guidance & Development
University of Derby



SOLVING THE NORTHERN APPRENTICESHIP PARADOX

By Ash
Mukherjee





THE QUESTION WE AREN'T ASKING

Apprenticeship
s: Success or
Just
Participation?

- - 353,500 apprenticeship starts
 - 761,480 participants
 - 198,330 achievements
- Big question: **What happens after completion?**

THE NORTHERN APPRENTICES HIP PARADOX



High Participation. Uneven Progression.

- ✓ Strong engagement in apprenticeships
- ✓ Strong investment in skills systems
- ✗ Uneven progression into higher-skilled roles
- ✗ Inconsistent wage growth
- ✗ Variable long-term career mobility



WHAT BILL LAW HELPED US SEE

Careers Are
Ecological, Not
Individual

Career outcomes are shaped by:



- **Employer capacity**
- **Labour market opportunities**
- **Organisational structures**
- **Access to progression conversations**



Employer insight: "**Sometimes progression depends on whether a role exists, not how good the apprentice is.**"

FROM PARTICIPATION TO PROGRESSION



The Northern Apprenticeship Progression Framework

- **Progression Intelligence** - Help apprentices understand realistic career outcomes.
- **Career Progression Reviews** - Structured conversations throughout the apprenticeship.
- **Employer Progression Agreements** - Shared responsibility for future development.
- **Progression Index (NAPI)** - Measure career impact, not just completion.



ACCESS IS NOT ENOUGH WITHOUT ASCENT.

→ THANK YOU FOR LISTENING.



Who Am I Professionally Now?



...STILL IN TRANSITION...

""Layering up rather than a replacement...""

Careers Sensemaking for SEND Learners

Developing CST-SEND as an Innovative, Practice-Ready
Framework

Hope Fogg, 2026

Many SEND
learners
develop
career
understanding
after
experience —
not before.

Key points: Traditional models rely on verbal reflection and linear decision-making.

Practitioner findings (n=24):

71% difficulty articulating preferences

67% low confidence

58% limited experiential opportunities

These barriers reflect **system misalignment**, not learner deficit.

SEND learners don't build career understanding by making decisions - they build it by making sense of experiences.

The CST-SEND Cycle

Career Sensemaking Theory for SEND Learners (CST-SEND)



FIGURE 1

Career Sensemaking Theory for SEND Learners (CST-SEND)

Career Sensemaking Theory for SEND learners reframes career development as sensemaking, not decision-making.

The four-stage cycle:

Experience - participation in real environments

Emotion - affective response (“comfortable, unsure, stressed”)

Pattern recognition - emerging strengths, needs and values

Supported interpretation - co-constructed meaning

They learn best when:

- tasks are small and manageable
- conversations are gentle and supportive
- experiences are repeated
- reflection happens slowly
- they are not rushed toward decisions

“Working at a manageable pace with low-demand, regular interactions.”

CST-SEND Tools for Practice

Four tools translate the theory into accessible, practice-ready guidance.

Experience Tracker: Captures participation without requiring verbal reflection. Understanding emerges through experience before expression.

Emotion Tag Board: Uses symbols/icons to record affective responses. Emotion becomes meaningful data.

Pattern Builder: Makes recurring preferences and triggers visible across experiences.

Self-Concept Compass: Synthesises strengths, needs, enabling conditions and values. Supports EHCPs and transition planning.

These tools legitimise nonverbal learning, reduce pressure and make career development accessible.

Before young people can decide who they want to become, they need opportunities to discover who they are.

Experience Tracker

Where?	What Happened?	Who?

Remember, you can draw, write, use photos or even leave some sections blank.



These cards can be cut out and stuck on to a physical emotions tag board.

Pattern Builder

Things that...

Work well	Need more support
☐ Quieter environments	☐ Noise
☐ Practical tasks	☐ Need more structure
☐ Clear routine	☐ Large groups
☐ Small groups	☐ Talking to others



CST-SEND conceptualises career understanding as emerging over time through cyclical, relational processes, in which learners construct meaning from lived experiences with the support of trusted adults.

Thank you!

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Invisible barriers? Navigating ambition, visibility, and career development with endometriosis

Jenny Sloan

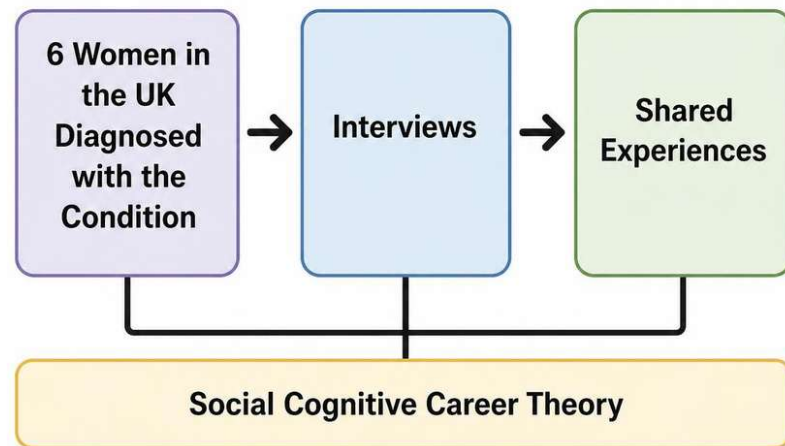
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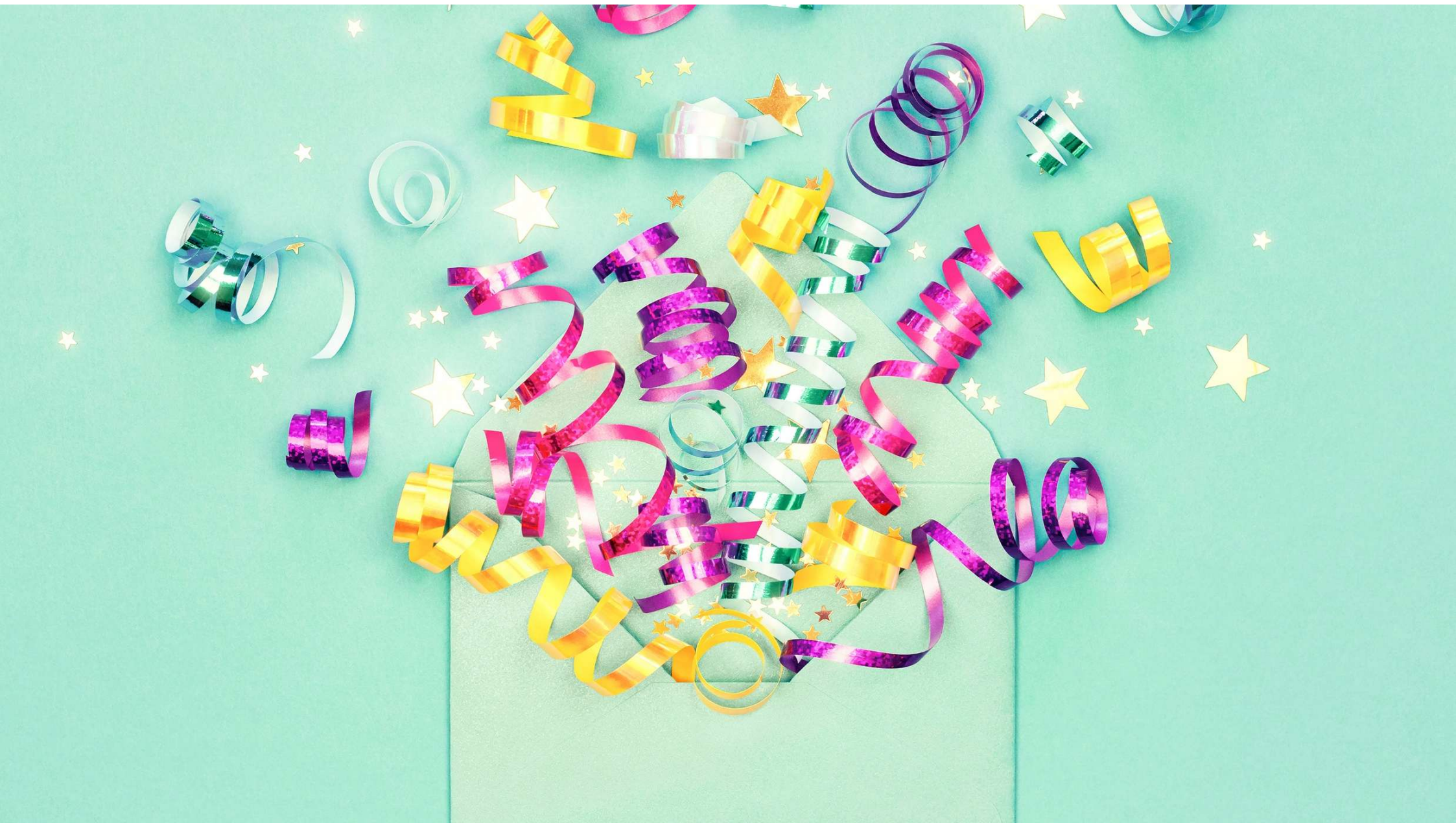
Finalist presentations

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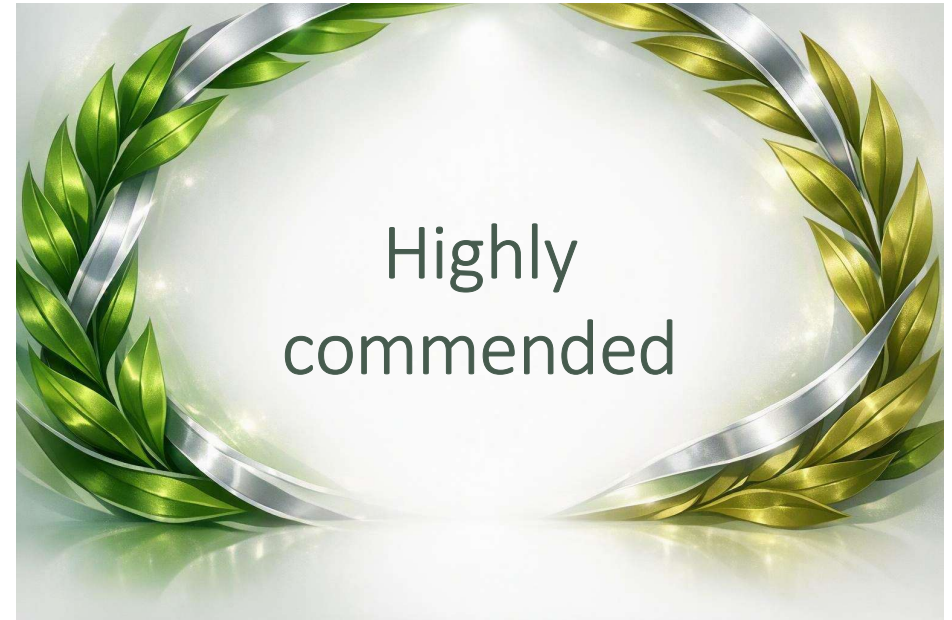
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