

University of Bolton's Postgraduate Research Students' Society Conference Events (2016)

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POSTER
PRESENTATIONS

Islamic Banks, Charity and Terrorism: How do they relate?

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ABSTRACT

In conventional banks, revenue is received from two types of sources: these are interest spread, and non interest or value added services which are offered to corporate clients. For example, these include issuance of new equity financing that can be further realised in the income statement as profit after deducting provision for credit loss and accounting for banks' expenses and applicable taxes. Islamic Financial Institutions (IFIs) on the other hand restricts all the revenue based on the Islamic law of transaction. Therefore there is a possibility of non-Shariah compliant income being received by IFIs from illegitimate transactions due to operational and inherent risk. This income cannot be regarded as revenue of the Islamic bank; hence the said tainted income should be purified according to the Shariah principles. Generally, the bank's Shariah Committee has decided to purify the income by channelling it to charitable bodies.

In view of the above backdrop, the aims of this research are to analyse the governance structure and activities of charitable bodies that received illegitimate income from Islamic banks in Malaysia. This study assembled primary data from Malaysia through content analysis of audited annual reports from 5 different Islamic banks and charitable bodies in Malaysia. It is hope that this research will assist in developing a benchmark for Islamic finance industry in the world as a whole in combating terrorism financing.

Keywords: *Islamic banks, illegitimate income, terrorism, charity.*

Bank selection criteria among diverse ethnic groups in Malaysian Islamic banking industry

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ABSTRACT

Recent years have witnessed a significant growth of Islamic banking industry with wide acceptance from Muslims and non-Muslims customers around the globe. The expansion of Islamic banking in global markets is driven by globalization, the interest-free nature and ethical practice of the banking system. However, research of bank selection criteria among customers from developing multicultural and multi-ethnic country like Malaysia is limited.

Malaysia is one of the key global Islamic financial centres and Islamic banking has contributed significantly to the development of the Malaysian economy since its establishment. The population is made up of three main ethnic groups namely: Malays, Chinese and Indians. With a significant influence of religion, ethnicity and culture in determining customer behaviour, this study seeks to find out the main bank selection factors for customers across different ethnic groups in Malaysia.

A total of 272 responses from multi-ethnic Islamic banking customers were collected and analysed in this study. A quantitative approach through a self-administered questionnaire was used to gather the primary data needed. Factor analysis and Kruskal-Wallis Test are used to analyse the data gathered. The findings are useful and beneficial for bank managers in order to win over new customers and retain the old ones.

Keywords: *Islamic banking, selection criteria, Malaysia, ethnicity*

BTECs: Future Pathways and their Possible Impacts and Effects

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ABSTRACT

Since the Coalition of 2010, perhaps the time has come to re-examine the BTEC Debate since the landscape of Further Education is changing rapidly (Bathmaker, 2016, Avis 2007, 2011).

The impetus for this study came from increasing discourse surrounding the BTEC Nationals qualification suite. It will survey the background to the BTEC Nationals discourse and focus on whether their future pathways to HEIs are being curtailed. This study will provide an explanation as to why this appears to be happening and if it is right and just, in terms of equality of opportunity.

Importantly, this research will provide an analysis as to whether the Coalition's and subsequent government's austerity measures and policies, have changed the current landscape of Further Education (Bathmaker, 2016; Avis 2007, 2011). Given the global equality climate moving forward, the investigation will debate if current government policies could be a reversal step. In turn, could these policies then be going back to the inequalities of opportunity of the Tripartite System (Norwood 1943; Avis, 2011; Avis 2007, p. 201)?

The deep and wide literature debating Vocational Education from the Industrial Revolution to the present day will be reviewed. On researching the literature, it is clear there is a limited scope and a gap in research regarding the BTEC Nationals' future pathways from the angle whether they are being curtailed.

The methodology will focus on a small scale study of Further Education Institutions and what the future pathways of the BTEC Nationals Level 3 suite holds for HEIs. This enquiry will be based on in-depth Case Studies of up to 5 BTEC centres requiring detailed analysis. The case study analysis will cross examine the impacts and effects that such policies may have on the future pathways of the BTEC National Level 3 students.

The quiet ego: A preliminary review

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ABSTRACT

In the Yogic tradition it is described that there are four levels of awareness. These are awareness of the body; the emotions; the mind; and, awareness of awareness itself. Self-awareness is proposed as an essential state of being in order to maintain physical, mental and emotional balance particularly with respect to the impact of the ego. In eastern philosophy the ego is considered to be a mental projection with no true substance. This arises as a result of identification with the mind and is maintained by a lack of awareness and true self-knowledge (Osho.com, 2016). The impact of a noisy ego can be one of unbalance, distortion and negativity with all these working together to create a reality that is not conducive to harmony between doing and being. The quiet ego is one that is proposed to have been strengthened to focus on the positives with acceptance of the usefulness of it, not one that is focused on the eradication of the ego completely.

This poster explores the concept of the noisy ego, the quiet ego and the transition between the two. Implications of the findings are discussed with the next steps of designing an effective intervention to promote the 'quiet ego' proposed.

Keywords: *Literature review; Positive Psychology; Ego; Intervention*

Theory Building for Postmodern Corporate Communication (CC)

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ABSTRACT

At the turn of the 20th century discussions on meaning derivation from the environment, centred round Saussure's and Peirce's signification theories. These appear to be remnants of symbolism; Yakin and Totu (2014) feel the theories echo culture not necessarily active communication. In 1949 Shannon and Weaver conceptualised a mathematical theoretical communication model of sender, receiver, plus processes of encoding and decoding messages via a channel. This gained traction in other disciplines over the next generation, but omitted human aspects of communication, as later refined by Shramm (1971). He considered overlapping sender and receiver "fields of experience" equal to medium, letters or words. Then in a new information technology age, concepts of co-construction of meaning via social processes emerged. Deetz (1992) and Mantovani (1996) purported shared meaning: communication participants add unique perceptions of reality to a meaning pool as in Grounded Theory. The 21st century saw this pool becoming highly internet-influenced, increasingly intertextual and multimodal. In summary, the foci of communication theorising changed in each generation; this implies a core narrative theory that transcends successive generations, even as modern theorising splintered (Boromizca-Habashi, 2013); this writer suggests post-modern communication research at intersections of theory.

In this mixed methods study on the narrative of CC, Social Constructivist Theory is the anchor to balancing online communication and human networking of brands (senders) undergoing change and at times damage control. Change management theory assesses change parameters in frameworks of Schema Theory, and Communication Theory (CT); these are contextualised by boundaries of Foucauldian theory. CT critiqued within Lacanian Theory affirms that leadership influences change. To build reputation, initial qualitative data from decision makers (leaders) in manufacturing and service industries, suggest brand messages' trustworthiness, clarity and timeliness are key to investment relations. CT introduces communication strategy (CS) meta-theory where PESTLE, transformational and transactional Leadership Theories meet. Fiedler's Contingency Theory contrasting stand-alone leadership theories, factors Persuasive Theory, across managerial levels. These are Systems Theory based and able to regenerate; an apt flexible communication model applying Personal Construct Theory or Reasoned Action plus Planned Behaviour Theory and, Integrated Marketing CS Theory can provide key information for leadership.

Keywords: *theory, communication, change, leadership, decoding, intertextual*

Exploring the effectiveness of ‘community stakeholding’ in commerce sectors within UK and Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

This study will investigate the effectiveness of community stakeholders’ management in Nigeria. Based on the broad usage of the term ‘stakeholder’ across different industries and contexts, the study will focus on community stakeholders in conflict zones.

The key objectives of the study are to: identify the key stakeholders at the community level and to map their level of influence on project delivery; examine challenges associated with community stakeholders management that induces the commercial burden incurred by the firm; determine the components of the expenditure incurred by firms in managing the stakeholders; and to establish the cost incurred by production organisations in managing stakeholders.

The significance of this study is, as this paper will highlight, to minimize the financial burden on firms and enhance mutuality and restrain of opportunism. To that end, future management policies as a result of this study should enhance the usage of community stakeholding. Thus, study will provide management models suitable for improving corporate governance in Nigeria and elsewhere.

INSTALLATIONS,
PHOTOS, SLIDES AND
VIDEOS

An Investigation in to the Impact of the Expansion Policy of Technical Education as a Correlate on the Acquisition of Basic Technical Competences by Students in Kano, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

Even though Nigeria's National Educational Policy (2004) states that educational activities should be student-centred so maximum skills are acquired for self-development and labour market fulfilment, Vocational Education and Training (VET) expanded disproportionately. This was without enough attention given to the impact on quality and acquisition of competencies required (Ekpenyong, 1988). This research aims at investigating possible relationships between the expansion of Technical Education and the quality of students' attainment of technical competences. By extension, the study potentially examines the outcomes of implementation of rapid expansion on technical education in Kano, Nigeria.

The research will adopt a descriptive survey, based on triangulation using quantitative and qualitative strategies in collecting and analysing data. Data collection will be through questionnaires engaging the Likert scale and closed-ended questions; it will also involve observations limited to seven technical colleges (one each from first and second generation colleges and five from newly created/expanded institutions). The study will reflect views from such respondents in semi-structured interviews as well as questionnaire-based data from the Kano Science and Technical Schools Board (KSTSB) and its zonal inspectors. The latter questionnaire will focus on colleges' physical infrastructure, human capital, material and financial resources. With regards to the sample, it will include 6 zonal education inspectors, 7 principals and 42 teachers in the field to be retained through the purposive and simple random sampling technique. Data will be analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Secondary data suggests that there are negative implications on acquisition and development of carpentry and joinery technical skills needed by graduates, which are directly related to rapid expansion. It will be part of recommendations that the government put at least a 10-year hold on expansions; during this hiatus of essential political changeovers, strategies and best practices should be explored regarding how to invest in existing colleges and physical resources with ample provision for infrastructural development, materials and human resources required by this sector.

Keywords: *VET, competencies, expansion policy, infrastructure, implementation, implication and correlate*

Curbing wildlife crime in Africa: Unveiling the challenges and offering solutions

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Nature has provided a very delicate and sophisticated ecological system where all plants and animals have a very important role. The realization that the future of this world and the human race is greatly linked to the global ecological system and its biodiversity balance has caused a new global awareness. It has also led to an eagerness to view the entire global environment as one and to halt any destruction of the eco - system taking place anywhere. Wildlife crime is currently the greatest threat to this ecological system and its bio-diversity balance in Africa and by extension globally, as it is destroying a universally important green belt area south of the Sahara. Wildlife crime has now reached global crisis point. Entire species in the CITIES endangered list - the Elephant, Rhino Lion, Leopard and Cheetah in Africa - are hunted down to an extent that extinction appears imminent in the next 10 years. Wildlife crime has been upgraded to the same level of serious international organized crime as human and drugs trafficking by the UNCCPCJ through its Resolution of 26 April 2013. This escalation in wildlife crime comes with severe environmental, economic, political, legal, social and global security consequences. It is fuelling conflict in Africa as it is a source of revenue used to purchase arms for militias, terrorists, pseudo-revolutionary and religious insurgents that are destabilizing states in Africa. This is leading to some becoming failed states and that is a great threat to international peace. East Central and Southern Africa have been identified as the largest sources and supply markets for illegal wildlife trophies to the consumer markets in the Far East, Western Europe and the USA. Yet some of these supply countries have functioning criminal justice systems that have failed to curb this crime. Kenya was selected for this research because it is the region's major trading and export hub for illegal wildlife crime trophies. Kenya has a functioning criminal justice system mandated to protect the wildlife yet poaching and other wildlife crime have escalated uncontrollably. Literature surrounding this topic and the research hypothesis, has shown that there is a gap in knowledge as to what is causing this proliferation. What was previously thought to be a reason like corruption, has been disputed by prominent British academics in this area. The main purpose of this study was to investigate and understand why a functioning legal system is unable to curb this vice. This is achieved by determining what challenges the system is facing in combating wildlife crime, and offering viable well-researched solutions. Another goal was to offer an African perspective to the general discussion on combating wildlife crime as a global concern for environmental protection, to ensure Africa's effective participation in such initiatives.

Methodology

To resolve this phenomenon both primary and secondary data was collected. For primary data, the targeted population was 5,016 respondents. A mixed method approach and research design were formulated to obtain primary data via a structured questionnaire, observation, focus groups discussions and interviews. A pilot test was carried out to determine validity and reliability of the research instrument. With a correlation coefficient of 0.601, it produced very good results. The main data collection was done between October 2015 and January 2016 as there was a delay due to the El Nino rains. Data was thereafter analysed and results obtained. The results were found to be astounding but truthful. This led to the development of three fold original contributions of knowledge on this topic.

Rekindling your Adrenaline in Sport

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INTRODUCTORY ABSTRACT

This research will consider the sporting experiences of women, whilst engaging in tourism in Latin America and Australasia. Sport has been noted as a channel to empower gender identities. The advancement of sport throughout the twenty-first century, is confronted with a shift from modernity to contemporary post-modernity.

Brymer et al, (2010) imply that extreme sports have been classed as high risk exposure and driven by adrenaline. In contrast to traditional sport which poses low risk and has featured as a common component within sport tourism over the past two decades (Weed, 2008). However tourist locations are now capitalising on alternative sporting experiences, such as sand boarding and paragliding. Sports that may pose fear, risk or uncertainty have been examined as a social phenomenon and are described within various connotations such as 'lifestyle sports', 'adventure sports' and 'extreme sports' (Wheaton, 2004).

The video will display a range of diverse sports that are currently (in 2016) offered to tourists within Latin America and Australasia. In accordance with the aim of the research, an auto-ethnographic narrative will detail the locality and experience of each sporting activity.

Do health-based cosmetic and economic benefits of topical avocado oil outweigh the psychological orientation to mostly consumption? The potential for psychographic research.

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ABSTRACT

Persea americana (avocado), indigenous to Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America, is an oily fruit of soft creamy green and yellow flesh with a mild flavour. It recently appeared in other warm areas such as California, Texas, and Florida, USA (Gilman and Watson, 1994), as well as Africa, Asia and parts of Europe. According to the Hass Avocado Board (2007), consumption rose in the USA from 1.2 billion avocados in 2000 to 4.25 billion in 2014. In comparison, oil production for health uses on the skin cosmetically, is not fully advanced (First World Avocado Congress, 2014). The aim of this investigation is to present a case for psychographic research into topical use versus consumption.

Creating a feeling of fullness avocados traditionally are consumed and, premium price may be paid as a speciality item. A preliminary literature review further intimates the avocado lowers cholesterol and the fruit has antioxidants which slow cancerous tumours (Qy *et al*, 2005). Further, the fats when ingested, produce sebum in sensitive skin (Akpabio and Akpan, 2006). The writers claim avocado is rich in potassium and vitamins, with folates that are critical for childbearing. So steady consumption is justifiable. Albeit as mature trees often bear profusely, supply surpasses immediate or psychological demands; in Tanzania (Benson *et al*, 2015) and the Antilles for example, surplus decomposes or becomes fodder.

Initial library based secondary data collection also proposes topical oil, quickly absorbed through the skin, leaving the surface soft to the touch. Dreher and Davenport (2013) intimate, in sunscreen for sunburn it helps inflammation and itching in eczema. Also, Werman *et al* (1991) demonstrate that massages, masks, hair care and growth benefit; ideal for aging populations, its lutein enables steroid production promoting collagen creation, reducing age spots and increasing elasticity. Aesthetic purposes remain unexplored in least developed countries, although the luxury cosmetic industry reported by Swiss Corporate Advisors (2014) is worth US\$42B. Further, Costalgi and Betti (2015) highlight three financially or otherwise accessible oil extraction methods. By a systematic literature review of social and scientific research, market reports, cost benefit analyses and engineering advances, this paper argues for and critiques information leading to a psychographic shift and better exploitation of an alternative focus for avocado.

Keywords: *indigenous, psychographic, extraction, topical, barriers*

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Flame retardancy and water soak durability of cotton fabrics subjected to phosphorus- and nitrogen- containing finishes and sol-gel treatments

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ABSTRACT

Fatal accidents caused by the ignition of household textiles have encouraged both academic and industrial researchers to investigate the flame retardancy of fibres and fabrics. Halogen-based, especially brominated, flame retardant back-coatings are commonly used for UK furnishing fabrics^{1,2}. These back-coatings, however, have become the focus of environmental attention because of claimed ecotoxicological properties of organobromine compounds^{3,4}. That said, in the specific case of textiles for domestic furnishing fabrics, flammability testing has been required to demonstrate the resistance of such textiles to cigarette and simulated ignition sources since 1988 in the UK^{5,6}; and organobromine flame retardants have so far proved necessary in order to achieve this.

In the context of replacing organobromine flame retardants in textile coatings, several recent papers have demonstrated that it is possible to improve the flame retardancy of fabrics by sol-gel treatments by using different silica precursors in combination with non-halogen flame retardants^{7,8}. However, there have been only a few studies of the water soak durability of fabrics finished with these novel treatments⁹. This paper reports an investigation of the water soak durability of sol-gel treated cotton fabrics and whether they meet UK flame retardant test standards for furnishing fabrics.

In this work, cotton fabric was sol-gel treated with tetraethoxysilane (TEOS) and certain phosphorus- and nitrogen- containing flame retardants. Thermal stability and flammability of treated cotton fabrics were determined by horizontal flame spread testing, LOI, TGA, and a small scale simulation of BS5852, Source 1 (match) or ‘Mydrin’ test.

The results show that while sol-gel treatment reduces the flammability of the fabric, the reduction is not enough to allow a pass of the Mydrin test. During this, the treated fabrics are tested in the form of a cover over non-flame retarded polyurethane foam. When a sol-gel treatment was used with phosphorus- and nitrogen- containing flame retardants, the former improved the water soak durability of flame retardant, but still not enough to pass the Mydrin test. Work is ongoing in our laboratory to improve the water soak durability of these treatments.

Keywords: *flame-retardant, textile, bromine, back-coating, sol-gel treatment*

Thermal Energy Storage and Fire Safety of Construction Materials

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ABSTRACT

The storage of thermal energy as latent heat of a phase change materials (PCM) has attracted growing attention in recent years. The use of PCM in building applications in low temperature can not only enhance energy efficiency but also improve indoor thermal comfort and decrease the thermal energy consumption. PCM can be mixed with gypsum wallboard to form phase change wallboard (PCW).

Immersion and direct incorporation methods were used to incorporate PCM into gypsum wallboard. Small test room of gypsum wallboard and PCW with dimensions of 100mm x 100mm x 100mm and thickness 10mm were set up using 6 pieces of gypsum wallboard. The impregnation of the top board of cubic with PCM was achieved by immersing 100mm x 100mm x 10mm gypsum wallboard in a 140mm x 160mm x 20mm bath filled with constant volume of PCM for 20 min at 40°C. In addition, direct incorporation was carried out by adding fine powder of PCM to fine powder of gypsum and water and mixing together at room temperature. Moreover, to prevent liquid leakage and interaction between the PCMs and the matrix material, the supporting materials such as nanoclay, fly ash, diatomaceous earth, brick dust and expanded perlite were mixed with PCM to incorporate into Plasterboard.

To compare the temperature difference of ordinary gypsum wallboard and PCW, a halogen tungsten lamp (500 W) was placed over the top board of the test room as the light source to simulate the sun. Thermocouples were placed within the room and linked to a data acquisition to automatically record the indoor temperature of the test room. Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC) was used to predict and measure transition temperatures and latent heat of Capric Acid (CA), Lauric Acid (LA), Eutectic mixture of CA and LA acids, Paraffin, Butyl Stearate, Isopropyl palmitate and PCW.

Keywords: *PCM, Energy storage, Plaster board*

Mechanistic study of the thermal decomposition of polyamide66

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ABSTRACT

There have been a number of studies in the past of the thermal decomposition of polyamide 66 (PA66) and a number of mechanisms have been proposed for its thermal decomposition under various conditions. Many techniques including thermogravimetric analyses (TGA) and pyrolysis coupled with mass spectrometry (Py-MS) have been utilized to study the mechanism of thermal decomposition of PA66. Application of thermogravimetric analysis coupled with gas phase Fourier-transform infra-red spectroscopy (TGA-FTIR) and pyrolysis coupled with gas chromatography mass spectrometry (Py-GCMS) for mechanistic studies of the thermal decomposition of PA66 have not so far been reported. Thus, in this study, we report a series of Py-GCMS and TGA-FTIR experiments on PA66 carried out to increase our understanding of the mechanism of its thermal decomposition.

In previous works, a degradation product giving a peak at 85 m/z in the mass spectrum of the pyrolysis products of PA66 was the dominant peak for all studies performed in temperatures above 350 °C. This peak was assigned to either cyclopentanone or cyclohexane in different studies. Our Py-GCMS results reveal that both cyclopentanone and cyclohexane are produced during the thermal decomposition of PA66 but that cyclopentanone is the main product. TGA-FTIR results suggest that cyclopentanone and ammonia, which is also a degradation product of PA66, are mainly liberated from the same degradation process, whilst different processes are involved in the release of carbon dioxide and cyclohexane. These data are being used as a base investigating effect of some inorganic synergists on thermal decomposition mechanism of PA66.

Keywords: *Polyamide 66, thermal decomposition and mechanism*

A new paradigm: General systems theory (GST): configuration with technologically mediated (TM) and face to face (FTF) communication, creating brand value and reputation during change

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ABSTRACT

Brands of all ages must respond appropriately to internal and external changes, creating paths to success via value and reputation. GST as conceptualised by von Bertalanffy (1956) encapsulates concepts of viability wherein interactions across disciplines, contribute to whether an organisation fails, survives or thrives. This paper incorporates 3 approaches to GST (Mele et al, 2010): open systems theory (OST), viable systems model (VSM), and viable systems approach (VSA) and how they may be integral to adapting in or regulating a new environment, and managing change there, by way of communication.

Where TMC has all but effaced human interactions, some scholars (Caughlin and Sharabi, 2013) highlight, if there is no smooth transition between TMC and FTFC, mistrust results. This is disconcerting for premium clients and suppliers (Porter, 1980). Effective transition involves OST and two sub-levels: management personal purposive behaviour, and social constructivism. Although Watson (1997) states “management is talk”, disproportionate frequency and intensity (Koch and Zerbach, 2013) plus increased multimodality (O’Cass and Hierati, 2015) do not necessarily equate to effectiveness, but potentially compromise the Yale persuasion approach (McGuire, 1986)), crucial to brand value. So VSM reflective of cybernetics, that is responding to feedback and adapting to self-induced change, applies. Fundamentally, persons seek truth; the process often includes reference to validity of previous TMC or FTFC experiences.

A systematic literature review and pilot study, interviewing 4 decision makers and 2 premium customers within one multinational organisation were completed. These provided themes and key words to design in-depth structured interview items for stages 1-2. To date, 19 managers participated; implications are, combined with decision makers’ accessibility, accurate timely information must be communicated when contacting key stakeholders. Then VSA, involving communication configuration between sub-systems (internal) and supra-systems (external) of the organisation, leads to heuristic guidelines, for management, with a view to good brand reputation.

Keywords: *systems theory, technologically mediated communication, face to face, persuasion, value, reputation*

Functional Technical/Vocational Education (TVET) and Nation Building of the 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

Functional Technical – Vocational Education and Training (TVET, is the aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills) that is not only important to individuals who have knowledge of any of them, but useful to everybody in the society: it is an aspect of education which has a direct relevance to the technological development and advancement of a nation. As a matter of fact, in the world we live today, Functional TVET has established itself firmly as pillars of prosperity. Thus, it is pointless to spend time arguing a case for its adoption as the support for national economic development.

It is therefore the aim of this paper to stress the urgent need for more provisions by different sectors, institutions and industries for adequate practical training. This allows TVET trainees and individuals to sufficiently equip themselves with both technical and vocational knowledge that enables them to secure employment, and perform satisfactorily in the society promoting nation building in the 21th century.

Mobile Phone Asset Tracking Apps: A thematic analysis of consumer experiences and expectations from Google Play app store reviews.

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ABSTRACT

Background: A review of the literature has revealed that in 2014, UK British adults lost about 100,000 items in their whole life time and in New York subway a total of 19,000 lost or missing personal assets each year. Although there have been lots of mobile phone asset tracking apps in the markets (iTunes and Google Play), the applications have not been widely accepted.

Objectives: The purpose of this systematic review was to summarize factors that are important and essential in user acceptance of Bluetooth 4.0 smart ready technology and in particular which factors affect the decision to accept the Bluetooth 4.0 asset tracking applications.

Methods: Distinct datasets are exploited from Google Play (in 2016). A systematic review was completed using 325 separate pieces of secondary data, which was drawn from user reviews of 25 separate, asset tracking system mobile applications. The data was up to the last 15 user reviews from each of the Bluetooth 4.0 asset tracking applications used within the review.

Results: Through a systematic analysis, this paper takes stock of the dominant research themes. Key findings within each of four themes are analysed, grouped into four: (1) functionality-connectivity, battery issues, sound, and Interface; (2) customer service-positive and negative; (3) attitudes towards the application-positive and negative; and (4) cost-benefit-ratio-value for money, not value for money.

Conclusions: The analysis has shown that functionality, customer service, attitudes towards the application, and cost-benefit-ratio are significant factors that need to be considered in developing a Bluetooth 4.0 mobile phone asset tracking applications.

Keywords: *Bluetooth 4.0, Incentivised, Thematic Analysis, Tracking*

Designing fire resistant light weight composites for marine / rail applications

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ABSTRACT

The work focused on investigating and designing fire resistant light weight composites which can be used in marine/rail applications. Inherently different fire resistant resins which can be blended with the commercially used unsaturated polyester and vinyl ester resins were identified. Core materials used for sandwich structures and type/properties of sandwich laminates utilised in marine and rail industries were also studied.

The flammability tests performed on these materials were Limited Oxygen Index (LOI), thermal analysis and cone calorimetry. Types of core materials (e.g. balsa wood) incorporated in composites for marine/rail applications were identified and sourced. Flammability behaviours of core materials and the resins were measured by LOI, UL-94 and cone calorimetry. Laminates were prepared and their physical, fire and mechanical properties were determined. Mechanical properties mainly cover tensile, flexural, impact testing and shear strength interface between skin and core. Thermal gravimetric analyser (TGA) was used to study the thermal stability and thermal degradation behaviour of prepared laminates, which include decomposition temperature and percentage of char residue. Glass fibre reinforced composite laminates with different proportions and sandwich structures of different lay-ups and thicknesses were prepared by resin infusion method and fully cured using a vacuum bagging technique. Composite laminates and sandwich structures were tested for both fire and mechanical and fire/heat induced degradation in mechanical properties. The flammability was tested by cone calorimetry at 50kW/m².

For marine applications IMO test and for rail application BS 476 flame spread tests are important. A small scale flame spread was developed and used to be correlated with IMO and/or BS 476 tests. Mechanical properties of composite laminates and sandwich structures before and after exposure to heat/fire were tested in tensile, flexural and impact modes. One or two best performing structures were selected for large scale sample preparation and testing according to the required standards.

Hiring Trends and Employability Skills for Job Aspirants in UAE: An empirical study

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ABSTRACT

In a fast changing, multi-cultural diverse and competitive environment, organizations irrespective of the industry, will compete to hire the right talent. Employers and graduates have different expectations of the workplace. Expectations of graduates getting work placements purely lie with the belief that they have acquired essential knowledge, skills and abilities to perform well at work. Whereas, employers' expectations about educational institutions are that it will provide students with fundamental skills and workplace competencies for them to perform well.

In a diverse and global business environment such as United Arab Emirates (UAE), organisations are constantly confronting challenges with attracting and retaining skilled manpower. A recent report on UAE HR trends and employability asserts that organisations are on the lookout for knowledgeable professionals who are both job and organization fit. Given the importance of UAE's vision (NQA framework) which is "to build a UAE education and training system that includes vocational education and training and improves its relationship with the economy and labour market", the purpose of this paper is to explore the relevance and workplace demands, of employability of college graduates.

In order to identify the gap and expectations and chalk out effective strategies, this research will focus on collecting data from various industries such as banking, telecommunications, construction, real estate, and tourism). The findings will reveal the importance of focusing on certain essential foundation skills as well as workplace behavioural competencies that could enhance employability of college graduates. From the findings it may be recommend that the importance of continuous communication needs to be maintained between industry and academia. This is because a lack of communication could lead to a void in terms of understanding the changing demands of the industry thereby restricting academic institutions to update their academic contents to enhance employability.

Keywords: *Basic skills, workplace competencies, UAE, various industries*

Prevention and early intervention model for school children with anger problem.

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ABSTRACT

Background: In recent years, there has been an increasing attention to behavioral and emotional problems, particularly in children (Leahy, Tirsch & Napolitano, 2011). How to appropriately identify and effectively help children with emotional problems such as anger mostly depends on an adequate applied prevention and early intervention model. This paper looks into two different models; amongst them, one has been popularly used in America as guidance in special schools and the other is being employed as guidance for mental health practitioners in the UK. This study also presents results into how these mentioned models help to identify anger problems and to improve anger management skills in Vietnamese adolescents.

Method: There were two main phases for the current study. Firstly, 395 adolescents were asked to answer the Children Inventory of Anger (CHIA, Nelson & Finch, 2000) as a screening phase. Thanks to that stage, children having anger problems were identified. Concurrent validity checks were then conducted with teachers and parents to make sure children had been chosen accurately. Later, intervention was undertaken with angry children during four months; they were compared with a group of children identified with anger problems but not offered any treatment.

Results: Results of the CHIA was concurrent with teachers' and parents' responses, with regards to the category of above average anger ($N = 21$, $N = 23$, $N = 20$ relatively). There was a strong positive correlation between the CHIA and a questionnaire designed by the research student, $\rho = .57$, $N = 40$, $p < .001$. The early intervention was found to be effective for children identified with anger problems. Adolescents in the intervention group significantly reduced their anger score ($p = .000$) compared with the control group ($p = .52$), with a large effect size, Cohen's $d = .71$

Discussions: This study indicates that the two mentioned models are beneficial to be utilized in both the mental health sectors and in school settings. Thus, educational psychologists can use them as a helpful and effective prevention and early intervention plan.

Keywords: *prevention, early intervention, anger*

The impact of perceived learner identity on academic literacy skills acquisition.

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ABSTRACT

The university in this study is based in the northwest of England and henceforth referred to as Northwest University. It attracts learners of all ages from diverse backgrounds; many fall into the classification of 'non-traditional' students who do not possess the learner identity associated with those who typically progress to university. Compared to middle-class social agents who see progression to University as natural, students from low participation groups may feel that their background influences upon their university experience. In particular, their perceived social class may direct their friendship groups, engagement with university activities and academic literacy and study skills acquisition (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). For these learners, the support services encountered during their early experiences of university can play a significant part in their retention and long-term outcomes.

This study investigates social class, habitus and learner identity and examines the role these factors play in the acquisition of academic literacy and study skills. It evaluates research into the effective academic literacy models and considers what interventions have been implemented in other universities. This study seeks to offer valuable insight into the individual student learning experience at Northwest University through evaluating how learners identify themselves and how this may impact upon their academic literacy and study skills acquisition.

Quantitative and qualitative data has been compiled to investigate the social, economic and educational backgrounds of students and whether students feel prepared when arriving at the University. Through a series of focus groups and a thematic analysis, the support mechanisms that students have engaged with and possible links between social background and skills competency have been explored. Conclusions indicate that although many students do successfully engage with the current services on offer at Northwest University, taking into account perceived identity and an academic literacies approach may increase engagement and positive outcomes.

Keywords: *social class, habitus, learner identity, academic literacy, study skills*

Title of the ongoing investigation: An Evaluation of the Resources used for Computational Skills Acquisition by Children with Learning Difficulties in South Western Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

A formal evaluation of the teaching of basic mathematics to dyscalculia in junior secondary schools informs the choice of research. As a Special Teacher Training College Lecturer, research interests' aims are in teaching and learning of basic computational skills to learning difficulties children.

The current research sample consists of 3 staff of Federal Ministry of Education, 3 Ministry of Education officers in charge of schools in each state, 9 mathematics teachers (three in each state), and 1 representative of the Teachers - Parents Association. The 9 schools are typical being randomly selected. Two representatives of the Federal College of Education (special training) who are teachers of the students with learning difficulties are also involved. The study adopts a qualitative approach with a view to providing critical analyses of the processes and practices of teaching basic mathematics to students with learning difficulties; this is with participants in different contextual positions. The three research methods that will be used for data collection are semi-structured interviews, non-participant classroom observations and focus group discussions with the participants. NVivo software is used because it has a large range of searching possibilities, creative and flexible functions, and analytic notes. It also potentially integrates work and thoughts by using linking devices as pointed out by Silver and Lewins (2004). The software does not analyse data, yet it is the only tool developed to help researchers manage data.

From the problems noted during initial observations, the expected achievement of this research will be to generate new knowledge about the way that special needs education is carried out in South-Western Nigeria, specifically with students with learning difficulties in computational skills. Based on experience, resources will be developed, peer reviewed by colleagues, and then tested the schools.

Defining the five super-genres: demonstrating the link between plot and genre

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My name is Ashley Lister. I am freelance writer, occasional performance poet and I lecture in Creative Writing. I am currently studying a PhD in creative writing and my supervisors are David Rudd and Simon Holloway.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate a correlation between genre and plot in short fiction. There is a commonality of plot archetypes in short fiction. Variations on the same core story are encountered and repeated, invariably with the same story being associated with a specific genre.

This is a creative and critical inquiry investigating the idea that unifying plot tropes are specific to genres. The creative portion presents a series of genre-specific short stories, each exploring the key facets of an identified plot applicable to that genre. The critical portion of this project explores these commonalities further by comparing the created artefact with published short fiction from appropriate genres.

This research explores how the concept of plot relates to genre, showing how generic expectations produce particular plot developments. Potentially this could lead to new ways for writers to address short story-creation.

The paper proposed here will consider the defining of the five super-genres that are representative of a large quantity of contemporary and classical short fiction.

English for Academic Purposes: The Non-native English speaker - researcher dilemma

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ABSTRACT

The non-native English tertiary level researcher is likely to encounter significant challenges. The high level of language capability required for expressing critical analyses (Cottrell, 2016) using English for Academic purposes (EAP), a key aspect of postgraduate study, is often not yet achieved. This research therefore aims to determine particularly common needs of learners, and what may be solutions to the problems encountered.

It is purported from standards of qualifying bodies such as Cambridge and Trinity ESOL Examinations that enough contact hours of formal tuition can make a difference in the performance levels of any one of the skills - reading, writing, speaking and listening - of the English language (IELTS, 2016). Crucial information for conventions of the language as well as conversational tutorials that elicit understanding to enable high attainment would be provided during these sessions. However, it may be that this is not necessarily afforded as part of the tuition at the tertiary level, to persons whose first language is not English and who may have matriculated into a postgraduate course of study with the minimum English qualification. This will be exacerbated by the graduate cultures in varied geographical regions which place more emphasis on collaborative work as opposed to independent critical thinking.

Through a series of in depth interviews with current students at the PGCE, Masters and PhD levels, initially, a thematic analysis is currently being executed. Then along with indicative non-parametric tests, and NiVo analytics, the primary objective is to find correlates that will direct further study into how best to meet the needs of non-native English speakers in the postgraduate researcher dilemma.

Keywords: *tertiary, non-native, English for Academic Purposes, critical thinking*

The Impact of Dyslexia on Learning Sign Language

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AUTHOR BIO

I am currently working at Genie Networks, a Charity inspiring deaf people and their families in Greater Manchester, providing communication training to families with deaf members, deaf awareness training to professionals, and teaching British Sign Language. Being Deaf myself I am interested in the education of deaf individuals and the teaching of Sign Language to hearing parties. I have a strong background in various types of education and teaching and am currently completing an Ed.D.

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ABSTRACT

Sign language learners with dyslexia often assert that they struggle with fingerspelling comprehension; there is no previous research into the impact dyslexia poses on sign language learning or use.

This descriptive study explored and highlighted the perceptions and experiences of individuals with dyslexia whilst learning sign language. Focus of interests were language anxieties, any disadvantages to learning sign language and fingerspelling use. In addition, comparisons were made between users of American and British sign language systems.

A mixed relativist approach to data collection and interpretation was taken; this means that both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. This was achieved through direct assessment in using the Wide Range Achievement Test 4 (WRAT4) Single Word Reading and Spelling tests both in English and sign language and through questionnaires.

The research highlighted that individuals felt dyslexia did not pose a disadvantage to learning sign language but created a clear disadvantage in the comprehension of fingerspelling. The WRAT4 standardised Single Word Reading and Spelling tests tracked differences between sign language and English use. These identified vast differences between English and sign language word comprehension, yet only marginal differences in spelling ability. Respondents and participants who took part in the research felt the issue was that when reading English words, letters could be viewed simultaneously aiding recall of spelling patterns whereas, the comprehension of sign language fingerspelling is difficult for individuals with dyslexia seemingly due to the letters being consecutively produced. Individuals with dyslexia who are currently learning, or considering learning SL should not be disheartened or feel that dyslexia will be a barrier. Preliminary research here suggests that with the exception of reading fingerspelling, many feel that having dyslexia has had a positive impact on their learning of SL.

Keywords: *Sign Language, Sign, BSL, ASL, Language, Deaf, Dyslexia, WRAT4, fingerspelling*

PLANNED
IN ABSENTIA,
OR POST-EVENT

Flourishing Autism: Happiness, Wellbeing and Joy

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ABSTRACT

Despite little research into happiness in individuals with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC), studies focused on psychological wellbeing, quality of life and positive emotions present an image of individuals with ASC as unhappy. Happiness in ASC has not been directly measured, and is unexplored territory. An additional issue is the definitions of happiness adopted by existing measures are mostly based on hedonistic perspectives, chiefly influenced by positive emotions, dependent on interaction with other individuals, or at least, from social stimuli. It is suggested that instruments of eudemonic happiness, which measure positive emotions based on more personal inner experiences of wellbeing may be a better measure for happiness among the ASC population. The present study assesses happiness, joy and wellbeing by means of using different measures in adults with ASC, as well as qualitative enquiry. The study also looks at the concept of flourishing autism, celebrating differences and how best to promote wellbeing, joy and happiness in all populations, especially autistic. Emerging themes, results and suggestions for ongoing studies are also discussed.

Keywords: *Adult Autism, Wellbeing, Happiness, Joy, Positive Psychology*

High performance triboelectric nanogenerators based on phase-inversion piezoelectric membranes of poly(vinylidene fluoride)-zinc stannate (PVDF-ZnSnO₃) and polyamide-6 (PA6)

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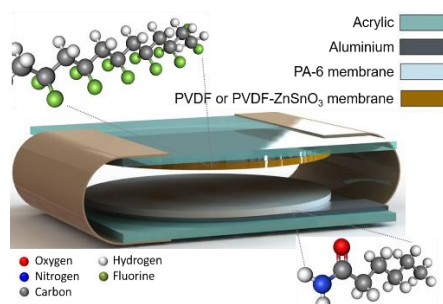
ABSTRACT

Vertical contact-separation mode triboelectric generator (TEG) based on lead-free perovskite, zinc stannate (ZnSnO₃)-polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) composite and polyamide-6 (PA6) membrane is demonstrated. For the 5wt% PVDF-ZnSnO₃ nanocomposites, the facile phase-inversion method provides a simple route to achieve high crystallinity and β -phase with a d_{33} coefficient of -76 pmV⁻¹, as compared to -52 pmV⁻¹ for pristine PVDF membranes.

Consequently, at a cyclic excitation impact of 490 N/3Hz, the PVDF-ZnSnO₃/PA6 based TEGs provide a significantly higher voltage of 520 V and a current density of 2.7 mA m⁻² (corresponding charge density of 62.0 μ Cm⁻²). By contrast, the pristine PVDF-PA6 TEG provides up to 300 V at a current density of 0.91 mA m⁻² (corresponding to a charge density of 55.0 μ Cm⁻²). This increase in the electrical output can be attributed to not only the enhanced polarisation of PVDF by ZnSnO₃ leading to an increase in the β -phase content, but also to the surface charge density increase by stress induced polarisation of ZnSnO₃, leading to the generation of stronger piezoelectric potential.

The work thus introduces a novel method of enhancing the surface charge density *via* the addition of suitable high polarization piezoelectric materials thus eliminating the need for prior charge injection for fluoropolymer membranes.

Keywords: Polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF); Zinc Stannate (ZnSnO₃); Polyamide-6 (PA6); β -phase; Triboelectric Nanogenerator



Resilience across the lifespan of individuals with learning disability in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT EXCERPT

Most individuals with learning disabilities, according to Brown (2007), have proven to be equally as competent as the rest of the general population, through provision of adequate resources. At the same time, lifespan has been influenced and improved as a result of positive educational, nutritional and educational factors. Influences also involve reasons associated with de-institutionalization and community inclusion. Thus it is paramount to reflect on individuals' education across the lifespan, and trials that could arise from disabilities, plus environments that include lifestyle and communal settings based on restrictive or manipulative area policy.

Employer Branding: A study on factors influencing potential candidates' preferences

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive job market, it is difficult to attract, recruit and retain potential candidates. Companies which have strong employer branding usually enjoy advantageous positions in the job market. Building a strong employer brand image among potential candidates just not helps the companies in recruiting the best candidates but also creates an emotional bond. It enhances the loyalty of highly-qualified and committed employees. Employer branding includes an image which candidates have for a company. This however can be positive or negative or neutral, which helps candidates in their vital decision of applying for a job vacancy or continuing to work with a company.

Employer brand image can get stronger with more successful years of the company, highly satisfied employees in terms of pay, fringe benefits, culture, and training. On the other hand negative employer branding can be due to various reasons like employer employee relationships, redundancy, low salary, autocratic leadership and competitive culture in the organization.

The main aim of the empirical research is to identify the factors which influence the potential candidates to show preference among existing companies in UAE. Secondly the study will identify how preferences change with positive/ negative employer branding image of a company. This will help the organizations to focus on the factors which assist in building strong employer brands. The research will focus on potential candidates' (university graduates) preference in choosing the company and how employers' brand image influences them.

Keywords: *Employer branding, image, training, strong employer image, recruitment, retaining, job market, pay, potential candidates, competitive advantageous position, employee satisfaction*

The People's View

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MINI ABSTRACT

The Postgraduate Research Students Society is in its second full year of operations. It places value and significant interests in developing a rich culture of investigative robust enquiry and social cohesion amongst its enlisted members, associate staff and other stakeholders in the university and beyond. It is with this background that a formal study into the relevance, accessibility, communication strategies and impact factor of PGRS is being undertaken. In this community, reflexivity is essential across all aspects of the research journey (Cunliffe, 2004, Cottrell, 2016); accordingly you are invited to complete a short evaluative questionnaire. Upon analysis, results will be made public.

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