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new vistas

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New Vistas | Policy, Practice and Scholarship in Higher Education

EDITOR'S NOTE

Volume 7 | Issue 2

Now in its seventh year, *New Vistas* has become the cornerstone of the University of West London's efforts to disseminate research, commentary, and scholarly work that engages with the complex agenda of higher education (HE) in its local, national and global contexts. This autumn issue features once again a combination of HE and discipline-focused articles both by emerging and established academics.

With the new academic year in full swing, academics around the UK have started to return to on-campus teaching. However, many of us have noticed that the pandemic has brought potentially lasting changes to our profession and the way HE operates. The authors of the first two papers consider the 'new normal' for the HE sector. Weerawardane discusses the on-going digital transformation journey in HE that has been accelerated by the pandemic. Hasan explores the effect of the pandemic on the UK's higher education system, with a focus on education economics.

In the next two papers, the authors look beyond the UK, directing their attention to Africa. In their case study, Duru, Fu and Nimo explore the idea that African countries can achieve manufacturing industrialisation, and thus socio-economic growth, through the appropriate knowledge management. Jika presents a Scoping Review of the literature, which explores the lived experiences of family caregivers for older adults with chronic illness in Nigeria.

The final two papers of this issue emerge from the creative industries. Crewe presents an argument in support of practice-led research. Drawing on his own experience with creative writing, he encourages colleagues also to consider creative writing as a valuable research methodology. Olsen and Scott investigate the discriminatory nature of current British TV adverting at the interface of old(er) age and ethnicity.

This autumn issue of *New Vistas* heralds new beginnings. Firstly, a new academic year has started. For many academics around the UK, this is the first time in over a year that they will return to on-campus activities full-time. Secondly, New Vistas has a new editor. I wish to take this opportunity to thank my predecessor for his tremendous achievements, leading *New Vistas* into the digital age and advancing the journal's ambition for indexing. Following in his footsteps, I will focus the team's energy on further strengthening *New Vistas'* reputation, reach and impact.

Here's to new beginnings!

Dr Dennis A. Olsen
New Vistas Editor

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MISSON STATEMENT

***New Vistas* is published by the University of West London (UWL) and provides a forum to disseminate research, commentary, and scholarly work that engages with the complex agenda of higher education in its local, national and global context.**

Published twice a year (with occasional special issues), for a broad (academic, international and professional) audience, the journal will feature research and scholarly analysis on higher education policy; current issues in higher education; higher education pedagogy; professional practice; the relation of higher education to work and the economy; and discipline-specific research.

We welcome thought-provoking scholarly contributions from external and internal authors, with the explicit intention to give a voice to early-career researchers and scholars.

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Dinusha Weerawardane | University of West London, UK

Higher education has come a long way from traditional tutor-centric education to student-focused, technology-integrated education.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: WHAT'S NEXT?

The higher education sector, like many others, has radically transformed over the last few decades. It has now aligned itself to the Fourth Industrial Revolution and is undergoing a digital shift of its own, which is known as Education 4.0

The Covid-19 pandemic has exponentially accelerated digital transformation within the higher education sector, and has given us the opportunity to re-think and re-shape how we do things. This article explores what true digital transformation looks like, where it could potentially lead us and what universities of the future might look like.

What is digital transformation?

Digital transformation is a shift in the role of technology within an organisation from being a mere support function, to being integrated into all areas of business, thereby fundamentally transforming its operations and the way in which it delivers value to customers (Bughin, Deakin & O'Beirne, 2019). This can be distinguished from business process re-engineering, as it extends beyond merely automating rule-based processes, and instead, focuses more on re-imagining business models and operations (Schallmo, Williams & Boardman, 2017). There are a number of emerging technologies driving digital transformation, such as social media, the internet of things (IoT), big data and analytics, cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, blockchain, cybersecurity, robotic process automation (RPA) and quantum computing. However, according to a study conducted by the MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte, it is organisational strategy that actually drives digital transformation, not necessarily the technology (Deloitte Insights, 2015). Nevertheless, technology has been a significant disrupter for many years now, transforming global value chains and business models and resulting in a seismic shift of skills, bringing us to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, or Industry 4.0 (Grosseck, Malita & Bunoiu, 2020).

What does digital transformation mean for the higher education sector?

The higher education sector, like many others, has radically transformed over the last few decades. From the origins of the traditional tutor-centric classroom where technology was even forbidden (Education 1.0), to the gradual infiltration of technology, first in basic ways (Education 2.0), and then on a mass-scale through user-generated internet which made it easier to connect with tutors and learn virtually (Education 3.0), education has come a long way. The higher education sector has now aligned itself to the Fourth Industrial Revolution and is undergoing a digital shift of its own, which is known as Education 4.0 (Bonfield et al., 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has exponentially accelerated this digital shift within the higher education sector. Since March 2020, universities have plunged head-first into online teaching and learning, and experimented with synchronous and asynchronous lectures, online learning communities, online assessments and other innovative pedagogies, and relied heavily on data analytics to monitor student engagement. Although this stemmed more from necessity than choice, there are nonetheless several benefits from this accelerated digital transformation in higher education. For instance,

the sector has been able to widen participation, promote access to education and more effectively prepare students for complex and unprecedented situations around which the business world revolves. The digital literacy of both staff and students have greatly improved, and students are also able to demonstrate their ability and willingness to learn and adapt, all of which are essential traits sought by employers today. Digital transformation within higher education is becoming even more important with the entry of Gen Z into universities. These young individuals are digital natives who live in a world of instant communication, and learn differently, with shorter attention spans and an increased ability to multitask, so it is essential to find more innovative ways to capture and hold their attention (Hernadez & Carreon-Flores, 2019).

However, it is important to note that for *true* digital transformation to take place, it should involve more than just a switch from traditional ways to online. For instance, merely converting a paper-based examination into a computer-based one is not in itself true digital transformation. However, when biometrics and AI are used to authenticate examination candidates, data generated from online assessments is analysed and used to improve future assessments and exam performance, and the full suite of tools is used to ensure exam rigour and security, such as question randomisation, algorithm-based question mix optimisation, prohibition of backtracking, prevention of browser search and perhaps even remote proctoring, digital transformation has truly taken place. This is just one example, but in essence, it should involve using technology to completely transform all processes, as well as the organisational culture, to meet future needs.

What's next?

The Covid-19 pandemic has compelled to re-think and re-shape the overall higher education environment and experience. Where Education 4.0 will ultimately take us is anyone's guess, but it is likely that a truly digitally transformed, futuristic higher education environment would incorporate most of the following technologies.

(a) Chatbots

Some universities have already started using chatbots to facilitate prompt responses to the influx of student questions during key enrolment periods, direct students to the correct department or web page for further support, and even for library support services (Beckingham, 2019). As these chatbots operate 24/7/365, students can be instantly signposted accordingly, and this frees up a considerable number of staffing resources to manage more specialised queries/issues which cannot be dealt with by a chatbot. However, if chatbot technology could be taken up a notch to deliver more than mere administrative support, for instance support reflective learning, that may revolutionise teaching and learning pedagogies.

(b) Augmented reality, virtual reality and mixed reality

Augmented reality (AR) is a means of layering digital information into the real world in real-time through a camera-equipped device, such as a mobile phone or laptop, in a manner that enhances or 'augments' reality (Advance HE, 2020). This contrasts with virtual reality (VR) which goes a step further by enabling a person to fully immerse in, explore and interact within a virtual, artificially simulated, 3D environment, using a special headset (Lowood, 2021). Moreover, mixed reality (MR) is also becoming more and more common, with the artificial simulations of VR being combined with the real-world interactions of AR. Fuelled by a boom during the Covid-19 pandemic, the AR/VR industry is expected to grow by more than USD 125 billion by 2024 and radically transform numerous industries (Technavio, 2021; Gonzalez, 2021).

AR/VR is gradually creeping into the higher education sector as well, with virtual campus tours, and some universities even experimenting with holographic projections in classrooms (Chowdhury, 2018, cited in Bonfield et al., 2020). Moreover, studies are being conducted on teaching international business using VR avatars, so that students can practice negotiating and communicating effectively with multicultural business stakeholders (Hernandez-Pozas & Carreon-Flores, 2019). In fact, AR/VR has the potential to take higher education to new heights. For instance, with this technology, we can 'take' palaeontology students to a dig site in Egypt, accounting students on an audit, or arts students to the Louvre. With AR/VR, it is now possible to expose students to any practical scenario that is either too dangerous, too expensive or physically impossible to be done in a traditional classroom setting (AACSB, 2018). Such technologies could also present new possibilities for an innovative assessment approach. It could be used to complement case studies, effectively simulate real work environments for integrative assessments, facilitate immediate feedback, and inspire reflective and creative learning.

(c) Smart classrooms and smart campuses

A smart classroom is a fully digitally equipped classroom which deploys a range of teaching and learning pedagogies using technology. It involves the integration of computers, specialised software/apps, assistive listening devices, artificial intelligence, AR/VR, audience response technology to facilitate and improve engagement, and learning analytics to identify areas requiring more attention and perhaps even students with mental health issues and learning disabilities. These smart classrooms might even have auto-regulated lighting, temperature, humidity, and CO2 levels (James, 2018, cited in Owen, 2018). A smart campus would take this concept further, using advanced technologies to digitally integrate various functions to improve experience, education and efficiency (Deloitte, 2019). For instance, smart timetabling could involve taking into account multiple variables, like a particular type of classroom with specific heating/lighting to suit the activities of that specific subject, so that student concentration and engagement levels are improved. A smart campus might also use AI and other technologies to optimise resource utilisation and allocation, or analyse noise levels and inform a student of the best spot for some quiet study, or help the cafeteria staff to improve meal options based on consumption trends. The possibilities are endless.

The pandemic has not managed to bring us here yet, although with the global e-learning market estimated to grow to approximately USD 370 billion by 2026, we are surely getting closer (Valuates Reports, 2021). Any institution bold enough to venture into a fully digitally transformed smart campus using the full spectrum of digital technologies for teaching, learning, assessment and other key functions, would no doubt become a mover and shaker in the UK higher education sector and be able to gain a significant competitive advantage. Inevitably, implementing these digital technologies would come with its own set of challenges. It would involve a steep learning curve for staff, may be quite labour-intensive to deliver effectively, and there may be general resistance by staff, bureaucracy in approval and implementation processes, and a lack of financial resources (AACSB, 2018).

The global e-learning market is estimated to grow to approximately USD 370 billion by 2026

In conclusion, the higher education sector has come a long way in its digital transformation journey, and an exciting road still lies ahead. The need for agility and adaptability is paramount, and a forward-thinking digital strategy with a range of effectively harnessed digital technologies could revolutionise the sector in terms of innovating and improving the teaching, learning and assessment experience, improving student engagement and the efficiency of all other processes, as well as increasing collaboration and research.

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Keywords

Higher education, digital transformation, smart classroom, mixed reality

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COVID-19 AND EDUCATION ECONOMICS IN THE UK

Considering the effect of COVID-19 on the UK's higher education system

Struggling for a second consecutive year in 2021, the world is still attempting to cope with the coronavirus. Of particular concern is the impact of a pandemic of such an enormous scale on the cross-border, international movement of people exploring more promising economic avenues and educational opportunities. Curtailing free movement and imposing a huge financial strain, the pandemic has especially hindered the ability of international students to access higher education in Western Europe. The UK's higher education system has by no means remained untouched by the scourge of the virus, with almost 56 % of the Tier-4 visa participants in a recent survey expressing displeasure and indeed fear regarding their international student status (Migrants' Rights Network, 2020). They cited increasing financial pressures and a conspicuous absence of support structures from higher education providers. As such, the very atmosphere of higher education for international students may deteriorate further, triggering the decline of the UK as a preferred academic destination. The impact of COVID-19 on international students and the consequent hardships they are facing have been documented. However, few attempts have been made to consider the disruptive effect of the pandemic on educational finances and the loss of academic appeal for overseas students, which countries such as the UK aspire to maintain. This present piece is an attempt in that direction, to reveal the various functional interlinkages between a ferocious pandemic, international student finances, educational economics and the overall influences of these factors on a nation's soft power projection through its hallowed institutions.

Pandemic and the international students in the UK

Continuing through 2020 into 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a crippling effect on everyday life. The exponential rise of cases in 2020 forced the British government to adopt stringent lockdown measures (Landler & Castle, 2020). Whole cities were shut down, people were forced to remain in their homes, cross-border travel was severely restricted, and gatherings were curbed. It was sadly inevitable that the migrant portion of the population would bear the brunt of the lockdown. Having left their home countries in search of better educational and economic opportunities, migrants in the UK were vulnerable. Many lost their livelihoods and employment to COVID-19 restrictions, as many migrants were employed in sectors which were hit hardest by pandemic-related closures. For example, 30 % of employees in hospitality and 28 % in the logistics sector were migrants (The Migration Observatory, 2021). Furthermore, statistics show that the share of migrants in the UK's workforce declined from 18 % in 2019 to 16 % in 2020. This led in turn to increasing financial insecurity and declining socio-economic development for this section of the population. The unemployment rate also increased for migrants, from 5 % in 2019 to almost 8 % in 2020. Migrants are more likely to be employed in temporary contractual jobs, which offer much less security than those employing their UK-born counterparts (The Migration Observatory, 2021).

Statistics show that the share of migrants in the UK's workforce declined from 18 % in 2019 to 16 % in 2020

Tuition from international students contributes 17 % of the nearly 40 billion GBP earnings of the higher education sector

Amongst migrants in the UK, however, it has been the international Tier-4 visa students who have faced additional pressures, both tangible and intangible. This is due to the fact that, apart from facing socio-economic disparities and possible exclusionary and discriminatory practices in a foreign land, students often have to rely on financial support from their home countries (Migrants' Rights Network, 2020). And with the developing world accounting for almost 60 % of global GDP losses (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2021), particularly for students who have come to the UK from developing countries, diminishing family income owing to COVID-19 has highlighted the possibility of suspension or even expulsion of students over non-payment of fees. The existence of a "No-Recourse to Public Funds" policy for Tier-4 students and lack of a uniform fee amnesty response from the government has in turn amplified the woes of the already anxious international student community in the UK (Migrants' Rights Network, 2020). However, the virus's impact is not limited to current migrant students. It has also exposed the vulnerabilities of the UK's higher education system, more specifically its finances. Tuition from international students contributes 17 % of the nearly 40 billion GBP earnings of the higher education sector. This amounts to almost 7 billion GBP. Accordingly, a loss of international students would have serious fiscal implications for the UK's higher educational institutions (Popov & Isard, n.d.). Another immediate impact of the pandemic has been the collapse of local economies that depended on consumption-based ecosystems generated by educational hubs in the country. With COVID-19-related restrictions in place, many international students have been unable to pay for accommodation in the UK. They instead are opting to attend to their academic obligations from their home countries through virtual learning. Educational hubs in small settlements such as Sussex and Brighton essentially fuel the local economy; every expense a student has, be it for accommodation, food or recreation, sustains these small population centres across the UK. With students being forced to opt for online teaching, the businesses that relied on once bustling student activities have been facing the heat of this pandemic.

Post-pandemic recovery and the future of the higher education system in the UK

The higher education (eco)system of any nation forms the foundation upon which its socio-economic, political, and diplomatic standing rests. The strength of a country's higher education system, and more so that of the infrastructure of tertiary education, exerts a decisive influence on the progression or retardation of teaching instructions, learning outcomes and employability (Teixeira, Amoroso & Gresham, 2017). The European Union's strategic framework for Education and Training (2020) also stresses that a healthy and sustainable higher educational system should be endowed with adequate financial support, along with a guarantee that will safeguard financial inflow from major fluctuations. For without finances, the institutions will suffer from quality degradation due to a decline in faculty involvement, disintegration of infrastructure, and disenchanted students. As such, the COVID-19 pandemic, with its rising human and economic costs, has the capability to subvert the UK's national higher education profile.

COVID-19 has been seen as a public health crisis on a global scale, sending shockwaves through leading nations of the West such as the US and the UK, upending existing worldwide norms and uprooting normal lives. Subsequently, the post-pandemic era has attracted attention to the resilience of the very essence of the higher education system in the world in general and the UK in particular. The higher education system has not only an economic role to play in terms of enhancing employability and ensuring

technological progress, along with enriching a nation's political and social profile, it also has a moral obligation to promote democratic thinking and provide solutions to shocks such as those caused by the pandemic, as suggested by Ira Harkavy, Associate Vice President of the University of Pennsylvania (Penn Today, 2021). The pandemic has evidently exposed the existing socio-economic vulnerabilities and disparities in the social base and created the challenge of finding innovative solutions to the higher educational system, which is already reeling under the effect of the virus. Therefore, in view of the pressures imposed by the pandemic and the rising importance of higher education institutions, the post-pandemic age offers both opportunities as well as dangers in term of sustaining the high quality education offered in Western countries such as the UK.

One of the primary issues discussed above is the financial blow to the higher educational institutions. In a post-pandemic age, these institutions not only have the responsibility to cater to the educational demands of the population. They should also serve as centres for excellence in research and development and continuously nurture innovation, promote growth, and bolster academic progress. Reducing the attractiveness for international students especially, and transitioning to a completely virtual mode of learning will indeed impact these intertwined objectives of the UK's higher education system. Moreover, the cross-subsidisation model that the UK institutions follow, for example offering higher education to UK citizens at a lower fee, essentially subsidised by the higher fees charged to international students, is bound to come under pressure. Furthermore, with many specialised departments deriving their remuneration through the income from international students and specific international research funding, their future prospects remain bleak, and very much subject to the environment created by the pandemic.

Conclusion

Beyond any doubt, the pandemic and its aftermath have reduced the prosperity of the UK's higher education institutes, with higher education now facing more deficiencies than ever before. The lack of reliable and efficient financial resources, coupled with declining educational standards due to promotion of impersonal and remote modes of learning through virtual media, has further distorted the norms of offering educational learning. This in turn increases the possibility of international student enrollment declining and the associated declining income that was supported by the UK's reliance on international students. The effect on local economies, as well as large-scale institutional financing of higher education institutions, will reverberate through the next few years. Therefore, it devolves on the state to provide much-needed innovative answers to the potential or even pending destruction of the UK's higher education system.

One of the first solutions the state could implement to reduce its overt reliance on income derived from international students is fee rationalisation. Since 30% of higher education income is sourced solely from international students, a reduced attractiveness of the UK's world class facilities needs to be countered by a policy of unshackling cross-subsidisation and moving towards an equitable fee structure, where domestic students are charged fees comparable to their international counterparts. This policy would ensure that fees from domestic students act as a cushion, which will brace the UK educational system for the otherwise sharp reductions due to declining enrolment from abroad. Another solution, which in the UK's case could be particularly effective, is the promotion of academia-industry interlinkages. By enhancing the prospects of employment for graduates and

In comparison to the US, where healthcare is highly privatised, the UK is more capable of offering international students extensive COVID-19 protection coverage through the National Health Service. This will further ensure healthcare outreach and thus lead to increased international student enrollment

research scholars who prefer to complete their education in the UK, such a step should maintain the attractiveness of the UK higher education system. Furthermore, in comparison to the US, where healthcare is highly privatised, the UK is more capable of offering international students extensive COVID-19 protection coverage through the National Health Service. This will further ensure healthcare outreach and thus lead to increased international student enrollment. Finally, UK higher education institutions must intricately devise and conceptualise structures that will provide safeguards to the international student community. The prevailing lack of such structures has driven a perceptible animosity towards the institutions on the part of international students.

The pandemic remains alarmingly rampant at the time of writing; the coronavirus's new delta variant is poised to bring even more challenges to an already overburdened, troubled and disturbed higher education system in the UK. However, concrete and viable steps can ensure that the pillars of higher education remain solid and intact, despite the 'new normal' being imposed by the virus. After all, wisdom, equity, and justice must prevail in the UK's adjustment to the new realities on the ground.

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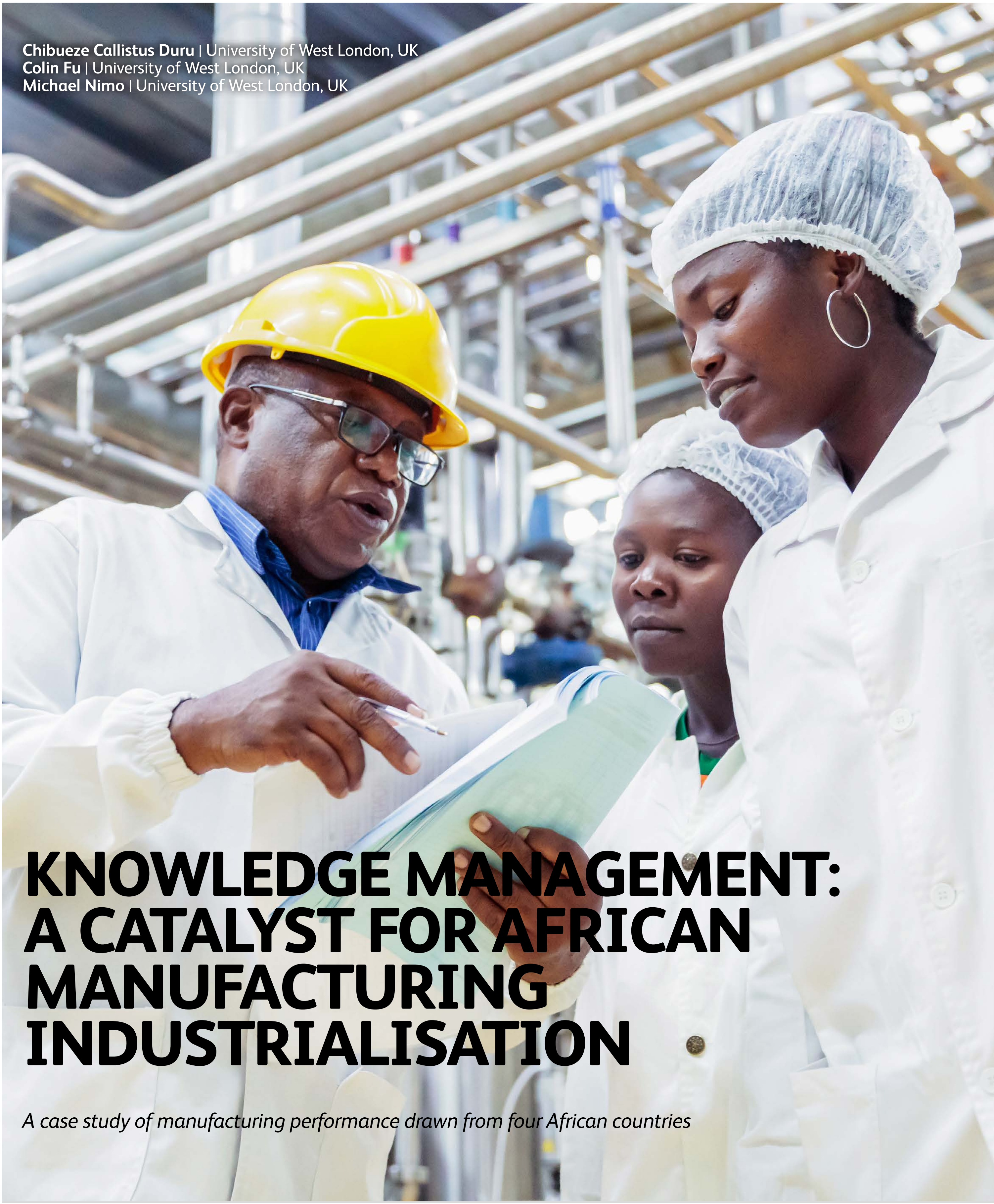
Key words

COVID-19, higher education, education finances, international students, immigration



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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT: A CATALYST FOR AFRICAN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIALISATION

A case study of manufacturing performance drawn from four African countries

Why does Africa's industrial development remain slow? Poor economic policies, a lack of openness to international markets and geographical issues such as a lack of access to the sea, and tropical climate are contributing factors

Recently, the call for African industrialisation has been louder across the continent, including among policymakers. Even the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) recently reported that African politicians have been exploiting the benefits of industrialisation in promising prosperity, new jobs, and better incomes for their voters. Yet, the continent remains significantly less industrialised than Europe, Asia, and North and South America. The African manufacturing sector's contribution to the continent's gross domestic product (GDP) even declined from 12% in 1980 to 11% in 2013, where it currently remains. However, the continuous growth and development of African countries such as Nigeria depend on their capacity to use knowledge effectively, so as to succeed in this new age of industrialisation. This paper refers to Africa as one of the world's continents and explores the importance of knowledge creation and application in pursuing African industrialisation.

African manufacturing industrialisation

Why does Africa's industrial development remain slow? In their study of sources of slow growth in African economies, Sachs and Warner (1997) identified poor economic policies, a lack of openness to international markets and geographical issues such as a lack of access to the sea, and tropical climate as contributing factors. Sachs and Warner further claimed that Africa's poor economic policy choices are influenced by colonial legacy, ethnic divisions, and a higher dependence on natural resources. African leaders' reluctance to take bold economic policies, including the fear of antagonising donors and investors, and a blurred development vision, contribute to Africa's slow growth. However, Timmer et al. (2019) observed that the theory of Africa de-industrialising is supported by declining shares of manufacturing outputs and employment. In another study, Meagher (2016) argued that the slow growth of African manufacturing industries is partly due to a lack of skill specialisation and limited collaboration with academic research and development centres like universities and similar institutions. Subsequently, Gaviria-Marin et al. (2019) put forward the notion that few studies have focused on knowledge management in emergent nations, particularly in Africa. For example, all African countries scored less in knowledge creation and diffusion in the Global Innovation Index.

By contrast, Newfarmer et al. (2019) claim that manufacturing is no longer essential to achieving economic growth and development. The authors stated that developing countries like those of Africa should adopt other methods, focusing on industries with similar economic characteristics such as information and technology, and tourism. They imply that manufacturing-led development cannot be achieved anymore in low-income countries like those in Africa. Therefore, developing countries should pursue structural adjustment with less emphasis on manufacturing industrialisation. Signé and Johnson (2018) disagreed, claiming that a different story of the African manufacturing sector unfolds, compared to its manufacturing size. For example, the total value-added in manufacturing almost tripled from US$66 billion in 1998 to about US$201.28 billion in 2015. 'Business-to-business spending in manufacturing in Africa is projected to reach $666.3 billion by 2030, $201.28 billion more than in 2015' (Signé & Johnson, 2018, p.2).

Naudé (2018) argues that, despite pessimism about the prospects for manufacturing in Africa, industrialisation was indeed the answer when Western countries and some Asian countries were experiencing similar demographic pressures. African countries such as Nigeria, Morocco, Kenya, Ghana and South Africa need sustainable 'industrial policies like other industrialised nations like China with its "Made in China 2025," Germany with its "Industry 4.0," the US with its "Strategy for American Innovation," and the UK with its "Building our Industrial Strategy' (Naudé, 2018, p.154). However, some African countries like Ethiopia, Rwanda, Ghana and Tanzania have embraced sound industrialisation policies, investor-friendly developmental policies under which the government controls, manages, and regulates economies in order to attract foreign investors. Nonetheless, more effort is expected from other nations' policymakers as well, to achieve African industrialisation.

Although many factors are cited in the literature as negatively impacting Africa's industrialisation, the cause of the slow growth can be attributed mainly to African leaders' inability to take bold economic policies like their American and European counterparts. African nations' manufacturing industries could improve performance by developing knowledge-sharing and shared experience, reflecting their organisational learning capability. For example, in collaboration with some universities, the UK government is already researching the UK manufacturing sector's future in 2050, and how manufacturing will adapt faster to physical and

intellectual infrastructures to exploit technology changes. According to Signé and Johnson (2018), industrialisation can transform any nation. After all, it transformed countries like the United States of America, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom into the world's wealthiest nations through manufacturing. Africa too has the resources and workforce to join the industrialisation race towards the upliftment of its general society.

Knowledge management in African manufacturing

This paper defines knowledge management (KM) as 'a holistic solution incorporating a variety of perspectives, namely people, process, culture and technology perspectives, all of which carry equal weighting in managing knowledge' (Du Plessis & Boon, 2004, p.74) in fulfilling numerous functions in the innovation realm, such as creating a conducive organisational environment that encourages innovation.

Knowledge can be implicit or explicit. Tacit knowledge plays a decisive role in innovation. Organisations build innovation capability through tacit knowledge-sharing, learning from their practices (learning-from-doing effect) so as to become more competitive. Tan and Wong (2015), in a study linkage between knowledge management and manufacturing performance, claim that tacit and explicit knowledge are quickly disseminated within an organisation via knowledge-sharing and transfer facilitated through informal and formal interactions among the organisations' stakeholders, especially its employees. Gold et al.'s (2001) theory is that KM capability is acquired through knowledge acquisition, conversion, application, and protection.

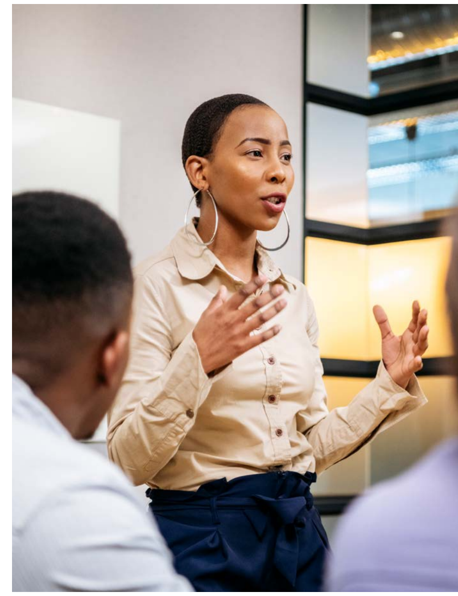
KM consists of enablers and processes (Gold et al., 2001). The application of knowledge processes in manufacturing industries depends on the factors referred to as KM enablers. According to Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland (2004), among the enablers of KM, human resources top the list. In a contrasting view, Gold et al. (2001) argue that infrastructure classified into technological, cultural, and structural infrastructure plays a more important role in KM in organisations. The absence of KM enablers affects the application of knowledge in product manufacturing and management.

In the literature, manufacturing is defined mainly as the transformation of raw materials into goods, for example, as: 'the making of products from raw materials using various processes, equipment, operations and manpower according to a detailed plan that is cost-effective to generate income through sales' (Scallan, 2003, p.3). The numerous definitions in the literature of manufacturing refer primarily to converting raw materials, including parts, into products according to certain specifications in order to satisfy customer needs. This paper argues that the definition of manufacturing as the transformation of input (raw materials) into output (goods) understates the role of data, information and knowledge. Therefore, for the purpose and scope of this paper, manufacturing is defined as:

> *a process that enables manufacturing organisations to generate revenue by combining knowledge management and resources to purposefully transform customer needs into tangible products and intangible services for sale at a price that satisfies customer preferences.*

Other knowledge-management activities that add value to product creation and delivery include information technology, software development, research, design, marketing, and logistics. As a result, the present paper's definition of manufacturing is more appropriate, as it covers all the operations involved in creating products and services.

This paper adopts the perspective that manufacturing ability can determine a country's wealth and prosperity, based on the existing disparity between countries with advanced manufacturing processes, known as developed countries. In contrast, those with not much manufacturing ability are called underdeveloped nations. Nations depend on manufacturing to create wealth, enabling health services, education, transport, entertainment, telecommunication and manufacturing. Therefore, a healthy manufacturing industry is vital to the well-being of a nation and its inhabitants. Moreover, industrial products form the fabric of civilisation, because a country without manufacturing capacity runs the risk of social and economic decline.



Human resources knowledge contributes to organisational intellectual property. The intangible factors that can hinder or promote African manufacturing productivity and affect the capability to adopt new technologies include a lack of desirable employability skills that hinder innovative production methods

Knowledge-Based Theory versus Resource-Based Theory

Wernerfelt (1984) considered knowledge to be the most strategic resource of an organisation. According to this author, knowledge and competence form the foundation of organisation competitiveness and performance. Knowledge is rooted and inherent in many entities such as documents, organisational culture, policies, routines and systems (ibid.). This perception was initially promoted as the foundation of the organisation resource-based view.

Notwithstanding that this view recognised that knowledge bases enable organisations to achieve a competitive advantage, some scholars of the knowledge-based view argue that the resource-based perspective is similar to the knowledge-based view. Explicitly, knowledge is considered as a vast resource instead of one with unique characteristics as in the resource-based view. Therefore, there is no distinction between the various types of knowledge-based capabilities. In the knowledge-based view, information technologies play a vital role in creating, improving, and accelerating large-scale intra- and inter-organisational knowledge management. 'Knowledge resources, KM processes and KM factors have significant and direct effects on manufacturing performance' (Tan & Wong, 2015, p.814).

The key drivers of the African manufacturing sector

Human resources and intellectual properties are crucial economic growth and manufacturing investment drivers according to the Global Manufacturing Competitiveness Index Survey. Organisations use their knowledge resources to pursue business objectives. As argued by Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland (2004), human capital is a crucial asset capable of generating and managing knowledge that helps enhance productivity; knowledge as capital is intrinsic in the workforce and not the organisation. Also, employee competencies determine the organisations' capability to realise competitive advantage. Therefore, human resources knowledge contributes to organisational intellectual property. The intangible factors that can hinder or promote African manufacturing productivity and affect the capability to adopt new technologies include a lack of desirable employability skills that hinder innovative production methods. Thus, exploiting intangible assets can be as productive as managing physical assets (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). Accordingly, for African industrialisation through manufacturing, matching intangible assets with tangible physical assets can enhance performance. Therefore, both tangible and intangible assets are necessary to achieve an African manufacturing competitive advantage.

Regarding the role of workforce skills in African industrialisation, highly skilled workers can be considered the organisation's most valuable and unique assets. Imagine a specialist technician with more than twenty-five years of knowledge and experience retiring or leaving. What a significant loss to the organisation if there is no proper knowledge documentation. Effective knowledge management enables manufacturers to provide a structured and repeatable approach to identifying knowledge gaps, untapped knowledge and avoid reinventing the wheel.

Therefore, good knowledge management of knowledge assets, linked to the organisation's physical assets, enhances manufacturing performance (Davenport & Prusak, 1998).

In terms of organisational infrastructure and technology, Hill (1987) classified knowledge management in manufacturing strategy into two parts, structure and infrastructure. While structures refer to process and technology—the design, development and implementation of manufacturing strategy, infrastructure covers human resources policies, organisational culture, IT and quality systems. The author argues that infrastructure strengthens the structure and that organisational infrastructure and technology play an essential part in the practice of KM in an organisation. Today, technology-based communication systems have facilitated information searching, storing, updating, accessing, and retrieving KM infrastructures. They enable knowledge-sharing activities such as information research in the organisation. Therefore, KM infrastructures are vital in African manufacturing industrialisation for communication and collaboration in searching for a new product or for process development-knowledge. African manufacturing organisations can use innovative infrastructures to implement KM in order to coordinate production processes and collaborate with all organisation stakeholders to facilitate their business objectives. Knowledge management infrastructures enable accessible information-sharing through formal and informal employees interactions that enhance knowledge creation and application.

Generally, the assumption is that knowledge acquisition provides problem-solving solutions for manufacturing. Nonetheless, knowledge acquisition without a sound understanding of how to implement it leads to implementation failure. African manufacturing organisations can gain more knowledge by accumulating facts and data from past problem-solving experiences, projects, training, product research and development. The acquisition of experience through learning boosts an individual's capability to make decisions and take action. Since knowledge is the combination of information and expertise, African manufacturing organisations can form a culture of using knowledge management to provide their workforce with the ability to utilise processes previously adopted to solve similar problems. Thus, African manufacturers can effectively create, share, apply, and protect knowledge to overcome environmental uncertainties by improving manufacturing performance.

Knowledge enhances organisational performance. Since individual knowledge evolves continuously, organisational knowledge evolves too, because of the prominent role of human capacity and environmental circumstances, specifically culture. African manufacturers must identify the vital factors that enhance knowledge creation and sharing in internal and external collaborations among organisational stakeholders in order to meet customer needs. The process of knowledge sharing plays an essential role in converting personal or group knowledge into organisational knowledge. The

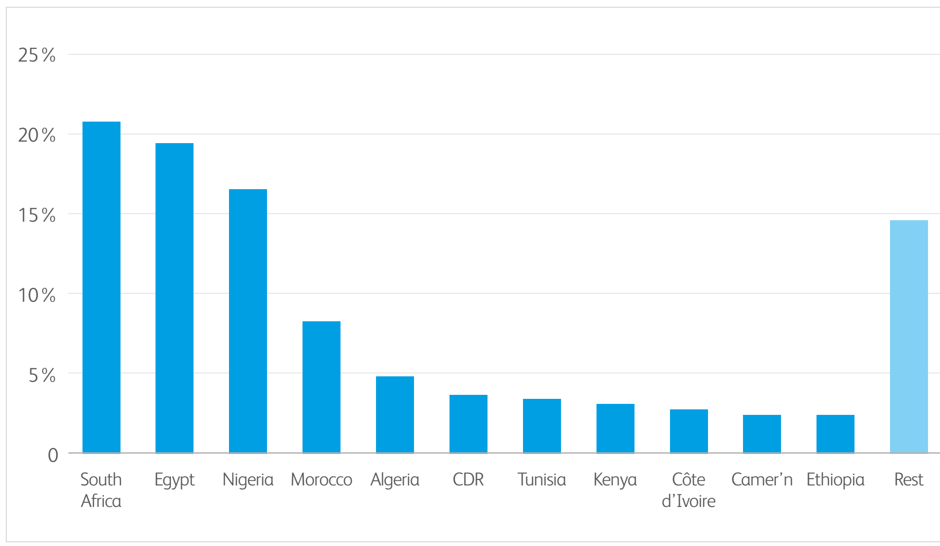


FIGURE 1 The importance of an African single market (World Development Indicators, 2017)

African manufacturing industry's knowledge-creation capacity can depend on its workforces' employability skills, conducive workplace, and prevailing innovation environment.

Many foreign direct investments (FDI) are concentrated in a few countries. Figure 1 shows that most African manufacturing production companies are in South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and Morocco. Some African governments are making significant strides in promoting regional clusters and special zones (SEZ) to attract more foreign investments (FDI) that will positively impact on technology transfer that is essential for productive transformation. McKinsey Global Institute (2016) has reported that the manufacturing sector would be driven by increasing networks between African countries and the rest of the world, with its rapidly growing consumer markets in the coming years.

Signé and Johnson (2018) point out that Africa needs achievable and reliable single market policies that are vital for the continent's progress and industrialisation. Africa is still moving too slowly towards a single market, even though the African Continental Free Trade Agreement was unveiled in Kigali, Rwanda, in March 2018. However, Africa's quest for a single market through the Organisation of African Union (OAU) dates back to 1963. There is certainly a need for

African manufacturers must identify the vital factors that enhance knowledge creation and sharing in internal and external collaborations among organisational stakeholders in order to meet customer needs

a functional African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) like the European Community. This could offer the African continent a key industrialisation strategy, a single customs union for the free movement of goods and services, including people and capital. The AfCFTA, compared to the European Union or the USA, would have the capacity to foster a competitive manufacturing sector and boost African economic development by creating a continental free market, an African common market (Signé & Johnson, 2018). If successfully implemented, the free-trade area would outsize any existing trade area, including countries with 55 members and a population covering more than 1.2 billion, estimated to triple by 2050 and entail over $4 trillion in combined consumer and business spending.

Methodological considerations

This paper presents a case study of manufacturing performance drawn from four culturally different African countries considered the continent's economic hubs where most African manufacturing production companies are located. This study used secondary data analysis, that is already compiled, gathered, organised and published literature, in order to establish the sum of existing knowledge on the African manufacturing sector's organisational performance. In searching the web, the keywords used are manufacturing, knowledge management, African single market, and endogenous growth. It emerged that Nigeria, Kenya, Morocco, and South Africa are among the four countries that can become the continent's economic hubs (Signé & Johnson, 2018). In finding detailed information on the African manufacturing sector, the web-search was country-specific, for example, the Nigerian manufacturing sector and the manufacturing sector in Morocco or Kenya.

Based on the manufacturing value-added for top producers in Africa 2017, South Africa, Morocco, Kenya and Nigeria, emerged as future African business hubs (Signé & Johnson, 2018). Kenya is considered a business hub, because it is among East Africa's most economically innovative and technologically advanced countries and scored 4% as one of Africa's easy places to obtain credit for business investments. According to the Kenyan government's 10-point policy goal, the percentage of manufacturing contribution to the GDP will increase by 15% and create about 300,000 job opportunities in 2022. Based on Kenya's present annual GDP growth rate of 5.7%, it is possible to double its manufacturing sector's output to meet the government's target. The government's plan to achieve the set objectives involves implementing the manufacturing development by reforming existing policies to align closely with Kenya's Industrial Transformation Programme (KITP), Vision 2030. Kenya ranked at fourth position in Africa after the Seychelles, Ghana, and Zambia regarding competitive advantage on the international market, based on the World Economic Forum judgment.

Global Innovation Index 2020	Ranks			
	Nigeria	Morocco	Kenya	South Africa
Corruption Perception Index 2020	149	86	124	69
Market Sophistication	102	95	57	15
Credit	87	95	20	107
Ease of getting credit	14	101	4	9
Human Capital and Research	(121)	81	110	70
Expenditure on Education (% of GDP)	n/a	34	29	13
Innovation Linkages	86	117	31	43
Infrastructure	124	71	114	79
Political and Operational Stability	128	76	104	92
Research and Development (R&D)	(121)	71	77	42
University / Industry Research Collaborations	122	113	36	30
Business Environment	109	59	60	75
Creative Goods and Services	(78)	105	69	92
Knowledge Creation	108	71	67	52
Knowledge Impact	109	51	90	92
Knowledge Diffusion	121	51	65	78

TABLE 1 Comparing the African economic hubs (Global Innovation Index, 2020)

The principal factor contributing to Morocco's consideration as one of the African economic hubs is its capacity to benefit from its geographical location between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, precisely its proximity to Europe via Gibraltar and Spain

Nigeria has secured the most influential and the largest economy in West Africa due to the abundance of oil and gas. It has the most significant petroleum import and export industry in Africa. Thus, it is among the most prominent economic hubs in the western part of Africa, but still lags in innovation, political and operational stability, business environment, university/industry research collaboration, knowledge creation, impact, and diffusion, based on the Global Innovation Index. Despite the government's various economic policies, the manufacturing sector continues to make an insignificant contribution to GDP. The Nigerian government has evidently failed to understand the crucial factors that make industrialisation happen, such as a stable political environment, infrastructures like a constant electrical power supply, good communication system and sustainable economic development policies. Although macroeconomic variables and economic policies are considered vital determinants of a nation's economic performance, this paper maintains that the most critical aspect is implementation. The sector's underperformance is also attributable to 'poor economic policies, and ethnic division' (Sachs & Warner,1997, p.336), including inadequate infrastructures such as electricity supply and economic-related factors like high exchange rates, inflation, and a high interest rate.

South Africa is among the African economic hubs due to its booming mineral-energy complex and innovative manufacturing sector. The country's mining sector, such as platinum, gold, diamond and coal, including its most advanced agricultural sector in Africa, have contributed massive wealth to the economy. Adopting innovative production processing methods has enabled the South African agro manufacturing sector to create profitable business opportunities for local and international markets, attracting investors worldwide. Based on the Global Innovation Index, South Africa is a growing knowledge economy hub. Much attention is focused on education, ICT technology, and e-commerce with higher market sophistication than other African countries, but with a low score in credit for business investments. In 2017/18 World Economic Forum (WEF), South Africa ranked 61 out of 137 countries in which to do business. The WEF reported that among the problematic factors for doing business in South Africa is corruption. The South African manufacturing sectors contribute about 11% of the country's employment and 13% of GDP.

The principal factor contributing to Morocco's consideration as one of the African economic hubs is its capacity to benefit from its geographical location between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, precisely its proximity to Europe via Gibraltar and Spain. Morocco is one of the major players in African affairs, ranked fifth as African's largest economy by GDP and securing first position as the most competitive economy in North Africa, according to the African Competitiveness Report 2014-2015 and 53rd in the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 benchmark business environment report. Morocco has the busiest and largest port on the Mediterranean and Africa, with a capacity to handle about 9 million containers, 700,000 trucks and 1 million vehicles a year, and ranked 18th globally. The country has become the regional hub for shipping, logistics, assembly, production, and sales for North, West and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Conclusion

Regardless of the negative factors like disruptive technology, COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, and more besides, this paper concludes that African countries can still use knowledge management to achieve industrialisation through manufacturing. Even though manufacturing has existed for centuries, it can still be considered the cornerstone of industrialisation, because it so positively influences economic growth. Finally, leaders and policymakers must create an environment that effectively encourages employees and teams to fully exploit knowledge at work and in the marketplace.

Contribution to knowledge

This paper contributes to existing knowledge from an African cultural perspective on the importance of knowledge creation and application in manufacturing for African industrialisation through an endogenous strategy. By adopting and embracing knowledge management, African countries can create a coherent and collective endogenous growth strategy that integrates basic development principles with local characteristics to improve socio-economic growth. 'Endogenous growth is economic growth at a rate determined by internal forces to the economic system, particularly those governing the opportunities and incentives to create technological knowledge' (Okereke & Agupusi, 2015, p.31).

The African endogenous economic growth rate hinges on knowledge management and government policies on subsidies for education, research and development, and innovation incentives. As a post-COVID-19 survival strategy, African manufacturers can improve performance by adopting a coherent and collective endogenous growth strategy created from knowledge and policies that are locally produced and content-specific, an alternative to externally driven development models. However, to achieve effective post-COVID-19 homegrown knowledge management, manufacturers in countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Morocco, South Africa, and other African countries should enhance their expertise and capacity to discern and make decisions based on knowledge management. Understanding the nature of ability enables the transformation of meaning from facts to knowing customer needs and the acquisition of implementation capacity to satisfy customers adequately. Therefore, African manufacturers have to start forming a frugal mindset, looking around at their environment and developing technologies to solve local customers' problems. However, there is also nothing wrong with importing knowledge and innovation, but a lack of adequate knowledge for using and maintaining them effectively is potentially disastrous.

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Keywords

Manufacturing, knowledge management, African single market, Nigeria, endogenous growth

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SUPPORTING FAMILY CAREGIVERS IN PROVIDING CARE

A Scoping Review of the experiences of family caregivers of older adults with chronic illness

This paper is part of my research at the University of West London, serving as an opportunity and platform to promote the wellbeing and quality of life for family caregivers. A Scoping Review of contemporary literature reveals a looming ageing population with chronic health conditions, shortages of formal care providers in developing societies and inadequate support to caregivers (Faronbi, Ajadi & Gobbens, 2020). Most of the reviewed studies base their research on single chronic diseases in older people, which ignores the overall, combined effect of the caregiver's burden regarding older adults with multiple chronic diseases. Conceptual clarity on caregivers' experiences of multiple chronic conditions amongst older people is lacking. In this paper, I make a case for further research on the experience of family caregivers of older adults with multi-chronic conditions. Moreover, I argue for a need to investigate the perception of policy implementation at all levels on the support for this group within a given society. Overall, my research is socially relevant in promoting support for the informal care sector, among other, in Nigeria.

Population ageing

Globally, there were 703 million people aged 65 or over in 2019. Over the coming three decades, the global number of older people is projected to more than double, reaching over 1.5 billion in 2050 (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020). Nigeria, like any other country in Sub-Saharan Africa, sees this emerging issue as a serious challenge for its future. Currently, about 8 % of Nigerians are aged 60 or older, which constitutes a total of about 10 million people. Survey reports and demographic estimations have evidenced an increase in both the absolute number and proportion of older adults in Nigeria. From 4.6 million in 1991, to 8.8 million in 2012; and it is estimated to increase further to 11.5 million in 2025; and 25.5 million in 2050 (Dokpesi, 2017).

The realities of informal caregiving

A growing proportion of older people globally has contributed to a shift from institutional to community care. As a result, older adults are increasingly depending on their families for support with daily activities. Consequently, the number of family caregivers, also known as informal caregivers, has been steadily rising. In the United States, it is estimated that there are 65.7 million unpaid family caregivers. A similar situation can be observed in the UK, with an estimated 6.5 million informal caregivers currently looking after older members of their families. The estimated economic value of their unpaid labour amounts to USD 470 billion and £119 billion respectively (Phillips, 2019).

These examples show the important, even vital role of family caregiving within the healthcare sector. The realities of informal caregiving in these rapidly ageing western societies could serve as examples that help other societies, like Nigeria, to prepare their informal care sector for an ageing population. According to various studies, the traditional system of family support appears to care for the increasing number of older people in Nigeria. The task of caring in Nigeria is traditionally reserved for females, who assist care recipients with Activities of Daily Living (ADL). The economic value of this system of family support in Nigeria is not clear, as studies are unavailable in the country regarding the socioeconomic costs of caring for dependent older people (Mudrazija, 2019).

Research objectives

This paper has three research objectives, namely to:

i. identify relevant literature on the experience of family caregivers for older adults with chronic illness;

ii. generate themes based on study objective(s); and

iii. generate research questions for each theme, addressing gaps in the existing literature.

Globally, there were 703 million people aged 65 or over in 2019. Over the coming three decades, the global number of older people is projected to more than double, reaching over 1.5 billion in 2050

Methodology

A Scoping Review was undertaken to synthesise current literature. This is a newer reviewing type, with the aim of mapping key concepts that underpin a research area and identifying the nature of and gaps in existing knowledge so as to provide a basis for further research. Unlike a Systematic Literature Review, Scoping Reviews include broader literature sources. These may include a range of relevant databases, grey literature and attempts to identify unpublished literature (Tricco et al., 2018). Due to the wide variability of studies in relation to study design, population, types of intervention and outcomes, the author decided that a Narrative Synthesis constitutes the best tool for synthesising the findings of the different studies included in the review. The reference management software RefWorks (Cite Them Right – Harvard) was used to organise and store all the literature. A Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flowchart (see Figure 1), obtained from Moher and colleagues (2009), summarises the review process. Search terms were generated using the modified Population, Context and Outcome (PCO) framework (Riesenberg & Justice, 2014).

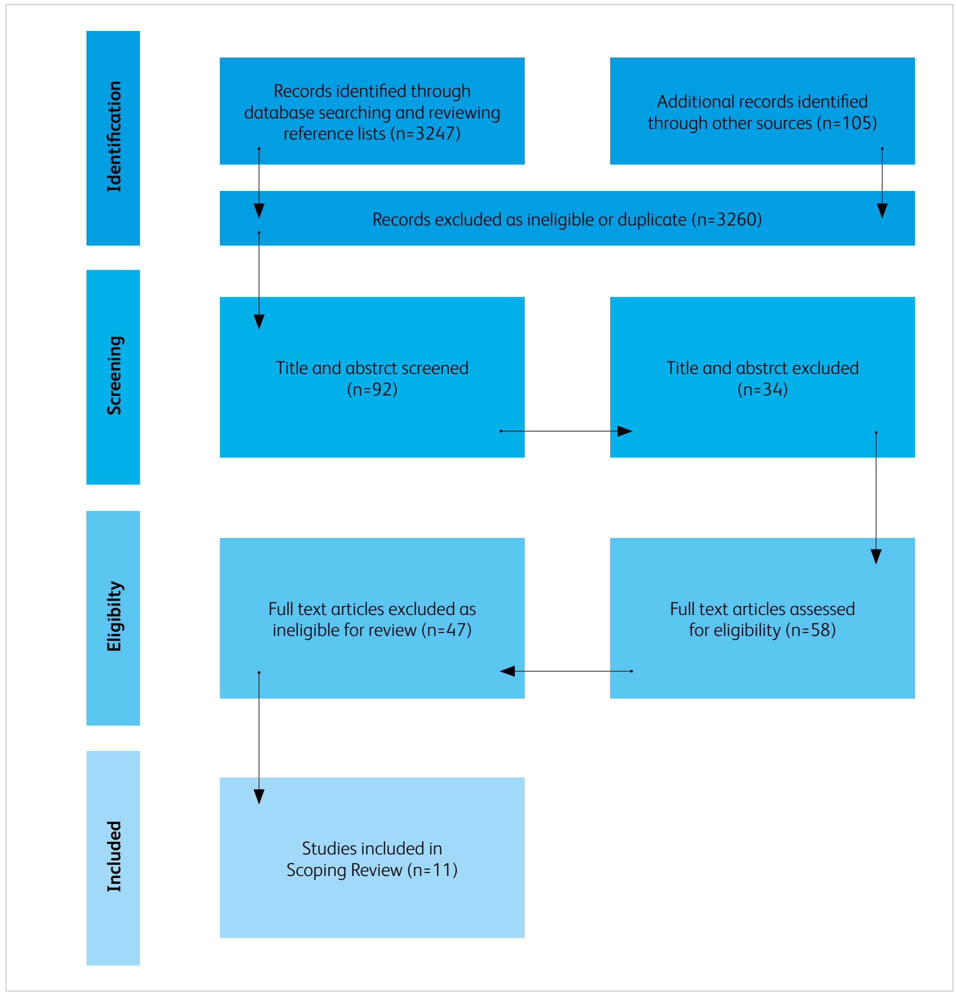


FIGURE 1 Scoping Review Process

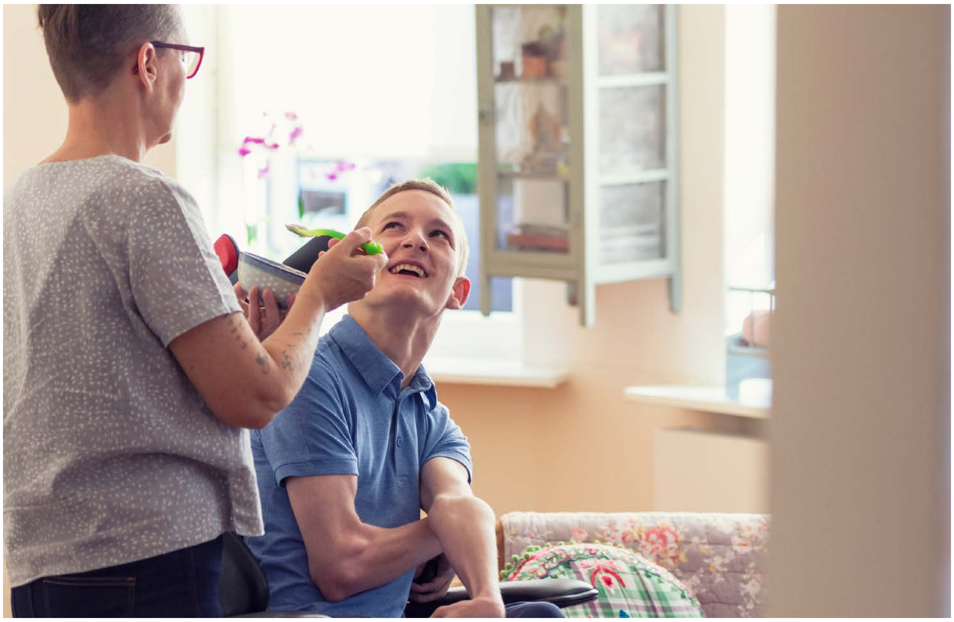
Selection of sources of evidence

The review of literature was undertaken through advanced searches of academic databases and grey literature, using a pre-defined set of key words. The literature search strategy was primarily developed for advanced searching, using five data base sources: Academic Search Elite, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Science Direct and Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE) and UWL's Summon. The search was carried out using the 'OR' Boolean operator as a single group. Each single group was then combined using the 'AND' function to produce a list of citations. Searches using the term 'family caregivers' were subsequently combined with keywords such as 'elderly', 'chronic illness', 'support', 'care burden', and 'coping', so as to narrow down the range of results. This search protocol was subsequently replicated with other search engines and databases, as well as grey literature sources, reference lists and citations of all relevant papers. This ensured an optimal identification and location of relevant sources. The limits applied to searches for work in English only, involving participants aged 60 years and older, peer reviewed full-text articles, and published between 1 July 2011 and 31 July 2021. Articles that did not provide a comprehensive understanding of the experience of family caregivers of older adults with chronic illness, but focused more broadly on family caregiving, were excluded. All literature searches took place between October 2020 to July 2021.

Findings

3,352 records were initially identified throughout all databases. The results were narrowed down to peer reviewed articles, of which titles and abstracts were reviewed for eligibility. Subsequently, full-text articles were assessed and included only if they 1) focused exclusively on family caregiver experiences with adults aged 60 and older with chronic illness, and 2) were published in English within the last 10 years on electronic databases. After reviewing the full text, a total of 11 articles were included in the literature review (see Figure 1). A final search of databases was conducted to ensure that all relevant literature had been captured. The literature review was considered complete when the same articles began to appear repeatedly in the electronic searches.

Unlike a Systematic Literature Review, Scoping Reviews include broader literature sources. These may include a range of relevant databases, grey literature and attempts to identify unpublished literature



Given the invaluable role of informal care, the need to support family caregivers cannot be overemphasised. It spans from caregivers' need for sustainable support and resilience, to using their experience to inform interventions and raise awareness about the importance of providing support and resources at multiple levels—local, state, and national

Themes

A recognition of the positive aspects of family caregiving was evident in the literature reviewed—with an emphasis on a heightened sense of responsibility, improved relationships with care recipients, increased level of patience, and sense of reward. However, the harsh realities of caregiving as experienced by unpaid family members, friends, and neighbours was also apparent, when it came to the burden of care, coping mechanism and support needed.

Theme 1: Burden and coping

Caregivers of older adults with chronic illnesses are fully exposed to the burden associated with their caregiving activities. As a result, caregivers experience stressors while carrying out their caregiving activities. Significant stress, due to financial instability, emotional strain, and physical support with Activities of Daily Living, are all part of the dynamics that play out in a caregiving role. However, the concept of burden used in research so far, lacks a consistent conceptualisation and operational definition. Critical attributes of burden include subjective perceptions, multidimensional phenomena, dynamic changes, and overload. Therefore, it is important to identify the different sources of burden and provide directions for caregiver intervention (Sit et al., 2020).

Most of the reviewed studies base their research on the family caregiving burden of single chronic conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, dementia, Parkinson's, or stroke. Some studies investigate the diversity of experiences of family caregivers of older adults with multiple chronic conditions. However, there is no literature at all from Benue State, Nigeria, on the experience of family caregivers of older people with a multiple chronic condition. This Scoping Review therefore identified the following research question: What are the challenges and coping mechanisms associated with informal caregiving of older adults with (multiple) chronic illnesses?

Theme 2: Support and intervention

There is increasing attention in research, as well as in government policy, on the support of family carers. However, supporting family carers may prove to be a more complex endeavour than one might initially believe. Within the nursing literature, caregiver support has been defined as the provision of general tangibles, such as information, education, economic aid, goods, and external services. Some researchers suggest that support measures, such as information sharing, training, and practical support, are crucial for sustaining family caregiving (Lilly et al., 2012). By contrast, a meta-review of international studies on family caregiver support interventions found no evidence of improvements regarding family caregiver stress, burden, psychological well-being, or quality of life based on the above support measures. There is a diversity of information as to how family caregivers of older people should best be supported, leading to various interpretations as to how support is and should be measured and operationalised. The following question then arises: How can caregivers be supported optimally?

Theme 3: Support delivery system

Given the invaluable role of informal care, the need to support family caregivers cannot be overemphasised. It spans from caregivers' need for sustainable support and resilience, to using their experience to inform interventions and raise awareness about the importance of providing support and resources at multiple levels—local, state, and national. Furthermore, understanding how these needs can impact on the delivery of support interventions and assist in developing a model of care for family caregivers, is fundamental (Parkinson et al., 2017).

For interventions to be successful, attention should be paid to the way in which policy implementation interacts and engages with caregivers. Supportive interactions are shown to have a positive impact on caregiver perceptions, decision making and coping. To work well with family caregivers, a partnership approach—that is, working with family caregivers of older people suffering from chronic illness, in order to assess their specific support needs—is recommended. Working in partnership with caregivers is a core principle in the policy rhetoric. For interventions to be effective, caregivers need to trust the people providing support services, see them as valuable and perceive the intervention as related to their needs (Lambert & Girgis, 2017). Furthermore, the absence of family caregiver support could be associated with a lack of awareness regarding the experiences of family caregivers. The notion of family caregiver support policy at all levels, paves the way for further investigating perceptions of policy implementation with respect to support for family caregiving (Cho & Kim, 2016). This gives rise to the final research question: What are the perceptions of those implementing policy in terms of family caregiving?

Researchers argue that, as the ageing population increases, the demand for informal caregiving is becoming an ever more important concern for researchers and policy makers alike

Conclusion

Understanding the themes from this Scoping Review reveals a growing body of knowledge on the experiences of family caregivers. This review of relevant literature shows how family caregivers caring for older people with chronic illnesses are heavily exposed to the burden generally associated with their caregiving activities and their coping mechanisms. The review also reveals some diverse interventions already in place to support family caregivers. Lastly, the Scoping Review encourages a discussion on how to best engage and support family caregivers at local, state, and national levels of policy implementation. Researchers argue that, as the ageing population increases, the demand for informal caregiving is becoming an ever more important concern for researchers and policy makers alike. Also, the steady increase in the number of people suffering from chronic diseases imposes new demands on healthcare and, at the same time, the need for informal caregivers is increasing. Therefore, this scenario clearly requires special attention in addressing the issue of an informal caregiving sector.

Why is this such an issue? And why is it important to conduct further research on this phenomenon? Family caregivers are the backbone of the healthcare system. Over time, caregiving can take a tremendous toll on the caregiver. Therefore, support from family, friends and, most importantly, the government, is required. My PhD research aims to explore family carer burdens, coping mechanisms, and support delivery systems. Although there is a great deal of writing about, and research into family caregiver experiences with older adults who have single chronic conditions, there is very little discussion on the experience of carers of older adults with multiple chronic conditions.

Considering the rising importance of family caregiving, it is surprising that it has attracted little scholarly attention globally so far. However, this could be explained by the fact that countries lack an awareness of and evidence on the lived experiences of family caregivers. The identification of appropriate family caregiver interventions is thus important for future policy practice for various reasons. Firstly, a greater emphasis on providing support for family caregivers in developing societies will mitigate the burden of caregiving. Secondly, family caregivers and care recipient quality of life will be positively affected. Finally, family caregivers of older adults with chronic illnesses can be an asset to the healthcare sector, especially if adequate support is provided to them. Hence, consideration should be given to the potential merits of officially recognising the true worth and value of family carers within the healthcare system.

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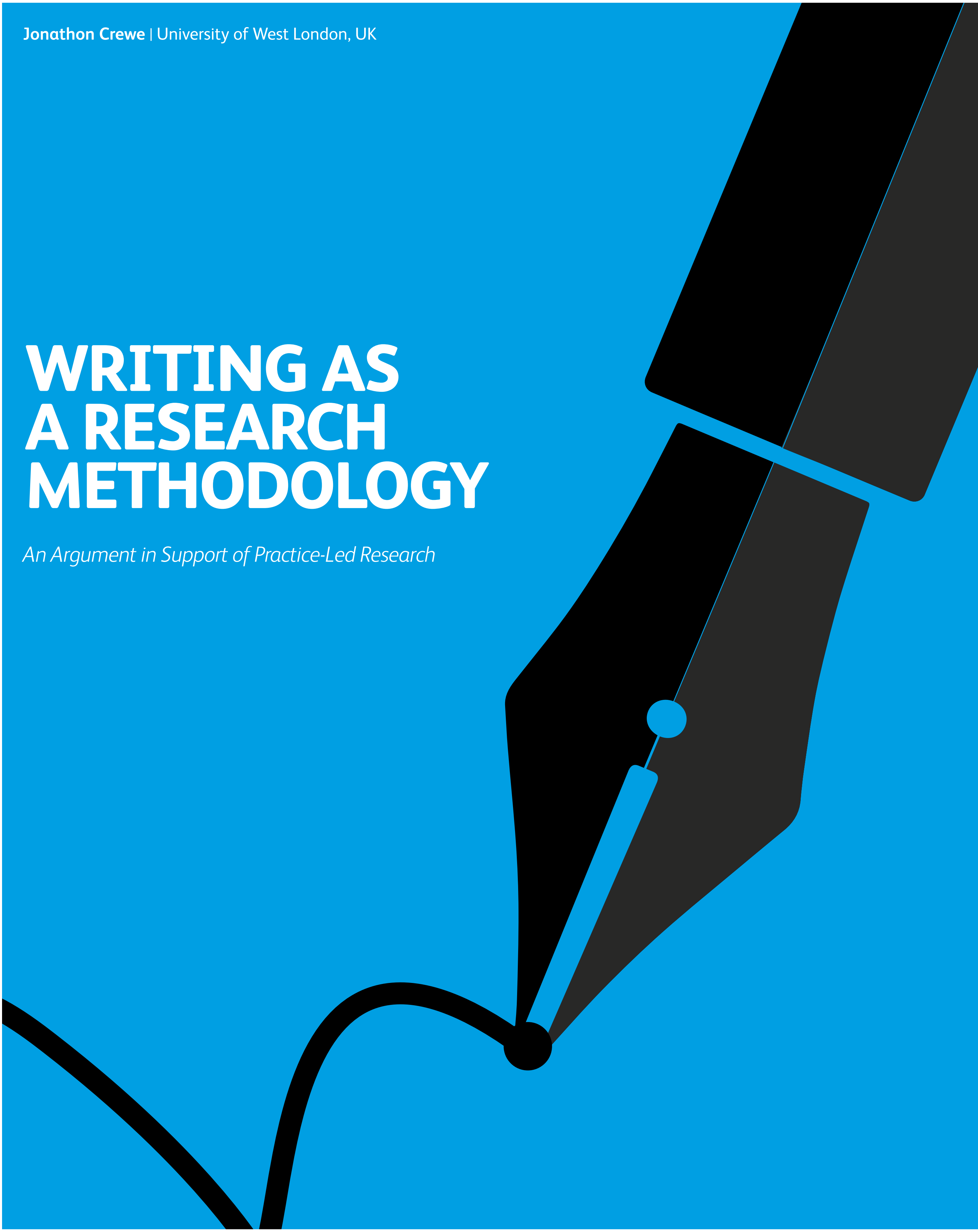


WRITING AS A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An Argument in Support of Practice-Led Research

One strength of practice-led research is the potential to bridge the gap between academia and the general public. The UK Research Excellence Framework's definition of impact beyond academia is 'an effect on, change or benefit to...an audience, community, constituency, organisation or individuals'

Within Arts and Humanities departments across academia, it is not unusual to find researchers who split their time between more 'traditional' research methodologies and their own professional and creative practice. Indeed, I am one of them. As well as being a Senior Lecturer and researcher producing papers such as this, I am also a creative writer working across film and theatre. Having insights into the production of both forms of outputs, it is clear that there are many similarities in their aims and methods. Combining these into a practice-led research approach, allowing synergies and dialogue to develop, offers the opportunity for deriving unique insights that may otherwise have been overlooked. This article argues that creative writing, in all its various forms, is a valuable research methodology—an argument that could be extended to all practice-led research disciplines.

One strength of practice-led research is the potential to bridge the gap between academia and the general public. The UK Research Excellence Framework's definition of impact beyond academia is 'an effect on, change or benefit to...an audience, community, constituency, organisation or individuals' (REF, 2018, p.83). Whereas social scientists may work with and theorise about group or community identities, individuals do not experience these groups per se, rather they experience interactions with other individuals who may be members of a group. Creative writing, as a practice-based research approach, provides a route to resolving this dilemma by accessing group and community identities from the perspectives of individuals within a particular group or those who have interactions with individuals from this group. Fiction facilitates the portrayal of, and access to, complex and nuanced interiorities (inner character) through the lived experiences of relatable characters, presenting

> *'people and situations in their contexts with multidimensionality...as a method of disrupting dominant ideologies or stereotypes by...[describing] social reality and then [presenting] alternatives to that reality. One of the main advantages of fiction as a research practice is the...[ability] to promote empathy, build bridges of understanding across differences, and stimulate self-reflection' (Leavy, 2014, p.298).*

Practice-led research can produce externalisations of interior knowledge and understanding, as well as exposing socio-cultural frameworks for contextual critical analysis and reflection. Creative writing works to explore the 'human process of making meaning through experiences that are felt, lived, reconstructed and reinterpreted,' and this includes both the writing *and* the reading process, where 'meanings are "made" from the transactions and narratives that emerge and these have the power and agency to change on an individual or community level' (Sullivan, 2009, p.50).

Creative writing allows the researcher access to the individual, but also to go beyond the personal, whereby the 'methods *and* theoretical ideas as paradigms may be viewed as the apparatuses, or procedures of production from which the research design emerges' (Barrett, 2010, p.138, original italics). Although creative writing provides the researcher and reader with unique insights, it cannot fully realise its research potential without a framework for theoretical and contextual analysis and reflection. A practice-based researcher must maintain a discourse between the artefact and the exegesis, in order to exploit findings and outcomes so that a wider impact can be realised. As such, the creative writing process works in dialogue with continued critical and contextual analysis. In *The Political Unconscious*, Frederic Jameson argues that 'the production of aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right' (Jameson, 2010, p.64). Therefore, the process of creative writing can be analysed in terms of it being a socially symbolic act, whereby the inclusion and usage of ideologemes can be exposed and interrogated. In this context, an ideologeme is understood, according to Jameson, as both a conceptual construction and narrative sign, incorporating concepts such as beliefs and opinions as well as minimal units of socially symbolic narrative acts. As such, they can be seen as the inherited units of representation upon which the process of writing and rewriting through interpretation bases its narrative construction. As Jameson puts it,

> *'by their respective positions in the whole complex sequence of the modes of production, both the individual text and its ideologemes…must be read in terms of…*

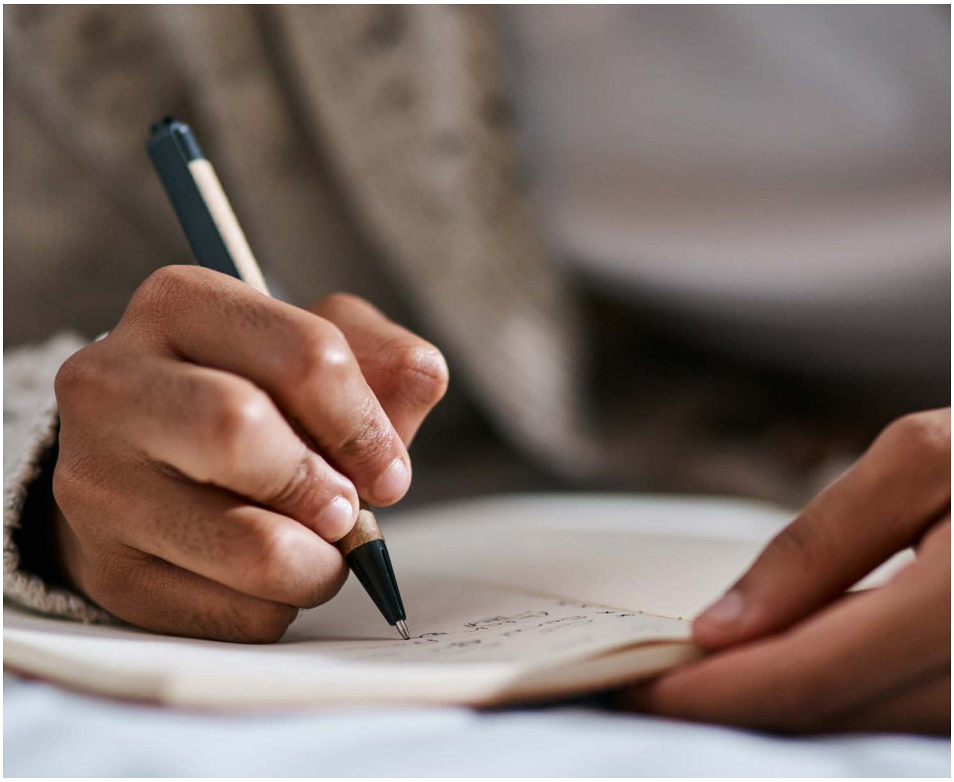
> *the ideology of form, that is, the symbolic messages transmitted…by the coexistence of various sign systems which are themselves traces or anticipations of modes of production' (Jameson, 2010, p.61).*

As such, narrative texts are not individual entities, but exist within the wider body of the literary canon, reflecting the social order in which they were written. In addition, practice-based researchers, similar to more traditional researchers, inevitably develop their methods and techniques in relation to the existent and recognised practices of their predecessors and contemporaries (Barrett, 2010). An understanding of this suggests a duality for the creative writing researcher, whereby a 'double movement occurs, of decontextualisation in which the found elements are rendered strange, and of recontextualisation, in which new families of association and structures of meaning are established' (Carter, 2010, pp.15).

This process not only informs the creative writing researcher, but also the reader of the text. For an example of how this works, this article will consider a creative writing research project in the form of a novel that aims to investigate a particular marginalised social group, whilst challenging typified representations of that group in mainstream media and politics (for a practice-led research project that does this, see Crewe, 2017). In line with the UK Research Excellence Framework's definition above, a novel can create a change in the behaviour and attitudes of its readers, as well as bringing potential benefits to a community—with respect to this example, a particular marginalised group.

A novel can create a change in the behaviour and attitudes of its readers, as well as bringing potential benefits to a community, such as, for example, a particular marginalised group

Monica Ali and Caryl Phillips are both contemporary authors who have written from the perspective of individual characters from groups often vilified by mainstream media—for example, the Bangladeshi immigrant Nazneem in Ali's *Brick Lane* (2007), or the African asylum seeker Gabriel / Solomon in Phillip's *A Distant Shore* (2004). By providing extended, vivid and nuanced insights into the minds of individuals from groups often portrayed with homogenised negative stereotypes in mainstream media, Ali and Phillips work to challenge these tropes, individuate their characters and elicit sympathy from the reader (see Booth, 1983). In other words, the individualisation of a marginalised voice moves the character beyond the sociological and into the psychological, the point where representational



At times, readers of literary texts find themselves participating in an unconventional flow of feelings through which they realize something that they have not previously experienced—or at least...not...in the form provided by the text

meaning can occur in narrative form, in the sense that 'the psychological impulse tends toward the presentation of highly individualised figures who resist abstraction and generalisation, and whose motivation is not susceptible to rigid ethical interpretation' (Scholes, Phelan & Kellogg, 2006, p. 101; see also Currie, 2010 and Jameson, 2010). In the above example, the creative writing researcher's conscious attempt to shift perceptions from a typified reading of characters from a marginalised group to a de-homogenised, individuated reading, serves to exploit Jameson's concept of rewriting texts through the interpretation process, whereby any given literary text cannot be viewed as independent and autonomous in itself, but rather as being 'rewritten' as part of a set of traditional interpretative functions during the process of reading. The reader's 'real-life' assumptions about the lifestyles and behaviour of these groups are exposed and challenged through their own interpretation of the characters' lifestyles, behaviour and choices within the 'fictional world' of the text.

Howard Sklar (2013) claims that emotions, in particular sympathy and compassion, felt by a reader in response to a fictional character can have 'ethical implications beyond the experience of reading itself…[Although] directed towards imaginary individuals, they may lay a foundation for emotional and ethical sensitivity in real life' (p.9; see also Kuiken, Miall & Sikora, 2004). This process allows the reader to recognise the emotional and psychological experience of a character, providing a route to the identification and re-evaluation of pre-existing assumptions about a person or character from a particular excluded or 'other' group. Although readers will possess existing 'interpretive frames and experiences to the reading of a given text, the narrative itself provides its own counterweight to personal presumptions by "persuading" readers to feel and to evaluate characters in particular ways' (Sklar, 2013, p.59). This re-framing of the reader's interpretive perspective will not only involve a re-evaluation of a character's behaviour and lifestyle choices, but also of the reader's systems of belief in relation to the character's social group. As with Booth and Sklar, Currie (2010) argues that 'sustained imaginative engagement with a vividly expressed and highly individuated mental economy through a long and detailed narrative can…be expected to have…finely-tuned imitative consequences, with correspondingly powerful results in terms of framing' (p.104). Narratologists have regularly pointed to focalisation, that is, 'seeing' from a character's perspective, as a technique for achieving this re-framing effect, inducing readers to view the narrative from a perspective that is not their own. For example, Sklar (2013) suggests that this re-framing effect is similar to the process of defamiliarisation, where readers are forced to reassess their 'familiar' assumptions about the fictional/real world as a result of shifts in perspective of the narrative's subject of focalisation, which 'may challenge readers to re-construct their representations of that character's feelings or attitudes' (p.69). Kuiken, Miall and Sikora (2004) discuss a set of phenomenological studies they undertook to investigate how defamiliarisation can lead to what they call 'self-modifying feelings' in the readers of literary texts:

> *'At times, readers of literary texts find themselves participating in an unconventional flow of feelings through which they realize something that they have not previously experienced—or at least... not...in the form provided by the text...The imagined world of the text can become unsettling. What is realized (recognized) also may become realized (made real) and carried forward as a changed understanding of the reader's own life-world' (Kuiken, Miall & Sikora, 2004, pp.268).*

Identification with an individuated character can elicit emotions of sympathy and compassion from the reader, forcing them to re-evaluate their judgements of the character within the fictionalised world—one of the key strengths of practice-based research (Leavy, 2014). Creative writing takes us 'to where we've never been, to see what we've never seen...[then brings] us back... [to] look again at what we thought we knew' (Sullivan, 2010, p.62). These self-modifying feelings can instigate changes in the reader's attitudes to parallel/comparable real-life situations.

Creative writing can exploit the nature of realist fiction by portraying aspects of a world familiar to the reader that are 'perceived as part of a conceptual frame and ultimately integrated into the world the readers know' (Fludernik & Häusler-Greenfield, 2009, p.55). Its narrative meaning is established though the relationship between a reader's response, the author's conscious and unconscious intentions, and the stylistic construction[1] of the literary text itself. In this way, creative writing works to create a connection between its fictional world and the real world of the reader. As Miall and Kuiken (1999) conclude from a number of empirical studies: 'during literary reading, the perspectives that we have, perhaps unthinkingly, acquired from our culture are especially likely to be questioned… This points to the adaptive value of literature in reshaping our perspectives…, especially by impelling us to reconsider our system of convictions and values' (p.127). This observation supports the notion of practice-based research as being consistent with more traditional scientific methodologies, as they 'bear intrinsic similarities in their attempts to illuminate aspects of the human condition...and work toward advancing human understanding' (Leavy, 2014, p.3).

Creative writing works to create a connection between its fictional world and the real world of the reader

Conclusion

Creative writing, and by extension all the unique specialisms and approaches of practice-led research, as a process of decontextualisation and recontextualisation, working in tandem with critical reflection and analysis, can produce original insights that may remain overlooked or undiscovered by more conventional research methodologies. In its impact beyond academia, potentially changing behaviours and attitudes in its readers and audiences as a result of defamiliarisation and re-writing through interpretation, creative writing can be seen as a valuable research methodology that, alongside more traditional research outputs, can bring new insights and original contributions to knowledge.

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1. It is worth noting a key limitation of creative writing, amongst others, that style and aesthetics can potentially distance the reader from the subject, rather than eliciting empathy.

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DIFFERENT STORIES

Investigating promotional narratives featuring older characters from minority ethnic groups in current British TV advertising

What makes a portrayal racist, sexist, or ageist is the repetition of the same types of behaviors over and over again to the point of limiting, denying, or excluding other potentials

A recent literature review by the Centre for Ageing Better (2020) concluded that ageism, the systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against older people, was 'still rife' in the UK, including in its media. Considering the country's increasingly ageing society, with the share of those aged 65 years or over now standing at almost 19 % of the UK's total population (Eurostat, 2021), this conclusion is a cause for concern. Although ageist portrayals may provide comfort for younger people by maximising group differences and reducing the anxiety associated with growing old, they deny the individuality of ageing and ignore the extreme heterogeneity which exists within the older population. The most salient feature of ageism is not so much its depiction of 'positive' or 'negative' images associated with old age, but far more its limiting effect. 'What makes a portrayal racist, sexist, or ageist is the repetition of the same types of behaviors over and over again to the point of limiting, denying, or excluding other potentials. A full range of human potentials is denied the individual; constricted roles become the norm' (Ansello, 1977, p.255).

In a previous paper, we considered how older members of British society were portrayed in market communication and how these schematic portrayals might still reflect ageist public views which focus, amongst other things, on gendered ageing (Olsen & Scott, 2021). With the UK's population gradually growing older, its population is also becoming increasingly ethnically diverse. It is estimated that currently, around 8 % of the nation's older population belongs to minority ethnic groups (Age UK, 2019). Socio-cultural artefacts, such as advertising, have slowly started to reflect a more multicultural modern Britain (Lloyds Banking Group, 2018). However, research by the Advertising Association (2014) has found that advertising is falling short of portraying a realistic image of Britain's multicultural population, crafting distinctively different stories for white characters compared to those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

This short paper presents insight into the commonalities and differences between promotional narratives told with older adults from different ethnic backgrounds in current British TV advertising. The objective is to investigate the ethno-gerontological hypothesis of double jeopardy (Torres, 2015), according to which older minority ethnic groups are at a double disadvantage, firstly due to their age and secondly due to their ethnicity. Intersectionality theory picks up on this, by acknowledging that the overlap of various social identities, such as a person's age, race, gender, sexuality and class may contribute to the specific type of systemic oppression and discrimination experienced by an individual (Bowleg, 2012). In the context of market communication, this topic is of interest, as consumers expect brands to represent different parts of society positively yet accurately, and consumers view brands that accomplish this in a more favourable light (Lloyds Banking Group, 2015).

Our research is further framed by Vitality Theory (King Smith, Ehala & Giles, 2017), according to which the standing of any social group within a society is reflected by the media and, thus, can be determined through the examination of, for example, advertising. Vitality theory is based on the grouping of individuals via socio-demographic variables, such as their proportion within a population, geographical distribution, political awareness and social status. Behind this lies the assumption that groups of greater number and social importance are considered to have greater 'vitality', and thus continue their survival as groups, and the specific group features are propagated. A group that possesses more vitality will receive much greater support and representation in society as a whole, including in the media. Therefore, by looking at how groups are portrayed within media content, one can gain insight into the social standing and the perception of these people within a society.

For this study, we analysed commercials during British prime-time television over a period of two consecutive weeks in September 2020. All commercials aired on ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 during the investigation period were included in the analysis, resulting in a sample size of 6,228 adverts, featuring a total of 367 occurrences of characters over the age of 65 years (for details of our sample selection and coding process, see Olsen & Scott, 2021). In line with previous research into diversity, equity and inclusion in media content, our study considered both physical characteristics such as skin colour, usually associated with the social construct of race, and cultural expressions and identifiers such as clothing, in order to assign a character's ethnicity. Categories of ethnic groups were informed by those suggested by the Office for National Statistics. The investigation comprised both media content and narrative analysis.

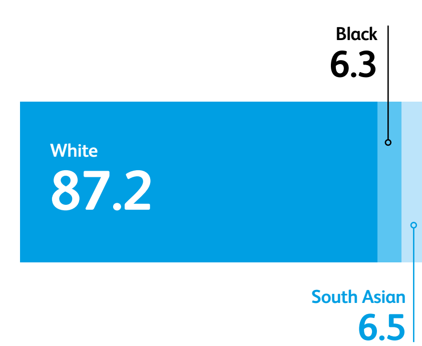
Findings and discussion

Roughly every tenth media character aged 65 years or over depicted in contemporary British TV advertising belonged to a minority ethnic group, which is higher than recorded in the population as a whole. However, minority ethnic representations were invariably limited to older Black and South Asian adults (Figure 1), and thus far from inclusive of the full spectrum of the UK's ethnic composition.

A conspicuous gender gap was also noted. The sample featured a pronounced female skew, with almost two-thirds of all older characters being women. Yet, commercials featuring older men from minority ethnic backgrounds, in particular of South Asian descent, occurred significantly more often during the investigation period, compared to those featuring older minority ethnic women. As frequent exposure contributes to the overall impression that audiences gain about older adults in the long term (Chen, 2015), this might result in a misconception that ethnic diversity in the UK is predominantly male. Contemporary British TV advertising still shies away from regularly featuring older women of colour. This aligns with previous findings for other forms of media, according to which minority ethnic women are often rendered invisible (Mohr & Purdie-Vaughns, 2015).

Looking at the promotional narratives—which were considered by analysing the products and services as the central topic of each advertisement, as well as the use of schematic character types—both older Black and South Asian adults were subject to significant limitations in terms of versatility. For them, a narrow number of different narratives were used (Figure 2). Older Black characters featured in commercials for only three different product groups; namely, gambling (8.7 %), banking services (13 %), and foodstuffs (78.3 %). Older South Asian characters were even more severely restricted, appearing only in commercials for entertainment (8.3 %) and insurance services (91.7 %). The limitations for ethnic minority characters in advertising in Britain have been documented previously, but without reference to age (Mogaji, 2015). However, these appear to be even more pronounced in older characters of colour.

A similarly limited pattern emerged for the use of character types. Older Black adults were only associated with three distinct character roles in the stories told by advertisers. They were portrayed as: (i) 'Golden Agers'—older people who are youthful and full of zest, actively enjoying their advanced years. The long-running campaign 'Sapeurs', for the Irish stout *Guinness*, is an example of this. Two older Black men are shown



	White	Black	S. Asian
Female	93.2	5.9	0.8
Male	76.2	6.9	16.9

FIGURE 1 Distribution of ethnicities in the sample overall and according to sex (in %)

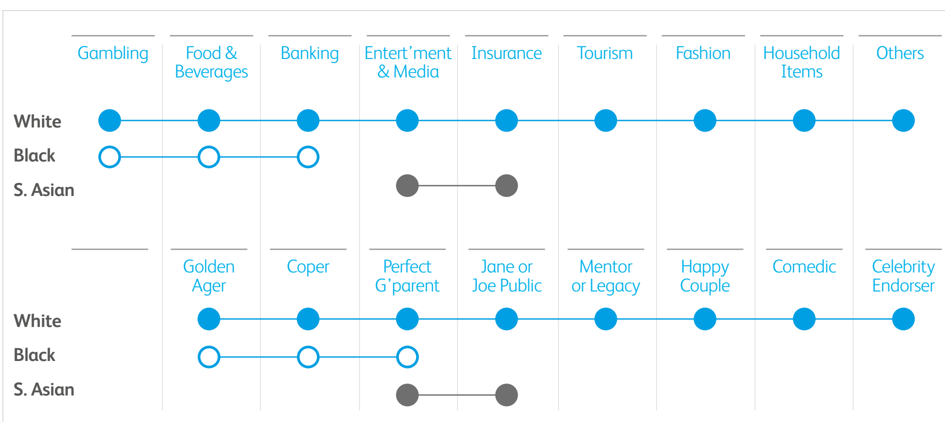


FIGURE 2 Distribution of ethnicities according to product categories and character types

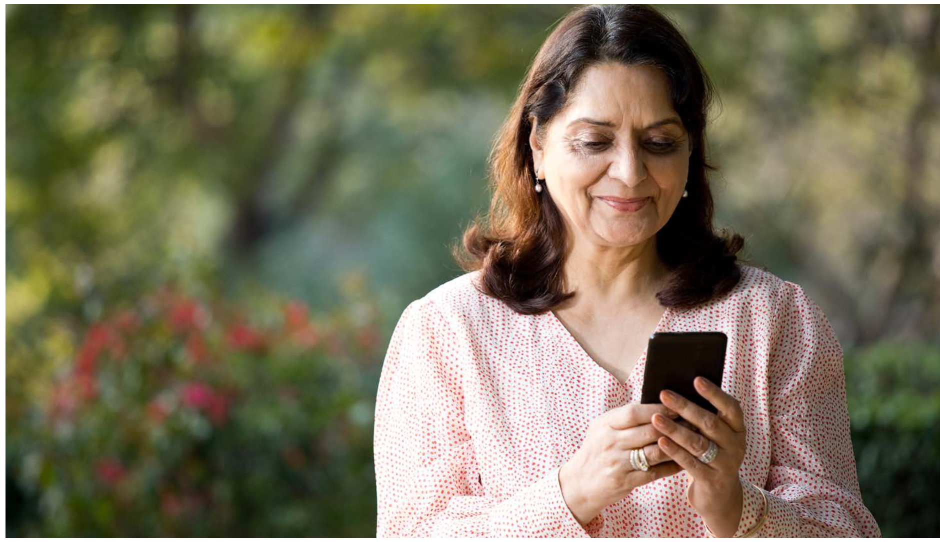
Notwithstanding the somewhat limited opportunities afforded to older Black and South Asian characters, this did not lead to exclusively negative promotional narratives

dancing in a bar in front of a cheering crowd, celebrating their heritage rooted in Congolese culture. Liveliness and enjoyment are at the centre of this campaign for the alcoholic beverage. (ii) 'Perfect Grandparents'—older people who are shown with their grandchildren, sometimes surrounded by several generations. In the commercial 'Family', for British cider maker *Thatchers*, the camera cuts to an older Black woman being lifted off the ground in a loving embrace by her grandson. Seemingly surprised by his visit, the female protagonist is overcome with joy and content. (iii) 'Copers'—older people facing a problem, such as compromised health, but who are coping with it thanks to the product or service being advertised. *The People's Postcode Lottery's* commercial, 'Goldies', features a jolly multicultural group of older men and women, including several older Black adults, participating in singing therapy to combat social isolation via community singalongs.

Once again, older South Asian adults faced greater limitations, being only ever cast in the slice-of-life role of 'Jane or Joe Public', or as the 'Perfect Grandparent'. Examples for these included commercials by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and international health insurer *Bupa*. The BBC's image campaign features several people of different ethnicities and ages, including an older South Asian woman who is seen sitting comfortably on her sofa at home, smiling at the TV, seemingly content with her chosen entertainment. She represents one of many people in Britain who have sought comfort in television during the challenges of 2020. Bupa's campaign 'Back to normal' broaches the issue of mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, featuring emotional cut-scenes of an older South Asian man at the front door of his home, embracing a member of his family in what appears to be an emotional reunion after an extended period apart, due to the pandemic.

Throughout the investigation period, both Black and South Asian characters aged 65 years or older were significantly more likely to be featured in major roles compared to older White characters. Yet, older White adults covered a considerably broader variety of both product categories and character types (for a complete typology of older characters observed in contemporary British advertising, see Olsen & Scott, 2021), resulting in the pigeonholing of older Black and South Asian adults, and leading to restricted opportunities to showcase a 'full range of human potentials' (Ansello, 1977, p.255) as part of contemporary promotional narratives in Britain. Finally, storylines featuring affluent older characters were exclusively reserved for White British adults.

Notwithstanding the somewhat limited opportunities afforded to older Black and South Asian characters, the examples mentioned in this article already indicate that this did not lead to exclusively negative promotional narratives. In fact, older Black adults were most often featured in positively connoted commercials, which might be explained by their frequent occurrence in advertisements for food and beverage products that regularly revolved around celebratory events and happy family gatherings. Social interactions with friends and acquaintances, as part of the promotional narratives, were three times as common in older Black and South Asian characters compared to older White characters, denoting distinct interpersonal ties beyond one's close family.



Conclusion

With Britain's ageing population growing increasingly diverse, this study contributes useful, original insights into the on-going discussion of media representations at the intersection of age and ethnicity. Media images influence people's perception of reality and reveal and/or influence what is considered important within society. Based on our findings, it seems that double jeopardy is very much prevalent in contemporary British advertising, with the breadth of representation of older adults from minority ethnic groups within promotional narratives far from reflecting the full spectrum of the UK's true ethnic composition. The underrepresentation of older women of colour might even suggest the existence of triple jeopardy, with age, ethnicity and sex potentially disadvantaging the vitality of this social group. The omission of certain social groups inevitably impacts the familiarity and awareness of affairs, accomplishments and needs of these groups in the broader public, thus weakening their social standing.

Our findings only partially support the claim that advertising in the UK crafts distinctively different stories for characters from minority ethnic backgrounds (Advertising Association, 2014). In 2020, different stories primarily translated into limited promotional narratives for older Black and South Asian characters compared to older White characters, rather than alternative storylines. Even in adverts for products and services that were exclusively promoted by older White adults, the schematic character types employed as part of the promotional narratives were similar to those used for minority ethnic characters in other advertising. Nevertheless, whilst ageism in the sense of denying the full range of potential was observed for all older characters irrespective of their ethnic background, this appeared to affect older Black and South Asian characters more than older White characters. Brands should thus strive towards further age and ethnic diversity, equity and inclusion in their promotional narratives. nv

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Intersectionality, ageing, ethnicity, advertising research, United Kingdom

The omission of certain social groups inevitably impacts the familiarity and awareness of affairs, accomplishments and needs of these groups in the broader public, thus weakening their social standing

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STUDENT PROFILE

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Course
PhD in Media

Year completed
2020

Title of thesis
"We are a service class": A workers' inquiry into the class composition of service commodity production during the unreal interregnum.

It is half a century since the British workers' movement went into decline. This downwards trajectory was not reversed by the financial crisis of 2008—in fact, if anything, it was accelerated by it. Levels of working class self-organisation and collective action in the sphere of production remain at historic lows. This lack of activity has left the British working class trapped in a long decade of crisis, subject to a deeply unequal balance of class forces.

Callum's work investigates where this precipitous decline has led us, by using an innovative multi-case-study workers' inquiry methodology to investigate the class composition of one fraction of the contemporary British working class: young, low-paid, service workers who are disconnected from the institutions of the workers' movement. His thesis makes two original contributions.

First, it develops an original theoretical framework for the analysis of class composition on the basis of a 3-part model (technical, social, and political). This framework uses readings from Marx, the socialist feminist tradition, and Lenin in order to analyse working class organisation in the sphere of production through a consistent system of categories based on the materialist analysis of social relations.

Second, it presents the results of a workers' inquiry comprising three case studies on three separate workplaces in Brighton. This study found a class fraction which is subject to intense systems of managerial control—but which also has the capacity to throw those systems into disarray. Below the surface of the service sector, many of the conditions necessary for a rapid shift in the balance of class forces are present. What is missing is a subjective spark—one which could be provided by the significant minority of workers who are sympathetic to political militancy, and whose agitation might prove capable of starting a process of 'associational amplification' through which the fraction first struggles to promote its immediate economic interests, and then leaps into the fight for more fundamental political ones.

He concludes that such a leap, if merged with the concerted efforts of socialists to create mechanisms for the expression of this antagonism at the political level, might offer some way forwards for working class politics. Completed just as the first Coronavirus lockdown was coming into effect, this thesis offers an empirical snapshot of a class fraction in the moments before the pandemic hit, and a theoretical model through which to understand how processes of development reorganise capitalist social relations.

During the research process, Cant also wrote and published his first book, *Riding for Deliveroo*. This popular workers' inquiry into the state of class conflict in 'platform capitalism' communicates much of the framework of the thesis in more approachable terms. His scholarly work has been published in journals such as *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Capital and Class*, *ephemera*, and *Triple C*, and in popular media outlets such as *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, and *Vice*. He took a break from his PhD research to work on the 2019 General Election campaign with Momentum as the Digital Communications Team Lead, and on completing his thesis, he returned to work as Momentum's Head of Communications. He has now returned to academia, taking up a position as a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Oxford Internet Institute on the Global Partnership for the 'Fair Work for AI' project focusing on regulatory frameworks for artificial intelligence in the workplace.

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