

Huddersfield Business School Autumn Research Update



A welcome from Professor Stuart Roper, Associate Dean (Research and Enterprise)

Welcome to our Autumn Research Newsletter and my thanks to Gill Mooney for putting this together. Clearly, this has been a difficult time for us as researchers, but despite these difficulties it is great to see some very interesting work progressing. Some of this work is highlighted here and the features on Covid research within the school and **Radi Haloub's** work with refugees highlights the impactful nature of research within the School. It is not just important to produce papers, we want our research to help people and communities and it is good to see this demonstrated below. Meanwhile our REF submission nears completion and I will be reporting on this in due course. Enjoy the newsletter and if you are conducting interesting work that deserves greater publicity then please **contact Gill** and we can feature this in a future edition.

What's on?

26th November

17:15-19:15

SURGE seminar

Professor David Weir, the School's new Director of External Engagement, will deliver a presentation on Sustainability and Philosophy. Everyone in the School is welcome. Look out for the event invitation in your inbox.

COVID-19 response research

The School submitted a number of bids to the University's URF special COVID research fund. The research covers a range of topics across all departments in the School, examining issues that are of special relevance in the current crisis. **Click here** for more information.

COVID-19 research spotlight: financial exclusion

Alper Kara and the team in the Northern Productivity Hub are working to uncover and understand the issues faced by older people during the pandemic in terms of access to payment services, in particular access to cash. Conducting fieldwork with elderly people, the research will aim to provide recommendations to help financial regulators and policy makers design responses to tackling the financial exclusion of the elderly in future. For a more detailed look at the research, **click here**.

Feature: Entrepreneurship in Syrian refugees in the UK and Jordan



Understandably, much of the current research focus in the School is on COVID-19, but longer term projects are ongoing, and Radi Haloub's work with Syrian refugees has become more, rather than less relevant as attention and resources are redirected to tackling the pandemic, and away from the needs of those fleeing increasingly unstable contexts around the world.

Life for refugees presents a number of difficulties that may reduce their integration in different contexts. Refugees might face language barriers, cultural differences, and unfamiliarity with financial and legal systems that isolate them in host countries. Refugees may be perceived as having no expertise, or their existing professional skills and knowledge might be overlooked. Moreover, the inherent uncertainty in their lives means that planning and operating a business can be fraught with difficulty.

Dr Radi Haloub's research focuses on Syrian refugees' journeys in Jordan and the UK. Born in Palestine, Radi himself may be considered to be a refugee in some countries, and this has driven him to use his research findings to amplify the voices of those groups, and support them in developing their own entrepreneurial potential.

In Jordan, a project titled: "sound out refugees' success stories" aimed to write lyrics from refugees' interviews, and culminated in performance events which were broadcast on Jordanian local television. When used in this way, refugees' stories became a powerful tool for understanding their experience, increasing their acceptance in Jordan, and ultimately improving their outcomes. The events were conducted in collaboration with a high school (**Islamic Scientific college**) and **Petra University** in Jordan, to enlighten Jordanian youths about refugees' challenges and to boost social cohesion.

In the UK, research funded by BA/Leverhulme Grant has resulted in partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organisations to support positive outcomes for refugees. Radi, Dr John Lever and Dr Deema Refai work with local authorities in Kirklees, Bradford and Wakefield in settling refugees in the area. Specifically, he has partnered with **Sanctuary Kirklees**, an organisation that seeks to provide a welcoming and hospitable environment for new refugees. He also has good relationships with the **UN Refugee Agency** and their partners, including Horton Housing in Bradford.

Radi attends sessions for new arrivals to identify the professional skills and knowledge they already possess, and offers practical support for starting and managing their own businesses. He provides information, helps the refugees navigate unfamiliar systems correctly to establish themselves in the UK, and helps to ensure they maximise the positive outcomes for themselves, their families and the wider social and economic landscape. Part of this work is focused on helping people to integrate into all sectors of their new local communities, encouraging people to work together and overcome differences. This minimises their isolation, and the fear of not being accepted, as well as fostering positive relationships between individuals and groups from all backgrounds.

Although the work is ongoing, the project will culminate in the publication of a number of papers, and an event in early 2021 where refugee entrepreneurs will be invited to share their experiences, demonstrate their resilience, tell their stories, showcase their businesses and come together with all sectors of the community to celebrate the positive and valuable contribution they make to the West Yorkshire region and the UK as a whole.

Research Centre update: Behavioural Research Centre

Since September 2020, the BRC hosted three successful events, which were well attended by staff members, PhD researchers and MSc students. These events were organised by the BRA decision-making and Behavioural Economics cluster:

- A PhD research session led by Joseph Teal (presenting his work on the First Attribute Theory);
- A Research talk by Professor Jason Roach from the School of Human and Health Sciences (Title: Using Behavioural Change to Reduce Criminal Victimization);
- An educational session led by Dr Sabrina Thornton (Title: A Configurational Approach to Understanding Causality in Management Research).

Coming soon: relaunched Research and Enterprise Sharepoint site

A new Research and Enterprise Sharepoint site is in development, and when complete will serve as a hub for news, resources and contacts for supporting researchers to plan, carry out and deliver high quality research. The site is currently under construction, and will continue to develop over time, you can check in on progress by **clicking here**.



Support for your research

The School's ART team continue to offer ancillary support for researchers in the form of proof reading, typing, transcription, minute-taking, and arranging meetings and focus groups. To find out more about their services and to make a request for support, **click here**.

Research Centre update: SURGE

In October, the Centre's new director, Julia Meaton, held an open meeting to discuss future directions for the Research Centre. The discussions focused on fairness, equity, equality and the Sustainable Development Goals. A lively debate among the diverse mix of researchers, with an equally diverse range of approaches to their subject areas and research led to a commitment to draw on this expertise while nurturing the commonalities that bind the researchers together. The aim for the Centre is to build a home for everyone interested in sustainability and the climate emergency to support collaboration and maximise opportunities for bidding and publication. This work is ongoing and Julia is continuing to gather information on research activity to further drive progress.



Research highlight: 600 million people living across Africa do not have access to electricity, and adequate lighting. Matt Snell's doctoral research focuses on the work of social enterprise Sunny Money, who are working to provide clean, reliable solar powered lights in communities across the continent. Read more about Matt's exciting and vital research **here**.

REF2021

The School is entering the final stages of compiling its submission for the delayed REF2021 exercise. Final lists of outputs are being carefully selected, the environment statement is being written, and impact case studies are nearing completion. The hard work of everyone involved will mean that the School makes the strongest possible submission.

Focus on: research impact

A key component of the School's REF submission are its nine impact case studies, which describe the effects HBS research is having away from the University. This impact work is key to the School's relationships with local, national and global stakeholders, as well as being the means through which we ensure HBS research has a positive impact on those it is designed to help.

Looking ahead to the next REF exercise, impact case studies are likely to remain a central element of the submission, and work is already beginning to identify research that has potential for development into case studies. Read profiles of the School's impact case studies **here**.

For information and resources about impact **click here**, or email Gill Mooney on **HBSImpact@hud.ac.uk** to discuss developing quality impact from your work.



Future issues of Research Update

If you have a story, a call for collaboration or support, or an event you would like featured in a future edition of this newsletter, email **HBSImpact@hud.ac.uk** or contact Gill Mooney on Teams.

