UKPDC 2017 PROCEEDINGS

Promoting Research and the Researcher

Held on the 5th and 6th June 2017

University of Plymouth, Faculty of Business

Editors: George Dexter
        ABM Golam Mustafa
Chairman’s Introduction

George Dexter Chairman of the Organising Committee

12TH ANNUAL PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY DOCTORAL COLLOQUIUM 2017

Welcome to our latest PDC event here in Plymouth (UK) and the published proceedings provided as extended abstract by our presenters this year. As chair it has been my privilege to work with a team of dedicated colleagues in this student-led event, which also has had the strong support of the staff from the Faculty of Business.

We were pleased to award prizes to the presenters for their papers and also for best presentations, which was decided by popular vote.

I recognize the contributions not only from students but our academic staff members who have been instrumental in making our new PDC event happen with their guidance and encouragement. Here Professor Jingjing Xu and Dr James Benhin have provided extraordinary levels of help.

Our keynote speakers provided real insight on the key themes of the colloquium: impact, publications and academic networking.

The colloquium provided friendly, constructive and immediate feedback to presenters by the use of discussants. Feedback through questions and constructive comments was provided by members of Faculty of Business academic staff with specific expertise in the area covered by the paper. I would like to thank these members of staff for the presenter friendly way in which they undertook their task.
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Opening Remarks

Professor Nikolaos Tzokas, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Business

PGR students and Colleagues

At the Faculty of Business (FoB) research underpins all our academic activities. We recognise the strategic importance of Postgraduate Research (PGR) programmes in helping to deliver our research excellence. Our aim is to provide a research conducive environment to enable our students not only to acquire excellent research experience but also help them to deliver research outcomes that could contribute to the Faculty’s research excellence agenda and their own career prospects. This Colloquium is one of the key avenues for achieving these objectives.

I would like to warmly welcome all of you to our 12th UKPDC with the theme “Promoting Research and the Researcher.” This Colloquium will showcase the potential of our research to impact on a wide range of stakeholders, from nations to communities, businesses and individuals.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all academic staff for taking an active part in the Colloquium as reviewers, keynote speakers, chairs, discussants and delegates. My thanks also go to all our students for the effort you have put into the preparation and submission of your oral and poster presentations, and I have no doubt that your research activities will benefit immensely from the discussions.

I wish you all a very fruitful deliberation.
Dr James Benhin, Director of FoB PhD Programmes & Associate Professor (SL) in Economics

The Faculty of Business (FoB) Doctoral Programmes aim to develop a highly confident, theoretically sound, quantitatively adept, independently minded and very well-informed PhD student, with the capacity to excel in academia, industry and related organisations. In achieving this objective we have put into place and developing several activities and programmes, including a buddy system, PGR research cafés, grants for data collection and conference attendance, and in depth training activities. Today’s Colloquium is indeed one of the ways we hope will contribute to achieving this objective.

As Director of the Faculty’s PhD Programmes, it gives me much pleasure to welcome all of you to our 12th UK Plymouth Doctoral Colloquium (UKPDC), under the theme, “Promoting Research and the Researcher.” I have no doubt that by helping to enhance the research culture and environment for our PGR students, this Colloquium, would also contribute to the Faculty’s research excellence agenda.

I am delighted that you are able to join us to make this event a memorable one. I am especially delighted to welcome our keynote speakers, presenters, session chairs, discussants and delegates. Thank you again for accepting our invitation to be with us today. We look forward to your invaluable contributions to the Colloquium.

For all delegates, especially PGR students, I hope this two-day Colloquium would be a very useful experience and contribute to enhancing the quality of your research activities.

I wish all of us very productive and thought-provoking discussions.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful for the sponsorship received from the University of Plymouth through the Faculty of Business, the Faculty of Business Information Technology, and the Document Production Centre.

We are equally grateful for the support provided by the University of Plymouth Postgraduate Society and its members.

We are indebted to the keynote speakers, the session chairs and the discussants.

The Keynote Speakers, Professor John Dinwoodie, Dr Nigel Jackson, Dr Stephen Childe, and Mrs Sarah Kearns provided an informed, insightful and often entertaining framework for the event and we thank them for their input and support.

The chairs of the sessions; Professor Paul Bishop, Dr Andreas Walmsley, Dr Sarah Tuck, and Professor Kim Stevenson efficiently managed of the sessions which enabled timely, in depth and very fruitful discussion of each of the papers presented.

The discussants provided invaluable expertise, constructive comments and insightful questions made for very lively discussions on each of the papers and the sessions. We therefore thank: Dr Nader Virk, Dr Mojisola Olubode, Professor Paul Bishop, Dr Rania Naguib, Dr Mohamed Haddoud, Dr Carole Sutton, Dr Haya Al-Dajani, Dr Irina Neaga, Dr Alberto Basso, Dr Victoria Hurth, Dr Jill Annison, Dr Patricia Gray.

Last but not least we would like to express our appreciation for the support provided by the Faculty Administration, in particular Flea Palmer and Jill Short from Fobit, for the IT support before and during the event.
## Day 1: 5th June 2017

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<td><strong>Uju-Ugochkwu:</strong> <em>Social media in organizations</em></td>
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<td><strong>Doaa Althalathini:</strong> <em>Women entrepreneurship in conflict-affected countries – Case of Gaza Strip</em></td>
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**Evening Dinner Event**

Drink and networking will start from 19.30. Dinner will start from 20.00. Address: Zuzimo Restaurant, 153 Vauxhall Street, Plymouth PL4 0DF tele 0172 651300
**Day 2: 6th June 2017**

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<td>14.00-14.45</td>
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<td>Associate Dean (Research)</td>
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<td>Chair of the Organising Committee</td>
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PRIZES

Prizes were awarded by the panel in four categories:

(a) for the abstracts: best paper; best literature review; and, best research methodology; and
(b) on the days of the colloquium: best oral presentation by audience vote.

Abstracts


Best Literature Review: Michael Bohlinger: The underestimated contribution of hydropower for the Energiewende (Energy transition)

Best Methodology: Alina Mia Udall: Identities and Sustainable Consumer Behaviour: A Factor-Analytical Approach

Best Oral Presentation: Alina Mia Udall: Identities and Sustainable Consumer Behaviour: A Factor-Analytical Approach

The Director of Faculty of Business PhD Programmes, James Benhin, on behalf of the Organising Committee and the Faculty, extends his congratulations to all the deserving winners, and applauds all the authors for their excellent work.
# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

| **Professor John Dinwoodie**  
Professor of Maritime Logistics | Professor Dinwoodie is the chair of Maritime Logistics at the Plymouth Graduate School. He is a member of the editorial board of a number of international journals as well as being a reviewer for over 30 international journals.  
Professor Dinwoodie’s presentation may be found on [link to be inserted] |
|---|---|
| **Dr Nigel Jackson**  
Associate Professor in Persuasion and Communication | Dr Jackson’s research interests include: political communication, especially the use of the Internet; political marketing and political PR; political event management including election campaigns, party conferences and the use of events by local authorities; and political persuasion.  
Dr Jackson’s presentation may be found on [link to be inserted] |
| **Dr Stephen Childe**: Associate Professor in Business Management & Operations | Dr Stephen Childe is a Senior Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy. He is a Chartered Engineer and Member of the Institution of Engineering and Technology and a member of IFIP Working Group 5.7 "Advances in Production Management Systems". He was formerly a Vice-Chairman of the UK Institution of Operations Management and is the Editor of the international journal "Production Planning & Control: The Management of Operations" which addresses operations management in all sectors, especially focussing on research that addresses or identifies problems experienced in industry.  
Dr Jackson’s presentation may be found on [link to be inserted] |
| Mrs Sarah Kearns  
Researchers Development Programme  
Manager: Research Strategy and Development (Research and Innovation) |
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Kearns is responsible for managing the Researcher Development Programme and Research Support Programme for research students and research staff. She facilitates the Researcher Forum and European HR Excellence in Research Award including work with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Kearns also oversees the work of the Plymouth University Postgraduate Society.</td>
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<td>Mrs Kearns’ presentation may be found on [link to be inserted]</td>
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EXTENDED ABSTRACTS
The Impact of microfinance on the empowerment of women - A case study of the Grameen bank, Bangladesh

ABM Golam Mostafa
Rumba.mukono@plymouth.ac.uk

Keywords: Microfinance, Women empowerment, micro-entrepreneurs, Child schooling, Poverty, society, economic growth, Grameen Bank

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

A significant issue with the financial sector is that commercial banks are biased against poor people, especially against the disadvantaged women (Remenyi 2000; Yunus 1996). Even, the government banks in Bangladesh which started with a target to help the poorer also have proven unsuccessful. Under the government administration, financial services may always not reach poor people (Beck et al., 2008); also formal credit system in provincial regions hampers rural development (Adams et al., 1984). This is the way women in rural areas are out of financial sources.

The empowerment of women refers to the capacities to increase self-reliance, making decisions, ability to impact the direction by achieving control over material and non-material resources (Moser, 1989, 1993). Empowerment is dream to women in many regions of south Asia who live in patriarchal culture. One of the main reasons of disempowerment of women is exclusion of financial products and services what makes them prone in the society and intercept them to be self-dependent (Sanyal, 2009). Empowerment of women is biased and incomplete when it was judged on inequality and does not include non-economic dimensions of decision making power both within the family and outside (Khan & Norren, 2012).

This study investigates the impact of Grameen Bank, a renowned microcredit provider originated in Bangladesh. The objective of this study is to find the extent of Grameen Bank’s impact in empowering the women in the society.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

Both qualitative and quantitative approach was adopted in this study to get the answers of selected questions through questionnaires and interviews. Specifically, 50 questionnaires were dispersed to the samples and two branch managers were interviewed. The motivation of using mix method approach is that both qualitative and quantitative (Robson, 2002) is not to get confined to a single method of social inquiry while adopting both approaches together comprehends the social reality (Hentschel, 1999; Bamberger, 2000; Creswell, 2003).
The data collection was in two parts:

Quantitative: Questionnaires were the key method to collect data from Grameen bank clients

Qualitative: Interviews with two managers also were added to avoid the influence of the clients’ perspective in the research.

This study was conducted in Bangladesh and the reason to choose this area as this is the origin of Grameen bank what provides utmost appropriate situation for the study of this research. Specifically, data was collected from two villages and an Upozilla (Sub-district) of Comilla (can be called as city) of Chittagong (Can be called as county). In order to ensure maximum variation in the sample, clients from both rural and urban areas were invited to join the questionnaires besides two interviews from the branch managers of Grameen bank.

3. Main findings:

This study suggests that Grameen bank has positive impact on its clients. Most importantly, demographics findings represents that 97% of clients are women. Clients had increment in income after joining the Grameen bank. 56% of clients responded that they became self-employed after joining Grameen bank. 42% of clients agreed that they are able to bear the schooling cost of their children. 50% of women clients mentioned they are empowered as they can make the family decisions.

4. Discussion of implications:

This study offers a depth understanding on the impact of Grameen bank’s activities. The implications of this study are manifold. Firstly, findings of this study are highly significant for other Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) as thousands of licensed and unlicensed MFIs are operating in Bangladesh. My findings represent that Grameen bank has positive impact in empowering women in terms of making family decision, becoming micro-entrepreneurs, receiving health and nutrients information and child schooling. Therefore, implications of this study are significant to other disadvantaged women of the society who are not the members of Grameen bank yet. They may want to be the part of Grameen bank by considering the positive impact of this research. Moreover, findings of this research are also important to the government’s financial policy towards MFIs. This research suggests the Government of Bangladesh to consider subsidising the fund of Grameen bank to reduce the poverty rate.

5. List of key references/resources:


Sanyal, P (2009), The role of microfinance in promoting women’s social capital and normative influence, American sociological review, Volume: 74. Issue:4 Pages:529-550

Yunus, M (1996). ‘The empowerment of the poor.” An address to the state of the world forum, San Francisco, USA
1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Herding is the most common behavioral biases in the financial market. Herding happens when investors blindly and irrationally follow the other players in the market, instead of their knowledge, beliefs, and analysis. This herd behavior causes the value of securities to deviate from actual market values and affects the trade-off between risk and return (Christie and Huang, 1995; Saxena et al., 2016). A growing strand in the GCC literature focuses only on the effect of global shocks on the herd behaviour (e.g. Balcilar et al., 2013; Balcilar et al., 2014). None of these studies investigate the “Spurious” and the “Intentional” herding in the GCC equity markets. The paper contributes to the literature by testing the fundamentals and the non-fundamental herding in the GCC stock markets. The study also investigates to what extent does the 2008/2010 financial crisis period and the Arab Spring period contribute to the herd behavior in the GCC stock markets. Also, testing herding in bull and bear market condition. Generally speaking, there are two main streams in the herding behaviour literature. The first stream studies the institutional investor herding (e.g. Lakonishok et al.,1992). While, another stream in the literature study herding using aggregate market data and tests herding towards the market consensus (e.g., Chang et al., 2000). The study follows the second streams of literature and tests herding based on aggregate market data.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

The study applies Change et al. (2000) (CH) methodology, who has improved Christie and Huang (1995)(CCK) approach. This method is simple and is commonly used in the previous literature. They measure herding based on returns dispersion in a portfolio of assets with similar characteristics. Christies and Huang (1995) estimate herding by the Cross-Sectional Standard Deviation of returns (CSSD). They argue that dispersion of returns will be low when herding behavior exists around the market consensus.

Chang et al. (2000) measure herding by the cross-Sectional Absolute Deviation of returns (CSAD). They argue that during period of market stress, the increasing association between dispersion and market return may no longer hold if investors choose to follow the aggregate market. Thus, non-linearly increasing or decreasing between dispersion and market return may occur. CSAD is calculated using the following formula:
Where:

- the Cross-Sectional Absolute Deviation of returns

\[ \text{N} \]  
Total number of stocks at time \( t \)

\[ i \]  
Individual stock

\[ t \]  
Refer to the day

Stock’s return

Market return

The study calculates the difference of the stock’s return and the market exchange of each individual stock \( i \) of the \( N \) stocks and for each day \( t \). The stock and the market index return is calculated using the continuously compounded returns as follows:

Where \( \log \text{ is the log of daily price} \)

Then, the study estimates a non-linear (OLS) regression as follows:

\[
\text{(1)}
\]

Prior research (e.g. Christies and Huang, 1995) find that the direction of market movement may affect the relationship between CSAD and the market return. Herding may be more present in either “up” days or in the “down” days of the market. The dataset is divided based on increasing/ decreasing market returns to test the asymmetric herding, the study follow Galariotis et al. (2015) approach which based on CCK (2000) method. The study estimates model (2) and (3) to test the asymmetric herding in the “up” days and in the “down” days as follows:

\[
\text{CSAD}_{\text{Down}} = + D | D | + D(D)^2 +
\]

\[
\text{CSAD}_{\text{Up}} = + U | U | + U(U)^2 +
\]

Where \( R < 0 \) refers to the “down” days, the days when the market portfolio correlated with negative return and \( R > 0 \) refers to the “Up” days, the days when the market portfolio associated with positive return. The negative and statically significant of \( \text{indicates herding behavior in the market consensus} \).
According to Bikhchandani and Sharma (2000), investors may follow each other’s behaviors for two reasons. First, they might react to similar changes in fundamentals. Also, investors may intentionally copy each other actions. The study follows Galariotis et al. (2015) methodology to investigate "Spurious" and "Intentional" herding in the GCC markets. The total measure is divided into two important measures, is the cross-sectional absolute deviation of returns due to investors responding to fundamentals.

Moreover, is the cross-sectional absolute deviation of returns due to non-fundamentals reasons. The study uses Fama and French (1995,1996) and Carhart (1997) factors in the return form to find the crucial fundamental information that influences investor decisions on a market level. The study estimates model (4) to find the appropriate measure of the cross-sectional absolute deviation with the effect of non-fundamental information as follows:

$$CSAD_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1(R_{m,t} - R_f) + \beta_2HML_t + \beta_3SMB_t + \beta_4MOM_t + \epsilon_t$$  \hspace{1cm} (4)$$

where:

- $HML_t$ is the High Minus Low return factor
- $SMB_t$ is the Small Minus Big return factor
- $MOM_t$ is the Momentum factor

Then, the study uses the error term in the model (4) as a measure of non-fundamental herding as follows:

$$CSAD_{NONFUND,t} = \epsilon_t$$

Next, the study then estimates the “Spurious” herding by deducting herding due to non-fundamental information from total herding as follows:

The study then estimates model (5) and (6) to capture the effect of fundamental and non-fundamental herding behavior as follows:

$$CSAD_{FUND,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1|R_{m,t}| + \beta_2R_{m,t}^2 + \epsilon_t$$ \hspace{1cm} (5)$$

$$CSAD_{NONFUND,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1|R_{m,t}| + \beta_2R_{m,t}^2 + \epsilon_t$$ \hspace{1cm} (6)$$

The negative and statically significant of indicates herding behavior in the market consensus.

3. Main findings:

First, the study investigates the presence of herding behavior in the GCC equity markets. The findings show evidence of herding behavior in the Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Dubai markets when using the full period sample. Previous research (e.g. Balcilar et al., 2013 and Balcilar et al., 2014) also find that most of the GCC financial markets are herding. Then, the study separates the sample into three sub-periods samples taking into account different crisis period such as the 2008/2009 financial crisis period and the Arab Spring period. The results find that most of the GCC countries are herding over the 2005/2008 pre-crisis period and the Arab Spring period.

These results may support Sharma et al. (2015) who find that during the pre-crisis period investors are herding. Moreover, it may also support Christie and Huang (1995) and Gleason et al. (2004) results.
regarding the presence of herding during the market stress period. There is not any sufficient evidence of herding behavior during the period 2008/2010 which covers the 2008/2009 financial crisis period and that is consistent with previous research (e.g. Sharma et al., 2015). Second, the paper does further investigation and check the presence of herding behavior in more detail. The study divides the sample into “up” days and “down” days. “Up” days refer to the days when the market consensus is positive and more than zero. “Down” days refer to the days when the market consensus is negative and below zero.

The results indicate evidence of herding when using the whole period sample in “up” days for Qatar, Dubai and Kuwait financial markets. Also, there is proof of herding behavior in “down” days for Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman and Dubai markets. The study also investigates the asymmetric herding using the sub-periods samples and reach the following conclusion. Most of the GCC financial markets are herding whether in “up” days or in “down” days over the study periods. Third, the main contribution of this paper is to examine the fundamentals and non-fundamentals herding in the GCC markets. Previous research (e.g. Balcilar et al., 2013 and Balcilar et al., 2014) does not distinguish between the “Spurious” and the “intentional” herding in the GCC context. When the study decomposes the total cross sectional absolute deviation of return to deviation due to fundamental information and deviation due to non-fundamental information. The main conclusion illustrates that most of the GCC financial markets are herding due to non-fundamental information. The paper fails to find that the GCC equity markets are herding due to fundamental information.

4. Discussion of implications:

By looking at the herd behavior in the GCC stock markets, it will develop a new insight into the making of investment decisions and strategies. It will also promote understanding of the risk attitude of the GCC stock markets and their efficiency.

5. List of key references/resources:


Natural resource curse and economic growth: An evaluation of the literature

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Keywords: Resource Curse, Dutch disease, Economic Growth

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Classical economists including Adam Smith and David Ricardo have deeply thought that rich states in terms of oil, gas, gold, and other primary commodity exports can base their development stage on these natural resources, and these natural resources can be used as an important factor to sustain economic growth (Badeeb et al., 2016). For example, natural resources in Africa can be used for generating exchange rate and job creation (Auty and Mickell, 1998; Auty, 2001). Moreover, incomes that derive from natural resources can be invested in other productive sectors including manufacture, human capital, and agricultural modernization. Ross (2012) stated that with incomes from oil, it is considered that the main natural resources sector for economic growth have different types of quality regarding to scale, stability, sources, and secrecy. These types of different quality should increase economic growth through business creation in the non-natural resources and natural resources sectors, receiving credit by firms, states, and individual, transferring technology from the main international oil firms to domestic firms, training and capacity building, and raise state’s income from natural resources-associated taxes and natural resources rents (Ackah, 2016).

According to Stevens (2003), historically, natural resources have played an important role in economic growth in industrialised states such as Australia, Canada, the Scandinavian countries, and the United States. Natural resources should bring wealth to a society, support economic performance, and reduce poverty. However, studies such as Auty (1986, 1993, 2001a, 2001b), Sachs and Warner (1995; 1997; 1999) and Robinson et al (2006) have found that a number of natural resource exporting countries are negatively affected in terms of various economic and social factors. Such adverse effect is what has been referred to as resource curse phenomenon. That is, an observed negative relationship between natural resource exports and the economic growth of countries engaging in these exports.

Frankel (2010) pointed out that it is noticeable how natural resource-rich countries including oil and gas have not grown successfully, while countries without natural resources have done so. Large numbers of African countries, including Angola, Nigeria, Sudan, and the Congo, have an abundance of natural resources such as diamonds and oil; however, per capita income is below average level and there is poor quality of life. In contrast, East Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong have a good economic performance despite the fact that they are natural resource-poor countries.

The natural resource curse theory suggested that natural resources exports have negative effect on economic growth in countries which export them through two mechanisms: economic and social. Economic explanation refers to Dutch disease and it was originated on the 26th of November 1977 in the Economists to describe the impact of natural gas field discovery in 1959 in the Netherlands. Corden (1984) defines the Dutch disease as a negative effect of manufacturing sector due to the discovery of the natural gas field. Corden and Neary
(1982) and Corden (1984) presented the model through two channels of resources: spending effect and movement effect.

**The spending effect:** This is happened when there is an increase in the income from flourishing oil sector encourages higher demand and large spending on the services sectors, which raises prices, production and wages in the non-tradeable sector. In the lagging sector (agricultural and manufacture), prices are set at international levels. Thus, profits are reduced after increase demand for services and imports. The prices of non-tradeable sector increases relative to lagging sector, resulting in exchange rate appreciation.

**The resource movement effect:** We assume that increasing in the oil prices leads to a rise in the marginal product of labour in the oil sector, which leads to greater wages and a greater return capital. If factors are mobile, this will cause both capital and labour movement from lagging and non-tradeable sector to the oil sector. This effect has been separated into two sub-effects: the direct de-industrialization, which refers movement of employment from lagging (manufacturing and agricultural) sector into oil sector. The direct de-industrialization causes decline in the employment and production in the lagging sector. Regarding to direct de-industrialisation is like a spending effect and results from falling production in the non-tradeable sector. Moreover, spending effect generates higher demand for non-tradeable sector. With higher demand increase prices following increasing wages in the non-tradeable sector relative to lagging sector. This will draw labour from lagging sector to non-tradeable sector.

The second mechanism is social, which includes institution and it is the most significant factor to support economic growth. Mehlum et al. (2006) developed a theory, which explains two types of institution in natural resources rich countries: the grabber-friendly institutions and the producer-friendly institution. They defines the grabber friendly institutions as weak, with the characteristics of this institution is the lack of democratic support for political action against rent seeking, lack of transparency which encourage bureaucratic corruption. Also, he described the grabber-friendly institution as insecure the property right, weaknesses of rule of law that leads to crime, fraud, and the chaos. By contrast, producers-friendly institution, the law is a strong and rent-seeking becomes less effective, strong bureaucratic structure, low corruption, securing property rights, greater transparency and the government effectiveness (Mehlum et al., 2006).

This study attempts to fulfil the following objectives.

1. To analyse the Dutch disease theory in natural resource exporting countries.
2. To examine the role of institution in the economy of natural resource exporting countries in relation to changes in revenue from natural resources.
3. To assess the correlation between natural resources and the human capital of natural resource exporting countries.

This research will contribute to the empirical literature on the resource curse theory through the adoption of a Dutch disease model, and test it empirically through exchange rate and non-tradeable sector (manufacture and agriculture) models. This research also contributes to the empirical literature by finding out the impact of natural resources on social factors such as institution and human capital variables. Another important contribution for this study is to apply panel data fixed effect estimator and General Method of Moment to solve the endogeneity problem.

**2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:**

Following Manzano and Rigobon (2008), Bravo-Ortega and De Gregorio (2008), and Lederman and Maloney (2002), researcher will apply panel data fixed effect of 142 countries from period 1975 to 2013. Panel data fixed effect estimator, which would be less affected by omitted variable bias issue compared to
cross-sectional. Van der Ploeg (2006, 2011) argued that it is important to apply panel data rather than of

cross-country data in analysis of resource curse hypothesis and presented that cross-country estimation suffers

from omitted variable bias. Manzano and Rigobon (2001, 2007) argued that Sachs and Warner’s (1995,

1997) results of the negative relationship between natural resources and economic growth were not precise

after they applied panel data fixed effect estimator because cross-sectional data fail to address omitted

variable bias issue. In addition, the endogeneity problem will be checked by applying the Durbin–Wu–Hausman

test. If endogeneity is found to exist, another estimator such as GMM (General Method of Moment)
or IV (Instrumental Variable) will be added to solve the endogeneity problem. The data collection is from

World Bank.

3. Main findings:

4. Discussion of implications:

5. List of key references/resources:


studies. Paper presented.


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Institutions and the Challenge of Socioeconomic Development In The Arab Region

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Keywords: Economic reform, Arab spring, governance, panel analysis, North Africa and the Middle East

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Following the Arab spring in 2011, Arabs today are going through an unprecedented time of tough and difficult choices that bear far-reaching consequences (SELIM & ZAKI. 2016). This paper argues that there was a significant economic underpinning to the Arab Spring, owing mainly to Arab economies failure to achieve sustained and inclusive growth (Costello et al., 2015). The purpose of the study is to examine whether the economic growth of the region has been unsatisfactory owing to Arab economies lack of reforms, or because of the nature of reform programs itself.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

The setup of the empirical model is primarily driven by the Solow-Swan growth model with the estimation approach following ‘Barro-type regression’ (Barro and Sala-I-Martin, 1995; Barro (2003)).

The main aim of the model is to measure the economic reform effort of the countries by estimating a conditional convergence equation for economic growth for a panel of 87 countries, including 20 from the Arab region over the period 1995 to 2014.

The aggregated economic reform indicators are generated using principal component analysis (PCA). This novel approach allows the computation and categorization of environmental variables identified by Barro (1995) into six separate groups. Each principal component represents a group of variables in terms of relativity. These components are macroeconomic stability reform indicators, external stability reform, structural and business reform, human capital, physical infrastructure, and governance.

The empirical analysis examines the trends and directions of the indicators, as well as the correlations between them then applies panel data econometrics to estimate economic growth functions for the respective group of countries.

3. Main findings:

The analysis finds that macroeconomic and external stability are key variables for an effective reform process and for the growth prospects of the developing world. The efficiency of structural reforms depends on success in stabilising the economy. In other words, reforming the economy materialises into growth if applied in a stable macroeconomic environment. In an increasingly volatile environment, a high level of structural reforms increases the disruptive effect of macroeconomic instability. This means that structural reforms should take place at least at the same time as macroeconomic reforms, if not after. The most striking result from the baseline model is that the coefficient of governance is significant and positively determines growth in the
whole sample, while it is negative in Arab sample. Additionally, the result tends to show that the resource curse in the Arab world is primarily an “institutional curse”, even though it has several macroeconomic manifestations.

4. Discussion of implications:

The empirical model confirms that the ACs resource rents have a negative effect on economic growth as well as the governance. This results proposed that the resource curse in the Arab world is primarily an “institutional curse”, even though it has several macroeconomic manifestations. The politics conditions affect economics through affect how resource rents are collected, allocated and used. The region is also concerned with achieving progress in structural reforms, which have always lagged behind faster-growing countries in terms of forging investment, trade openness and financial development. The conclusion of the study confirms that reform is simultaneously political, social, and economic. Economic reform should not be seen in a vacuum, in isolation from the political and social choices that society makes.

5. List of key references/resources:


SELIM, H. & ZAKI, C. 2016. The Institutional Curse of Natural Resources in the Arab World. Understanding and Avoiding the Oil Curse in Resource-rich Arab Economies.


A Study of Entrepreneurship and Internationalization of SME in emerging Markets

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Keywords: SME, Internationalisation

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

The Sri Lankan garment industry is losing its competitive advantage principally due to the long lead times (Tirimanne and Ariyawardana, 2008). Generally speaking, purchasing plays a major role because it is one of the main areas that tend to incur high expenditure. In order to realise adequate profits it is essential to reduce the cost of purchasing. In this scenario internationalization has become a vital issue in the Sri Lankan garment industry. According to Porter (1980), an organisation can obtain competitive advantage through cost leadership and differentiation. Purchasing is a crucial factor in the Sri Lankan garment industry which decides the level of profitability in the industry because it consists of a high proportion of bought-out items of fabrics and accessories.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

Deductive Research Approach

Mixed Methods of Data Collection

3. Main findings:

The result of the study will:

- Improve understanding and awareness of the meaning of internationalization at a conceptual framework.
- Improve the key awareness and overcome the challenges in the SME sector organizations.
- The developed internationalization strategic framework provides broader guidance for SME organizations to implement appropriate internationalization strategy.
- The result of the study will help employees to improve their awareness, knowledge, skills and overcome their current challenges within SME organizations.

4. Discussion of implications:

In order to maximize the positive implications and minimize the adverse implications of the internationalization process on the T&G industry in Sri Lanka, there is some certain internationalization strategic options have to be pursued. Those strategic options are including the focus on niche markets, international joint venture FDI as a superior manufacturer of specific products and focus on innovation based internationalization for this T&G industry. In this context, internationalization could be identified as a double edge sword, simultaneously...
threatening and supporting the T&G industry in Sri Lanka, with its wide spread effects on economy and society.

5. List of key references/resources:


A Comparative Study of An Investigation of The Extent to Which Multinational Companies (MnCs) Adopt Social Media for Employee Engagement to enhance performance

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Keywords: Employee engagement, social media, performance, multinationales

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

In recent years, there has been an increase in the use of social media in organizations due to its media richness, social presence and strong user content (Bennett et al, 2010). The growing importance and the penetration of this communication medium into businesses are encouraging organizations to embrace social media platforms to enhance employee performance and organizational strategies (Anand, 2010).

Many scholars have defined social media within various disciplines such as information science, mass media and public relations.

Definitions of social media typically relate to "the relationship that exist between network of people" (Walter & Riviera, 2004). Kaplan & Heinlein (2010) defined social media as "a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content". El Ouiridi et al (2016) added that social media is an internet-based mode of communication used on an online platform or website which enables users to access, share and create information. This has brought in the idea of user-generated content making it easier for people to interact with content interesting to them (El Ouiridi et al., 2016). That said, this medium of communication should give users the opportunity to interact and use the information in a meaningful way, such as in a workplace environment where the media could be used to drive internal communication and improve employee engagement.

In the last years, the invention of social media has changed the online world, many companies now use social media for various purposes, including enhancing business strategy and performance, communicating and participating, and building relationship among employees. Marcia (2013) study indicated that 91% of 250 “Fortune’s Most Admired U.S. Companies utilized at least one social media platform” for different work purposes. Researchers state that social media can be a means by which organizations can establish dialogue and relationships between employees and employer and are essential tools to shape effective organizational strategies (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009, Kahn, 1990, Kirby and Raphan, 2014). Parry & Solidoro, (2013) added that Social media however provide a new avenue of building relationships within the organization.

At first glance some organization may think it is a waste of time. Leftheriotis & Giannakos (2014) stated that social media can be a real challenge to an organization because they are concerned about risk of misuse and
its consequences (decreased productivity and personal use of social media during working hours); Buche et al (2013) supported this claim and state that organizations are slow to adopt social media platform for workplace activities, due to the inability of the organization to control corporate communication. Some organizations believe that employees may use the medium for personal use during working hours; therefore, they are concerned about risk of misuse and its consequences. In addition, other organizations think that it is a waste of management time, as managers and supervisors may have to frequently check and provide warnings and reminders to employees to focus more on their work (Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014). Numerous literatures have emphasised the importance of promoting dialogue within the organization to enable employee engagement to improve performance and increase productivity (Konrad, 2006).

However, regardless of the challenges pose by social media to organization's privacy and productivity, many organizations are making use of advanced technologies to manage employees to improve technical and professional skills (Cairo, 2014). These skilled employees cannot be managed with the old style of management in regards to communication pattern. Employees will expect culture of transparency, speed and clear communication. It is due to these facts that organizations are becoming more people-oriented. For over 10 years, concept like employee engagement started to appear in academic journal and acknowledged by management practitioners that effectiveness and productivity depends on employee satisfaction and commitment (Icha and Edwin, 2015). Organizations concern is on how to engage employees in their job, because they realized that engaging employees can create more efficiency and improve productivity. Any initiatives of establishing effective interaction, closer links within the workplace and to facilitate a collaborative, innovative, diverse and inclusive workplace to increase productivity and performance which is taken by organization cannot be fruitful without strong involvement and engagement of employees using social media (Parry and Solidoro, 2013, Marcia, 2013, Girard and Fallery, 2010, Miller-Merrell, 2012, Parry, 2011).

Employee engagement is all about establishing a good relationship between employee and employer (Rees et al, 2013). It also helps employees to establish closer links with their workforce and enables greater communication, collaboration and help to promote dialogue within the organization (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009, Kahn, 1990). However, the concept of employee engagement is vast and limited attention has been focused on employee engagement using social media to enhance performance. Kahn (1990) defined employee engagement as psychological condition whereby employees can be engaged in three different components, namely, physical (means being fully involved in a work in an emotional state) emotional (connected to a task through dedication and commitment) and cognitive. (Being well alerted at work through the experience of absorption and involvement) these three psychological conditions are all interrelated to the advance of engagement at workplace (May et.al. 2004).

MacLeod and Clarke (2009) in their evaluation of employee engagement argued that employee engagement is built on three dimensions; Intellectual engagement, effective engagement and social engagement, this basically means the extent in which employees can improve their performance, feel emotional connected to their work and socially engaged with their colleague about work related improvements and change. Truss et al (2006) offer a different view and construe employee engagement as a ‘passion for work’ which results from motivational drivers. While performance is a financial and nonfinancial indictor that gives information on the degree to which organization achieve its targeted objectives and missions (Lebans & Euske 2006, Kaplan & Norton, 1992). At present, whether social media has its positive and negative implications, many organizations are still utilizing this medium for work purpose. many researchers have been diving into considerable amount of research on how the use of social media influences employee's engagement at workplace. Therefore, this research limits itself to discuss only social media adoption for employee
engagement in the workplace and its influence on employee engagement and performance based on recent studies. In other word, this research ascertains the relationship between social media, employment engagement and performance.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

In summary, this research will employ quantitative methodology to understand the level of employee engagement using social media platforms in MNCs within the context if UK and Nigeria. Questionnaires will be used as a tool for data collection to get employees views and opinions about the use of social media for engagement purpose. Survey questionnaires which will be administrated on 1000 employees of multinational companies specifically on selected aviation and banking sector in the UK and Nigeria. 500 questionnaires will be administered in each country in the mentioned sectors. Respondents will consist of both mangers and their subordinates and the questionnaires will be distributed within them to get information about their opinion or impact in adopting social media platforms for engagement.

Smart Partial Least Squares (Smart PLS) and fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (FSQCA) software will be used to analyse data and test the proposed model. Smart PLS as a variance base model would be used in this study to explore the construct visibly and to simplify the research, to measure the relationships between indicators and variables to test the hypothesis (Urban & Mayerl, 2013). While FSQCA would help determine and focus attention on what conditions lead to a given outcome and “help to detect problem in conceptualizations that might have been overlooked otherwise” (Goertz, 2006, Pp.37) in addition, this software would be used to test the relationship between social media and employee engagement, as well as performance. However, to examine the relationship between social media and employee engagement and the impact on performance. Technology acceptance model (TAM) would be adopted and extended to examine the adoption of social media for engagement purposes. Constructs from original TAM (Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use) and extended constructs (perceived cost, perceived need, perceived sense of belonging, organizational policy control and perceived managers support) will be measured using the above mentioned methodology and techniques to determine the relationship between social media, employment engagement and performance, as well as the underlying factors that influence the adoption of social media platforms for employee engagement. The extended TAM would provide an insight into the influence of employee’s decision to adopt social media platforms at work.

3. Main findings:

As the research is still in its infant. Other relevant literatures on social media and employee engagement have found out that the use of social media at workplace can be a means by which organizations can establish dialogue and relationships between employees and employer, to shape effective organizational strategies (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009, Kahn, 1990, Kirby and Raphan, 2014). Sinickas (2005) states that organizations adopt social media platforms for employee engagement and collective brainpower of all employees to improve business decision. Similarly, Parry and Solidoro (2013) maintains that many organization recognizes that social media have a vital role to play in establishing closer links with their workforce and that it enables greater communication, collaboration and help to build relationship among employees. The authors also added that the use of social media to engage employees brings effective interaction that encourages knowledge sharing and easy problem solving and thus bring greater value to the organization.

Although the concept of employee engagement using social media platforms has been identified as significant by different authors. Many of the studies employed qualitative methods to determine the relationships
between social media and employee management. There have been limited research on the relationship between social media and employee engagement and its impact on performance. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationships between the use of social media and employee engagement to know whether the adoption of social media to enhance employee engagement improve performance or not.

4. Discussion of implications:

Although the concept of employee engagement using social media platforms has been identified as significant by different authors, but it has received little attention by researchers (Parry, and Solidoro, 2013).

The research aim is to address the lack of research evidence on the adoption of social media platforms for employee engagement to enhance performance (Park, 2009). At the end of this research, it is believed that the research will add to the existing knowledge the comparative study of the adoption of social media for employee engagement to enhance performance in MNCs within the context of UK and Nigeria. The research will not try to standardize or benchmark the practice of adopting social media platforms for employee engagement in MNCs in these countries but focus on seeking to understand the diversity of management practices among multinational companies within Nigeria and UK. The rationale for choosing UK and Nigeria is that it is important to compare the possible adoption of social media platforms for employee engagement in the developed and developing county.

In addition, this research will call on MNCs managers in UK and Nigeria to adopt to the changes of the new technology and become more open to communication and improve employee engagement through the adoption of social media to encourage open and effective communication to improve employee engagement and increase performance. The research outcome will improve organizational understanding of the relationship between social media and employee engagement and increase organization understanding of the factors that influences the adoption of social media platform to enhance employee engagement to improve performance, as well as the institutional, social and cultural barriers associated with using social media platforms to engage and communicate in the MNCs within UK and Nigeria.

Furthermore, aside demonstrating the benefits of social media at workplace, this study predicate specific factors which can influence employee’s adoption of social media platforms for engagement. Most employees enjoy using social media for their personal use – communicating and exchanging messages with friends and families. In this digital economy, using social media platforms at workplace is important if organizations could implement the medium for communication and engagement purposes. Organization must do everything to ensure and inspire employees to accept and adopt social media platform for engagement to enhance performance. In addition, employees must be trained and supported in the use of social media platform designed for work activities and they must have social media platform available to use during work hours so that employees can effectively work and collaborate with each other and share their expertise.

5. List of key references/resources:


Liquefied Natural Gas as Marine Fuel: Just a Dream or Future Reality?

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Keywords: Liquefied Natural Gas, Marine Fuel

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Over the past two decades, vast resources have been devoted to developing the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry, essentially to improve gas shipment efficiency from surplus regions to countries with excess demand (Mutlu et al., 2016; Andersson, 2016; Scheig, 2009; Özelkan et al., 2008). LNG is a natural gas that goes through a refrigeration process which has been reduced to a liquid state, and represents approximately 1/600th of its gaseous size, and subsequently is vaporised back into natural gas for consumption (Scheig, 2009). However, there is a paradigm shift promoting the use of LNG in combustion engines in its form due to low sulphur emission compared to conventional fuels. Is this just a dream or a future reality?

Although shipping is the most carbon efficient international transport mode, environmental issues have been an area of growing concern and sea transportation are frequently regulated and controlled. The negative impact shipping has on human health and the environment is significant, sea transport is responsible for an estimated 3% of global carbon dioxide emissions (Xu et al., 2015). As a result of the growing concern over climate change and pollution, environmental groups and maritime bodies are pushing for LNG as a marine fuel to reduce the environmental impact (Xu et al., 2015). LNG has less emission compared to sulphur fuel oil and marine diesel oil, most LNG has no detectable sulphur (Bunkerworld, 2017a; Xu et al., 2015). Although obstacles such as high infrastructure costs, lack of sufficient enforcement, unavailability of installations around the world, as well as the current low prices of crude oil still remain (Bunkerworld, 2017a; Bunkerworld 2017b; Bunkerworld 2017c), some ships in northern Europe have used LNG as a fuel source for over a decade, with an excellent safety record. Several ports in Asia are also preparing up for LNG bunkering (Bunkerworld, 2017a). To further cement the future of NLG as a marine fuel, in February 2017, the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) published ISO 20519:2017, a new standard that aims to ensure LNG-fuelled vessels bunker in a safe and sustainable way (Bunkerworld, 2017a; Bunkerworld, 2017b). The new standard gives details of content related to liquid and vapour transfer, operations, requirements for the LNG provider to provide an LNG bunker delivery note, training and qualifications of personnel and requirements for LNG facilities to meet applicable ISO standards and local codes. The standard comes at a time when demand for LNG as a marine fuel is expected to surge due to stricter environmental regulations such as the IMO’s 0.5% global sulphur cap, which will come into force from January 1, 2020 (Bunkerworld, 2017a; Bunkerworld, 2017d). By 2020, ship owners will either install emissions-cleaning scrubbers on vessels or switch to burning cleaner, more expensive fuels. For most that will mean switching to a gasoil-based fuel, however switching to LNG would allow ship owners both to comply with the new sulfur regulation and with prospective limits on nitrogen and particulate matter emissions that are likely to be imposed (Bunkerworld, 2017d).
This paper aims to address the issue of how LNG can be a viable marine fuel? To tackle this, the paper will analyse the objectives of using LNG as a marine fuel, assess the benefits of using LNG fuelled vessels, analyse the challenges in using LNG fueled vessels and propose strategies and policies to improve the viability of LNG as marine fuel.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

This is a new area, as such there is limited literature on the field. The study will rely primarily on data from industry publications to draw a valid conclusion.

Time and resource constraints limit the depth of data collection for this study. This paper will utilise secondary industry data.

3. Main findings:

Ship owners are investing in LNG bunkering. The market for LNG bunkering is rising, Total perceives its share growing to 10 million mt/year by 2025, and Shell expects 30 million to 35 million mt/year by 2040 (Bunkerworld, 2017d).

This study found that LNG is a more sustainable fuel than other marine fuels. This is because it has no detectible sulphur like conventional marine fuels and it is cheaper than gasoil.

In a survey facilitated at the S&P Global Platts London Oil Forum in 2017, only 14% of respondents said they planned to use LNG to meet the new sulfur rules in 2020 (Bunkerworld, 2017d).

There is a need for sufficiently effective infrastructure, market stability, regulations and policies to ensure the viability of LNG as a marine fuel.

4. Discussion of implications:

For ship owners, while vessels can burn a gasoil-based fuel straight away, using LNG would need a new engine for most or retrofitting existing engines (Bunkerworld, 2017d). Such investments looks prohibitively expensive and a high level of uncertainty remains on the availability of LNG and the reliability of its supply (Bunkerworld, 2017d; Acciaro, 2014). On the bright side, LNG fuelled vessels are promising alternative since LNG offer potential cost savings in addition to ensuring regulatory compliance (Xu et al., 2015; Acciaro, 2014). Furthermore, although the adoption of environmentally friendly solution (Neto et al., 2008), such as LNG as marine fuel is bound by the increase in costs and uncertainties, organisations are coming up with incentives for vessels with certain environmental or energy efficient standards, as well as lower operation costs in the long-run (Bunkerworld, 2017c). Moreover, the association of greenness from a certain product or service is considered a positive feature among environmentally conscious consumers (Neto et al., 2008). The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) is currently running an initiative, where environmental efficient vessels receive extra percentage points per transit, which can improve their position in the channel's ranking system. This is intended to reward ship owners who make conscious efforts and invest in technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Bunkerworld, 2017c).

Policy makers can play a crucial role in providing support to advance technical knowledge, maintain LNG prices at favourable levels and avoid ambiguity on regulation. NLG fuelled vessels will help immensely towards achieving IMO’s 0.5% global sulphur cap (Bunkerworld, 2017a; Bunkerworld, 2017d; Xu et al.,
The international Maritime Organisation, the European Commission and the Baltic and International Maritime Council and port authorities need to devise clear policies, guidelines and incentives that will support the new ISO 20519:2017. This will further increase the confidence and reduce the uncertainties faced by ship owners.

For the society, as ships get larger, the pollution is worsening. Study finds that one large container ship can discharge practically the same quantity of cancer and asthma-causing substances as 50 million cars (Guardian, 2009). Similar studies show that just 16 of the world’s largest ships can produce as much sulphur pollution as all the world’s cars (Daily Mail, 2009). In the seas surrounding Europe; the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, the North-Eastern part of the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, sulphur dioxide emissions from international shipping were estimated at 2.3 million tonnes a year, nitrogen dioxide at 3.3 million tonnes and particulate matter at 250,000 tonnes. These emissions are expected to grow by 40 to 50% by 2020 (Transport and the Environment, 2017). This has a significant negative effect on human health, aquatic animals, food chains and ecosystems. Considering all these the viability of NLG as a marine fuel is vital to the society as a whole.

5. List of key references/resources:


The underestimated contribution of hydropower for the Energiewende (Energy transition)

Michael Bohlinger

Keywords: Energy industry, German Energiewende, Electricity market, Energy transition, Renewable energy systems, Hydropower

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Germany, the fourth largest national economy of the world (IMF, 2014), is a pioneer of renewable energy deployment (Amin, 2015). According to Amin Director General of IRENA, Germany has one of the most ambitious renewable energy targets in the world under the term “Energiewende” translated into energy transition and could be seen as a transition project with pilot character. Due to the strong political support to establish the Energiewende, the share of the renewable energy systems has grown in the primary energy consumption from 1.9% in 1995 to 12.6 % in 2015.

Energiewende focused on electricity market
In the electricity sector, which is about a 20% (Umweltbundesamt, 2016) share of primary energy consumption, the share of renewable energy systems has grown in the same time from nearly 5% to nearly 33% (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2016).

In 1995 4.7 % of the gross electricity generation was generated by renewable energy systems. The predominant share comes from hydropower. Since then the share of renewable energy systems in the electricity market (gross electricity generation) has risen from to more than 30% (AG Energiebilanzen e.V., 2015). The development of gross electricity generation of renewable energy systems is shown in Error! Reference source not found.. To emphasize the growth of renewable energy systems, a comparison of the growth rate of annual production and installed capacity on the basis of 2005 is shown on Error! Reference source not found.. Photovoltaic has the biggest growth rate in annual production by 2950% followed by wind offshore. This peak lasts from the commissioning of the first offshore windpark Alpha Ventus, in 2010 (Alpha Ventus, 2016). This was the most significant progress in applying renewable energy systems compared to the sectors of transport, heating and industry.

Future Outlook of renewable Energy Systems in the electricity market
The government passed the 2014 update of the energy feed-in law to declare a reliable development path for the growth of renewable energy. The development path should secure a step-by-step synchronization of the increase of renewable energy systems and the necessary expansion of the grid. Furthermore, the development path should also provide a secure planning foundation to development future of the conventional coal, lignite or gas fired plants and the cross border interaction with the European neighbor countries (BMWi, 2016b).

The future development path of renewable energy systems based on the quantitative goals of 40 to 45 % renewable Energy gross electricity generation till 2025 and 55 to 60 % till 2035 is shown in Fig. 1. A minimum of 80% should be achieved by 2050 (BMWi, 2016b).
Wind onshore/offshore, biomass with a capacity of more than 705 kW, and large scale photovoltaic will be seen as the most important growth volume and is estimated by 80% (BMWi, 2016b). The BMWi also sees in wind onshore the most cost effective technology. Therefore the amount of new capacity per year is staggered from 2800 MW in 2017 until 2019 and 2900 MW from 2020. For wind offshore a total amount of 15 GW is intended for new installed capacity till 2030. The growth target amount for photovoltaic with more than 750 kW per site was set by 600 MW per year (BMWi, 2016a).

The underestimated contribution of hydropower for the Energiewende

Hydropower is the most tradition form of renewable energy. The first established transmission from hydropower to mechanical power was used about 300 years before Christ. Today about a 17 % share of world-wide produced electrical power is produced by hydropower plants. The absolute amount of produced energy by hydropower is about three times higher compared to any other renewable power generation sources (The World Bank, 2012).

The intended growth of the renewable energy systems in the electricity market pursued by the German government is mainly focused on wind onshore. The BMWi sees wind onshore as the most cost effective technology (BMWi, 2016b). A technology-independent funding of renewable energy systems is not intended in Germany and Hydropower is not seen as a bigger role player in the Energiewende (Umweltbundesamt, 2014).

On a closer look to the gross production of 2015, the only market competitive renewable energy systems, which are not promoted by energy law are hydropower plants with an installed capacity of more than 5 MW (Vahrenholt and Gassner, 2012; Henning et al., 2014; Pöhler, 2014). This statement could be supported by the comparison of annual cumulated remuneration for different renewable energy systems, which have been paid by feed-in law shown in Error! Reference source not found..

The research goal is to identify the contribution of hydropower for the Energiewende.
2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

The research in the field of Energiewende is characterized mainly by pragmatic approaches. Therefore are mixed method research design are recommended by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008 and Kuckartz, 2014. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008 an quantitative research followed by qualitative research is defined as sequential explanatory research design. Furthermore the research is based on a three-phases model (Fig. 2).

- In phase 1 an in-depth literature review figure out quantitative data. Therefore, three different perspectives are defined to structure the in-depth literature research: political and social, economic and technical, and global warming has been identified (Fig. 3).

3. Main findings:

With the research being in an early stage, findings from phase 1 the in-depth literature review gives a first impression for the underestimated contribution of Hydropower for the Energiewende.
Political and social perspective
Political decision makers underestimate the contribution of hydropower to the Energiewende in Germany.

- In a survey from Voith GmbH, 2015, 600 energy experts were asked about hydropower and its influence on climate change. 63% of the German experts said that hydropower is not adequately supported compared to 40% in Austria and 38% in Switzerland 36% in Sweden and 32% in Norway.

Hydropower could provide a valuable contribution to the Energiewende.

- In the most powerful federal tectorial states Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg considered by gross domestic product, hydropower has the biggest share of renewable gross electricity production. In Bavaria the average share of gross electricity production lies by 14.3%, in Baden-Wuerttemberg by 7.4% (BMWi, 2014; Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder, 2015).

- Studies also promote existing potential for hydropower. So the potential in annual production in Bavaria is seen by 14% (Overhoff, 2010; Heimerl, Dußling, and Reiss, 2011; AG Energiebilanzen e.V., 2015). According to Anderer et al. 2010 there is a significant potential of 1.372 GWh in Bavaria and 571 GWh in Baden-Wuerttemberg of additional annual production which could be lifted by existing hpp. Measured by the total potential of Germany, the largest share of 54% is located in Bavaria. The second largest share with 22% is located in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

Economic and technical perspective
The BMWi promotes wind power as the most cost efficient renewable energy technology (BMWi, 2016b). In-depth literature review demonstrates that hydropower is more cost efficient.

- In contrast studies from Nestle and Kunz, 2014 and Keuneke, 2015 indicate a comparison of electricity generation costs for new built renewable energy systems built in Germany like new wind parks or hydropower plants with more than 1 MW installed capacity. Hydropower could be built with the lowest generation costs and is the best cost efficient renewable energy system. The data is provided in Error! Reference source not found..

Hydropower is one of the most reliable renewable energy systems

- A comparison of the capacity factor helps to understand the reliability of renewable energy systems. The capacity factor could also be described as measurability for quality feature of electricity generation. The assessment of renewable energy systems by capacity factor in Error! Reference source not found. shows, that only biomass and hydropower achieve more than half of its theoretical technical potential (BDEW, 2013; Kunz, 2013).

- Another criteria for measurement of quality can be seen in the reliability of assured capacity. The volatility of windpower and photovoltaic between is immense and up to 33 times higher compared to hydropower (Burger, 2016). The comparison is shown in Error! Reference source not found..

Global warming perspective

- An ecological measurement parameter for the assessment of renewable energy systems could be seen in the avoidance of greenhouse gases per gross generated energy. Hydropower has the highest avoidance of greenhouse gases per gross generated Energy (Error! Reference source not found.) (AGEE-Stat and BMWi, 2016).

- The individual advantage of hydropower concerning the avoidance of green house gases could also be represented by the approach of CO2 abatement cost. Hydropower has the lowest CO2 abatement cost (Error! Reference source not found.) (Beer, 2009).
4. Discussion of implications:

At this stage of the research the establishment of the German Energiewende has a strong focus on the electricity market. With the definition of the future development path of renewable energy, Germany could achieve the ambitious goal to reduce greenhouse gases by 80 to 95% (Bundesregierung, 2010). Wind power is seen as the most cost efficient technology and should bring the greatest contribution. The current and future possible contribution of hydropower is underestimated.

Regarding the findings in this early stage of research, hydropower could be seen as all in all completes technology. At least in the most powerful federal tectorial states Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg considered by gross domestic product, hydropower has the biggest share of renewable gross electricity production. In these federal states hydropower has still growth potential and altogether the highest growth potential compared to all other German federal states. Additional research is needed to evaluate possibilities for hydropower to support the target path of transforming the existing electricity market within the Energiewende.

5. List of key references/resources:


AGEE-Stat and BMWi (2016) Zeitreihen zur Entwicklung der erneuerbaren Energien in Deutschland Unter Verwendung von Daten der Arbeitsgruppe Erneuerbare Energien-Statistik.


BMWi (2016a) EEG-Novelle 2016; Fortgeschriebenes Eckpunktepapier zum Vorschlag des BMWi für das neue EEG.

BMWi (2016b) EEG 2016: Ausschreibungsvolumen für Wind an Land.


Identities and Sustainable Consumer Behaviour: A Factor-Analytical Approach

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Keywords: Identities; sustainable consumer behaviour; factor analysis

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Humans are generating many environmental problems and are not sustainable over the longer term (Stocker, Qin, Plattner, Tignor, Allen, Boschung et al., 2013; United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP], 2014). Therefore, many attempts have been made to implement marketing strategies to successfully encourage non-mandatory sustainable consumer behaviours (Chernev & Blair, 2015; Gershoff & Frels, 2015; Kidwell, Farmer, & Hardesty, 2013; Klöckner & Oppedal, 2011; Newman, Gorlin, & Dhar, 2014). Non-mandatory sustainable consumer behaviour can be defined as the production, promotion, and consumption of goods and services that preserve the environment, prevent damage to the environment, or promote improvements to the environment which are optional (Abrahamse, Steg, Vlek, & Rothengatter, 2005; Akenji, 2014). Furthermore, in recent years there has been a surge in research, particularly in consumer research looking at how to market, and promote consumer behaviours to those that are more sustainable consumer behaviours (Chernev and Blair 2015; Gershoff and Frels 2015; Kidwell, Farmer, and Hardesty 2013; Newman, Gorlin, and Dhar 2014).

For the past 40 years, environmental psychologists have devoted attention to marketing and promoting individual level factors predicting these non-mandatory sustainable consumer behaviours. Using environmental psychology, there are many ways in which we can explain why consumers choose or not to carry out sustainable consumer behaviour. The dominant psychological theories, namely, the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), the norm-activation theory (Schwartz, 1977), its extension, the value-belief norm theory (Stern, 2000), and the theory of habit (Verplanken & Aarts, 1999) seem to collectively explain to some extent why consumers choose to be sustainable. However, large parts of sustainable consumer behaviours remain unexplained by these theories even when combined (Klöckner, 2013). Therefore, this article sought out other factors which may contribute to explaining why consumer are sustainable or not.

To find other factors that may help better explain sustainable consumer behaviour we take a look at the limitation of the three theoretical approaches widely used to explain sustainable consumer behaviour. That is, these theories all have one common omission; they ignore individual differences (Murtagh, Gatersleben, & Uzzell, 2012). Individual differences are an important factor that can be used to increase our understanding of when behaviour will occur (Murtagh, Gatersleben, & Uzzell, 2012). Therefore, by focusing on individual differences, this article can improve the understanding and predictions of sustainable consumer behaviour (Murtagh, Gatersleben, & Uzzell, 2012). A perspective which specializes in individual differences is identity. A consumer’s own identity is considered core to any human behaviour (Akerlof & Kranton, 2010). As identity is regarded as an important aspect for explaining human behaviour, we assume it is core to specific behaviours, such as sustainable consumer behaviour.
Identity is a rapidly growing approach used in marketing and promotes sustainable consumer behaviour. Identity from a psychological perspective, can be defined as the conception, qualities, attitudes, beliefs, labels, descriptions, and expressions that consumers use to define and recognize themselves individually (individual-identity) per identity theory (Stryker & Burke, 2000), as part of a group of consumers (group-identity) based on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and/or in relation to specific places (place-identity) explained by place identity theory (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). Identity is used because theories of identity suggest we have many identities that guide our behaviour (Stryker, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Unfortunately, this increase in research identity for promoting sustainable consumer behaviour has led to over 200 identities having been studied in this area. However, not all these identities may be unique and relevant in marketing for promoting sustainable consumer behaviour. The key identities for explaining sustainable consumer behaviour may indeed be far fewer because as a field expands so quickly, and so much, there is a tendency for constructs (identities in this case) to converge (Bacharach, 1989). Therefore, we first aim to establish the key identities that are potentially relevant for explaining sustainable consumer behaviour. Second, we aim to test the extent to which the key identities explain sustainable consumer behaviour. Third, we aim to provide a theoretical framework of the key identities for explaining sustainable consumer behaviour, which can be used in marketing research to promote sustainable consumer behaviour.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

To address the aims, we conduct an online survey study, using a UK representative sample (n = 578) measuring all the identities previously studied in relation to sustainable consumer behavior, along with measuring sustainable consumer behavior. First, by conducting exploratory factor analysis of the identity responses we can establish the key identity factors. Second, by conducting hierarchical regression of the identity factors in relation to sustainable consumer behavior reports, we can gain clarity of how the key identities, relate to sustainable consumer behaviours.

3. Main findings:

First, the exploratory factor analysis reveals 17 unique identity factors. Second, the hierarchical regression shows only 12 of the 17 factors explain the variance in sustainable consumer behaviours, with a large correlation coefficient (effect size): .777. The 12 factors in order of predictive power are as follows: environmentally concerned identity, no environmental identity, environmental place identity, connectedness with nature identity, green-space visitor identity, active ethical identity, carbon off-setter identity, thoughtful self-identity, close community identity, anti-carbon off-setter identity, environmental group member identity, national identity, identification with developed countries, cyclist identity, identification with thoughtful organization, environmental gardener identity, and anti-pesticide use identity.

4. Discussion of implications:

Furthermore, to be able to understand and operationalize the 17 identities, we provide theoretical definitions of each newly developed identity factor. Unambiguous definitions facilitate the interpretation of results in a consistent of comprehensive manner (Bacharach, 1989). Therefore, we have clarification of how the 17 identities are to be interpreted. Furthermore, these definitions enable us to operationalize the identities. Finally, we reveal a new, theoretical framework that is parsimonious showing how identities explain sustainable consumer behaviour, to help improve and align the field of identity in sustainable consumer behaviour taking an environmental psychological approach.
5. List of key references/resources:


Verplanken, B., & Aarts, H. (1999). Habit, attitude, and planned behavior: is habit an empty construct or an interesting case of goal-directed automaticity? European review of social psychology, 10(1), 101-134
The Cultural Injunction to Enjoy’: A study into Children’s Leisure Activities

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Keywords: Deviant leisure, socialisation, harm, sport, pseudopacification process

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Many studies have shown that children’s participation in organised sport and engagement in after-school activity clubs has become categorically beneficial for childhood development (see Covay and Carbonaro, 2010). Such supposed benefits include an array of physical and psychological attributes, including health and wellbeing.

For example, the ‘change 4 life’ campaign explicitly states that children aged 5-16 need 60 minutes of activity a day, two of its main suggestions, for children, is a ‘kick about’ and a ‘dance off’. Clearly indicating the physical necessity for participation to improve their health, indicating without it, it ‘can cause life-threatening diseases like cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease’. Aside from physical benefits, many education scholars, have researched other benefits, Bodovski and Farkas (2008) for example, highlighted how parents valued extra circular activities for what they offer outside of the academic realm.

In addition to these irrefutably positive outcomes, these organised sporting and after-school activities can also be linked to a variety of other unintended outcomes which, from a critical perspective in neoliberal consumer culture can be understood as harmful, such as increased competitive individualism. Utilising qualitative data from a children’s football club and dance class, this research highlights the demands and anxieties that both the parents and children are subjected to in the context of organised leisure activities.

Furthermore, many of the socialisation processes which are acclaimed as pro-social by the greater part of child development literature (see Kennedy and Kennedy, 2015; Weininger et al, 2015; Covay and Carbonaro, 2010; Bodovski and Farkas, 2008; Lareau and Weininger, 2003; and McNamara Horvat et al, 2003), can be understood as emulating some of the more socially corrosive characteristics of neoliberal culture, such as, individualism, aggressive competition and cultivating narcissism and anxiety. The concept of sports role in maintaining social order is not new, it is largely framed as what Elias (1939) describes as the ‘civilising process’. However, critical criminologists would consider it as part of a ‘Pseudo-pacification process’ (Hall, 2012a), in which underlying violent energies are sublimated and redirected into the perpetual, obligatory cycle of consumer capitalism, inciting sociosymbolic competition through spheres of work and consumption.
This project is only in its primary stages, but early analysis of data appears to uphold the claim that assumptions around the perceived benefits of childhood participation in sport and organised leisure may be in part responsible for the increasing levels of anxiety and unhappiness in children and young adults. Which is becoming ever more prominent in this economic climate. In 2016, a study found that English children ranked 13th out of 16 on the international happiness table, worries related to: body image, school pressures and enjoyment of outdoor areas (Gayle, 2016, Guardian online). Moreover, there is a significant increase in concerns about self-harm, rising from 45% to 88% and depression up from 47% in 2010 to 85% in 2015 [guardian online]. Confirming that children in this neoliberal society are not as happy as society would have us believe.

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

This research is employing what Harvey (2007) coined as an ‘embedded multi-method approach’ (cited in Davies et al, 2011: 173), using: observation, social network analysis and the use of ‘on the wing discussions’ (Robson, 2011). I adopt differing ethnographic roles within each of the research sites, adopting a complete participant role within the dance school, while acting as an observer participant within the football group research site.

The football school is an FA non-competitive team of under 11s. The services are private and coaching is paid for, which is significant when discussing access to extra circular activities, and highlights that parents are investing in their child. I will be observing weekly matches, extending to training and FA meetings in my second year. I will be observing interactions between parents on the side line, the coaching staff and the children on the pitch. Which is imperative to exploring the socialisation aspects of my research.

The dance school is a small private school with less than 50 pupils aged from 3 to 16, because of my access I have regular contact with between 8-12 sets of parents. I am present with my daughter 4 times a week, although yet I do not have access to competitions.

I have access to both the schools’ social media pages which will allow for in-depth analysis on actions and comments on actions. I will also use qualitative interviewing methods to speak to the parents at pertinent times. Field notes will be used from observation.

My results will be explored, analysed and framed using the ultra-realists’ theory of criminology and more specifically utilising the deviant leisure concept, taking a normative leisure activity and exploring its deviance and harms. In doing this it will explore the current social climate and allow ‘common sense’ explanations to be dissected.

3. Main findings:

This is an on-going research project which will provide the most preliminary findings from my research. These findings indicate that the attributes, such as: competitive individualism, narcissism, and sociosymbolic competition, that are celebrated in this economic climate, are indeed socialised through sport with several harmful effects which require critical theorisation.
For example, one would imagine football is a team sport, encouraging collectivism and unity, however, in my findings parents are wanting their children to be better than those of their team mates, even paying up to £50 for an extra 30 minutes' private tuition. In this case, the parent pulled their sponsorship and their child from the team because they felt that their child was the better player and the other should not have been playing the sport because of their (perceived) lack of skill. Even at this non-competitive level we can start to theorise on the life lessons the children are being socialised into from their parents.

4. Discussion of implications:

The implications of this research should impact on socialisation research. Moreover, it should explore previously unsearched areas of sporting and leisure activities, especially in relation to the possible effects on children. The main literature on this area to date is about the inclusivity and growth and improvement into non-cognitive skills. This research aims to challenge this assumption that extracurricular activities only offer positive attributes for children.

5. List of key references/resources:


The ethical and personal impact on the researcher of ongoing involvement with participants in sensitive research areas

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Keywords: Qualitative research, Ethics, Birth mothers, Public Child Law, Adoption

1. Problem statement/rationale, including reference to key literature:

Collecting qualitative data by interviewing vulnerable participants requires a high degree of care and consideration along with clear ethical guidelines on both a professional and personal level. It is not enough to simply apply for and receive ethical approval from the university ethics panel. The responsibility does not end at that point. The researcher must be mindful of the dynamic that is developing between her and her participants; particularly in this research where the researcher has disclosed her ‘insider status’ to participants. She has assumed a position where participants are likely to exhibit a higher level of trust in her and possibly forget she is collecting data. They may identify her as a friend.


Bell, J., Doing Your Research Project: A guide for first-time researchers in education, health and social science,(4th Ed, 2005), OUP

2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

This data collection by way of semi-structured interviews grew from the original design which was data collection by questionnaires. However, the pilot study failed to produce the rich and subjective data which was being sought to answer the research questions because were focused on the subjective experiences and views of women whose children had been compulsorily adopted from local authority care. Participants were difficult to find and the social stigmatizing of this marginalized group meant that the researcher had to approach them very sensitively to gain their trust enough for them to willingly participate in the study. The interviews developed from such ongoing dialogue which was designed to build a researched/researcher trust relationship. Following the collection of data from the interviews, three participants continued to make autonomous contact with the researcher with the desire to continue their narrative but also seeming to seek some element of a supportive relationship.
This created an unexpected dilemma. On one level this ongoing relationship which had grown from the initial interview was a perfect opportunity to enhance the meaning of the research and the depth of data; but on another level this presented ethical issues. For example, how much, if any, of these additional conversations should be included in the data analysis and findings. Further what of the personal impact of these ongoing relationships, not just on the participant, but on the researcher.

The actions taken to resolve this dilemma were as follows:

A second application to the university ethics panel was made. This application requested that the researcher could continue to respond to the contact that was being made by the participants. The researcher would make it clear to them that this ongoing dialogue may be used as potential data in the findings if the participants were willing to allow this. The participants would therefore need to provide informed consent for this ‘extra’ data to be included. The researcher would continuously reflect upon and self-evaluate the benefit of this ongoing dialogue to the participants. The researcher would also have to accept and be aware that there would come a time when these ongoing relationships would need to end, not only because there would come a point when no new data was being generated (saturation); but also because there would only ever be a dynamic, no matter how meaningful, that existed between a researcher and participant. Any ideal that a friendship was developing was not sustainable and had significant ethical considerations. There was the possibility that the participants would misconstrue this ongoing contact as something personal which went beyond what was ethically acceptable. It was however favourable that this ongoing dialogue was suited to a feminist approach where the researcher is an active and involved participant in the study. The narrative that resulted from these conversations with the participants was a result of the interaction and conversation that flowed between the researcher and each individual participant.

3. Main findings:

Over the course of three months following the interviews there were ongoing dialogues with three participants who had signed a further consent to any data collected after the initial interview being used in the findings. These unstructured conversations took place by Skype, by phone and by email and the researcher made notes of issues that seemed highly relevant to the study. This allowed the participant to talk freely to the researcher about ongoing issues connected to the adoption. Gill was having CBT therapy to help her recover from the loss of her child to adoption. She described graphically the ongoing therapeutic process including her grief, anger and guilt of ‘failing her child’. Nicky spoke of her feelings when she unwittingly found herself face-to-face with her adopted child and his adoptive mother when they came into a café where she worked. Nicky’s complaint to the local authority for placing her child with adopters close to her home on the same estate was ongoing. Nicky shared her anger and frustration of this situation with me along with the process of the complaint. Urith had discovered that her 14 year old child, adopted seven years previously had run away from her adoptive placement in the hope of finding her birth mother. Urith had to undergo a psychiatric assessment for the local authority to decide if she and her child should have contact. Urith shared her fears and anxiety about the invasive process of assessment which may or may not lead to her being reunited with her child, something she could not comprehend at that point. For the researcher all of these ongoing dialogues were, at times, difficult, challenging and deeply emotive. The data from these conversations however was incredibly valuable because it dealt not just with the legal process of adoption but of the messy aftermath for women who are regularly ignored and forgotten despite the enormity of what has just happened.
4. Discussion of implications:

There were both ethical and personal implications arising from these relationships. The most significant being when it was time to end them. Rather than approach this prescriptively I tried to apply perception to each individual situation, being painfully aware that these women had already experienced profound loss and the severing of the most important relationship, that of their children. Gill was easy to cut ties with, we agreed during our last phone call that it was time to stop speaking after I had summarised what particular data of hers I may use. This last conversation was positive and respectful and the ethical and personal considerations felt neatly tied up. With Nicky the ethical issues were less neat and tidy. I explained to Nicky that it was time to conclude our involvement but Nicky found this difficult to accept. I attempted to end the relationship with great care but there was no easy way and I was left feeling deeply uncomfortable that I had overstepped some ethical line with Nicky that I could not take back. Breaking the communication with Nicky took time and energy and I learned a valuable lesson that when a participant agrees to something initially it may mean something quite different to them than what the researcher intended. The relationship with Urith ended appropriately where ethics were concerned but the personal impact on my emotions was unexpected and significant. I had become quite emotionally involved with Urith’s situation without realizing it. I often found myself waiting eagerly for her calls and updates on the progress of her case for contact. When Urith called me to tell me she had passed the assessment and a date for contact was being set I was delighted and excited for her. Urith promised to call me following this contact, her first for 7 years, to tell me how things went. I waited for this call and it did not occur to me that this call would not come. Urith cut contact with me and I did not hear from her again. Against my better judgment I felt rejected, and concerned. I was left not knowing how Urith’s first contact had gone, if it had even happened. I speculated as to why Urith had stopped calling for some time until I realized that I must reflect upon and learn from this experience. She just had and that was her decision and not something I could control, although I was disappointed in myself that I had not anticipated this. I took some time to write about these experiences, which I feel were priceless to my research. Relationships with participants can be more powerful and profound than any data we objectively collect; and not only are these relationships unique but each one allows us to learn more about our own strengths and weaknesses as researchers and as people. Rather than exist separately from our research we can become an integral part of it providing we openly acknowledge the ethical and personal challenges that may arise.

5. List of key references/resources:


Bell, J., Doing Your Research Project: A guide for first-time researchers in education, health and social science,(4th Ed, 2005), OUP


Closing remarks

Dr James Benhin, Associate professor, Director of FoB PhD Programmes

The Faculty of Business based UKPDC2017, provided a very high quality and rich diversity of presentations by internal and external Doctoral students, in addition to four keynote addresses, and members of the Faculty academic staff providing very useful comments to presenters.

Many people contributed immensely to the level of success of PDC2017 and I wish to express my deepest thanks and appreciation for all their energy, time and efforts.

In particular, many thanks to Professor John Dinwoodie, Dr Nigel Jackson, Dr Stephen Childe, and Mrs Sarah Kearns for their very inspiring and thought-provoking keynote presentations on promoting research.

My deepest appreciation also goes to the chairs of the sessions; Professor Paul Bishop, Dr Andreas Walmsley, Dr Sarah Tuck, and Professor Kim Stevenson for their efficient management of the sessions which made for an in depth and very fruitful discussion of the papers presented.

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My sincere appreciation also for the tremendous support provided by the Faculty Administration, in particular Flea Palmer and Jill Short from FoBIT, for another impeccable IT support throughout the event.

I would also like to say many thanks to the organisers of the event: George Dexter and ABM Golam Mustafa. Your many hours of sacrifice and hard work have resulted in this very high quality research event.

Finally, I would like to say many thanks to the presenters for an excellent work and all delegates whose constructive comments and questions made for the lively and fruitful discussions.

We look forward to another UKPDC next year and for every year in the future. I hope I can count on your support to entrench this event as key part of the research environment and culture in the Faculty.

To all participants, my best wishes for the future.
Dear students and colleagues,

I hope that you have all enjoyed this platform that we built for you to share, learn and exchange your research ideas and experience with your peers and academic staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organising committee members for their hard work and to Dr James Benhin for providing all the necessary support for the Colloquium.

Finally, my particular appreciation goes to the academic staff members who have contributed immensely to the event in various roles including as keynote speakers, reviewers, chairs and discussants. While I am sure this has made a huge difference to the standard of the event, I think more importantly it benefits the students’ research work going forward.

Thank you all once again. I look forward to seeing, hopefully, all of you at UKPDC 2018.