UKPDC 2015 PROCEEDINGS

Challenging Practice Through Research

Held on the 4th and 5th June 2015

Editors: David Carter
Adah-Kole Onjewu, Anastasios Kitsos, George Dexter,
Mohamed Yacine Haddoud, Imane El Hakimi,
Mamata Dhakal, Sophie Dejie Kong
Chairman’s Introduction

10TH ANNUAL PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY DOCTORAL COLLOQUIUM 2015

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 who have managed to deliver major changes including a new website, remote webinar presentations and academic awards for the first time.

This year, the new focus on doctoral student participation meant that the event was extended into a second day with competition for every place from other business faculties from Teeside to Munich. There were also awards for academic excellence in research design method and research results and these were awarded at the colloquium dinner by Dr James Benhin. Not forgetting the prizes awarded on the basis of a popular vote for best oral and poster presentations, we were able to celebrate real contributions to knowledge and understanding from a broad range of perspectives this year.

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 (with his predecessor Dr Jonathan Moizer) have provided extraordinary levels of help. Plymouth’s Executive Dean in the Faculty of Business, Professor Nikolaos Tzokas, kindly agreed to open the event with his warm welcome to all attending, whether in person or via the internet. Our keynote speakers also provided real insight into how editors work and what gets published as well as offering panel questions and answers to audience questions which proved popular. Professors Alison Anderson and Kim Stevenson plus Doctors Kevin Meethan and Paul Jones all provided distinct contributions from an editorial perspective. Professor Paul Tracey reflected on his journey to academic success as a research-active member of the staff at Judge Business School, Cambridge University.

Highlights from this year’s doctoral colloquium included students presenting their research and being questioned by others in constructive ways that added real value to PDC. The extended abstracts published herein reflect a wide range of topics and advances in knowledge reflecting world-wide issues and concerns that they pose for humanity. Perhaps as researchers the focus is necessarily tight and controlled but the lessons that can be taken from our successes will provide the basis for future students to extend and develop theory. Before introducing our presented research in extended abstracts, I would recommend everyone to look for the recorded talks by both academic keynotes and our doctoral research specialists at www.ukpdc.org where the highlights can be viewed: those that are underpinned by this hard-won research.

David Carter

Chairman of the Organising Committee
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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.

The Colloquium would also like to thank the following journals, which greatly enhanced the event.

- Social & Public Policy Review
- The International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research
- The International Journal of Management Education
- The Plymouth Law & Criminal Justice Review
- Promoting Interdisciplinary Studies in Law, Crime and History

We would like to thank Professors Alison Anderson, Kim Stevenson, and Paul Tracy for acting as academic reviewers and panel members for ensuring the quality and consistency of the papers submitted for presentation at the Colloquium.

The Keynote Speakers, Professor Alison Anderson, Professor Kim Stevenson, Dr Paul Jones, Dr Kevin Meethan, and Professor Paul Tracy, provided an informed, insightful and often entertaining framework for the event and we thank them for their input and support.
# PROGRAMME

## Day 1: 4th June 2015

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POSTERS

Three posters were presented.

Carter, D.       Closing the learning loop on the school choice problem
Ghatnekar, P.L.  Tourism Experiences on Tourist Buying Behaviour
Oyemomi, O.     Organizational Knowledge Framework for Performance Decision Making
PRIZES

Prizes were awarded by the panel for four prize categories: research design, research findings, oral presentation and poster presentation. Prize winners for the research design and research findings were determined by a rigorous review by three distinguished members from the Faculty, while the best oral and poster presentations were voted on by event participants.

The results and citations for prize winners are as follows.

1. **Research Design**

   **Winner:** L. Deblasio  
   *A Different Perspective on Legal Adoption: A Critical Analysis of the Relationship Between Birth Mothers and the Law From 1926 to 2015*

   A very clear and considered exposition of a range of methodologies for a project that is difficult to access and examines sensitive subject matter. A good example of best practice in undertaking a small scale pilot study to test the feasibility of the research design.

   **Runner Up:** A. Jalili Idrissi  
   *Difficulties in prison research: from obtaining access to engagement*

   A challenging research project that raises a number of ethical issues. There is evidence of strong underpinning rationale to justify the methods proposed. Could have briefly elaborated on what ethnographic and rational inquiry would entail.

2. **Research Findings**

   **Winner:** A. Alsace  
   *A Model for Predicting Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Performance in Saudi Arabia*

   Very clear account of research findings that will have very practical and useable implications for small/medium enterprises in Saudi Arabia. The prediction model should have positive benefits for both these and the wider commercial economy.

   **Runner Up:** N. Umeokafor  
   *The Influence of Contextual Factors on Health and Safety Performance of Construction Contractors in Nigeria: A Comparative Assessment*

   An impressive survey that yielded detailed statistical findings of relevance for improving health and safety policies and culture in Nigeria. Results could have been presented in a more accessible format.
3. **Best Oral Presentation**

**Winner:** H. Kroger  
Hanne Kroger  
The role of place identity in sustainability place branding

4. **Best Poster Presentation**

**Winner:** D. Carter  
Closing the learning loop on the school choice problem

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 of both the oral and postal presentations, for their excellent work.
## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

| Professor Alison Anderson | Alison Anderson is Professor of Sociology in the School of Government at Plymouth University. She is Director of the Centre for Community, Culture and Society and Editor-in-Chief of Environmental Communication (Taylor & Francis). She is also Associate Editor of the International Journal of Technoethics and advisory board member of the International Journal of Climate Change: Impacts and Responses. Alison's research interests include media and risk, nanotechnologies, public engagement, marine pollution, climate change, and science communication. She has published widely in such journals as Science Communication, Public Understanding of Science, Health, Risk & Society, Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change and Media, Culture & Society. Recent publications include Nanotechnology, Risk and Communication (Palgrave, 2009, with Alan Petersen, Clare Wilkinson and Stuart Allan) and her latest single-authored book is Media, Environment & the Network Society (Palgrave, 2014). |
| Dr Paul Jones | Dr Jones is an Associate Professor and Reader at the Futures Entrepreneurship Centre in Plymouth University. Dr Jones is an experienced academic researcher with over 150 academic outputs in academic journals, book chapters, conference papers and working papers in entrepreneurship and small business management. Dr Jones is Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research and Associate Editor for the International Journal of Management Education. Previously, he successfully guest edited issues for the journals “Education + Training”, “Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development”, “International Journal of Management Education” and the “Journal of Systems and Information Technology”. |
| **Kevin Meethan** | Dr Meetham a Member of the International Sociological Association, the Market Research Society and Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute and a member of the Royal Anthropological Institute’s Research Committee on Tourism. 

He is a member of the editorial board for Cultural Sociology and Tourism Today and a founding editor of the Journal of Tourism Consumption and Practice [http://www.tourismconsumption.org](http://www.tourismconsumption.org) |
| **Professor Kim Stevenson** | Kim Stevenson, Professor of Socio-legal history and Deputy Director Research Centre for Law and Criminal Justice. Kim is also a co-director in SOLON, promoting interdisciplinary studies in law crime and history joint editor law crime and history and general editor for a new book series Routledge SOLON Explorations in Crime and Criminal Justice Histories. |
| **Professor Paul Tracey** | Paul Tracey is Professor of Innovation and Organization and Academic Director of the Centre for Social Innovation at the University of Cambridge Judge Business School. Much of Paul’s research is concerned with the relationship between entrepreneurship and institutions, with a particular focus on social entrepreneurship. He has published widely in several journals, including Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Journal of Marketing, and Organization Science. He also has extensive experience of teaching entrepreneurship and innovation on undergraduate, masters and MBA programs. |
The Potential for Water Freight in the South West UK

Sapna Chacko

sapna.chacko@plymouth.ac.uk

Keywords: water freight, logistics industry, sustainability

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

This research investigates the potential for water freight in the South West UK especially in Devon and Cornwall. The study aims to examine the nature of water freight, possible contributions that water freight could offer, challenges blocking the potential of water freight, its socio-economic impact in society and to identify whether the use of water freight as a mode of transportation is worthwhile to the logistics industry in Devon and Cornwall.

Research Background: The recent statistics from the Department for Transport UK revealed that waterborne transport has become a substantially underutilized mode (DFT, 2013). If used properly it could perform an important role in eliminating freight from the road and rail networks. (North West Freight Advisory Group, 2003). In this situation this research analyses the nature of water freight in the South West UK. There are 41 ports in the South West. Among them six major ports are commercially active in Devon and Cornwall. Many ships regularly export and import goods through these ports. The study investigates general attitude towards water freight transport in Devon and Cornwall, current practices in water freight, the importance of water as a mode of transport in the supply chain, the potential of water freight from a business point of view, and barriers to achieve this potential. At the same time the researcher tries to identify whether the use of water freight as a mode of transportation is worthwhile to the logistics industry in Devon and Cornwall. The benefits they are getting by the use of water freight as a mode of transport also examined. By collecting opinion from the experts of different areas related to water freight, social and economic developments with implications for Devon and Cornwall will be identified. From all these activities this study ultimately tries to find out solutions to develop water freight as an efficient and sustainable mode of transport in Devon and Cornwall.

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

This study is exploratory research. So it uses qualitative approach known as the Delphi method and secondary research for data collection. Secondary research is mainly the review of literature. A detailed literature review is the base of this study. Hence a proper understanding of the current status, future opportunities and obstacles to water freight is realized. Since water freight in Devon and Cornwall is very much less compared to many other parts of the UK, the opinions and suggestions from the experts in the shipping and logistics field is very important to achieve the objectives of the study. Thus the Delphi method will be used for primary data collection. It uses recursive rounds of sequential surveys interspersed with controlled feedback reports and the interpretation of experts’ opinion to organize conflicting values and experiences into consensus (Donohoe et al, 2012). It allows a group of individuals to express their opinion on a complex issue. The selection of experts and their knowledge and experience of the research problem determines the success of the Delphi method. All the participants in the Delphi method are anonymous to each other but not to the researcher. This allows the researcher to do follow-up each respondent when there arise any problem between rounds.
Usually the consensus is reached within three to four rounds of the Delphi survey. This research is planning to conduct three rounds of the Delphi survey and the consensus level is fixed at 75%. The first round will be supplied a questionnaire with an intention to collect mostly qualitative data from the respondents. The second and third questionnaire will be prepared based on the information collected from the previous questionnaires. The participants who form experts' panel will be selected from different categories related to water freight. They include experts from shipping and logistics industry, government officials dealing with transportation, academics especially from shipping and logistics, journalists (Lloyds' list, Herald etc.), officials from ports, and politicians. Each participant will be informed about their role and duties, the time they have to spend for each questionnaire and duration of the survey using a cover letter. After getting their consent, prepared questionnaires will be distributed. Once receiving their reply the process repeats until consensus is reached.

3. Main findings:

The developed conceptual model identified the most relevant factors and their interrelationships in estimating the potential for water freight movements in Devon and Cornwall. The study revealed that presence of an extensive coast line and accessibility to a number of ports along the coast of the South West UK are supportive for water freight movements in the region. Water freight is a sustainable green alternative to road and rail which is more labour, energy and fuel efficient than road transport. As an efficient and sustainable mode of transport, water freight will reduce the cost of transportation of bulk products over long distance, overland congestion, negative impacts on the environment, and external costs. It provides competitive cost, integration across all region, economic progress and sustainability compared to road transport. At present ports in Devon and Cornwall lack investments in infrastructure and poor hinterland connectivity which block the development of water freight in the region. As a result, the integration of water freight in the logistics chain is difficult.

4. Discussion of implications:

Research Impact: This study provides comprehensive information about water transportation in Devon and Cornwall. Before this research, the available information on water transportation was mostly industrial or commercially biased. The statistics on the quantity of goods transported from each port will provide little information about the potential of conducting water transportation. In this situation this study fills the gap in the literature by analysing various reasons blocking the extensive use of waterways and suggests possible solutions to overcome these issues and challenges.

Results of the research provide many practical recommendations to encourage the logistics industry to use water freight for the movement of goods, services and information without disturbing the environment. The Delphi study reveals when waterways are used for transportation, the economy and social status of that particular region will be improved. Thus this study opened a new insight into the possibilities and innovative uses of less considered waterways as a sustainable mode of transport in the coming days.

5. List of key references/resources:


Determinants of AAOIFI/IFRS Adoption in Islamic Banking Industry

Aziza Al Qamashou

aziza.alqamashou@plymouth.ac.uk

Keywords: AAOIFI, IFRS, determinants, Islamic Banking, GCC countries, middle Asian countries

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

Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) is a non-profit organisation based in Kingdom of Bahrain. It was developed in 1991 by an industry based on the recommendation of Islamic Development Bank (IBD) workshop in 1987. AAOIFI managed to develop up to now 88 standards in different areas as following: 48 in Sharia’h, 26 in accounting, 5 in auditing, 7 in governance and 2 in ethics (AAOIFI, 2015). The strategy used by AAOIFI in developing those standards was to review the existing international standards, test them against Sharia’h (Islamic law) principles, accept what is consistent with Sharia’h and reject what is not (AOSSG, 2010 and AAOIFI, 2010). After 25 years of its establishment this study primary aim is to contribute to our understanding of the determinants of AAOIFI accounting standards adoption in Islamic banking industry. To the best knowledge of the researcher this is the only study investigating the determinants of adopting AAOIFI empirically so far.

The main different views of reporting the Islamic financial transactions can be attributed to two main factors which are the acceptability of reflecting the time value of money concept and the recognition, the measurements and reporting of the economic substance of transactions (Substance over form concept), but not the legal form (AOSSG, 2010). AAOIFI does not agree with the concept of time value of money and considers it not consistent with Sharia’h. AAOIFI emphasises that financial reporting should involve the substance of the economic activity as well as it is legal form (AAOIFI, 2010). On the other side, Malaysian Accounting Standard Board (MASB) has come to conclusion that IFRS do not conflict with Sharia’h and issued SOP i-1 to give the green light to use the IFRS to record Islamic financial transaction if no conflict with Sharia’h exists. This step was approved by Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM). The concept of “substance over form” is viewed as a recording process of economic effect only which will not affect the Sharia’h validity transaction: This is also approved by BNM (AOSSG, 2010). This debate about what are the right standards to record the Islamic financial transactions will continue as long as AAOIFI and IASB defend their standards. Which guarantees that the debate will exist and continue but the idea is how to take the debate to a corner where all stakeholders benefit through some empirical evidence studies. As a result, this debate motivated me to investigate empirically bases of accounting standards adoption decision especially in Islamic banking industry.

Previous literature, Lewis (2001) and Hanifa and Hudaib, (2010) pointed out that the principles of Islamic finance cannot be met by the current conventional accounting and a separate set of Islamic accounting standards are required. How far is this claim being true for non-Muslim countries starting Islamic banking services is another motivation for this research.
2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

This study covers 14 countries offering Islamic finance services in the year 2013. Those 14 countries own almost 90% of the total Islamic finance assets in the world. The environmental determinism theory (Cooke and Wallace, 1990) is used to investigate the possible factors which can affect the accounting standards adoption decision. Therefore country level variables i.e. governance, education, financial market development, and market size are investigated as determinants. The needed data are collected from the global competitiveness report (GCR, 2013).

3. Main findings:

Logistic regression on SPSS both (enter and stepwise) methods has been run to investigate the significances of the four variables as determinants of the AAOIFI/IFRS. Results of the study revealed that the market size of each country is significant at 90% to the AAOIFI accounting standards adoption in Islamic financial Institutions.

4. Discussion of implications:

At AAOIFI level, Vinnicombe (2012) highlighted that for the last twenty years only few studies on AAOIFI have empirically tested important issues i.e. compliance. Most of the studies about AAOIFI as Sarea (2012) argued that most of AAOIFI studies discuss either understanding or acceptability of AAOIFI standards. Therefore, the objective of this study is designed to contribute to the Islamic accounting literature through investigating the determinants of adopting AAOIFI/IFRS in Islamic industry empirically. In addition, it also contributes to international accounting by comparing for the first time IFRS adoption’s determinants to other set of accounting standard in developing countries.

This study is of importance to many stakeholders including: policy makers, Islamic banks, standards bodies, investors, capital market and society. Finding the determinants of adapting AAOIFI vs IFRS will help all the interested parties to either adopt AAOIFI or IFRS in Islamic banking industry based on empirical evidences. In addition, finding out the incentives and the motivations of adapting either AAOIFI or IFRS will help the professional standards bodies to promote their standards in different way in addition of being sharia law compliance.

5. List of key references/resources:

AAOIFI. (2010/1432H), Accounting, Auditing and Governance Standards for Islamic Financial Institutions, Accounting and Auditing Organisation for Islamic Financial Institutions, Bahrain.


A Different Perspective on Legal Adoption: 
A Critical Analysis of the Relationship Between 
Birth Mothers and the Law From 1926 to 2015

Lisa Deblasio
lisa.deblasio@students.plymouth.ac.uk

Keywords: public child law, adoption, birth mothers, Adoption and Children Act 2002

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

Adoption is a significant aspect of the UK’s child protection policy. It is also, according to O’Halloran (2009), almost entirely based upon political ideology. There is currently significant pressure between the Government’s aggressive pro-adoption policies and the Senior Court’s deep concerns that adoption has become a ‘first resort’ for children in care. What is often overlooked in these debates is the effect adoption has been having on those subject to its consequences. The main direction of the thesis will be a critical analysis of the State’s utilisation of legal adoption and the impact on birth mothers and their children. This narrow emphasis is not aimed at discounting the experience of birth fathers, adoptive parents or the wider family; it is simply because there is inadequate focus, political or otherwise, on the experience of the birth mother, who becomes an insignificant factor very early on in the adoption story.

The primary aim of the study is to learn more about the experiences of birth mothers whose children have been adopted since the Adoption and Children Act 2002 became law. The study has several objectives: the first is to uncover an element of adoption which has not been recently studied; that of birth mother’s experiences. The second is to contribute the findings of the study to the field of adoption; in particular, evidence of the strengths and weaknesses of current law, policy and practice. The third is to help empower women who have been affected by adoption. The fourth is to make recommendations in line with the findings that will seek to improve the way birth mothers are treated by our legal system and by those involved in adoption practice. Finally the study invites birth mothers to speak out about what impact adoption has had upon them personally.

The motivation to study this population was strengthened when it became evident that no notable research has been carried out on this population since approximately 1998 when Charlton et al (1998) studied the effects of compulsory adoption on birth mothers in a social work context. Since this study there has been a major overhaul of adoption law, policy and practice, with the Adoption and Children Act 2002 being in effect since 2005. What effect has this law had upon birth mothers? Has the law created a modern system of adoption which embraces the changes in society and accounts for our human rights obligations; or is the law stagnant with one foot in the past? This study hopes to find answers to these questions.

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

The original contribution to the field of law will be provided by the primary research data generated by the study of birth mothers since the ACA took effect. If the word count allows these recent experiences will be
compared and contrasted to the birth mother’s experiences of previous significant law reform, this being a useful method in which to establish evolution/progress or stagnation of the law. This will also provide a narrative which will take the reader on a journey through our history of birth mothers and adoption law. The recruitment of participants has only just commenced following recent ethical approval. The methodology includes calls for participants through discussion boards on adoption support websites for example ‘Family Rights Group’

http://www.frg.org.uk/ParentsForum/viewforum.php?f=15&sid=16c428d71eabd299224014d1e68238e6

The other recruitment method utilises local authority statutory adoption counselling services by requesting that they make the study known to birth mothers who are their clients.

Data collection will by way of a questionnaire (primarily quantitative data) with the view to a second questionnaire being sent to selected responses (qualitative data).

A small scale pilot study is currently being conducted in order to evaluate feasibility, time, effect and adversity so that the performance of the larger scale study can be predicted.

3. Main findings:

The study is in its early stages and recruitment of participants is the next stage. However, a small pilot study has been implemented to measure feasibility, time, effect and adversity of the questions. Three birth mothers completed the questionnaire and one experienced birth family counsellor (BFC) considered the methodology and questions in detail. The BFC provided detailed feedback in the form of pointing out some slightly leading questions that required rewording and felt overall that the questions were helpful and sensitive to the aims of the study. The three participants returned completed questionnaires and despite residing in different local authority areas their answers were comparable in several areas, in particular where domestic violence was cited as a reason for their child’s adoption.

4. Discussion of implications:

At this stage the implications can only be measured from the pilot study. The findings have demonstrated that the initial questionnaire may lean too far toward a quantitative data collection method rather than a qualitative method collecting ‘rich data’ as is the aim of the study. This limitation will be addressed with two possible adaptations to the methodology: a further questionnaire which provides scope for more detailed answers based on the data collected from the first questionnaire, and/or a semi structured interview either in person or via skype of telephone.

5. List of key references/resources:


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O’Halloran, K., The Politics of Adoption, (2nd Ed, 2009, Brisbane, Queensland University)
Proudman, C, Trevena, F., ‘Setting Parents up to Fail: punishing the hopeless is integral to care proceedings’, Family Law, (August 2012) pp. 987-994

B (A Child) (FC) [2013] UKSC 33

Re B-S (Children) (Adoption: leave to oppose) (2013) 3 FCR481
Media Frames and Foreign Policy Aims: UK policy in Libya and Syria

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Keywords: media, foreign policy, conflict, intervention, Libya, Syria

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

The aim of the research is to examine why British foreign policy authorises a level of intervention in some conflicts and not others, and the role that the mass media may play in this.

The study is concerned with analysing the media framing of conflict and the reactionary British foreign policy through discourse and language use. We may understand framing to play “a major role in the exertion of political power” and frames within the media to be “the imprint of power” (Entman, 1993: 55), with potentially significant political consequences in the form of policy construction.

How the media participates in the framing of such political issues is of interest and importance as the primary instrument through which the general public receive information about domestic and foreign policy issues. Philip Hammond suggests that the Cold War era provided a “stable framework” which aided the comprehension of international conflict, yet the post-Cold War period has been symbolised by increased military engagement by Western powers (Hammond, 2007: 1). It is the interpretation of the media framing of post-9/11 military engagements that is central to the research, with a particular focus on recent ‘Arab Spring’ conflicts in Libya and Syria, and also Iraq. The research seeks to interpret frames within the media and understand how framing may affect UK foreign policy actions towards these conflicts.

This paper presents a discussion of the initial findings from the first two case conflicts; Libya and Syria.

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

The research adopts a hermeneutical methodology, utilising the tools of framing analysis from the broader discipline of discourse analysis. According to Robert Entman, how an issue is framed is central to “successful political communication”, and may “promote perceptions and interpretations” that have tangible effects (2003: 417). The framing of issues occurs when words and images can be identified from the rest of the news-piece as having the ability to generate support for or opposition to a particular stance during political conflict (Ibid). These words and images are ones considered salient within the culture examined; they are “noticeable, understandable, memorable and emotionally charged” and include “prominence and repetition” [emphasis in original] (Ibid).

The research is influenced by the concept of a ‘new media ecology’, (see Cottle, 2006, 2011) and as such takes a more holistic approach to media analysis, examining texts from various sources, including broadsheet newsprint (The Times and The Guardian), online news (BBC News) and social media (Twitter), while attempting to retain a primarily (but not exclusive) British perspective. An ecological approach allows the chapter to consider the way that events were framed across different media outlets, considering remediations,
intertextuality and interplay, rather than reducing analysis and scope to either ‘emergent’ or ‘established’ media (Hoskins, 2013).

The research employs an ‘event-driven’ approach to case study selection in order to produce a detailed ‘snapshot’ of the media framing of each case, and with cases selected according to their contextual salience. This limits the boundaries of the unit of analysis, permitting a deeper exploration of media framing while retaining manageability of the wealth of primary data. The cases selected include; the advance on Benghazi by Gaddafi’s forces as part of the counter-offensive during the Libyan uprising (9-19th March 2011), the chemical weapons attack on civilians in Ghouta, Damascus, during the Syrian uprising (20-30th August 2013), and the siege of the Yazidi people on Mount Sinjar by Islamic State forces in Iraqi Kurdistan (2-12th August 2014).

3. Main findings:

The presentation focuses upon the first two of these three case conflicts, Libya and Syria and presents a discussion of the preliminary findings.

The paper finds firstly, that a humanitarian framing of events in Libya was presented through the media’s employment of a ‘fairy-tale of just war’ metaphor (see Lakoff, 2001) and the frequent evocation of past Western experiences with non-intervention in order to substantiate in/action. Secondly, this framing bolstered the concept of R2P, legitimising the subsequent intervention, yet limiting the policy responses available. Finally, the paper explores how the experience in Syria came to be different, despite superficial similarities.

4. Discussion of implications:

This analysis highlights the dynamic and influential relationship between the media and foreign policy decision-making, focusing in particular on the framing of events in order to cognitively influence the way we perceive issues. The research builds upon the work of others in the fields of international relations and political communication who have examined the media-foreign policy nexus (Bennett, 1990; Entman, 1993, 2003; Hallin, 1989; Hawkins, 2002; Herman and Chomsky, 1994; Robinson, 2000).

The adoption of a more holistic approach that takes into consideration both emergent and established forms of media outlet permits a more detailed analysis of the relationship between media forms, and the remediation of frames across these different outlets. As such, a more complete snapshot emerges, rather than one that considers, for example, merely print sources alone. The constant evolution of new communications technology requires us to look beyond the restrictions of a single medium (Hoskins, 2013) and to consider the media as an ecology in constant flux; living, interconnecting, and influencing. How this ecology affects and is effected by the political realm of conflict and intervention is of significant implication and consideration.

5. List of key references/resources:


Difficulties in prison research: from obtaining access to engagement

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Keywords: prison research, imprisonment, prison access, post-Soviet imprisonment

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

The overall aim is to explore Latvian penal system and to examine the impact of physical prison conditions on social relationships among prisoners and key stakeholders. The research aims specifically to explore how prison conditions affect the interpersonal relationships and order among employees and offenders. If prison’s overriding goals of reform and rehabilitation are to be achieved, prisoners as well as employees need to be asked how this can be accomplished better (redesigning the prison environment, receiving adequate assistance throughout the sentencing and appropriate help after release). Therefore, one of the envisaged outcomes of this research is not only to understand how the current prison physical conditions affect the relationship building and the maintenance of order within Latvian Central Prison, but how inmates could also provide valuable input in future prison strategy design and implementation.

Prison research has always been a challenging field of study as prisons not only tend to be physically and bureaucratically isolated but also provide a less appealing research environment. Although the prison settings across countries vary greatly, mostly reflecting the financial and economic situation of a country, the prison environment is predominantly far less hospitable to researchers than many other fields of study. There are many issues with accessing prison facilities. Traditionally prisons have been ‘closed’ institutions (Davies, 2011) and as such governed entirely by complex political and administrative procedures.

However, obtaining access for conducting prison research is only the first of many hurdles that needs to be managed and addressed promptly. As pointed out by Reiter, nowadays prisons are remote and structurally isolated and often are “physically located outside of our communities, invisible to the public and the researcher alike” (Reiter, 2014, p.417). Prisons are no longer built in city centres to warn about the consequences of criminal action (Crewe, 2009), which identifies a change in the paradigm of punishment and additionally for researchers it implies longer commutes to prison facilities that might also result in additional costs. Moreover, prison research is also underfunded and mainly awarded to already experienced researchers (Davies, 2011; Martin, 2000) which further place limitations on research possibilities.

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

This research adopts a multi-method design initially employing an extensive literature review in order to study the paradigm of punishment, focusing in particular on the role of imprisonment and social control as well as its socio-political and cultural implications. This will lead to further in-depth documentary analysis of the penal policy in Latvia that forms the basis for understanding current socio-legal context. The empirical study of prisoners and staff will take place in the largest prison in Latvia - Riga Central Prison. The empirical data collection has been planned within 2 separate phases. Firstly, during the phase I (summer 2015) exploration
of Riga Central Prison physical space and initial sample selection as well as the first semi-structured interviews with offenders and employees will take place. During the phase II (pending on further approval by authorities) a further interviews would be conducted expanding sample size. A combination of methods will be used for data collection purposes, namely a mix of ethnography, appreciative and critical inquiry. The data collection entails observation of key stakeholders within prison environment and 40 semi-structured in-depth interviews with offenders (25) and employees (15) regarding their ‘lived’ prison experiences. By utilising the appreciative inquiry during semi-structured interviews best practices will be gathered from both offender and employee perspective, however this research will also be subject to the ‘lens’ of critical inquiry to provide ‘deeper’ knowledge of reality. The envisaged 40 semi-structured interviews with offenders and employees are aimed at finding out their attitudes towards imprisonment especially focusing on prison physical conditions, their interpersonal relationships and the prison regime and order. The quantitative research methods such as surveys will not be utilised because collecting quantitative data in prison environment can be difficult as “inmates implement so many methods of lying and misrepresentation that surveys or other [quantitative] techniques are often rendered almost useless” (Kaminski, 2004, p.5-6).

3. Main findings:

It is widely accepted that prison research is a challenging field of study. Prisons not only tend to be physically and bureaucratically isolated (Reiter, 2014) but have also become an increasingly hostile and over-regulated environment for researchers where different levels of gatekeepers have the right to obstruct access and set limits to research activities. Wacquant (2002) has raised serious concerns about insufficient ethnographic and qualitative knowledge production regarding life in prison. Jewkes (2013) has argued that in the age of mass incarceration those incomprehensible numbers need to be translated into meaningful language describing “the lived experience of imprisonment” (Jewkes, 2013, p.14). Thus, more than ever, there is a need for more qualitative research on imprisonment.

4. Discussion of implications:

The scope of research is limited to investigation of the Riga Central Prison and will not be extended to the other 11 prison facilities in Latvia. Thus the analysis obtained attempts to portray the life in imprisonment in this particular facility and cannot be generalised and applied to other facilities as the daily routines and management system may not necessarily be alike. Other limitations involve language barriers and potential misrepresentation of participant communication while undertaking the translation process as prisoners and prison officials use specific argot and tend to have both Latvian and Russian speaking origins. Consequently interviews will be planned in both languages – Latvian and Russian. There can be further implications for a female researcher entering a predominantly masculine world (with a male work culture). It is when such trivial dilemmas such as dress code and being ‘taken seriously’ (Jewkes, 2012) can become an important part of the day-to-day life. Prison researchers face not only high emotional demands but also threats to integrity (Liebling, 2014). Researchers in such conflictual environments as prisons are also more likely to be under pressure to ‘take sides’ (Liebling, 2001; Scott, 2014; Sim, 2003). Thus, it can be a real challenge for a researcher to address and represent adequately the views of all involved parties as well as to prevent any involved parties from feeling that the researcher has ‘taken sides’.

5. List of key references/resources:


Aiding Afghanistan: Managing the Security-Development Nexus

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Keywords: Aid, Conditionality, Stabilisation, Counterinsurgency, Democratisation, Europeanization, New Institutionalism

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

The working paper, in looking retrospectively to (UK) aid assistance (and associated conditionality) proffered to Afghanistan, identifies a potentially problematic contradiction in purposes. This problem relates to the ‘security-development nexus’ (Donnelly, 2007; Ginty and Williams, 2009; Hout, 2010), and meshes with notions of institutionalism, modernity, legitimacy and orientalism (see Said, 1977).

International/foreign aid is emphasised as the paper’s central concept. As a narrative, the UK aided the US during the political fallout of the 9/11 (2001) terrorist attacks (by way of Article 5 of the NATO alliance), and thus the internationalisation of the then ongoing Afghan civil war. The US-led coalition then aided the Northern Alliance/United Islamic Front (UIF), a faction of the Afghan civil war, to victory over the Taliban. The international community (UN under SCR 1378, 1383 and 1386; and NATO ISAF) subsequently aided the fledgling government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, post-Bonn Agreement (2001). With a resurgent Neo-Taliban-led insurgency, Afghanistan ultimately became a prominent partaker of what has been debated as the ‘new wars’ (see Duffield, 2014).

Aid, assistance, cooperation (and conditionality) within and unto Afghanistan became mired amidst concepts such as counterinsurgency (COIN), stabilisation, democratisation, reconstruction and nation/state/peace building. Associated discourse and counter-discourse entailed the likes of Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), ‘Clear, Hold, Build’ (CHB), and the ‘3Ds’ of Defence, Diplomacy and Development. Arguably however, aid is anything but (aiding) when it is not willfully requested; in which instance it becomes conditionality, or more subjectively, neo-imperialism (see Pugh, 2003, 2004, 2005).

But, as Cowper-Coles (2012) noted, from the Western perspective post-9/11 Afghanistan was not an unprecedented (imperial) problem. The established precedent was to either 1) mount a punitive expedition, 2) install a favourable (client) government, or to 3) fully occupy the territories from which the barbarians sallied forth. Elements of all three options are identifiable. However, the northern UIF were not enabled to lead the new interim government (Karzai was selected, a Pashtun), and beyond assisting the new government, considerable conditionality (such as democratisation) was levied (see Flint, 2014).
The paper’s central problem is thus internally ‘professional contention’ between agencies (Woodward, 2012) and externally within the aid relationship with Afghanistan where aid meets conditionality (or where assistance meets interference).

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

The working paper is a component of a broader research project which is concerned with the Europeanization of aid and the post-9/11 management of the security-development nexus (as a sub-domain of aid). A critical theory orientated paradigm of inquiry is adopted, through alethic hermeneutical methodology (see Geuss, 1981; Howell, 2013; Williams and May, 1996). The hermeneutical ‘message’ and ‘meaning’ is scrutinised through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as influenced foremost by Fairclough (1995, 2003, 2006; also see Goffman, 1981; Machin and Mayr, 2013). However, the broader social analysis (second and third levels of Fairclough’s (1995) distinctive theoretical approach) is emphasised over pure textual analysis.

CDA is utilised foremost to ‘critically’ explore historical ideas and power-structures (see Fairclough, 1995; Guess, 1981). The paper does not operate in accordance with pre-established popular assumptions as with developmental, humanitarian, and militaristic domains, but explores the broader institutional discourses (through archive strategies and elite interviews).

This analysis is informed by Europeanization theory as a broad mapping and analytical concept, in its eclectic usage (see Bučar, 2012; Exadaktylos and Radaelli, 2009; Gross, 2009; Howell, 2004; Lightfoot, 2010), and in synthesis with the new (historical and discursive) institutionalisms (see Pierson, 1996, 2000; Schmidt, 2008, 2010). As a result, interest is with the directionality of influence with regard soft content such as norms, and the path dependency, critical junctures and communication of institutional ideas.

Within this broader research project, the paper levies focus upon the evolution of UK aid policy and associated discourse towards Afghanistan, as the institution of ‘UK aid’. Scope for norms to be uploaded into EU-level discourse, or identification of EU-level norms within UK discourse, is tackled in a separate discussion paper. Rather, focus is on the UK’s Department for International Development (DfID) as a case study (see Jordan, 2003), with spill-over into the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) joint doctrines, the subject matter being a policy nexus spanning agencies. DfID end of year reports are adopted as the case study starting point for the CDA process.

In summary, the underpinning methodology is hermeneutical and is operationalised through CDA within the limits of exploitation of a case study research design. The higher social analysis dimensions of the CDA approach is enhanced through a theoretical framework which combines Europeanization with the new institutionalisms. The paper is strongly influenced by critical theory rationale.
3. Main findings:

The working paper builds towards two planes of findings. Firstly, there is the theoretical discussion with regard to security and development within the institutional realms of UK aid, and its purpose (such as with the theoretical compatibility of democratisation with COIN). Secondly, the preliminary exploration of policy documents and associated discourse lends support to the argument that the empirics of UK aid towards Afghanistan have been unequal and in areas conflicting. This is in contradiction to the purported ‘comprehensive’ approach. It reveals not one but more properly two case studies; that of post-1997 DfID approaches, and that of the subsequent (post-2009) ‘comprehensive’ or ‘whole of government’ approach, as UK aid evolved through the post-9/11 historical context.

There is a fundamental distinction between COIN and stabilisation, and in aiding a foreign state to conduct COIN and to stabilise. Whereas, there are more nuanced distinctions between Western norms, modernity and legitimacy, and Afghan norms, modernity and legitimacy (Flint, 2014). However, preliminary scrutiny of early (historic) discourse shows a lack of awareness of these subtleties of culture and socio-political power structures. As a result the paper is critical of the supposed ‘comprehensive’ approach as forwarded in latter discourse.

4. Discussion of implications:

As this working paper constitutes an exploration of past discourses and counter-discourses and associated empirical events, as guided through the application of extant theory, the most prominent implications are found within scope for theory building.

It is perhaps overly reductionist to think of the security-development nexus in terms of which must come first in order to facilitate the other. Where it comes to aiding a foreign government assert its sovereignty in COIN and socio-political stability, this falls within the realm of ‘hearts and minds’. But, do you win the support of the polis (for the indigenous ‘legitimate’ government) through targeting their hearts (through development) or through targeting their minds (through security)? Is the policy area coherent (see Carbone, 2008, 2010, 2011; Dearden, 2008)?

Furthermore, how politicised, or securitised, has UK aid policy become? UK/EU norms of foreign/overseas aid may not be the same as American norms (which more overtly target aid towards perceived overseas threats) (see Holden, 2009; Natsios, 2006; Versluys, 2008). But, was UK aid towards Afghanistan altruistic and alleviating of poverty (as per EU acquis norms), or was it politicised? Was it supportive of traditional Afghan socio-political power structures and culture, or was it promoting a Western ideal of modernity and democratisation (exhibiting Western understandings of legitimacy)? Was aiding the democratisation of Afghanistan aid, or was it conditionality (did any ‘legitimate’ or popular Afghan leadership request such aid)?

5. List of key references/resources:


Antecedents and Consequences of Overshooting in the Context of Product Innovation

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Keywords: overshooting, path dependence process, trade-off-breaking innovation, trade-off-positioning

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

A significant proportion of product innovations are not successfully commercialised and persistently applying one particular innovative approach could be risky (Barczak, Griffin, & Kahn, 2009; Thrane, Blaabjerg, & Møller, 2010). Christensen and Raynor (2003) contends that persistently improving certain product attributes may overprovide the performance of the particular attributes for the consumer and boost prices for features unwanted by customers. Thompson, Hamilton, & Rust (2005) also agree that constantly incorporating more product features may cause user fatigue. On another side, Hauser (2001) stresses that persistently improving certain product attributes can be at the expenses of the alternatives favoured by a particular market segment. For example, an excessive emphasis on ergonomics may restrict the flexibility of product usage (Yoo 2004). This phenomenon can be referred to as ‘overshooting’ indicates the unproductive outcome of persistently improving certain product attributes such as, functionality, convenience or price, by using the same approach of innovation. This research will uncover the antecedents and consequences of overshooting.

Overshooting is traditionally regarded as a negative in terms of its consequences for two major reasons. Firstly, as overshooting is a term with negative connotations, researchers are inclined to focus on the negative consequences of overshooting (Christensen, 2006a; Lukas, Whitwell, Heide, Need, & Organizational, 2013; Thompson et al., 2005). Secondly, overshooting does bring about negative consequences. As mentioned in the introduction, ‘overprovided improvement’ and ‘compromised improvement’ on certain product attributes are likely a consequence of overshooting and may undermine product performances (Christensen et al., 2004; Hauser, 2000). However, there are several reasons why outcomes may be less negative as normally presumed. Here we provide more details in the factors regarding the positive and negative consequences of overshooting.

On another side, overshooting may give rise to positive consequences. Firstly, when the performances of certain product attributes are elevated, the higher performances may satisfy some customers with low performance threshold (Adner & Levinthal, 2001; Ron Adner, 2002). Secondly, overshooting simplifies the innovation space in which companies try to develop new products, which largely reduces the cost of seeking an alternative approach to innovation and brings about initial success to firms in a stable environment (Gilbert, 2005; Miller, 1993). Finally, although overshooting may cause an adverse reaction in some customers, this situation may just be temporary and tomorrow’s customers may value the improvement in a different way (Earl & Potts, 2012).

This research will address the following questions:
1. What is overshooting?

2. How and why does overshooting happen in organisation?

3. How and why does overshooting bring about positive or negative outcomes?

4. How do companies deal with the consequences of overshooting?

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

The research setting is a comparative case study regarding four major players in the market for virtual learning environment (VLE). As software-borne products are featured by frequent upgrades and constant improvement on product attributes over time, sampling in the industry of VLE is thus considered as appropriate theoretical sampling (Claser and Strauss 1967). Moreover, selecting cases within one industry also helps to screen out extraneous variation (Eisenhardt, 1989; Gilbert, 2005).

The relevant theory to be developed is grounded on the data collected for this research (Glaser and Strauss 1967). However, in contrast with the case studies that purely grounded on data, this research is conducted under the theoretical lens of path dependence process (Sydow et al 2009) and the theoretical lens developed around the consequences of overshooting. The rationale is that taking theoretical lens helps to specify the prior concepts relevant to theory-building, which will clarify the focus of data collection and facilitate researchers’ measurement of constructs (Eisenhardt 1989, p.536). This research also claims that taking theoretical lens is different from taking assumptions into theory-building process for the lens or angles of building theory can be rejected whenever it appears not to be in line with data. Moreover, taking theoretical lens adds to the chance of theory-building success for the theoretical lens suggest a theory-throne tunnel leading to new theories, which is evidenced by prior research (K. M. Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Gilbert, 2005; Rubera, Ordanini, & Calantone, 2012; Thrane et al., 2010).

3. Main findings:

- Overshooting on certain product attributes derives from the overshooting on a particular approach of innovation.
- The resultant case studies confirm that overshooting is consequent to path dependence process. The antecedents of overshooting are thus classifiable according to the different mechanisms existent at three different stages of path dependence process.
- The case studies also reveal that trade-off-breaking innovations and trade-off-positioning innovations are the two major competitive innovations following up the overshooting on certain product attributes.
- Incumbent firms may respond to the consequences of overshooting initially by hostily attacking or imitating, later by hospitably cooperating and finally by radically reorganising.

4. Discussion of implications:

This research provides a comprehensive and systematic view about the antecedences and consequences of overshooting. Managers relying heavily on overshooting can use the theoretical framework developed from this research diagnose their competitive position both from a dynamic capability perspective (Salomo, Gemünden, & Leifer, 2007) and competitive dynamic perspective (Chen, 1996). Also, incumbent firm managers will be empowered by the outcome of this research to defend disruptions while new market entrants may attack over-shooters more competitively by resorting to the outcome of this research.
5. List of key references/resources:


A Model for Predicting Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Performance in Saudi Arabia

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Keywords: overshooting, path dependence process, trade-off-breaking innovation, trade-off-positioning

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

It is common for the Saudi market to be seen to lose countless organisations, the majority of which are small and medium. Altogether, in 2012, more than 45,000 businesses ceased trading; in 2011, this figure was less than 28,000 whilst in 2010 it was just under 1,800, (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2012). In the view of the General Organisation for Social Insurance (2012), 98% of all organisations operating in Saudi Arabia are SMEs, and average between 3 and 7 years in operation before ceasing to trade. As a result, there have been a number of negative effects on the economy (Raj, 2009). Thus, the aim of this paper is to examine the factors behind this occurrence so as to provide solutions and suggestions. Failures occur and businesses cannot succeed when there is a misalignment present; on the one hand the resources of the business and their placement in order to achieve the business’s aims and, on the other hand, its environment (Thornhill & Amit, 2003; and Turner, 2005). Barney (1991) explained that the reason for businesses’ failures are due to them not succeeding in obtaining competitive advantages by implementing strategies that exploit their internal strengths, through responding to environmental opportunities, while neutralising external threats and avoiding internal weaknesses. It has been seen through the literature review that SMEs come to face a number of different failure and success factors. In an attempt to classify these, it has been emphasised by Storey (1994) that factors can be either exogenous or endogenous, causing the failure or success of small and medium organisations, with their significance resting on the composition and positioning of the business, as well as the operating environment’s prevailing characteristics. Accordingly, this study is in line with the notion that SMEs are impacted by a number of different external and internal parameters. In this way, it takes into account the fact that external aspects affect an organisation from the outside, and that such businesses are not able to avoid such elements (Zacharakis et al., 1999). On the other hand, internal factors may be controlled through the organisation or even its members; nevertheless, individual perception and reality may differ.

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

The main aim of this research is to explore and examine the factors that stand behind this occurrence to provide a model that can identify the factors that assist small and medium sized enterprises to increase their chances of success and decrease the failure rate. This have been reached through identifying the different factors that are producing from inside the business and from the external environment, which may play an essential role to effect on SMEs performance in the Saudi context. Data have been collected by utilising a quantitative method. First, 139 questionnaires were sent to successful SMEs owners/managers who made profits for the last three years, second, 44 questionnaires to managers of small and medium sized enterprises that had not made profits for the last three years. The questionnaires have been analysed by using SPSS. First, the descriptive analysis was conducted to identify the participants and business characteristics. Second, exploring factors analysis was utilised in order to decrease large-scale variables into a more compact factor
base, and to explore the nature of the constructs influencing a set of responses. Third, the logistic regression analysis has been examined to measure the influence of the factors that constructed from previous analysis on small and medium sized enterprises performance.

3. Main findings:

The results indicate that there are four factors that form the internal environment, which named characteristics of owners/managers and managerial issues; the efficiency of owners/managers in management practices; using of information technology; and lastly, owner’s/manager’s experience and relationship with others. In addition, there are four factors constructed from the external environment that named, market threats; the role of multinational firms in the host economy; the impact of terrorism factor; and availability of external support. Logistic regression analysis was run with these factors and with businesses and participant’s information in order to identify which factors are statistically significant and effect on the business performance. The logistic regression analysis found that, using of information technology; owner’s/manager’s experience and relationship with others; the role of multinational firms in a host economy; education level of owners/managers; years of experience of owners/managers; nationality of owners/managers; age of the business; and number of employees, are statistically signifies and influence small and medium sized enterprises performance in the Saudi market.

4. Discussion of implications:

The goal of this research is to identify the factors influencing on small and medium – sized enterprises (SMEs) in Saudi Arabia to be successful business or not. Specifically, the study addresses SMEs currently operating in the Saudi market as a way to deepen understanding of the performance of SMEs with their internal and external environments. The outcome of the study is a prediction model which gives the probability of the success or failure in the Saudi market. Therefore, the current paper assists owners/managers of SMEs to be aware about the important factors that enable them to succeed in the Saudi market. Also, the results of the current paper have to support the Saudi authorities to know the success factors for SMEs which will enable them to develop SMEs sector in the Saudi context.

5. List of key references/resources:


Hate Crime Conceptualisation

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Keywords: hate crime, prejudice, bias crime

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

This presentation will explore how hate crime has been conceptualised by key authors in the field including Perry, Iganski, Brax, and Lawrence.

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

The paper represents a comprehensive review of the literature on hate crime and considers how the concept has evolved and been understood for the purposes of legal enforcement, upholding safety and security throughout society and in explaining the experiences of those groups who are victimised through hate crime.

3. Main findings:

Hate crime is not easily defined by any single typology and is instead best understood via a number of concepts. Hate crimes by nature are not a static event, incident or crime and instead can be understood as any one of more of the following:

- Offender bias
- Motivating factors related to an incident that does or does not constitute a crime in its own right
- Prejudice towards a group(s) that pose a ‘threat’ to the offender, their own group identity or status
- ‘Message’ crimes intended to control a social group of which the victim is perceived to belong
- The harm or impact of the incident on the victim or their wider group
- Targeted at specific minority groups within society

4. Discussion of implications:

Research needs to be completed to understand specific forms of victimisation such as exploration of transgender experiences of hate crime.

5. List of key references/resources:


The Influence of Contextual Factors on Health and Safety Performance of Construction Contractors in Nigeria: A Comparative Assessment

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Keywords: construction contractors, contextual factors, health and safety, Nigeria

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

The health and safety (H&S) performance of construction contractors in Nigeria is documented as poor in various studies (Idoro 2008; Umeokafor et al. 2014; Windapo & Jegede 2013). The industry does not see the safety of its employees as a watchword (Umeokafor et al. 2014) and all the risks fall on the construction workers (Ajayi & Thwala 2014).

However, multinational construction firms (MCFs) are demonstrated as performing better than indigenous construction firms (ICFs) in various areas including H&S. Typically, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) who are mostly ICFs are prosecuted more than MCFs in terms of H&S related issues (Arewa & Farrell 2012). Similarly, scholars demonstrate that in Nigeria, MCFs comply with H&S standards more than ICFs (Windapo & Jegede 2013) and perhaps wholly government owned construction agencies (GOCAs). Further, evidence from literature also shows that MCFs have better H&S records and management systems than the ICFs in Nigeria (for example see Windapo & Jegede 2013). Although little or no literature exists on GOCAs, it is also possible that their H&S performance is worse than that of ICFs and MCFs.

These differences can be attributed to contextual influences, as the construction industry exists in the environment (cf. Hofstede, 1980). In particular, MCFs get adequate governmental attention unlike ICFs (Odediran et al 2012). SMEs are unable to secure loans (Odediran et al. 2012) thus are unable to bid for contracts or finance projects like MCFs do. Also, it is believed that MCFs have better management and planning skills than ICFs thus are preferred in the award of contracts. These may explain why studies (Idoro 2010; Jimoh 2012) note that MCFs execute most of the construction projects in Nigeria. Also, SMEs are unable to compete in the international market thus operating in only local markets (Kheni et al. 2007). It is then believed that these make MCFs to be better placed financially than ICFs, thus allocating more resources to H&S and in turn performing better in terms of H&S.

Studies comparatively assess MCFs and ICFs in various areas (see: Ido 2010; Windapo & Jegede 2013). However, little or no study has assessed the impact of contextual factors on H&S performance of Nigerian construction contractors (including GOCAs) comparatively. A study that addresses the aforesaid premise will help in policymaking. It will also help in bridging the gaps among the various categories of the industry. Against this premise, this study comparatively assesses the impact of contextual factors on H&S performance of ICFs, MCFs and GOCAs.
2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

Random purposeful sampling was adopted because as at the time of conducting the research, no comprehensive contact details of construction contractors were available.

A total of 173 questionnaires were hand distributed to construction professionals and 147 were returned. The first section of the questionnaires identified the demographic details of the respondents. Among the respondents were project managers, H&S professionals, engineers, quantity surveyors inter alia. The respondents were made up of both construction professionals at management and operation levels. Section two assessed the contextual factors that have been identified through literature review. The respondents were then asked to assess the factors using Likert scale, which ranges from 1 to 5 where 1 is negligible; 2: very low; 3: low; 4: high; 5: very high. The relative importance index (RII) of each contextual factor was then calculated after which the factors were ranked.

3. Main findings:

This section presents the first six ranked factors and the last. The RII of each of the factors is also presented.

Table 1: summary of identified contextual factors, degree of importance and ranking for MCF employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual factors</th>
<th>RII</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate governmental attention on H&amp;S</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate H&amp;S regulatory system</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor safety culture</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption at industry level</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate H&amp;S legislation in Nigeria</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial influence</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption at private sector level</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;S is only for the big construction firms</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysfunctional regulatory environment of Nigeria</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference to multinationals in awarding contracts</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecurity</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: summary identified contextual factors, degree of importance and ranking for ICF employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual factors</th>
<th>RII</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor safety culture</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate governmental attention on H&amp;S</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate H&amp;S regulatory system</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate H&amp;S legislation in Nigeria</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of management commitment of indigenous construction firms</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of employee commitment towards safety</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of members of organisations from countries of high safety culture</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective institutional arrangements in Nigeria</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysfunctional regulatory environment of Nigeria</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity in language of employees</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: summary of identified contextual factors, degree of importance and ranking for respondents from GOCAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual factors</th>
<th>RII</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor safety culture</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate H&amp;S legislation in Nigeria</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor safety standards in informal construction projects</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude, values and perception of the construction industry</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude, values and perception of the management of organisations</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High level of management commitment of multinational firms</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate H&amp;S regulatory system</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity in language of employees</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Discussion of implications:

Table 1 shows that MCF employee’s perceive inadequate governmental attention to H&S as the highest contextual factor that influences H&S in their organisations with a RII of 0.89, while Table 2 shows that for ICFs it ranks second with a RII of 0.82. This is revealing as scholars note that MCFs receive more governmental attention than ICFs (Odediran et al. 2012). Nonetheless, it suggests that MCFs may not be receiving sufficient governmental attention as assumed.

For employees from GOCAs, inadequate governmental attention does not rank among the first sixth factors (Table 3). This may be so because GOCAs may be receiving more governmental attention than others because of the type of ownership. Nonetheless, the low level of governmental attention towards H&S is noted in literature as high and significant (see Idubor & Osiamoje 2013; Umeokafor et al. 2014). While the onus for improving H&S lies on all, the significant role of the government in improving H&S is highly evidenced in this study.

Table 2 shows that employees of ICFs opine that poor safety culture is the highest factor that influences H&S in their organisations. Poor safety culture is also the highest ranking factor for GOCAs (Table 3), but ranks third for MCFs (Table 1). This implies that there is a consensus on the significant influence of poor safety culture on H&S practices in Nigeria. This therefore calls for a reorientation of norms, values and attitude of Nigerians towards safety, from grassroots and family levels.

While inadequate H&S regulatory system ranks second for MCF employees (Table 1), Table 2 shows that for ICF employees it ranks third, and Table 3 puts it at sixth for the respondents from GOCAs. It can also be seen in Tables 1 and 2 that regulatory related issues rank high for MCFs and ICFs. Typically, in addition to inadequate H&S regulatory system, inadequate H&S legislation in Nigeria ranks fourth for both MCFs and ICFs. Also, the dysfunctional regulatory environment of Nigeria ranks sixth for both ICFs and MCFs. This strong evidence of poor regulatory issues in terms of H&S is consistent with Idoro (2008) and Umeokafor et al. (2014).

From Tables 1 and 2, inference can be made that as much as MCFs and ICFs have most of the factors related to regulatory issues, lack of management commitment of ICFs and low level of employee commitment towards safety both relate to organisational issues. And these may also contribute to the poor H&S performance of ICFs. It therefore suggests that more efforts are needed from ICFs themselves to improve H&S.

Studies strongly recognise the influence of the values, perceptions and attitude of Nigerians in terms of H&S at both industry and company levels (Idubor & Osiamoje 2013; Keni et al. 2007; Umeokafor et al. 2014) and these two factors rank fourth and fifth for GOCAs respectively. However, it remains unclear why the two factors do not rank high for ICFs and MCFs, thus further studies can explore this.

Most importantly, the findings of this study show the areas that strategies for improving H&S practices in Nigeria should focus on in terms of the various categories of the construction industry. This study also offers insight into the discourse to policymakers, organisations and researchers in developing countries.

5. List of key references/resources:


Knowledge Transfer and Innovative Corporate Strategies in Organisational Collaborative Relationships: the Potential of Open Strategy

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Keywords: knowledge transfer, collaborative relationships, open strategy, organisation structures, knowledge transfer networks

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

In the 1990s collaborations became popular and seemed to provide a good possibility to partner with competitors or suppliers in vertical or horizontal integration. (Whittington, Cailluet, Yakis-Douglas, 2011, p. 531) There are many different forms of collaborative relationships seen from a structural perspective as being different partnerships with third parties, all structured in a web of network ties. (McEvily, Zaheer, 1999, p. 1135) These can be ties of different circles such as stakeholders, professional partners, and personal contacts inside and outside the business. (Sorenson et al., 2008, p. 617-618, Gulati et al., 2000, p. 203)

Some organisations are looking for collaboration in order to enter new markets or create new products (Hamel, Doz, Prahalad, 1989, p.133) share resources (Wernerfelt, 1984, p. 171) or save transaction costs. (Jarillo, 1988, p. 33)

A strategic feature of a network of alliances or collaborative relationships is that the firms in the system are closely linked for information sharing (Lorenzoni, Baden-Fuller, 1995, p. 401). Knowledge is considered as one of the most important resource within networks so the role of knowledge creation, knowledge management and knowledge transfer is essential to access and assimilate knowledge as a strategic resource. (Lorenzoni, Baden-Fuller, 1995, p. 401). Furthermore, knowledge is seen as being essential for the innovation process (Cohen, Levinthal, 1990, p. 128) and innovation capability is a critical aspect for managers in order to seek competitive advantage of business strategies (Hoffmann et al., 2012, p. 145).

Currently, innovation has mainly been subject of interest in technological areas and product related domains (Berghman, et al., 2013, p. 58) but a firm’s network ties can offer new knowledge in regards to business practises and techniques (McEvily, Zaheer, 1999, p. 1137) that can be interesting for innovative strategic purposes as well (Berghman, et al., 2013, p. 40). How the knowledge created, assimilated and transferred through network ties can be used in a strategy context remains relatively unexplored (Gulati, 2000 et al., p. 204). As well, the influence of network structures at the organisational level, as well as network positions and their effect on knowledge transfer and reciprocity has not been investigated in detail so far (Caimo et al., 2014, p. 1).

Collaborative structures inhabit unexplored aspects on how to effectively share knowledge between partners without losing strategically relevant knowledge, especially as knowledge sharing is based on reciprocity and mutuality (Ahuja et al., 1999, p. 744). These considerations display as well the paradox of successful collaboration and competition at the same time (De Witt, Meyer, p.375).

Knowledge can be considered as key resource for the development of innovation (Kodama, 2007, p.117). Particularly on product and functional level strategy, knowledge as a resource plays an essential role to
create innovative products (Grant, 2002, p. 133). Furthermore, the ability to combine, create and acquire knowledge is directly linked to a firm’s innovation performance (Zheng, Zhang, Du, 2011, p. 1048). Knowledge as a resource is a very important motive for collaboration between firms (Sorenson et al., 2008, p. 619).

In order to create knowledge within collaborative relationships it needs to be accessed. Organisations need to place emphasis on the external knowledge access and the internal learning capability (Tsai, 2001, p. 997). Network structures or alliances can even be superior to firms that are not actively linked to collaborative partners in regards to external knowledge creation and knowledge transfer (Grant, Baden Fuller, 2004, p.64). As knowledge is integrated into firms by direction and routine, companies need adaptive capabilities and absorptive capacity to integrate knowledge. Networks on the other hand are faster in accessing new knowledge as they do not need to develop complete new directions and routines, but access the knowledge required directly at their partners. On the other hand they have a lack in incorporating the knowledge accessed (Grant, Baden Fuller, 2004, p.67-68).

Still, the learning organisation and the role of adaptive behaviour are essential for the incorporation of existing knowledge which can be called ‘knowledge substitution’ (Berghman et al., 2013, p. 42-43, Conner, Prahalad, 1996, p.477–501), as this is required to match old knowledge to new knowledge (Nonaka, 1994, p.19). But, routines and habits can also hinder the assimilation of new and unexplored knowledge (Kane, 2010, p.657).

Despite the importance of the above described mechanisms and determinants there has been very little research focusing on facilitating knowledge creation and knowledge transfer.

Summarising the short review, collaborative relationships can offer additional and new knowledge and have the potential, under certain restrictions and circumstances, to facilitate knowledge transfer. Still, there is the paradox of collaboration and competition (De Witt, Meyer, 2012, p.374-377) that might hinder organisations to successfully develop innovative strategies within collaborative relationships especially as knowledge exchange is based on mutuality and reciprocity (Ahuja et al., 1999, p. 744).

When looking at companies and their collaborative relationships as partners acting within a business ecosystem (Moore, 1996, p. 3) with shared visions and ideas, the importance of co-evolvement emerges. In this view the conflict of collaboration and competition is needed in order to successfully develop and co-evolve the whole business ecosystem. The aim is to strengthen all partners within that ecosystem in order to harden it against outside influences. Following this idea, collaboration with competitors within the same ecosystem can even strengthen the collaborating company instead of weakening it (Moore, 1996, p. 4-5).

Positions and knowledge transfer within the business ecosystem vary, keystones play a different role as niche players do (Iansiti, Levien, 2004, p. 82) and they certainly have different roles in knowledge transfer and creation within that ecosystem. So far, no research has focussed on positions that can be taken within an ecosystem, what network structures can be found and how knowledge creation and knowledge transfer is influenced by the particular network position taken.

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

Unit and Level of Analysis: This means an in depth analysis of firms and what collaborative relationships they maintain would be suitable. Looking at network structures, which are embedded or hub spoke and the positions, which can be found in such networks. This is an organisation level of research rather than an industry level of research (Gulati, 2008, p. 205) but as knowledge originates on individual level, (Nonaka, 1994, p. 17) knowledge creation and transfer process within the organisation need to be addressed as well (Marabelli,
Newell, 2012, p. 20). It would be interesting to look at organisations within a business ecosystem with a shared business idea and a shared belief (Iansiti, Levien, 2004, p.5-10).

German SME’s will be the unit of analysis, as they are well known for their innovativeness and their collaboration in business relationship and they are found to work only in very selective business network being based on trust and risk sharing (Love, Roper, 2004, p. 387). Within German industry the energy sector is well known for its activities in business networks and clusters (Clusterplattform, 2015) and could therefore offer an interesting network structure for investigation.

Research Method: Case study method should be used for very complex contexts (Xiao, Smith, 2006, p. 739). Furthermore, case studies can be used to generate (Yin, 2003, p.38) and sample theories (Glaser, Strauss, 1998 p.53). “(...) theory development can occur through the systematic piecing together of detailed evidence to generate (or perhaps replicate) theories of more general interest” (Hartley, 1994, p.211). A case study can investigate a phenomenon in depth and within its reality (Yin, 2009, p. 18), but it is also very limited by its uniqueness. Yin suggests that this weakness can be overcome by a multiple case study which can be the appropriate method for analysing keystone and niche player positions.

3. Main findings:

It shall be questioned how firms can access, incorporate and transfer knowledge created in existing network ties depending on their position and their role within the network.

4. Discussion of implications:

Using the idea of business ecosystems and co-evolvement through competition and collaboration (Moore, 1996, p.4-5) the idea is to seek certain network positions such as keystones, which “achieve powerful and successful positions not by dominating large parts of their industries [...]” (Iansiti, Levien, 2004, p. 82), and by investigating on niche players, which are located at the edge of the business ecosystem and bring in innovations and new ideas into the existing network (Iansiti, Levien, 2004, p. 125).

By looking at network positions such as keystone or niche positions the aim is to investigate on the organisations abilities on accessing, integrating and transferring knowledge and how they manage their knowledge and intellectual property. What impact does size, position and influence have on their knowledge creation and transfer abilities? Are keystones necessarily the strongest transfer and the biggest organisations in the network? Are niche player’s smaller and peripheral firms that are automatically weaker?

5. List of key references/resources:


Credit Constraints, Identity, and Individual Investment in Further Education: Evidence from the University of Greenwich Fast Forward Programme

Igwe Emmanuel

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Keywords: credit constraints, educational decision making, schooling, identity

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

A fundamental determinant of a nation’s wealth is the quality of its workforce. To this end, the propensity of the individual to enhance herself through learning contributes to the overall quality of the workforce. Government economic policy is thus designed to influence the decision making process of the individual. In the case of contributing to the economy, one such policy endeavour would be to encourage individuals to enrol for further education with the aim of obtaining sufficient skills to improve productivity in the workplace. However, investments in education can only be impactful after individual perceptions of “self” and the imperfections of credit markets are considered. With particular emphasis on further education, this research considers the effects of credit constraints and identity on an individual’s decision to invest in education.

The Fast Forward Programme is an innovative package of mentoring, work placements and financial support, which started in September 2014. The aim of the programme is to increase the number of Masters level students from groups that have been under-represented in higher education. It also seeks to help these students to develop workplace skills. The programme provides a 60% fee waiver and £500 towards the cost of books and other study essentials. Also included is the benefit of a close partnership between the university and employers in the region, ensuring every Fast Forward student benefits from guaranteed work experience and ongoing mentoring. Before the start of the programme, all third year undergraduate students and Greenwich undergraduate alumni (between 2005 and 2013) were asked about their intentions with regard to future study and additional socio-economic background, using an adapted version of the HEFCE survey extending this to explore behavioural tenets. This paper uses the information from this survey to consider the constraints and enablers for Masters Level study.

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

The study design comprises the application of both a primary and secondary data analyses. To fulfil the aims of the study, the mode of inquiry began with a primary data analysis conducted in the form of an online questionnaire distribution. The questionnaire was created to observe individual perceptions of postgraduate education with the aim of understanding the factors current students and graduands consider as they choose between postgraduate education and an immediate entry into the labour market upon graduation. To explore the control and treatment effects, questionnaires were distributed through emails to two major groups- current third-year students at the university of Greenwich (2013/2014 academic year), and alumni of the university of Greenwich between 2008 and 2013. Here, the third-year students were the control group while the treatment group was the alumni.
Following the primary data analysis, a secondary data analysis was conducted. Firstly, the sample - 484 third-year and 520 alumni respondents - were compared against the population to check representativeness of the data through demographic and cross-tabulation comparisons. Following that was the use of ordered probit (as the data is discrete with a limited dependent variable characteristic) following by a switching regime model to ascertain the propensity to engage in postgraduate education.

3. Main findings:

We find that both the alumni and third year students at Greenwich are from more disadvantaged backgrounds than those in the HEFCE survey in terms of the incidence of coming from a disadvantaged background and thus appear more likely to be financially constrained. The Fast Forward Programme therefore, is being offered in an institution with a strong track record of attracting students from more modest backgrounds. Despite this, our respondents are more likely than those on the HEFCE study to consider further study, showing high levels of aspirations for future study. However, when faced with the reality of financing these aspirations within the next three years, many voiced concerns about being able to actually live up to these aspirations.

4. Discussion of implications:

We will explore the degree to which the Fast Forward Programme has enabled the students to undertake an appropriate Masters programme as well as investigating the relative importance of reducing the credit constraint and offering innovative programme design, including the use of employer mentors in encouraging students to take on Masters level study. The results of the paper will help inform future designs of Masters Programmes within the local institution as well as provide evidence for the HEFCE Postgraduate Support Scheme.

5. List of key references/resources:


Research on the Interaction of Firm’s Internal and External Power in Perspective of Global Value Chain Upgrading (GVCU) in Developing Countries

Xu Jasmine

Keywords: firm power, global value chain management, GVCU

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

Before 1991, Porter and Millar (1985) used nine categories (e.g., primary activities: in-out bound logistics, operations, marketing and sales, services; support activities: basic infrastructure, human resource management, technology development and procurement) about value activity and five competitive forces (threat of entrants or substitute products/services; bargaining power of suppliers/buyers; rivalry among existing competitors) to give companies some ideas about competitive advantage to make sure they are in control of all of the events. However, even though the company knows about the impact of information technology, they do not know much about when and how this impact strikes. Therefore, Porter (1991) first began to investigate the Global Value Chain (GVC) because of that dynamic strategy process, Porter found that top managers or the management board in GVC cannot take part in or control all the situations or decisions; on the one hand, even though top managers know well about value activities, they do not know much about the degree of differentiation and integration across the whole value activities, because the value chain seems more like a bureaucratic organisation (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998; Porter and Millar, 1985). On the other hand, when this refers to GVC upgrading, it involves innovation, technologies, internal governance, cooperation during the four types (process, product, functional and intersectoral upgrading) of upgrading in order to increase the chain value, as well as to enhance the firm or the organisation’s competitiveness (Porter, 1990; Gereffi, 1999; Gereffi and Kaplinsky, 2001; Humphrey and Schmitz, 2000). Also, the learning of upgrading can be achieved by matching standards or some direct involvement from GVC leaders, multiple interaction (GVC governance, suppliers’ capabilities), also the co-evolution of suppliers and buyers involved continuous changes because of the dynamism of innovation (Pietrobelli and Rabelllptti, 2011). Most vulnerable value chain participants in developing countries want to increase the added value during this GVCU process, however, there are some risks e.g. environment uncertainty, R&D cost risk, hence, in order to minimum those risks, they choose their strategies such as cooperation, collaboration, or even imitation (McGuffog and Wadsley, 1999). Vega-Jurado, Jaider, et al (2008) Chang, Y. Y., Hughes, M., & Hotho, S. (2011) have already observed that the internal and external factor of a firm can affect SME’s normally production performance, the limitation is they do not lay much emphasis on how the interaction of firm’s internal and external power relationship impact on GVCU strategies. Thus, the questions have now become how do company’s internal organizations and the firm itself upgrade in the GVCU? What are the causal conditions for upgrading? Especially how do case companies to upgrade? What are the consequences? What are the potential problems? What are the top-manager’s possible behaviours under this upgrading situation?
2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

Since the research aim is to get a better understanding of GVCU in developing countries, this research selected the high-tech equipment manufacturing firms in Henan Province, the central part of China. In 2011, the government of Henan Province published the details of 50 equipment manufacturing firms as the Province’s Emphasised Developing and Reforming Targets in order to give them more support for that competitive advantage in GVC (Henan Sina, 2011).

This research introduces a comprehensive literature review of the interaction of firm’s internal and external power, and uses an survey to find the ability of firm’s managers to make a strategy decision on resource distribution with internal organizations, and to identify their responses of technology gap with the external competitors in GVC; Also, a questionnaire will be applied to those 50 highlighted firms and their internal organizations, in order to make a depth investigation of the relationship between the internal and external powers. Data can be collected from the survey, a questionnaire, the internal organization records as well as that firm’s annual report. Of this 50 highlighted firm samples, 15 firms (30%) responded to the survey, and 20 firms (40%) responded to the questionnaire.

3. Main findings:

This paper concludes that the internal organisations in that dynamic global value chain upgrading process stimulate the firm’s resources accumulation for external competition. Moreover, it is found that the relationship between the internal organisation and top management is partially mediated by the balance of that internal resources distribution, and the rate of payment of the firm’s technical support, internally; for the external, the relationship for the firm itself with the competitors is up to that technology gap in GVCU process. Also, lack of adequate cooperative constructs with the internal organisation, external competitors and the government authority detrimental to the high-tech firm’s upgrading process in developing countries.

4. Discussion of implications:

This data collection of this research is limited to the equipment manufacturing firm in central part of China, thus, other cases should be selected in proposing generalisations from this research.

The results of this research show that how top management’s strategic decision-making affects internal organisation’s production behaviour in GVCU process, and how top management’s attitudes towards the technology gap with their possibility competitors in GVC impact the firm’s sustainable development. By contrast to the large or SME manufacturing firms, how government policy or government authority intervenes those high-tech firm’s environmental condition.

5. List of key references/resources:

Chang, Y. Y., Hughes, M., & Hotho, S. (2011) ‘Internal and external antecedents of SMEs' innovation ambidexterity outcomes’ Management Decision, 49(10), 1658-1676


Social Entrepreneurship and Mission Effectiveness: Insights and Case-study Evidence from Three Christian Charities in England

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Keywords: capacity, charities, Christian Social Action Charity (CSAC), Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT), mission effectiveness, performance, Resource-Based Theory (RBT) scalability, Social Entrepreneurship (SE), Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA)

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

The Research Subject, Context and Constructs: This paper sits within wider research into the relationship between social entrepreneurship (SE) and mission effectiveness for social impacts (SI). It is being undertaken within the Christian Social Action Charity (CSAC) subsector of the English third sector at a time when social needs in the UK are rising and fiscal funding is falling. Complex, unstable economic, political and market background factors present problems and opportunities for subsector participants to grow and scale their operations and thus deliver much-needed social service capacity. Accordingly, there is a contextual need to identify SE means and methods by which subsector providers may, through appropriate entrepreneurship, maximise beneficial SIs. Grounded in Resource-Based Theory (RBT), Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT) and SE practice, this paper explores two organisational constructs, performance and scalability.

Research Aim, Objectives & Propositions: The main aim of this paper is to identify and evaluate a set of SE means and methods to increase SI in CSACs and thereby improve mission effectiveness. The selected SE means are proactivity, innovation and risk-taking, while the SE methods are the processes, tools and techniques of business entrepreneurship deployed for social purposes (e.g. technology, investment, collaboration). To this end, three research objectives (O) are driven by three propositions (P):

O1: To identify and evaluate a set of SE means and methods in the light of DCT via desk-based review;

O2: To describe and reveal insights case into the nature of CSACs in terms of SE in the light of DCT;

O3: To construct from the evidence a theory for CSAC mission effectiveness from SE growth and scale.

P1: That SE means and methods, informed by DCT principles, can be adapted to increase SI in CSACs;

P2: That mission-centric SI is a primary driver of firm growth and operational scalability in CSACs.

The Literature Review: Ordinary resources and capabilities and first order dynamic capabilities are required in the strategic management of the firm resource/capability base to ensure survival and long-term sustainability in competitive and changing environments. Social providers in developed economies increasingly deploy DCT principles through SE means (including cross-sector and intra-sector collaboration) to achieve growth and scale. Thus, blurred boundaries justify literature from SE and the third sector, the professions and Christian sources. These different perspectives elicit theories and constructs which facilitate the creation of a new proposition-cum-theory for capacity building.
2. Research design and methods of data collection and analysis or method inquiry:

**Research design and methodology:** A socially constructed interpretivist philosophy was chosen to facilitate socio-religious ontology on the basis of realist epistemology. An inductive approach elicits new theory by building arguments based in prior research and primary findings. Three case studies, strategised within three national CSACs enable the theories to be explored using research questions. Access to the research participants was limited, making a cross-sectional time horizon the only suitable option. In an appropriately ethical manner case study data collection methods are employed: questionnaires, interviews, observation, some internal documentation, and public records. These data are categorised by theoretical construct, and analysed under their related objectives using three techniques: within-case thematic comparisons and pattern matching; inter-case identification of emergent causal relations for explanation building; and cross-case synthesis to develop inductive argumentation.

3. Main findings:

**RBT & DCT Themes**

- *Business Services* inform governance processes, and depend on resource investment
- *Governance* is the predominant theme for performance and growth, on several counts
- *Resource Investment* is a board responsibility that directly feeds into firm growth
- *Collaboration* (internal and external) directly affects both firm investment and growth
- *Social Entrepreneurship* informs dynamic management in competitive social markets
- *Growth* was seen by CSACs as evidence of achieving mission effectively

**SE Means**

- Direct and urgent social needs are more attractive to funders than non-urgent services.
- Agile SE means are most relevant to firms which directly tackle urgent social needs.
- Performance-driven mission effectiveness is relevant regardless of funding sources.
- Different market contexts demand and prioritise different resources and capabilities.
- Firms operating in volatile markets were more dynamic than those which did not.
- Differences between charities' relational and collaborative activities were stark.
- Where development and growth were paramount, collaboration was more advanced.
- In volatile markets responses were entrepreneurial, innovative and change-ready.
- Current markets favour the more strategic risk-takers.

**Mission Effectiveness**

- All participants recognised the value of SE means and methods but few practice them.
- Where SE is selected and practiced, it is more efficient than philanthropy.
- Dynamic strategic management resulted in improved performance and greater scale.

4. Discussion of implications:

Implications for practitioners include:

1. Transcending options along a continuum progress towards optimising suitable opportunities.
3. The importance and urgency of missional services is reflected in impact assessments.
4. Performance-based governance is key to achieving SI strategies through aligned policies.
5. Mutual benefits of interfirm collaboration can reduce transaction costs and increase scale.
6. Public services must be restructured to sustain social services through nonprofit providers.

5. List of key references/resources:


Performance Management and The Emergent Public Sector Accountability and Governance Theory in Local Government of Nigeria

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Keywords: accountability, local government, performance, governance, partnership

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

There is no doubt that the design and use of performance management systems have been widely investigated in management studies and public services (Ibem, 2012; McAdam et al, 2011; Chia Yie Tan et al, 2011). Most often, the results of such studies show that Performance Management has the advantage of increasing accountability, transparency, service delivery improvements and organisational planning (Galera et al, 2014; Hamilton et al 2013; Andre de Waal and Kourtit, K; 2013).

It is clear from the literature that local government plays important roles towards not just the grassroots but national development (Akinboade et al, 2012; Toress et al, 2012). Hence, Performance Measurement has been advanced as a performance management tool necessary for advancing the development of local government (Bjork et al, 2014; Sole, 2009; Toress et al, 2012). It is also particularly vital for local government development because of issues of accountability and transparency especially as it concerns spending public money and fulfilling service users’ expectations (Moxham, 2009; Bamford and Chatziiasian, 2009). Furthermore, it is being argued from the perspective of the new public governance reform that collaboration, partnership, participation, networking, co-management and involvement are necessary for good governance (Osborne, 2010; Pestoff, 2011; Borzel and Risse 2010). This means that for performance evaluations and performance levels to be ascertained, citizens and those for whom services are provided must be included in the performance management process. Without effective performance systems that include citizens, it is difficult for local government to govern effectively. It is paramount that local government is governing effectively because of the need to increase transparency, accountability, information disclosure, value creation, participation, quality services and fulfil to a large extent the expectations of service recipients (Shaoul et al, 2012; Noftianti and Suseno, 2014; Tabi and Verdon, 2014). However, there is predicated observable absence of empirical data on integrated performance measurement systems in Nigeria’s local government. What exist are self-evaluations and advertisements yet issues of corruption, underperformance, lack of transparency, accountability persists leading to poorer and underdeveloped communities. This paper fills an important gap that incorporates citizens, that is, service recipients into the performance management process for better governance and performance in local government.

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

Qualitative research, Data collected through semi-structured interviews. Snowball strategy used to contact hidden and difficult populations amongst service recipients and this was accelerated using face book (Amon et
al, 2014; Martin and North, 2014), while purposive targeting was used for the service providers because of
the need to gain insights into the rich context of the phenomenon and generate ideas about that phenomenon
(Bhattacherjee, 2012).

3. Main findings:

The findings of this research shows that people’s involvement in performance management process increases
accountability, transparency, openness, information gathering processes, value creation, partnership,
communication and satisfaction which are important aspects of good governance in local Government. This is
directly related to why there is so much corruption, isolation, poor performance, lack of innovation and poor
management in Nigeria’s local government system government. It is because people are excluded from
decisions that affect them. Also, there is domineering interference by the state on the affairs of local
government and this is affecting the independence and capacity of local government to function properly as a
tier and the local government itself lacks creativity and accountability presenting an institution that is weak
with poor leadership.

4. Discussion of implications:

Integrating citizens into a performance management process is essential for improved local governance
because it creates an interactive system that is open and transparent. It also helps harmonise objectives for
improved service delivery performance while at the same time minimising incidents of corruption. The
integrative framework created in this study is proposed to help facilitate this process with the potential of
creating an improved system of partnership and networking in local governance.

5. List of key references/resources:

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Closing the learning loop on the school choice problem

David Carter

Keywords: school choice problem, Analytical Hierarchy Process, AHP, system dynamics, Group Model Building, GMB, image theory, double loop learning, K12\(^1\) enrolment

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

Secondary school choice is reducing from 2015 as raised cohorts of children, now in primary schools, transfer into existing year 7 places from the age of eleven. Rising competition for secondary school places is anticipated as demand increases with additional, associated parent enquiries about school admissions and anxiety referrals to health as families navigate secondary admission processes. Reductions in parent support for schools advice now mean increasing numbers of secondary school comparison factors are provided over the internet for which few parents are necessarily prepared and little data is structured for researching. Uncertainty associated with individual or micro change (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) can have psychological impacts on children involved, as loss of school friends and change of school workplace cannot always be mitigated. P2015\(^2\) research therefore seeks to better understand family relationship dynamics and the influence of competition on secondary school decision making using Dynamic Systems Theory (van Gelder, 1998) to explain potential causal action and resultant effect across the socio-technical admissions system through the lens of a critical realist philosophy to answer a gap in system dynamics literature concerning K12 enrolment (Kennedy, 2011).

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

Modelling multimethodology research designs support the combination of different operational research techniques (Santos et al, 2008) including decision support and policy evaluation. For the school choice problem, competing for places already extends across and beyond Plymouth with a range of semi and fully selective schools. Analytical Hierarchy Process (Saaty, 1999) weights parent views of important factors for deciding between alternative schools. Validated results from AHP structured interviews with volunteers confirm that those parents with experience of competing, filter against their perceived risks (Beach and Mitchell, 1987) of non-selective education by only including selective schools within a “choice set” for their child from year 5. Students failing to qualify for a selective school place stimulate those deciding to rapidly compare non-selective school options at the start of year 6, often reusing the academic school selection league tables available online. Parent exit interview questionnaires suggest that only when results fall below selection test entrance levels do parents reset filters to screen-in a different secondary school “choice set” to succeed in

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\(^1\) Kindergarten through to year 12 or K12 is the international term referring to child education in the West. Year 6 is the last year of primary or elementary school and year 7 the first year in secondary or high school with year 12 examinations reflecting overall academic performance in secondary school league tables. Typically children transfer between local primary schools and larger secondary schools at the age of eleven in the UK.

\(^2\) Project P2015 uses a modelling multimethodology shared with system actors to construct detailed models of the school choice problem in Plymouth based on not only views of parents but also schools, council and health care providers.
getting their most preferred school. Two girls Grammar Schools, one boys Grammar School, one co-
educational School of Performing Arts illustrate the specific risk filtering opportunities required for competitive
entrance in Plymouth schools from year 5.

Electronic comparisons employing schools data can be used to eliminate unwanted options and resolve
decision dilemmas facing families competing for secondary places. Competing families failing to meet
selection standards already possess knowledge of researching options that reduce risks effectively. Pre-
experience of eliminating school options representing family risk should therefore assist others without
competitive knowledge, in fast and accurate resolution of their choice sets. By consulting expert practitioners in
workshop settings, System Dynamics supports development of causal links between family wellbeing and
knowledge. By applying known influences, dynamic behaviours observed by small numbers of multi-agency
experts can be reproduced. Group Model Building (Vennix, 1996) offers a method for assembling system
dynamic models that can be understood, and therefore owned, by those participating in workshops in order to
test proposed agency changes and their potential impacts.

3. Main findings:

Based on evidence of competitive parental risk filtering behaviour from AHP, simulating the impacts of
different agency policy\(^3\) decision rules using system dynamics can help develop shared agency decisions to
coordinate change across secondary education, community health and local government. Feedback simulation
models can help decide sustainable policy across complex socio-technical issues. Key policy suggestions to
smooth flows into secondary education from the multi-agency group have been tested against the P2015
simulator. System behavioural responses suggest that sharing key secondary schools information smoothes
emotional wellbeing fluctuations for parents in short-term and wellbeing gains for students in the long run. By
contrast, eliminating competition (by removing grammar schools in the city, subject to parental agreement\(^4\) )
reduces knowledge of comparing schools against risk filtering criteria before sequencing those in their
admissions choice set by relative profit. By doing nothing, polarisation of competitors winning at the expense
of others without such knowledge is predicted to continue for non-selective admissions, creating related
demands on other urban services providers.

Double loop learning (Argyris, 1978) helps summarise policy implications by inferring that all decision makers
should benefit from opportunities to compare shared action/result/learning information on schools to obtain
the best fit of child to school. Without competition, such learning about how and what to research is lost
leaving parents “make-do” with secondary schools within their catchment radius: one largely determined by
ability to pay for costs of wider choice such as transport. Each system dynamics causal loop in the theory
comprises circular links between interacting factors indicating that feedback is an important element within
social learning systems. Single or first loop learning assumes action connects to result and results inform further
(in case of failure to gain a selective school offer) or future (in case of publically accessible, archived results)
action. However a second loop

engendered by competing, also offers to connect results and learning, linking once again to action followed
by results. The ability to learn from the second or double loop is available in Plymouth thanks to a competitive
policy encouraging semi and fully selective schools. Such learning can be enabled by previous community

\(^3\) Policies to simulate include closing selective schools, sharing key information with families and leaving competition enter the
non-selective arena without making further changes.

\(^4\) Rippon Grammar School offered the first test case for new rules around previously compulsory grammar school
replacement by comprehensive secondary schools where following consultation, parents voted to reject closure in 2000.
experiences to address lack of time and resources for choosing/sequencing non-selective schools during September and October in year 6.

In order to close the second loop, P2015 suggests that pre-experiencing potential outcomes through simple gaming could therefore help establish valuable learning for families, but also professionals, involved supporting and making decisions on choice of secondary school where risk (illustrated by snakes) and profits (represented by ladders) are made explicit to participants across generations.

4. Discussion of implications:

Jettisoning risks first by eliminating the clear and present threats from the individual school choice problem or JETSNAKE1 is one such game designed based on learning, largely gathered from competitive parent interviews on factors that influence secondary school decision making aimed at families with children in year 5 to extend the interval for researching secondary school options and obtain the best fit of school to student need. Designed to close the second learning loop in a fun and enjoyable way for family groups and others, linking results (an offer for example) to extracted knowledge of which questions to ask of schools for meeting individual needs, it is proposed that JETSNAKE1 can help decision makers assemble strategies to cope with the increasingly complex school choice problem.

The gaming approach therefore supports closing the second loop on learning through an electronic comparison process for factors (over and above existing academic standards from previous years) to achieve greater smoothing as admission shocks arrive in successive years based on simulated policy predictions. This affects the majority of those considering non-selective school applications as pressures rise, since playing the game offers knowledge of comparison processes through the available information sources supporting the city and beyond\(^5\). Tests using simulation suggest that the extra gaming link to knowledge can also compliment greater child involvement in secondary school decision making and help maintain levels of personal as well as family wellbeing. An internet-based survey approach is now planned to collect JETSNAKE1 contribution information after families have played the electronic game based on MS Office.

5. List of key references/resources:


\(^5\) Both Devon County and Cornwall Councils offer successful secondary schools in the vicinity of Plymouth that Plymouth families can apply to and receive offers from that widen non-selective competition (both counties not offering local selective schools). Under these circumstances, Plymouth would have to pay for students they send elsewhere.


To Evaluate the Persuasive Power of Online Tourism Experiences on Tourist Buying Behaviour

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Keywords: persuasive technology, experience design, human computer interaction, behaviour change, user experience

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

Technological advancements have made the Internet ubiquitous, resulting in an exponential growth in users who have adopted and grown accustomed to online experiences. Experience design in the realm of the Internet has become an integral component of every user-focused marketing strategy, across all sectors (Vittersø et al., 2000; Bowie and Change, 2005). Tourism has been at the forefront of adopting technology to innovate business and marketing practices (Buhalis and Law, 2008; Xiang et al., 2008; Think Digital, 2013). A large number of tourism users prefer to buy online (Google Travel Report, 2012), making the Internet a lucrative sales medium (Econsultancy, 2013) for tourism service providers (Simeon and Sayeed, 2011). Studying the nature of online experiences and how they can be designed for an optimum output in terms of user conversion has academic and professional potential.

The majority of the tourism literature studied thus far has only been able to provide an insight, solely from the service provider’s point of view. Furthermore, even fewer tourism studies address persuasive technology, a field that is built on the notion that computers act as persuasion agents for behavioural and attitudinal changes. This study of computers as persuasive technology is termed ‘Captology’ by B.J. Fogg who has also developed the Fogg’s Behavioural Model (FBM), which forms the foundation for Oinas-Kukkonen and Harjumaa’s (2009) comprehensive Persuasive System Design (PSD) model. The PSD model provides the theoretical construct for this research. The advantage of the PSD model over the FBM model is that it allows for development and evaluation of persuasion strategies (Oinas-Kukkonen and Harjumaa, 2009).

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

The aim of the research is to evaluate the application of persuasive technology across online domains offered by tourism SMEs and to study its implications on tourists’ buying behavior.

This is a mixed methods research and its underlying philosophical foundation lies in pragmatism (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003; Somekh and Lewin, 2005). Pragmatism aims to solve practical problems of the real world rather than develop assumptions about nature of the knowledge (Hall, 2012). According to Creswell (2003, p. 11), the pragmatic paradigm places importance on the "research problem" and allows the researcher, the freedom to use those data collection and analysis methods that would best help in providing insights to the research question without any philosophical loyalty to alternative paradigms.

Using the supervisory team’s professional network, Pennywell Farm, a Devon based tourist attraction was approached. Pennywell Farm’s website and users will provide the research data required.
The first part of the research involved designing a questionnaire based on the 4 parameters (Primary task support, Dialogue support, Credibility support and Social support) of the PSD model. 200 questionnaires were collected on field, over Christmas 2014. An online link to the questionnaire was shared via Pennywell Farm's social networking sites, which resulted in 330 more responses. The survey was closed on April 30th, 2015. Data collected from the questionnaires will be used to study the user context, which involves addressing tourist motivations to engage with the online experience and analysing the effect of various elements of the online domain on the tourist’s motivations and intentions to make the purchase.

The second part of the research involved designing a coding sheet based on the 28 strategies of the PSD model. Not all strategies mentioned in the PSD model are applicable to tourism, therefore the model had to be revised. The goal is to analyse 100 tourism SME's websites, based on the coding sheet. Data collected from the coding sheets will be used to evaluate the persuasiveness of the online experiences currently offered by tourism SMEs.

An analysis of the data collected from both research instruments will be used to identify gaps between tourist expectations and tourism service provider’s offerings. Moreover, the main aim is to customise the PSD model to suit tourism SMEs needs.

Based on the research thus far, it has been noted that the PSD model has not yet been empirically tested against the tourism SMEs context.

3. Main findings:

The 530 questionnaires collected have not yet been analysed. Based on the field conversations with 200 respondents who filled the questionnaires face-to-face, specific patterns were documented. These will assist in the establishment of SPSS analysis parameters.

1. Gender divide exists between how persuasion strategies are viewed. In a proportionally high number of cases, male participants appeared to be interested in finding specific information such as “buy tickets” or “how to get here” while a larger portion of the female participants appeared to have noticed and taken interest in the visual components of the website such as colours, design and images.

2. Contrary to popular belief, large number of participants appeared uninterested in engaging over social networking sites.

3. The primary motive behind making an online purchase for many participants was to get confirmed tickets.

4. In the questionnaire, many users have suggested that the call to action button requiring them to take some sort of an action be placed in a more visible part of the website, preferably top left.

The second part of the research involving the website coding sheets has not yet been embarked upon; therefore, it is impossible to comment on its potential findings.

4. Discussion of implications:

On a larger scale this research will add to the existing research on persuasive technology, majority of which has mostly been either conceptual or qualitative when tested empirically.
Moreover, all sectors can benefit from relevant knowledge about the implications of online experiences on user behaviour and attitude change. Most persuasion led research is company focused, thereby limiting its ability to address the user’s context, their motivations and intentions. This research incorporates both customer and company’s point of view, making it more comprehensive.

Many tourism SMEs still believe that if the website appears functional (Chaffey et al., 2003; Turner, 2010; Sigala, 2012), no innovation is required. It is a hard-sell dominant view that considers looking at user experience as a secondary or non-existent entity. In these competitive times, the tourism SMEs can only gain from having an efficacious measurement model customized to meet the experience design requirements for a higher conversion rate.

5. List of key references/resources:


Closing remarks

Challenging practice through research is a key issue which impacts upon the higher education sector, individuals, organisations and nations. Research-related knowledge and skills can bring benefits by fostering economic performance and competitiveness, globally and nationally, increase the effectiveness of public services and policy, and enhance the individual’s and society’s quality of life, health and creative outputs.

The wide range of papers presented at the Colloquium demonstrated a commitment to and engagement with the world outside education. The presentations, which covered diverse discipline areas such as law, foreign policy, product innovation, economics, knowledge management, and governance, also demonstrated the breadth of research interests and relevance within the Faculty of Business.

The event, built upon those of previous years, was a great success. Many people contributed immensely to the level of success of UKPDC2015 and as Director of the Faculty of Business PhD Programmes, I would like to express my deepest thanks and appreciation for all their energy, time and efforts. In particular, my sincerest appreciation to David Carter as Chair of the organising committee and members of the committee inclusive of, Ada-Kole Onjewu, Mamata Dhakal, Imane El Hakimi, Mohamed Yacine Haddoud, Dejie Kong, and George Dexter for their many hours of hard work, enthusiasm and efficiency with which they steered the whole event.

I would also like to express my thanks to the: Executive Dean of the Faculty of Business, Prof Nikolaos Tzokas, for his inspiring opening address; keynote speakers, Prof Paul Tracey from Cambridge University, and Dr Paul Jones, Prof Alison Anderson, Dr Kevin Meethan, all from Plymouth University, for their superb contributions both in setting the tone and as panellists at the event; Review Committee members, whose vast experiences and rich research insights helped to select papers and posters with the highest academic quality; presenters for the quality and effort applied to their papers; the Faculty Administration, in particular Rob Giles and Flea from Fobit, for an impeccable IT support throughout the event. Finally, but not least, Prof Jingjing Xu, Associate Dean Research, for her consistent and strong support for the event.

To all participants, my best wishes for the future.

Dr James Benhin
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