



Middlesex
University
Dubai



Research Matters

- Eight Tips for dissertation write up
- Collaborations bringing benefit to Middlesex University Dubai Law students
- Highly Commended Paper Award at the ICFDB 2016
- ATLAS Conference 2016: Dr. Cody Paris

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Editorial note

It's hard to believe that we are now well into in the academic year 2016-2017. The summer months went by quickly and we returned to university life in September, feeling fully recharged and ready for the rest of the year ahead!

Welcome back to our returning students and staff members and a very warm welcome to the new cohort of IFP, Undergraduate, and Postgraduate students, and to our new staff. We are delighted that you have chosen to join the Middlesex University Dubai community, and we hope that your time here will be enjoyable and fruitful.

We have many achievements to report in this issue of Research Matters. Yet again, our students have been fantastic ambassadors for MDX Dubai, representing our university at national and international competitions and conferences. We have also had many staff publications over the past few months, across a diverse range of topics. In this, our fifth issue, you will see many examples of how research is central to our identity as a university.

Some of you are about to commence your dissertation journey. It can be incredibly exciting to conduct your own research and to assess the state of the art in your chosen field of specialisation. It's your chance to showcase what you have learned throughout your studies. Make it count! Ms. Seada Kassie has written an insightful article on how dissertation students can not only survive, but also thrive, during the dissertation process.

The importance of research does not end when students receive their degree at graduation. Employees place considerable value on research, and highlighting research skills on your CV and in interviews may get you your dream job, or that sought-after promotion. From the early stages of learning research skills in university, through to completing projects and dissertations, it is important to document your newly acquired skills. Our Careers and Employability Service colleagues, Ms. Alveena Javed and Ms. Alpa Katkoria, have written an article on the importance of transferrable skills in today's job market. Complementing this, we have articles from former students who discuss what students should know before entering the working world, and how research plays a role in work life. We hope you enjoy reading this issue of Research Matters. Have a great academic year ahead! ♥



Rajesh and Lynda

Summer Research Challenge

Following on from the success of the 2015 Research Boot Camp, in June this year the Research Committee held the Summer Research Challenge. This was designed to support Middlesex University Dubai staff in reaching their own research goals. This included anything from conducting an initial literature review, to the completion of a paper or a PhD chapter. Twenty six university staff self-formed five groups at an initial information session. Two of these groups were working on clearing a backlog of research; one group was writing up a paper; one was working on Ph.D.-related issues; and the final group was keen to create new research ideas. Attendees were encouraged to set their own specific SMART goals. These are goals which are:

- S** Specific
- M** Measurable
- A** Agreed or Action orientated
- R** Realistic
- T** Time-phased

Stemming from these goals, a series of short workshops were developed. These were held on Monday 20th, Tuesday 21st, and Wednesday 22nd June, and were well attended by MDX colleagues.

These workshops included:

1. Achieving your goals: Using the 'TGROW' coaching model
2. Library resources
3. Literature search
4. Reviewing the literature
5. Using NVivo as a tool to manage literature
6. Time management
7. Advanced quantitative analysis using SPSS
8. Synthesising and modeling literature
9. Selecting a journal for your paper

Huge thanks go to the presenters of these sessions – Kay Sanderson, Lorraine Kelly, Cody Paris, Fehmida Hussain, Alveena Javed, Ajit Karnik, and Krishnadas Nanath-for giving their time so willingly.

Effectiveness of Bloom's Taxonomy in an Online Classroom: Improvements in teaching and learning methods

Innovation Arabia 9 Congress, held by the Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University Dubai (HBMSU) in March 2016, is an annual prestigious, scientific event. The theme for this year was 'Accelerating Innovation towards Sustainable Economy'.



My action research paper titled 'Effectiveness of Bloom's Taxonomy in an Online Classroom: Improvements in teaching and learning methods' was one of the few selected from over 600 entries. I was very fortunate to have represented Middlesex University Dubai in this event. I presented in front of a distinguished audience and my research was well acknowledged by all.

The work I presented came from an action research study to analyse my students' progress at the middle school level in a virtual school based in USA. This pilot project addresses key issues within the curriculum of a web-based course and highlights best practices

on a virtual platform using online pedagogical methods. Bloom's taxonomy operates in this project as the conceptual framework that achieves constructive alignment of the curriculum to meet intended learning outcomes in the online course. After an extensive review of the literature, an online learning management system (LMS) was incorporated for asynchronous learning and as a potential to facilitate group work, share resources and allow constructive participation and engagement among students. Key findings that emerged were: enhanced higher order thinking skills (like critical analysis, reflection, and deeper learning), consistent peer support and encouragement in group work, and an increase in the level of information retention among students. A shift in the roles of the teacher and students was seen with minimal teacher guidance and increased critical thinking and independent learning. Students reported a positive experience and overall, the level of student engagement was found to be higher than average. Research papers that focus on K-12 online courses in the UAE are scarce and this study offers powerful insights into aspects of online learning through an LMS and curriculum development of web-based courses. These findings may serve as a guide for schools, educational institutions, and universities who wish to maximize the potential of web-based learning and develop quality online educational experiences for their students.

Fouzia Begum is an online Educator, Curriculum Developer and final year student of M.A. Education at Middlesex University Dubai. ♥

Middlesex University Dubai students mentored for participation in the Annual Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot

Ilham Kabbouri, paralegal at Taylor Wessing, an international law firm and long-term partner of Middlesex University Dubai, has generously offered to coach a team of Y3 and Y2 students to participate in the Willem Vis Moot International Commercial Arbitration Moot Competition (Vis Moot <https://vismoot.pace.edu>), one of the world's largest and most prestigious international moot court competitions. Each year, students from approximately 300 law schools from more than 65 countries compete by preparing written memoranda and participating in oral arguments held in March and April in Vienna, Austria. It runs in parallel with the Willem C. Vis East which takes place in Hong Kong.

The Vis Moot is based on a fictitious commercial dispute arising out of a contract of sale between two countries. At least one country is a party to the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International

Sale of Goods. The contract provides that any dispute that might arise is to be settled by arbitration in a fictitious country which has enacted the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration and is a party to the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards. The arbitral rules used change from year to year. In 2015-2016 the rules were the Arbitration Rules of the Vienna International Arbitral Centre.

The goal of the competition is to foster the study of international commercial law and arbitration for the resolution of international business disputes and to train law leaders of tomorrow in methods of alternative dispute resolution. This year will be the 24th year of the Vis Moot competition. The oral arguments in Vienna are scheduled to take place late March 2017. Good luck to our participating students! ♥

Congratulations, Dr. Supriya!

Dr. Supriya Kaitheri has been awarded a Ph.D. from the Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode, for her thesis on the topic of “User Technology Readiness in ICT for Social Development Initiatives”.



Intelligent use of ICT is a key to transform society and it can also contribute to the social development objectives of a nation in multiple ways. ICT4D is defined in this study as the design/use of ICT and e-Services that consider social context and socio-economic development. The lack of user participation in ICT4D initiatives and reluctant usage of its services are major concerns in the ICT4D project implementation.

The research questions addressed in the study include: (1.a) identifying the factors that contribute to the user technology readiness in the context of ICT4D, (1.b) assessing the impact of technology readiness on the use intention in ICT4D projects, and (1.c) examining the mediation role of technology readiness in the relationship between these factors and the ICT4D use intention. It also assessed factors discriminating the success and failure of ICT4D project implementation.

The study started by analysing the secondary data on various ICT indices and usage rankings published by agencies like ITU, WEF, UNPAN, UNCTAD, etc. exhibiting the problem of user technology readiness in ICT4D. Factors affecting technology readiness was then grouped under the dimensions of (a) technological factors (b) user characteristics (c) project specific factors, and (d) macro environmental characteristics (using exploratory factor analysis). Data for the study was collected from ICT4D users. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to empirically investigate the proposed framework. Discriminant analysis was used to identify the factors discriminating the success and failure of ICT4D projects. ♥

Congratulations,
Dr. Supriya!



Eight Tips for Dissertation Write up

Seada Kassie

This is it. It's the final year for undergrads and postgrads alike: where you spend every waking minute of your day fantasising about graduation day...BUT - and it's a big BUT, dreading the inescapable and mountainous task of writing up your dissertation. Yes, dissertation. That laborious yet amazing piece of work that you proudly call your own once it's completed, but until it is, gives you hellish nightmares. Depending on how you look at it, this tasking project brings with it a myriad of emotions – from sheer relief and euphoria at the thought of completing it, to stress and dread that typically marks the entire process. But just as any other project, there is no reason why your dissertation can't be manageable, or even enjoyable. Quite a stretch? Maybe, but with the following handy tips, you can easily change your write up journey from an impending doom to a rewarding success (if not a fun and addictive exercise, one would hope!). With that being said, let's get cracking on the tips!

1. Your brain is what you eat

A misplaced section? Nope. It may look so at first glance. However, you may have heard the old adage 'you are what you eat' and to say that well-balanced diet has an effect on how well we perform cognitively is an understatement. To put it more precisely, 'your brain is what you eat'. Studies* show that eating a balanced meal is positively correlated with increased cognitive performances.

Eat wholesome foods such as wholegrains, fresh fruits and vegetables as opposed to loading up on processed snacks. Ditch the vending machine and reach out for cooked

meals. Better yet, bring your own packed lunch from home to resist the temptation. You may soon start to notice that your attention span is stretched significantly and you are less likely to feel lethargic.

Now that we've mentioned clean eating, it's a no brainer that keeping yourself hydrated is also very essential. Yes, it is very tempting to reach out for the energy-drinks-stuffed vending machine, but such sugar-laden calorific drinks are disastrous to your health, and more relatedly, to your 'brain' health. They send you off on an energy roller-coaster and that's the last thing you need when you're trying to concentrate. Avoid them by all costs and drink water to see positive effects such as heightened concentration, increased energy levels and an over-all fantastic feeling!

2. Your topic is not set in stone

Disappointing? It shouldn't be. Although many students day-dream of certain topics they want to explore in their final project, you will soon come to learn that topics may or do change as you get further into your research. There is a variety of reasons for this, such as failure to meet the standards set by the ethics committee and choosing a topic that has previously been explored extensively. In such and similar other circumstances, you may be required to alter (or at times completely change) your initial research topic. Make it a priority to discuss your chosen topic with your assigned supervisor before you commence your research, while keeping in mind that it may take several weeks before you make a final decision on which specific topic you'd like to pursue.

3. Time and Place

Set a time each day to work on your research and stick to it. Choose a time where you'll find yourself with no distractions. No, not just the human type. Social media too. Set your phone on silent and give your undivided attention to your work during that entire allocated time.

Ambience is also key to help you concentrate. Allocate a work station in your home or office where you feel will be most productive. Studies* show that positioning your seat towards adequate lighting will make you more productive by sending 'wake' signals to your brain and helping you concentrate better.



4. Research, Research, Research

That is, if you are not doing so already. Research is at the heart of any academic project, more so when it comes to dissertation writing. Search databases for articles which relate to your topic and keep reading until you feel very confident about what you'll be writing. Each claim you make has to be supported by sound academic literature of your chosen area of research. Failure to do so will not only reduce the quality of your final product, but it might also land you in trouble, also known as plagiarism. Attend each and every workshop on research and writing; many of the schools provide seminars and workshops on how to do academic research. Also, the Library offers research assistance so be sure to pop in and ask for help whenever you need it. They are such a lovely team!

5. Synthesise information

As you do your research, keep taking notes. This will help you synthesise the information you're taking in. If you're not used to annotating, now is a good time to start. Annotating is simply taking explanatory notes by way of commenting on the sides of articles you're reading. Not only does it help you remember important points mentioned in your readings, it also helps you avoid plagiarizing someone else's work as you're more likely to take notes in your own words. Don't feel obliged to summarize every single point mentioned in your readings; you may come across sections which are completely irrelevant to your topic. The more you read, the more you'll be able to disregard the irrelevant and focus only on the important.

6. Divide and Conquer

Yes, you may feel super excited at some point during your research where you feel the need to 'finish it all and be done with it'. You may spend days working on it shunning anything and everything outside of it. Or quite the opposite, you may let the work pile up until you're very close to the deadline and then enter panic mode. Either ways, avoid both at all costs. Not only are they unhealthy, they'll also compromise the quality of your work. Divide the amount of work you have into manageable chunks and tackle them one by one. You won't believe how accomplished you'll feel this way!

7. The 50/10 rule

Work for 50 minutes, and then take a break for ten minutes. Why, you ask? Research* shows that taking brief breaks between your studies will make you more productive by improving your attention span and therefore increasing your performance. This is so because our brain is naturally designed to detect and respond better to change. So go on, take that well-deserved ten-minute break. You know you want to.

8. Reward yourself

So as you go along accomplishing each small task leading all the way up to your final polished product, be sure to reward yourself. This doesn't have to be anything big. A small chocolate bar if you've stuck to a clean diet for some time, or an evening out with that friend you've been ditching for weeks on end because you've been 'too busy to have fun'. Anything goes, as long as it is something that brings you joy and motivates you to do more. And before you know it, that mountainous task (AKA the dissertation) is done and you're ready for your big day!

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Seada Kassie is a Middlesex University alumna with an M.Sc. in Applied Psychology. She currently is a Visiting Faculty member at Middlesex University Dubai in the Department of Psychology and is also currently pursuing further postgraduate studies in Psychology. Seada has previously worked as an Academic Researcher for a Socio-political institution in Dubai and has also provided pedagogical care to children with neuro-developmental disorders at a centre in Dubai. Her research interests include adolescent psychology, third culture individuals, cultural homelessness, digital culture, cognitive flexibility and mindfulness. Outside academia, Seada is a busy mom-of-two who is progressively proving that the ever so cliché concept of work-life balance does exist. She also enjoys doing yoga-pilates infused workouts to keep fit.

Collaborations bringing benefit to Middlesex University Dubai Law students

In line with Middlesex University Dubai's focus on developing further the competitive edge of its Law Programmes and with a view of enhancing students' employability skills, Dr. Tenia Kyriazi, CPC Law and Politics, has negotiated and concluded an MoU between Middlesex University Dubai and BARBRI International. BARBRI International provides legal education solutions, bar examination test preparation and other law student and legal professionals academic as well as professional development services, and it is currently the largest provider of NY Bar exam qualification training.

The general purpose of this MOU is to facilitate academic and professional cooperation between the parties based upon the principle of mutual benefit. In this framework, the BARBRI International Bar Review Program will be offered to law students at Middlesex University Dubai on Campus, at a fee representing a 20% reduction on its published price. The MoU was signed in September 2015 by Dr. Cedwyn Fernandez, Director, Middlesex University Dubai and Sarah Hutchinson, General Manager, BARBRI International.

An MoU between Middlesex University Dubai and FICHTE & Co was signed on Monday 17th October 2016 at a Round Table event held in the DIFC. Sharing a commitment to high quality legal education and appreciating the benefits of linking the legal profession to academia, FICHTE and MDX Dubai (Department of Law and Politics) have established collaboration in legal education and training through the development of joint undertakings.

The parties are pursuing this objective by undertaking a range of initiatives, including but not limited to:

- Training workshops on advocacy skills for law students;
- Guest lectures and career preparation workshops for law students;
- Training seminars on International Maritime Law for students and legal consultants; and
- International Maritime Law courses.

The partnership between FICHTE and MDX Dubai will bring vast benefits to MDX law students, who will have the unique opportunity to meet and interact with distinguished legal professionals. Through their participation in guest lectures, workshops and courses offered by Fichte, students will be taught and trained by leading experts in the region. This will allow them to expand their legal knowledge, develop soft transferrable skills, and be offered networking opportunities, instrumental for enhancing their employability skills.

Under this partnership, Teresa Starr, Barrister at FICHTE Legal is offering a series of advocacy skills training workshops to twelve Y3 LLB students. The programme involves a six training sessions throughout the academic year, which will conclude with a mock trial to be held in the DIFC Courts. The first workshop was held on Tuesday 27th September 2016. During the advocacy workshop the students were engaged in a number of exercises such as the art of persuasion, cross examination and examination in chief. ♥

Dr. Tenia Kyriazi, CPC Law and Politics: Awarded the Certificate in 'Introduction to DIFC Laws'

Dr. Tenia Kyriazi, CPC Law and Politics was awarded the Certificate in 'Introduction to DIFC Laws' by the Academy of Law of the DIFC Regulation Authority, upon completion of a seven-weeks professional development

training programme. (November 2015). In association with Thomson Reuters, the DIFC Dispute Resolution Authority Academy (Academy of Law) has developed the "Introduction to DIFC Laws" Certificate.



This programme has been specifically designed to meet the needs of today's Emirati and expatriate lawyers, legal advisors and consultants, seeking to gain a better understanding of DIFC laws. This certificate is unique and forms part of Sheikh Maktoum Bin Mohammed Al Maktoum Initiatives for Legal Excellence, and it is taught in collaboration with leading common law practitioners and DIFC Courts judges. The course is accredited by the Government of Dubai Legal Affairs Department in respect of its CLPD (Continuing Legal Professional Development) scheme for registered legal consultants. ♥

Dr. Cody Paris joins the Editorial Board of 'Mobilities'

Dr. Cody Paris has been invited to join the Editorial Board of the leading social science journal *Mobilities* published by Taylor and Francis. Cody has been a long time reviewer and supporter of the journal, and his co-authored paper the "Social Affordances of Flashpacking: Exploring the Mobility Nexus of Travel and Communication" is one of the all-time top-20 downloaded in the journal. Additionally, his research regularly engages with and contributes to the "new mobilities paradigm" of social science. The *Mobilities* journal was founded by the eminent sociologist Prof. John Urry and co-editors Profs Mimi Sheller and Kevin Hannam in 2006. Since that time, it has emerged as a leading journal in the social sciences with a 2015 impact factor of 1.569.

Mobilities examines the large-scale movements of people, objects, capital, and information across the world, as well as more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public and private space and the travel of material objects in everyday life. New transportation and digital infrastructures and novel social and cultural practices pose important challenges for coordinating and governing mobilities and for mobility rights and questions of 'access'. These 'mobility' issues have generated new research methods and theories. The journal addresses major topical issues and fosters scholarly debate around the 'mobility' turn including:



- Mobile spatiality and temporality
- Sustainable and alternative mobilities
- Mobile rights and risks
- New social networks and mobile media
- Immobilities and social exclusions
- Tourism and travel mobilities
- Migration and diasporas framed in terms of wider mobilities theory
- Transportation and digital technologies
- Transitions in complex systems
- Climate change and transportation energy ♥

Middlesex Student Wins First Place in the Education and Social Sciences track at the 4th Undergraduate Student Research Competition in Abu Dhabi

Our student, Eva Lacher (BA Journalism and Media), won first place in the Education and Social Sciences track at the 4th United Arab Emirates Undergraduate Student Research Competition (UGSRC) which took place on May 9th, 2016 in Abu Dhabi University. Eva's presentation of her paper 'The Political and Economic Motivations behind Orientalist Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in U.S. News' was very well received by the judges. Her work was supervised by Ms. Evelyn Stubbs (CPC Media). Congratulations to Eva and Eve on this outstanding achievement!

Over 200 teams and individuals from universities across the Emirates participated in the 2016 UGSRC, in six main divisions (Engineering, Business Administration, Arts and Social Sciences, Information Technology, Education, and Natural and Health Sciences) and individual tracks. In total, Middlesex University Dubai was represented by seven excellent student researchers.

Student name	Title of research	Mentor
Eva Lacher	The Political and Economic Motivations behind Orientalist Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in U.S. News	Eve Stubbs
Syeda Haider	Does the Homeland television series perpetuate Islamophobia and anti-Arab prejudice, in addition to justifying U.S. military aggression?	Eve Stubbs
Sidra Irshad	The strategic Use of Information Systems & E-Commerce :Souq.com	Krishnadas Nanath
Khadija Sanusi Usman	Content analysis of celebrity fan pages: An analysis of popularity on social media	Krishnadas Nanath
Ruth Jacob	Let Me Explain Myself: A Narrative Performative Analysis of Identity Development in Adolescence	Lynda Hyland
Annja Perera	Collectively Unique Identity: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Paradoxical Nature of Adolescent Identity Formation	Lynda Hyland
Cezalyn Gomba	Brand Management of Dubai with relation to Dubai Expo 2020 and Perception of Tourists towards both	Cody Paris



Participation in this event was coordinated by the Student Research Committee chaired by Fehmida Hussain, and including Tenia Kyriazi, Anita Kashi, and Lynda Hyland. Students had the opportunity to deliver a practice presentation the week prior to the competition. Thanks to Krishnadas Nanath, Eve Stubbs, and Soraya Raeisipour for providing support and feedback during this practice session, and to Bianca Bertl for accompanying the students to Abu Dhabi. ♥

Upping your game with transferrable skills in today's job market

Alveena Javed & Alpa Katkoria



Transferable skills are skills and abilities that are relevant and helpful across different areas of life: socially, professionally, and at university. They are 'portable skills'. All skills and abilities can be transferable – depending on where they are being transferred to and from. People usually think about their transferable skills when applying for a job or when thinking about a career change. Employers often look for people who can demonstrate a good set of transferable skills.

When applying for a job you should remember, however, that the type of transferable skills you highlight in a letter of application or in your CV or résumé should be related to the position for which you are applying. The good news is that you already have transferable skills – you've developed such skills and abilities throughout your time at university, in your social life, as well as through any experience in the work-place. It is often important that you can identify and give examples of the transferable skills that you have developed - this will go a long way to persuading prospective employers that you are right for the job.

One of the most important transferrable skills is research. You can demonstrate this by emphasising dissertation or coursework research, using terminology such as "investigated", "evaluated" or



"assessed" to illustrate the depth or extent of your research. Include any positive comments from your supervisor. Furthermore, it may be appropriate to demonstrate your ability to research, analyse and critically evaluate information. There could be a variety of complex information that you are required to work with and make sense of, for example sales figures, new product and supplier specifications, technical reports, and financial information. Ideally, the research skills can be demonstrated during an interview by having an conversation with the employer about their company or industry related news based on the role you are applying for. Moreover, the research skills developed during university coursework or project can be emphasized on your CV by highlighting information about data collection, evaluation, using different software tools such as SPSS, determining quantitative results, searching databases, balancing and prioritising tasks, disseminating results of research activities, and preparing project reports.

Overall, these research skills will help you to develop a professional persona by doing some basic research, present facts, develop effective communication skills. This will also help you to prepare for the interview by researching about the company and will hopefully get you noticed by potential employers. ♥



Employment law workshop

In cooperation with the Academy of Law of the DIFC Dispute Resolution Authority, the Department of Law and Politics of Middlesex University Dubai hosted an employment law workshop on Saturday 28th May 2016, accredited by the Legal Affairs Department of the Government of Dubai. The workshop consisted of four sessions: UAE federal employment law, DIFC employment law, legal and practical applications of UAE employment law, and a panel discussion. The engaging,

interactive sessions were delivered by distinguished professionals: Thenji Macanda, Senior Associate at Taylor Wessing, Sarah Malik, Counsel at Taylor Wessing, Bushra Ahmed, Barrister and Head of Dispute Resolution at KBH Kanuun, Shiraz Sethi, Head of Employment at Stephenson Harwood, Luke Tapp, Head of ME Employment Practice at Pinsent Masons, and Emma Davies, HR Manage at ALEC. ♥

Publication of journal special issues from ERPBSS 2013

As many of you will be aware, we publish a number of journal special issues from our Emerging Research Paradigms in Business and Social Sciences (ERPBSS) conference series. The two final special issues from our ERPBSS 2013 conference have been published.

Professor Ajit Karnik, Dr. Alun Epps, and Dr. Cody Morris Paris have guest-edited a special issue of a leading international business journal – ‘World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development’ (Vol. 12, No. 4, 2016) with the theme ‘Global Issues: Emerging Business and Social Perspectives’. The guest editors selected theme-based quality articles from the 2nd ERPBSS conference (2013) and published them in this special issue. The articles selected for the special issue cover a wide canvas of topics that are of critical academic and social importance. The topics covered range from issues in globalization, leadership and CSR, non-profit organisations, and grievances and social defense. All papers in this special issue contribute to a superior understanding of countries of varying diversity in developmental levels and cultural attributes.

The special issue ‘Emerging Topics in Niche Tourism, the Hospitality Industry, and Online Consumer Behavior’ from the 2nd ERPBSS conference has been published in ‘Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research’. This special issue (Vol. 27, Issue 3) was guest edited by Dr. Cody Morris Paris, Dr. Marcus Stephenson (University of the South Pacific, and formerly of MDX Dubai), and Dr. Lynda Hyland. This issue provides a mixture of conceptually and empirically informed papers on a range of emerging topics related to niche tourism, the hospitality industry, and online consumer behaviour. The papers also represent a range of geographic areas including Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Australia. In total, this special issue includes six papers and one research note.

The research committee is now busy editing four special issue journals from the ERPBSS2015 conference which will include many of MDX-authored papers! ♥



Rome, Italy becomes classroom for the week for 2nd year International Tourism Students

During the spring 2016 independent study week, 15 second year MDX students travelled to Rome, Italy, as part of their “Researching People and Places” module for the BA (Hons) International Tourism Management programme. The module’s main focus is to develop students’ knowledge and skills in the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Students have the opportunity to then apply their knowledge and skills in a real world setting addressing a research question of their choice. The 2015-2016 students of this module focused on a range of interesting research questions around the topics of Sustainable Tourism, Urban Tourism, and Heritage and Culture.

Dr. Cody Morris Paris (Associate Professor and Deputy Director of Middlesex University Dubai) is supportive of the benefits that can come from international experiential learning opportunities, particularly for developing

research and analytical skills. He notes that “there is no better way for students to develop genuine abilities to carry out and understand research than to actually do it in a real world setting. This trip to Rome allowed students to actually collect data through participant observation, interview, and survey methods, as well as deal with the limitations, challenges, ethical considerations and other practicalities. Upon return the students final research reports are more than just normal assignments, but represent ‘new knowledge’ they have uncovered!”

In addition to the ‘research component’ the international study trip to Rome offered students an opportunity to engage on a deeper level with the faculty and classmates, to explore the historic sites of Rome, enjoy the Italian food, and, of course, to have fun while doing it.

Ms. Lulu Baddar (Campus Programme Coordinator, BA Honours in International Tourism Management) highlighted the range of benefits that trip affords students: "Taking students into a new environment gives them the experience of travelling in a group and teaches them to appreciate the locations they visit. Many students who become interested in particular themes of sites during fieldwork pick up these topics for their future studies or become interested in employment in issues dealing with debates covered in fieldtrips. Moreover, the type of memories that educational trips create, called episodic memories, helps students retain information for longer periods. These are just a few of the many benefits that field trips could provide to students."

Of course, a great benefit for tourism students is to gain experience in visiting some of the iconic attractions in Rome, many of which have been discussed during their modules previously. On this trip, students had a mix of organized trips (to the Vatican and St Peters Basilica, Colosseum, Trevi Fountain, Spanish Steps, Piazza Navona, and the Pantheon) and free time to explore on their own.

The international field trip programme runs annually, including past visits to Ghana and Singapore, and is led by Dr. Cody Morris Paris, who has also previously led and developed international study programmes to Australia, Fiji, Dubai, Austria, Holland, and the Caribbean, and Ms Lulu Baddar, who has also previously led MDX Dubai students to Malaysia, London, Istanbul, and Hong Kong. They both look forward to taking a new group of students on the international trip next year!

“Our research trip to Rome in March this year was fun, yet educationally challenging. Unforgettable memories were made between



Giannina Feldbauer

classmates, as Rome is known for its amazing food and history.

Nonetheless, the research project played the most important part in our daily schedule. A lot of secondary research was necessary before the field trip, to be fully prepared for the data collection on site, which included questionnaires, interviews and observations. Although I had done primary research on a small scale in Dubai, this research project was totally different, since I was responsible for the topic selection, the data collection and evaluation process. This research project was the most beneficial for my research skills and gave me the confidence to do successful research in the future on my own.”

“It is amazing to think of the change that I experienced whilst being in Rome! Having secondary literature as a foundation for the research, exploring the Eternal



Rachel Simmons

City was captivating and I found myself more confident in approaching potential respondents, as well as constantly thinking of new ideas along the way. Prior to the trip, I focused on understanding data analysis techniques which I used to develop reoccurring themes to research, when in the field. When gathering the data, I ensured in-depth notes were made and used the knowledge gained from workshops provided beforehand for analysis. Overall, the trip was very enriching academically, increasing my creativity and multi-tasking skills in order to make the best decisions in terms of exploration and research.”

“The field trip to Rome is definitely the highlight of my university life. Conducting research on a foreign land did pose a lot of challenges, however, it also resulted in

Hamna Ashraf



polishing my skills as a researcher. Since the study was conducted over a number of days, I prepared myself beforehand by organizing an observational logbook and deciding a few questions for micro-interviews. It helped me organize my field notes and allowed me to spend more time in research rather than gathering unnecessary data. Moreover, approaching tourists from various backgrounds built my confidence. Most importantly, being involved in participant observation developed my critical analysis skills. Overall this field trip was a unique experience as it developed my observational skills, confidence to conduct interviews, and critical thinking.”

MA International Relations Students Share their Dissertation Proposals at the First Annual ProPo Colloquium

On the evening of 19th of April 2016, the MA International Relations students presented their dissertation proposal posters at the First Annual MDX MAIR ProPo Colloquium at the School of Law. The session provided students an opportunity to share their initial research ideas and for their dissertation proposals and receive constructive feedback from their peers and lecturers in the School of Law at Middlesex University Dubai. Dr. Cody Morris Paris (Deputy Director of Middlesex University Dubai) noted that “The goal of this colloquium is to provide a forum for students to share their ideas, receive constructive feedback, and engage in thoughtful discussion and debates around their research ideas. Many of the students are focused on important, yet challenging, topics, and thus this feedback is crucial to ensure that they are approaching their research questions from the best possible theoretical and methodological direction.

This cohort of 27 students examined a range of important and timely issues throughout dissertation process. Just a sample of these

topics include: water politics in Egypt and Ethiopia, US Foreign Policy in Iraq, the impact of terrorism in Nigeria. “The ProPo session was an effective way to get immediate advice and feedback on our dissertation proposals from our lecturers and peers. It was an extremely helpful activity getting this opportunity to discuss and shape our own ideas about our work. It was also an enjoyable way to get to know what our peers were working on.” shared Clodagh Emily Byrne, who is examining cultural security, soft power and culture in Ireland.

Aya Amache, who hopes to contribute to current literature on peacebuilding in Syria, added “if it wasn’t for ProPo session, I would have just started writing with no idea where I was headed.”

This cohort of students had the opportunity of discussing their proposals with their fellow School of Law students from the MAIR and LLB programmes and the Politics and International Relations lecturers Mahine Rizvi Ahmad, Parnian Farnam, Dr Tenia Kyriazi, Dr Belisa Marochi and Dr Cody Morris Paris. ♥



Highly Commended Paper award at the ICFDB 2016

Dr. Sudipa Majumdar

The College of Business Administration at University of Texas (USA) and The Institute of Management Technology Ghaziabad (India) jointly organized the “International Conference on Facets of Doing Business” which was held on 28-30 July, 2016. The conference brought together academics and research scholars from renowned institutions to share their research on contemporary issues on growth and development with a focus on Emerging Markets.



My paper (co-authored with Dr. Behrooz Asgari, Professor, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan) was titled “Performance Analysis of Listed Companies in the UAE using DEA Malmquist Index Approach. Our focus was on the non-financial sector and we studied the impact of the financial crisis and the recovery thereafter – taking the time period 2007 to 2014. Based on the Malmquist productivity analysis, we found that the most efficient industries during the post-crisis period were food and beverages, telecommunication and pharmaceuticals while the sectors that were adversely affected by the crisis were services, real estate,

construction and cements. Interestingly, the efficiency of the top performing industries were driven by technological improvements or frontier effects indicating innovation-led growth, aided by the use of better technology, investments in capital equipment, adoption of new production processes.

The conference had 5 technical sessions with more than 40 academic presentations, and another 10 symposium sessions. At the end of the conference, the publisher sponsor for the conference, Emerald Publishing Ltd made a surprise announcement and I received the best paper of the conference – “The Highly Commended Paper” Award. ♥

What every student should know before entering the working world

Sarah Zainal Abidin

Towards the end of the academic year, many students will have started listing out a number of things they want to do during the holidays, from planning vacations to daydreaming and watching endlessly their favorite series, but the most common thing that students will start to think about is getting a job. Yes a job! If not, at least some form of work experience, be it volunteering or internship. However, most of us are pretty stuck on the idea of how to actually get started in that search. If you ask those around you, most likely they will tell you to start writing up your CV or preparing yourself for different type of interviews, but one thing that they may not tell you is the other important part of the process which is preparing 'yourself' for the working world. Here, I will be sharing with you eight tips in helping you prepare yourself for the next stage in life.

Know which field you would like to work in

This may sound simple but many students tend to get excited when starting out their job search and often times apply for every job opportunity that they come across in the market, without actually giving it a second thought. Although these experiences may help you in the future, it's definitely not the

best way to go about this task. Rather, pick a job and a field that is linked to what you like doing, related to your skills and relevant to your potential career growth. Learn more about the field that you are interested in and ask experienced people. It may take some time and may even require you to do a little bit of research, as well as doing some form of personal self-reflection. Just consider various factors such as your personality, skills and goals when trying to relate to the field you think would suit you best. And realize that it's okay if it takes a little bit of time for you to decide, this is just part of the process, and you will eventually figure out which path would be best. Don't limit yourself to only one type of field though; have a number of them so that if one of the jobs doesn't work out, you won't be so disappointed. Remember, you still have other options to consider!

Learn to adjust and adapt to different environment

When you enter the working world, you will realise that sometimes the environment will be different than what you have in mind and you will be interacting with people who will be of different characters, which can be challenging at times. You may have to deal with someone

who has a completely opposite personality to yours or it can be a person who is demanding or gets moody very easily. Learn to adapt. By doing so, you will be able to cooperate with others in your workplace and work with ease.

Have patience and tolerance

There will be times where you will be placed in certain situations that will test your patience to the core. If you allow the situation to overtake you and your emotions, it can result to a number of regrets, not forgetting the negative consequences that can come with it. It is at this time, you need to be able to be calm and deal with the situation as it is. So how can one be calm during such situation? Have patience and tolerance. There will be times when things will not go the way want you want, or you can't deal with a really demanding or annoying colleague or client. I know it's hard but train yourself now to overlook people's actions even when you feel that you are right. When you do so, you will be able to perform at work and not take things personally. As a student, one of the ways you could train yourself to develop such character is through group projects. Most students dread group projects, but despite all the tension that a person would have to endure in working as a team, it truly prepares you for the real world. It is through such group projects that you learn to be more open, understanding, and flexible when dealing with your team members. And most importantly, you learn how to work together as a team despite the differences you may have in terms of opinions and preferences. Your ability to deal with tough situations and ability to get along with others will influence your ability to achieve success.

Be appreciative and humble

No matter who you are, where you work, and whichever company you are in, appreciation is something that we all seek and want.

Appreciate people's effort, even if it's just a small help from a colleague of yours, a cleaner, or the security guard. Appreciate it and thank them. And take the time to acknowledge their work and effort in that process. You will be surprised to see how far an act of kindness can go. And if your work or effort goes unnoticed, don't be sad. Realise that it is just a matter of time before it is acknowledged. And always stay humble, no matter where you reach in life. Remember at the end of the day, people will remember you by how you made them feel and how you carry yourself.

Be respectful

People will have their own values, beliefs, and culture, and sometimes it may be different than yours, and that's okay. If you are able to respect others, not only will you be given respect, but will also be a person who can spark positive change in building an open and healthy communication with others around you.

Learn to take responsibility and be responsible

When we first get into our job, we assume or expect that things will be spoon fed to us, but the reality may be different. When a company takes you in, they feel that you have shown your level of independence and ability in being able to take responsibilities carrying out the specific job role. And if you are not prepared for that, it can leave you in a big mess. So learn to take responsibilities early on. Although some companies may be quite lenient with you in the beginning, make the effort and take the initiative to take up certain tasks. And whenever in doubt, have the courage to ask. Your boss will see your level of maturity and the fact that you're able to handle a certain responsibility will make you stand out as an employee.

Be prepared for the unexpected and take it easy

Sometimes things may not turn out the way you plan, maybe your first job wasn't the best job for you or that you've been applying to several companies but still haven't got a call back for an interview. It's okay. Things take time. Instead of beating yourself up about it, use this moment to work on yourself, enhance your skills and personal growth. Use the time to do some volunteering work or an internship even if it's unpaid. Experiences are experiences and that matters in the working world. And whatever happens, take it easy and keep moving forward.

Be yourself and don't compare yourself to others

When we look at our family and friends, we tend to compare our own lives to their success and wish to have the things that they have, without realising the effort and sacrifice that it took for them to get to that stage and their

own personal struggles. Realize that we all have our own potential and have the ability to reach our own aspirations in life. Know that every single one of us is different and have our own unique and amazing personality, characters, and features that makes us who we are, which can never be the same to another person. Yes, they may be similar to you but not the same. Be yourself, and look at the things that you love doing, your skills, your talents. Recognize that all these are the things that makes you 'you' and that's what every great company wants to find. Something that makes 'you' different from others. Find what your strengths and passions are. And work hard on polishing them. The more you do that, the more you will discover about yourself and will be a person of your own character and personality, which is the best state that you can ever be in. People will see that in you and perhaps that may be the very reason why your future company will hire you. ♥



About the author:

Sarah Zainal Abidin, B.Sc. (Hons) is a recent graduate, who majored in Psychology with Counselling Skills. Her interest lies mostly in areas of counselling and education, particularly related to issues of mental health and well-being. She is currently a volunteer at Al Noor, a training centre for children with special needs. She has also worked in Thalassemia Center under the DHA, as well as at PULSE, a learning therapy centre in enhancing her passions and skills. During her spare time, she loves to bake traditional Malaysian desserts and enjoys doing cardio workouts regularly. ♥

New Faces, Fresh Ideas

It's a new academic year, and we are familiarising ourselves with new faces around campus. Quite a few full-time faculty members have joined us this year from different parts of the world, bringing their expertise and experiences in teaching and research. It is fantastic to see that not only are our new faculty well-versed in their respective fields, they are also hands on with their research and writing. This can only be great news for research, as the more academically varied our staff are, the more opportunities there will be for new ideas and collaborations to emerge. Take the following brief introductions on our new staff as your opportunity to learn about them and their research areas and interests, and go say hello and start a conversation. You never know when you will land on a fantastic idea for a research collaboration! ♥



Daphne Demetriou

Position: Lecturer in Law, School of Law and Politics

Qualifications: Ph.D Law, Middlesex University London, LL.M in Public International Law, UCL, LPC, The College of Law, LLB, University of Kent

Research Interests: Public International Law, International Human Rights Law, International Criminal Law, Human Trafficking and Slavery



Rory McConnon

Position: Campus Programme Coordinator-Business Management Programmes & MA International Business Management, Lecturer in Management

Qualifications: MBA, Middlesex University Dubai, UAE.
Master of Science Energy Management, University of Ulster, UK.
Master of Science Renewable Energy, University of Ulster, UK.
Higher Diploma in Business Management, Institute of Technology Carlow, Ireland.
PGCert (Teaching & Supporting Learning), Middlesex University Dubai, UAE.

Research Interests: Sustainable Development, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Community Development, E-Learning



Johanna Horlings-Plender

Position: Lecturer in IFP / Education

Qualifications: M.A. in TESOL, University of Sunderland, Postgraduate Cert. in Family Day Care and Early Childhood, Manucan Institute of Technology

Research Interests: TESOL and Early childhood



Michael J. Kloeppel

Position: Senior Lecturer in Management, School of Business

Qualifications: Ph.D. (Economics), University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, M.A. (Economics), University of Applied Sciences

Research Interests: Marketing (Pricing Methods), Strategy, Innovation & Entrepreneurship Management, Science of Happiness



Rhoderick Romano

Position: Lecturer in Management, School of Business

Qualifications: MBA, Middlesex University Dubai, BA in Philosophy, University of Santo Tomas

Research Interests: Cross-Cultural Management, ethics, philosophy, Corporate Social Responsibility, entrepreneurship



Samantha Jayne Roberts

Position: Lecturer in Law, School of Law and Politics

Qualifications: MA in Medical Ethics and Law, King's College, PGDip in Legal Practice, BPP University, PG Cert Higher Education, Westminster University, LLB, King's College London, Fellow Higher Education Academy, UK

Research Interests: Law and ethics at the end of life, reproductive genetics and ethics, legal education and pedagogy



Savita Kumra

Position: Associate Professor in Human Resource Management
Qualifications: Ph.D, Cranfield School of Management, Cranfield University, M.Sc. Economics, Industrial Relations and Personnel Management, London School of Economics, BA (Hons) Business Studies, Middlesex University London
Research Interests: gender, career advancement, professional services and cross-cultural management



Jenny Meggs

Position: Senior Lecturer, Psychology
Qualifications: Ph.D. (Psychology), University of Teesside; B.Sc. (Psychology), University of Teesside
Research Interests: The psychology of exercise, the psychology of elite performance, the biological underpinnings of mental toughness, cognitive- affective structure of the self in sport



Eliseo Ferrante

Position: Senior Lecturer, School of Science and Technology
Qualifications: Ph.D. Applied Sciences, Universite Libre de Bruxelles, MSc Computer Science, University of Illinois, and MSc Computer Science Engineering, Politecnico di Milano
Research interests: Swarm robotics, self-organization, non-equilibrium statistical physics, evolutionary biology, machine learning



Yasser Mahmood

Position: Lecturer in Law
Qualifications: LLB (Hons) First Class, Bar Vocational Course, Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, BPP University College, London
Research Interests: European Union Law, governance

Dr. Cody Morris Paris Keynotes the Annual PhD Workshop at the ENTER 2016 eTourism Conference in Bilbao, Spain



Dr. Cody Morris Paris, Deputy Director of Middlesex University Dubai, was recently invited to give a keynote talk at the PhD Workshop of the ENTER2016@Bilbao, Spain Conference on “eTourism: Empowering Places”. Organised by the International Federation for Information Technology and Travel & Tourism (IFITT), the 23rd Annual ENTER conference offered a global forum for attendees from academia, industry, government and other organisations to actively exchange, share, and challenge state of the art research and industrial case studies on the application of information and communication technologies to travel and tourism.

The ENTER PhD Workshop is a forum within the annual conference that provides doctoral students undertaking research related to

Information and Communication Technology in Travel and Tourism to interactively discuss their research with peers, colleagues, and leading supervisors/scholars in the field. During the ENTER2016 PhD Workshop, Dr. Cody Morris Paris gave a keynote titled “Surviving and Thriving during your early academic career,” which outlined some key recommendations for early career academics. The keynote was well received, and complemented the other two eminent keynote speakers, Professor Ulrike Gretzel “Experimenting in/with Tourism Research” (University of Queensland Australia) and Iis Tussyadiah “Research Trends in eTourism” (Washington State University).

Cody is an active member of the IFITT community having attended the ENTER conference annually over the last eight years. He has served on the Scientific Committee of ENTER several years, and was the Research Co-Chair off the IFITT PhD Summer School in Helsinki, Finland in 2014. Reflecting upon this research community, Cody notes that “the IFITT community and the Annual Enter conference is unique as it not only provides a forum for leading innovative international IT and tourism research, engagement between industry, academia, & government, but also due to the sense of community and collegiality that has been built.” ♥

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The role of research in the working life of an ABA Therapist

Sheldon D'Silva

For many students conducting research or even studying the module research methods is seen as a 'necessary evil' when doing their psychology qualification. Maybe it's because most students studying psychology would much rather spend their time learning about the thoughts, behaviours and emotions of individuals than think about how to design a research project, recruit participants and deal with all the variables that can affect the study. That, and try as our lecturers may, it's impossibly hard to make factor analysis sound interesting! Nevertheless, the fact of the matter is that without research, most disciplines especially psychology would be non-existent or, at best, relegated to being a set of opinions with no credibility. Lots of people already associate us with crystal ball readers, asking us to read their minds or predict the future once we tell them we're studying psychology. Just imagine how much worse it could get without this 'necessary evil'.

Much of psychology is comprised of questions that are asked and then developed into theories. The resultant theories and subsequent hypotheses can be debated over in several different ways, depending on which field or application of psychology that one decides to look from. However once an approach has been decided on, a conclusion can only be obtained by conducting research. Empirical evidence can argue for or against an idea and could even guide a researcher in a new direction displaying an area he or she had not previously considered. Getting an understanding of psychology and attaining

an insight into the inner workings of the human mind depends on being able to verify what is being stated is factual, so research is extremely necessary. This research results in psychology getting scientific value, nearly bringing about falsification by giving evidence for new theories and enabling other individuals to question them, since sometimes researchers create the error of classing multiple attributes into a single idea.

I too decided to pursue a psychology degree as I have always been very interested in how the mind works and the wide differences between individual reactions to similar situations and challenges. Nevertheless, I was also keen on making a positive difference in the lives of others, especially assisting young patients and their families deal with distress and the sacrifices they have to make. Soon after my graduation, I was fortunate to be offered a full time position as an ABA Therapist at Kids in Motion. The work here is challenging, yet deeply rewarding as I get to observe first-hand the great strides, children with developmental delay can make when effective behaviour programs are implemented.

Working as a behaviour therapist has made me realise just how important learning research methods during my undergraduate years is, as all decisions made in Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) are entirely data driven and objective. ABA is the process of applying intervention based on the principles of learning theory to shape behaviours and

teach new skills. Specific behaviours are observed and analysed to find out their function. When implementing programmes, behaviours are examined and analysed to determine their function. ABA programs highlight the importance of analysing the antecedents and consequences of behaviours. The antecedents and consequences are analysed and manipulated in an effort to shape or modify behaviour. Data are also collected when teaching new behaviours, and developing systematic instructional plans to teach new skills. Skills are broken down into small discrete steps through a task analysis and taught systematically. Moreover, data are also collected and analysed to identify skills and/or behaviour that need to be taught. The data is analysed to measure a child's progress, evaluate the effectiveness of the child's individual program to determine if a goal is mastered, to decide when to switch or add new targets or even change teaching procedures to increase progress. Furthermore, these data can then be represented as graphs to show a clearer picture of the child's progress. Through graphs one can better assess where the target behaviour was initially, where it is currently, and where it can be projected to. Finally,

regular collection of data also ensures that there is an archive of the skills the therapist is working on.

Some of the methods that behaviour analysts use when obtaining behavioural data include the following:

Frequency - The number of times that a particular behaviour occurred.

Rate - Similar to frequency, but within a specified time limit.

Duration - The total time the behaviour occurred for.

Fluency - How quickly a learner can give responses within a period of time.

Latency - The amount of time that elapses once a specific stimulus is given until the target behaviour occurs.

This is of course just a very brief glimpse into the research methods that are utilised in ABA, and I do not want to bore or scare the undergraduate psychology students reading this. While not everything I learnt is applicable to my current role, my degree at Middlesex University has been invaluable in instilling the importance of ABA data collection methods to optimise effectiveness and verify the legitimacy of treatment plans, identify and end the use of pseudoscience, bring about accountability and meet ethical standards. ♥



Sheldon is a Registered Behaviour Therapist at Kids in Motion Paediatric Therapy Services. A graduate of Psychology with Counselling skills, he is looking to pursue a Masters in the same and is excited at the prospect of assisting in some area of research in positive psychology, happiness, or humor. A keen believer in the saying 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy', Sheldon spends far too much time exploring the lighter side of life.

ATLAS Conference 2016: Dr. Cody Paris

With colleagues Professor Kevin Hannam and Jihane Adeimi (Edinburgh Napier University), Dr. Cody Morris Paris convened a special track on “Changing Lifestyles and Tourism in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)” at the Annual ATLAS conference in September 2016 in Canterbury, UK. The conference marked the 25th anniversary of the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education Research and was organized around the theme of “Tourism, Lifestyles, and Locations.” Taking this conference theme into consideration, the aim of the special track was to give researchers a platform to discuss more recent tourism developments and changing lifestyles in the MENA region.

Papers were selected for presentation in the special track on a range of topics including:

- Developments in Halal/Islamic tourism and marketing in the MENA region
- Changing lifestyles, mobilities and tourism performances in the MENA region
- Changing host-guest relations in the MENA region
- New tourist destinations and urban tourism developments in the MENA region
- The politics of events in the MENA region
- Changing tourism policies and strategies in the MENA region
- The impact of risks on tourism in the MENA region ♥





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Middlesex University Dubai Research Seminar Series

January 2016 to May 2016

Research Seminar Series 178

Culture & Entrepreneurship in the United Arab Emirates

Wasif Minhas

Higher Colleges of Technology, Sharjah Campus

Culture plays an integral role in shaping an entrepreneur's motivation, self-concept, personality and cognition. This study aimed to identify specific cultural factors that affect entrepreneurship in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) context and the wider Middle East region. The study used a qualitative methodology and in-depth interviews to focus on the lived experiences of eight university graduates who had entrepreneurial intentions as undergraduates, but only half managed to start a business whilst the other half opted for employment. The study sought to understand how cultural factors lead to the fruition of these different outcomes. A further sample of two incubator managers was used to triangulate findings. Interviews revealed four themes of Collectivist Nationalism, Perceptions of

Entrepreneurship, Religion and Tradition, and Reputation. Outside other social structures such as family or government represent the main influences that affect young Emiratis. This study concludes that the UAE culture promotes a sense of civic duty and seeds ambition, which encourages entrepreneurial action; however, cultural influences can also add to the fear of failure and push Emiratis towards less risky careers options of employment. Findings highlight a complex network of interrelated cultural factors that alternate as barriers or enablers, depending upon personal circumstance and other environmental factors. Whilst the nature of cultural factors and their application to entrepreneurship in the UAE is complex, the study highlights opportunities to counter some of the barriers, which signal a number of practical implications for practitioners. Given the increasingly globalized market place for entrepreneurs, developing a better understanding of culture is crucial to advance entrepreneurship and economic progress. Findings presented here indicate opportunities to further develop and adapt support mechanisms for nascent entrepreneurs according to cultural differences, making them more relevant to different regions across the world.

Research Seminar Series 177

Research Ethics

Anita Shrivastava Kashi, David Tully, Douglas Russell, Lynda Hyland
Middlesex University Dubai

Research is of vital importance to the development of each of our academic disciplines and it is incumbent upon researchers to ensure that their work follows

strict ethical guidelines. The ethics policy of Middlesex University Dubai emphasises the rights of research subjects and the responsibilities of researchers. It helps to ensure that studies undertaken by staff and students are conducted to high ethical standards and that all participants in primary research are afforded protection. This seminar will discuss research ethics in general, along with the MDX Dubai policy and application process. It will also involve a request for feedback on issues you believe should be considered within our current ethics procedure.

Research Seminar Series 176

Competency Mapping for the Employees of Centrifugal Pump Manufacturing with Special Reference to Coimbatore

Praveen Srinivasan
FDC International and Karpagam University

During a period of rapid growth in India, the manufacturing of motor pump scaled up business for what seemed to be a new level

of demand in the market. Manufacturers that had purchased capital equipment to meet this increasing demand for finished goods were faced with overcapacity in their operations. This study has scope due to the concentration of Centrifugal Pump manufacturing units in and around Coimbatore (India) and the large number of employee associated with this job. The findings will be useful for policy makers, government officials, professional associations, owners, management and also workers to plan their activities and strategies in a better way. This will also help other similar industries globally.

Research Seminar Series 175

Looking for Leadership: Reflections on Theory and Practice

Keith Reynolds

Middlesex University Dubai

This preliminary research draws on reflective assignments submitted by MBA students studying at a University in the Middle East. The students on the programme are a diverse mix of mainly expatriate managers working in SME's. A particular module 'Leadership has an assignment that asks for evidence of learning and reflection as to what is most meaningful for them in terms of module topics, academic content, relevance to their work and what they will do with their reflections and conclusions. There is an emphasis on career management as an outcome. The word limit is 8,000 words. For most the assignment takes the form of a 'diary' reflecting on each week of the module and using models of reflective practice (Kolb 2006)) to consider the learning experience, engage in reflective observation, consider abstract conceptualisation and move forward with what they will do with the learning outcomes (active experimentation). Content (learning experience) of the module (inputs) includes Leadership Models and Frameworks, Management, Management and Leadership

Development, Diversity, Leadership and Power, Managing across Cultures, Reflective Learning, Coaching and Leading Change. The students/managers reflect on these areas by choice i.e. they choose which are most meaningful for them. The themes emerging from 47 pieces of work were reviewed to provide an overview or 'snapshot' of what middle managers are thinking, experiencing and practicing in terms of leadership and Management in their organisation in mid-2015. Preliminary indications are that many managers' experience of work is far from the espoused theories of leadership and management. Many cited difficulties in recognising any of the leadership practices or management styles in their organisations. Additionally, there are some indications that reflective Practice whilst difficult to master can be a powerful tool in enabling leadership and Management Development in organisations. Thirdly there is some support that the 'right' leadership in the right place at the right time can make a considerable difference to individual and organisational performance. The findings suggest further research is needed in to the application of leadership in different cultural contexts, the development of reflective practice as a key leadership and management development tool and a concern as to the possible rise of 'corporate psychopathy' (Boddy, 2014) or amoral leadership and management behaviour in local organisations.

Research Seminar Series 174

Emirati women in Dubai's hospitality industry: Their personal experiences and perceptions

Neelofer Mashood

Middlesex University Dubai

The aim of the paper is to examine the factors that influence Emirati women to work in the Dubai's hospitality industry and subsequently to make recommendations to increase the participation of female Emirati in the sector. In order to do so, the perceptions and experiences of female

Emirati employed in the sector have been captured through semi-structured interviews and form the basis for recommendations made to various stakeholders, such as the government and hotel companies. The interviews showed that there are various religious, social and economic reasons which impact on the participation rate of female Emiratis. Furthermore, the interviews revealed a number of acceptable and less-acceptable functions within the sector. Based on these findings, recommendations were made, which echo and extend those made by Al Marzouqi and Forster (2011) for the IT sector, and as such include education, subsidies and incentives to remove the stigma associated with working in the sector and for making the sector financially more attractive.

Research Seminar Series 173

There's no app to replace your lap, read to your child

Louise Edensor

Middlesex University Dubai

This informative talk discusses the importance of reading with children. Neil Postman said,

'Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see'. What kind of message do you want to send? This talk addresses some of the important reasons why children should put down their ipads and pick up a book. So step away from the marking, and come and be entertained for a little while. Come to this talk for the fun, the laughs and above all, the stories.

Research Seminar Series 172

Systems thinking as a key attribute of strategic leaders

Sardor Usmanov

Academy of State Governance under the President of Uzbekistan

One of the most widespread concepts in theory and practice of strategic management is 'systems thinking'. Paradoxically, being rather an 'old' concept, it is increasingly being considered as a 'new way of thinking' to understand and manage complex problems of management at both local and global levels. In their 2007 study 'Systems thinking, system dynamics: Managing change and complexity', Maani and Cavana use the analogy of an iceberg to demonstrate a conceptual model of understanding complex systems problems. This model is also known as the Four Levels of Thinking. According to this model, current events or (identifiable symptoms) represent only the visible part of the iceberg above the waterline. Meantime, the majority of managerial decisions often take place at this level. The reason for such 'quick fix' actions

targeting the symptoms is that it seems to be the easiest way out of complicated situations. This 'quick fix' mindset however does not provide efficient long lasting solutions. At the deeper level of thinking, according to this iceberg model, that is hardly ever visible at the surface level, are the 'mental models' of individuals and organizations that influence why things work the way they do. Maani and Cavana assert that these mental models reflect the beliefs, values and assumptions that people and organizations hold which influence our methods of taking important decisions. Management experts consider that the third level of thinking is a critical step towards understanding how these mental models can be integrated in a systems structure that reveals how the different components are interconnected and influence each other. So, the systems thinking paradigm integrating these four levels of thinking encourages managers and decision-makers to move from the event level to deeper levels of thinking and providing a systemic framework to deal with complex problems. During our research seminar we will address the specific features of this systems thinking model. Understanding of this model and its application will enhance the chances of the participants of coping with intricate systems issues in their future managerial contexts.

Research Seminar Series 171

How an offender can be a victim: A study into the social attitudes towards victims, offenders, and their identities within a student population

Lydia Miller

Sheffield Hallam University

There is a considerable amount of research and theory that groups offenders and victims into two discrete categories. This

study explores the concept of an individual possessing victim and offender identities simultaneously. Focus groups were conducted on the student population of Sheffield Hallam University to explore opinions around the notion of the stereotypical victim and offender labels and the interaction of these identities within one person. The role of the media in influencing opinion on victims and offenders will also be discussed. Through all four focus group discussions, it was found that all participants upheld the stereotypical view of victim and offender identities and very few acknowledged the dualism concept, citing the media as a factor in influencing their views.

Research Seminar Series 170

Confessions of a (Research) Shopaholic

Lorraine Kelley

Middlesex University Dubai

Confessions of a (Research) Shopaholic is a playful while nonetheless serious presentation which distills the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (established in 2000) of the Association of College & Research Libraries of the American Library Association (ACRL, 2015) and demonstrates how doing research may be taught to students at all levels as a standard five step process. Using shopping a process with which students everywhere are inherently familiar as a metaphor simplifies the process and helps students internalize the steps. De-mystifying the process in this manner conserves valuable time a resource which is usually in very short supply for students and at the same time contributes to student confidence and relieves student anxiety.

The five steps of the research process taught in this model are Define, Locate, Select, Organize, and Cite. The model targets both genders by providing comparable examples of interest to females (shopping for a dress

to wear for a special occasion) and males (cars). Though stereotypical, nonetheless these are examples with which members of either sex can connect. How doing research is like shopping is demonstrated by graphical comparisons which break down the shopping process and compares it, step-by-step, to the research process. As a counterpoint, examples of bad shopping processes (impulse buying, purchasing counterfeit products) are also compared to unethical research and report-writing processes. In conclusion, the author's successful experience using this model over a three-year period to effectively teach research methods to English-as-a-second-language female Emirati students self-proclaimed shopping experts is briefly described.

Implications for Information Literacy professionals include learning a new and easily taught research process model that appeals to and is easily understood by students and by teachers alike. It is suggested that the use of a simple model of this nature increases the likelihood of both successful embedding of research methods instruction into cross-disciplinary curriculum and student research success, whether the model is taught by a Librarian or Faculty member. Ultimately, the "researcher as shopper" model provides a sustainable, time-saving, and simple yet authoritative method of conducting research and of teaching the research process.

Research Seminar Series 169

Expat academics in the UAE

Kristin Kamøy

American University in the Emirates

Higher education in the United Arab Emirates and its institutions, faculty, students and quality controllers are both international and local at the same time. The first “foreign”

university opened its doors in 1993, and today there are more than 40 transnational institutions. Only three institutions out of 102 are federal, and state-funded. The majority of academics are expatriates, and Emiratization is slow. Students prefer private institutions, yet citizens are in majority at the federal institutions. Findings suggest that these features of the sector have implications for research. This paper will look into who arrive in the Emirates to be academics, why they come and why they leave.

Research Seminar Series 168

TED-Ed web-based blended learning to support teaching: An action research project

Douglas Russell

Middlesex University Dubai

The use of video material to support the pedagogical shift to blended learning has begun being utilised in traditional campus based universities. This student-centred approach has supported higher education practitioners in adapting their practice to better meet the diverse student populations entering university. An action research project

utilising TED-Ed to introduce out of class, student-centred learning was conducted by a Dubai based lecturer. A class of 65 students enrolled in a second year Psychology module completed between one to three online activities and answered a qualitative survey sharing their opinions towards completing the tasks. The results showed that blended learning could be effectively used as a teaching tool to support practice in a ‘traditional’ university with a focus on the lecture/seminar approach, and support a reflective cycle of continuing professional development in line with current UK guidelines. The research seminar will include an example Ted-Ed activity for attendees to complete as well as a very brief introductory session to using TED-Ed. why they come and why they leave.

Research Seminar Series 167

Education as service industry and the student as customer: square pegs in round holes?

Mick King

Middlesex University Dubai

This session draws on theoretical concepts of service management and the service encounter and the extent to which they apply to the field of education. It aims to raise questions about the role of educational institutions in modern-day society. Do they

still represent to some extent the concept of public good or have they become companies that look to attract customers to purchase their service product? If they lie somewhere in between, do they lean more to one extreme or the other? The session is designed to be interactive given the range of business and education expertise in the audience. After initially applying a number of theoretical concepts to modern day educational institutions, secondary research which questions the application of service industry and customer monikers in the education sector will be reviewed. Finally, the audience will be invited to comment on the views presented and give their own perspectives on this complex debate.

Research Seminar Series 166

"Do gaming avatars mirror our personalities or do they differ? Online gaming motivation and personality dimensions"

Anita Shrivastava Kashi and Daniel Powell

Middlesex University Dubai

Cyber psychology is a relatively new field within the historical boundaries of psychology as a whole, looking into the human mind as well as the interaction between both man and technology. The introduction and globalization of the internet and mass media has fundamentally changed numerous aspects of human interaction (Bailenson & Beall, 2006). Most of the studies in regards to this focus primarily on online gambling, addiction, anti-social behaviour, and avatar creation. Some research and theoretical discussion

also indicates that the virtual world can have a positive impact on select individuals under certain circumstances (Trepte, Reinecke, & Juechems, 2012). This study aims to investigate the differences between an individual's personality and that of their favored online gaming avatar, as well whether personality traits can act as determining factors of online gaming motivation. The design of this study is within group, and the participants consisted of 6 females and 20 males. These participants were assessed on the HEXACO-PI-R, and the Online Gaming Motivation Scale. The participants were asked to fill out the HEXACO-PI-R twice - once for themselves and once for the personality of their favored avatar. Paired sample t-test analysis found that the personality traits of an individual and their avatar differ from one another; however, none of the personality factors predicted online gaming motivation. The findings of this study add into existing literature and provide support for theoretical grounds. ♥

Staff Publications

Name in **bold** is Middlesex Faculty Member

- Ahuja, R., **Jain, M.**, Sawhney, A., & Arif, M. (2016) "Adoption of BIM by architectural firms in India: technology-organization-environment perspective", *Architectural Engineering and Design Management*, 12, 311-330.
- Banerjee, R., & **Majumdar S.** (2016) Determinants of financial soundness of insurance firms- a study of UAE insurers. *Global Business and Economics Review* (forthcoming).
- Bhaumik, S. K., Kuran, A., & **Majumdar, S** (2016). How Successful Are Banking Sector Reforms in Emerging Market Economies? Evidence from Impact of Monetary Policy on Levels and Structures of Firm Debt in India. Institute for the Study of Labor, Discussion Paper 9992.
- Butler, G., & **Paris, C.** (2016). Reaching the End of the Unbeaten Path? An Analysis of Lonely Planet's Digital Media 'Requiem'. *Anatolia: An international journal of tourism and hospitality research*, 27, 377-388.
- Chandanani, P., Singh, K., & **Majumdar, S** (2016). Market Structure and Competition in the Banking Industry. *Indian Journal of Finance* (forthcoming).
- **Edensor, L.** (2016). 'Me or I? The Search for the Self in the early writings of Katherine Mansfield' in *Katherine Mansfield Studies* Vol 8 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press).
- Iqbal, M. J., & **Rashid, S.** (2016) A re-interpretation of impact of the Icelandic Low and Azores High on winter precipitation over Iberian Peninsula. *Arabian Journal of GeoScience*, 9 (102). doi:10.1007/s12517-015-2086-y (Impact factor 1.224)
- Lalvani, M., & **Karnik, A.** (forthcoming). Fiscal Performance in the wake of Fiscal Responsibility Legislation: A Study of Maharashtra's Public Finances. *Journal of the Indian School of Political Economy*.
- Leckey, Y., **Hyland, L.**, Hickey, G., Lodge, A., Kelly, P., Bywater, T., ... & McGilloway, S. (2016). A mixed-methods evaluation of the longer-term implementation and utility of a teacher classroom management training programme in Irish primary schools. *Irish Educational Studies*, 35, 35-55. 2015 (Impact Factor 0.431; Google Scholar h-5 Index: 12).
- **Karnik, A.** (In press). Growth and Convergence under Uniform and Varying Rate of Change of Technology. *Journal Panoeconomicus*.
- Lalvani, M., & **Karnik, A.** (In press). Fiscal Performance in the wake of Fiscal Responsibility Legislation: A Study of Maharashtra's Public Finances. *Journal of the Indian School of Political Economy*.
- **Karnik, A.**, & Lalvani, M. (2016). Budget 2016-17: Lacking in Substance. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 16, 51.
- **Majumdar, S.** (2016). Understanding Brexit. *International Management Institute Konnect*, 5(5), 10-12.
- **Mohnot, R.** (2016). Exploring optimal portfolio opportunities in Indian stock markets. *International Journal of Economics and Business Research*, 11, 336-346.
- **Moustakas, E.** et al. (2016). Region of Makkah, Using Social Media to enhance Region

performance. *Habitat Publications Journal*. King Salman Center for Local Governance, United Nations.

- Pani, P., & **Kishore P.** (2016). Absenteeism and performance in a quantitative module - A quantile regression analysis. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 8, 376-389.
- **Paris, C.** (2016) Sustainability: A threshold concept for tourism education. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal*, 64, 329-337.
- Pillai, R., & **Nanath, K.** (In press). The influence of green IS practices on competitive advantage: Mediation role of green innovation performance. *Information Systems Management*.
- Pstross, M., Rodriguez, A., Knopf, R., & **Paris, C.** (2016) Realizing the American Dream: Empowering Latino Parents to Transform the Education of their Children. *Education and Urban Society*, 48(7), 650-671. (Impact Factor 0.444, Google Scholar h-5 Index: 18).
- Rodrigues, G., Sarabdeen, J., & **Balasubramanian, S.** (2016). Factors that Influence Consumer Adoption of E-government Services in the UAE: A UTAUT Model Perspective. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 15, 18-39.
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- **Shrivastava, A.**, & Pietschnig, P. (2015). There are Many Facets of Stigmatization: Cross-Cultural Evidence from Four Samples in the United Arab Emirates. *Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 42(2), 94-101.

Book Chapter

- **Alokaily, R.** (2016). Adapting Technology Enhanced Learning to Students' Culture: Faculty Perspectives. In Alshahrani & Ally (Eds.). *Transforming education in the gulf region*. UK: Routledge.
- **Balasubramanian, S.**, & Sundarakani, B. (2016). Assessing the Green Supply Chain Management for the United Arab Emirates Construction Industry. In M. Khan, M. Hussain, & M. M. Ajmal (Eds.), *Green Supply Chain Management for Sustainable Business Practice*, (pp. 83-110). IGI Global.
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- **Beebeejaun, Z.** (2016). The UAE legal system. In J. Bisacre & Y. McLaren (Eds.), *Commercial law in a global context*. UK: Goodfellow.

Edited Special issues

- **Epps, A., Karnik, A., & Paris, C.** (Eds.) (2016). "Emerging Research Perspectives on Business in the Middle East" *International Journal of Business and Globalisation*, 16(2). Editorial (Pages 105-108). (Google Scholar h-5 index:8).
- **Karnik, A., Epps, A., & Paris, C.** (Eds.). (2016). Global Issues: Emerging Economic and Social Perspectives. *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management, and Sustainable Development*, 12(4). Editorial (Pages 377-381). (Google Scholar h-5 index:8).
- **Paris, C.**, Stephenson, M., & **Hyland, L.** (Eds.) (2016). Emerging Topics in Niche Tourism, the Hospitality Industry, and Online Consumer Behavior. *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 27(3). Editorial (325-326). (Google Scholar h-5 index:15).

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Invitation for contributors: The editors cordially invite article submissions for the upcoming issue of 'Research Matters' from Middlesex University Dubai students and faculty, and from external researchers. If you would like to submit an article, kindly contact Dr. Lynda Hyland at l.hyland@mdx.ac.ae or Dr. Rajesh Mohnot at r.mohnot@mdx.ac.ae. ♥

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