

*Who is engaged in the research impact agenda? Equity, diversity and inclusion perspectives*

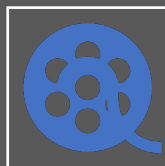
Professor Julie Davies & Dr Emily Yarrow

Kent Business School, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023

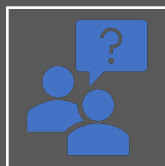
# Outline



Introductions



What is impact?



Why does it  
matter?



**Who is doing  
impact?**



REF impact case  
studies (ICS) and  
ongoing research

*Discussion and impact journey  
reflections*



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## ...ing a Business School

### Professor Julie Davies, UCL, GBSH, Deputy Director (EDI)

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# What is impact?

‘the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy’.

- **Academic impact** is the demonstrable contribution that excellent social and economic research makes in shifting understanding and advancing scientific method, theory and application across and within disciplines
- **Economic and societal impact** is the demonstrable contribution that excellent social and economic research makes to society and the economy, and its benefits to individuals, organisations and/or nations.
- The impact of research, be it academic, economic and social can include:
- **Instrumental**: influencing the development of policy, practice or service provision, shaping legislation, altering behaviour.
- **Conceptual**: contributing to the understanding of policy issues, reframing debates.
- **Capacity building**: through technical and personal skill development.

Source: UKRI, 2020: <https://esrc.ukri.org/research/impact-toolkit/what-is-impact>

## Why engage with impact?

*‘Research conducted without understanding stakeholder needs risks being misdirected. Bi-directional engagement with the public, patient champions, charities, policy makers, and the media is key to effectively delivering research that matters in the real world’ University of Edinburgh (2020).*

# Who is doing impact?

GENDER, WORK & ORGANIZATION






ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## The curious under-representation of women impact case leaders: Can we disengender inequality regimes?

Julie Davies , Emily Yarrow, Jawad Syed

An analysis of 395 REF impact cases for business and management studies with an identifiable lead author revealed that only 25 per cent were led by women, of which 54 per cent were sole authored.

GENDER, WORK & ORGANIZATION

ORIGINAL ARTICLE |  Open Access |    

## A typology of sexism in contemporary business schools: Belligerent, benevolent, ambivalent, and oblivious sexism

Emily Yarrow , Julie Davies

First published: 01 November 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12914>

## **Previous, underpinning research** **(Davies, Yarrow and Syed, 2020)**

- Women management scholars were disproportionately under-represented in leading impact cases in the UK's REF (Research Excellence Framework) 2014
- **Our analysis of 395 REF impact cases for business and management studies with an identifiable lead author revealed that only 25 per cent were led by women, of which 54 per cent were sole authored**
- In the extreme, women are not credited with being a case study leader or joint leader, but left as 'handmaidens' to men whose careers are advanced because of the men claiming to generate the impact cases. This results in suboptimal talent management and leads inevitably to a bias towards men in the way policy reforms are implemented and research impact is designed. It means that policymakers who are men have not only shaped REF (e.g., Stern, 2016) but have mainly determined how REF impact has evolved in practice and what constitutes impactful research in society.

Received: 22 October 2018 | Revised: 30 June 2019 | Accepted: 23 July 2019  
DOI: 10.1111/gwao.12409

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

WILEY

### **The curious under-representation of women impact case leaders: Can we disgender inequality regimes?**

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Universities are increasingly expected to demonstrate the wider societal impacts of academic research. Yet women management scholars were disproportionately under-represented in leading impact cases in the UK's REF (Research Excellence Framework) 2014. An analysis of 395 REF impact cases for business and management studies with an identifiable lead author revealed that only 25 per cent were led by women, of which 54 per cent were sole authored. Based on 12 in-depth interviews with women impact case writers, we use Acker's inequality regimes framework to understand invisible and socially constructed gendering of the UK's policy that is designed to evaluate research impact. In a knowledge-intensive workplace dominated by men, the shape and degree of gendered bases of inequality, systemic practices, processes and controls result in sub-optimal talent management and gendered knowledge. We call for university leaders to be proactive in addressing barriers that fail to support or recognize women's leadership of research impact.

#### KEYWORDS

academics, gender, inequality regime, REF, research impact, women

#### 1 | INTRODUCTION

This article responds to Broadbridge and Simpson's (2011, p. 470) call 'to monitor and publicize ... new forms of gendered power'. We explore women management scholars' leadership of impact case studies. Universities must

**COMMENT** • 27 MARCH 2018

## Women left out of impact assessments

Consideration should be given to the research impact agenda's effects on female academics, say Julie Davies and Emily Yarrow.



<https://wonkhe.com/blogs/why-arent-women-leading-research-impact-cases/>

<https://www.natureindex.com/news-blog/women-left-out-of-impact-assessments>



## Diversity in cases?

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## Impact case study database

The impact case study database allows you to browse and search for impact case studies submitted to the REF 2021. Use the search and filters below to find the impact case studies you are looking for.

[Impact case study database FAQs](#)

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[REF 2014 impact case study database](#)

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# Diversity in cases: who gets named?

## Household financial decisions and reform of the structure of the mortgage markets ...

**Submitting institution** Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine  
**Unit of assessment** 17 - Business and Management Studies  
**Summary impact type** Economic  
**Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?** No

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### 1. Summary of the impact

Professor David Miles and Professor Tarun Ramadorai have both, over an extended period, conducted research on household financial decisions. Both have been appointed to conduct landmark research on mortgage markets: Miles by the UK Government (2003), Ramadorai by the Reserve Bank of India.

## Improving electricity sector governance in the UK and China to benefit consumers ...

**Submitting institution** University of Cambridge  
**Unit of assessment** 17 - Business and Management Studies  
**Summary impact type** Economic  
**Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?** No

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### 1. Summary of the impact

Research by Cambridge's Energy Policy Research Group (EPRG) has played an important role in energy market reform in the UK and China. The Group's study, led by Professor Michael Pollitt, underpinned the announcement by National Grid in 2017 to create an independent system operator legally unbundled from

## Advancing legal rules mandating data sharing to ensure innovation

**Submitting institution** University of Oxford  
**Unit of assessment** 17 - Business and Management Studies  
**Summary impact type** Societal  
**Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?** No

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### 1. Summary of the impact

Mayer-Schönberger's research explores the impact of machine automated-learning competition. To neutralise the negative effects of this, he proposes mandated data sharing. This research has led to mandated data sharing in the UK and Germany, and has inspired similar legislation in other countries. It has also led to data sharing in the UK and Amazon to share the data they have collected.

2021 Research Excellence Framework Results															
Quality profiles															
Note: In this table, joint submissions are shown split by their constituent institutions.															
Institution code	Institution name	Institution sort order	Main assessment number	Unit of assessment name	Multiple submission letter	Multiple submission name	Joint submission	Profile	FTE of submitted staff	Percentage of the submission meeting the standard for:					
										Total FTE of submitted staff for joint submission	% of eligible staff submitted	4*	3*	2*	1*
0007788	University of Cambridge	25	C	17 Business and Management Studies				61.20	100	73.00	21.00	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0007788	University of Cambridge	25	C	17 Business and Management Studies				61.20	100	71.10	23.00	5.20	0.70	0.00	0.00
0007788	University of Cambridge	25	C	17 Business and Management Studies				61.20	100	70.00	20.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0007788	University of Cambridge	25	C	17 Business and Management Studies				61.20	100	87.50	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0007794	University of Glasgow	49	C	17 Business and Management Studies				127.33	100	45.00	49.00	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0007794	University of Glasgow	49	C	17 Business and Management Studies				127.33	100	36.60	53.00	9.80	0.60	0.00	0.00
0007794	University of Glasgow	49	C	17 Business and Management Studies				127.33	100	61.10	38.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0007794	University of Glasgow	49	C	17 Business and Management Studies				127.33	100	50.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0003270	Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	64	C	17 Business and Management Studies				92.15	100	70.00	27.00	2.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
0003270	Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	64	C	17 Business and Management Studies				92.15	100	67.50	27.20	4.40	0.90	0.00	0.00
0003270	Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	64	C	17 Business and Management Studies				92.15	100	57.10	42.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0003270	Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	64	C	17 Business and Management Studies				92.15	100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0007774	University of Oxford	100	C	17 Business and Management Studies				84.20	100	59.00	29.00	10.00	2.00	0.00	0.00
0007774	University of Oxford	100	C	17 Business and Management Studies				84.20	100	52.10	35.80	13.80	2.80	0.50	0.00
0007774	University of Oxford	100	C	17 Business and Management Studies				84.20	100	64.30	35.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0007774	University of Oxford	100	C	17 Business and Management Studies				84.20	100	75.00	12.50	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.00

## Establishing the Scottish Fiscal Commission

**Submitting institution** University of Glasgow  
**Unit of assessment** 17 - Business and Management Studies  
**Summary impact type** Economic  
**Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?** No

[Download case study PDF](#)

### 1. Summary of the impact

Professor Leith and colleagues have developed an extensive body of research on fiscal policy and its institutions in response to fiscal policy failures. They have used this research to develop principles and practice that have had a threefold impact on the redesign of Scottish arrangements:

## Financial Inclusion - Supporting Africa's Poorest Farmers

**Submitting institution** Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine  
**Unit of assessment** 17 - Business and Management Studies  
**Summary impact type** Economic  
**Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?** No

[Download case study PDF](#)

### 1. Summary of the impact

Enrico Biffis and Erik Chavez, both at the Brevan Howard Centre for Financial Analysis at Imperial College Business School, conducted the research. The research outputs led to the design and deployment of an innovative parametric agricultural insurance product backed by a global reinsurer, which allowed banks to

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Cambridge
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA17 Business and Management Studies
<b>Title of case study:</b> Building sustainable growth in social enterprises
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2007-2018

Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Paul Tracey	Professor of Innovation and Organization; Co-Director Cambridge Centre for Social Innovation	01.10.2007 to date
Neil Stott	Faculty in Management Practice (Professor-level); Co-Director Cambridge Centre for Social Innovation	01.03.2014 to date
Helen Haugh	Senior Lecturer in Community Enterprise; Research Director	01.10.2008 to date
Belinda Bell	Programme Director of Cambridge Social Ventures	01.11.2017 to date

## 1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

The Cambridge Centre for Social Innovation (CCSI) at the University of Cambridge has pioneered a unique approach to securing the sustainable growth of social enterprises (SEs); business ventures that address social problems. Cambridge Social Ventures (CSV), an SE incubator, is the main route to research impact. It has had a transformative effect on a range of organisations in the sector. Since 2014, CSV has successfully nurtured over 170 SEs tackling a range of social and environmental issues including those related to health, transport, housing, ageing, and education through a tailored system of support. These SEs have raised more than GBP31,000,000 funding, secured GBP3,700,000 in public sector contracts, and reached about 1,700,000 beneficiaries. Two years after joining CSV, 80% of the SEs supported are still trading.



PALGRAVE DEBATES IN  
BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

## Debating Business School Legitimacy

Attacking, Rocking, and  
Defending the Status Quo

Edited by  
Anders Örtenblad  
Riina Koris

palgrave  
macmillan

# 7

## Delegitimizing Women Management Scholars' Underrepresentation in the Research Impact Agenda

Emily Yarrow<sup>id</sup> and Julie Davies<sup>id</sup>

Arguably, business schools have been a major success story (Cornuel et al. 2021) and generate “transcendent goods” (Naudé 2021, p. 51). Counterclaims, however, reveal a dark side for the academic labor force (e.g., Anteby 2016; Tienari 2019) in these “reliable cash cows” (Cameron 2017). Moreover, as Juusola (Chapter 2 in this volume) notes, managerialism has made business schools less attractive workplaces for women.

Globally, business and management studies are the most popular university subjects (Zammuto 2008), and women in many areas make up around half of students. In Australia, pre-pandemic, almost half of the

Yarrow, E., Davies, J. (2022). *Delegitimizing Women Management Scholars' Underrepresentation in the Research Impact Agenda*. In: Örtenblad, A., Koris, R. (eds) *Debating Business School Legitimacy*. Palgrave Debates in Business and Management. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-12725-0\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-12725-0_7)

UCL

## Ongoing research

- Findings from the previous research led us to investigate *who 'does' scholarly impact and, in turn, narratives of serendipity, synergies, and Sisyphus*
- Subsequent exploratory interviews focused on negative experiences of women members of impact case teams at different levels including early career academics. As a follow-up, the research design in this study is based on answering a 'how' question (Eisenhardt, 1989, 1991; Yin, 2014), i.e. how do marginalized individuals (specifically women scholars in UK business schools) engage with impactful scholarship despite deeply engrained gender inequality regimes?
- Three biographical narratives of success-*Fortuna, Hestia, and Sisyphus* – good luck, synergies, and relentless hard labor, as well as high levels of discretionary labour
- We contribute theoretically to understanding how encumbered individuals succeed against the odds in overcoming chronic institutional marginalization. In doing so, we call for systemic changes within business schools by 'extending the big table' (Foster, 2020) and ensuring clearer, further accessible resourcing and support around impact case study writing

## Ongoing research

- Following an analysis of two pilot interviews to refine our interview guide based on our literature review
- purposively selected 15 women leaders of impact cases to interview for our qualitative study to understand their lived experiences of impact case study generation.
- All the women were mid or late career scholars working in business schools in the UK and their anonymity was assured.
- Average one-hour 1-1 semi-structured interviews conducted on Skype/Zoom
- Thematic analysis, mapped onto a Gioia framework, and linked to Acker's Inequality regimes (2009): *I [which] is an analytic approach to understanding the on-going creation of inequalities in work organizations. It can be used to identify inequality-producing practices and their locations in particular organizing processes.* (p. 201)
- we focus on persistent systemic bases for gender inequality which are defined as *'loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings that result in and maintain ... gender ... inequalities'* (Acker, 2009, p. 201).

## Ongoing Research

- Empirical study illustrates the importance of understanding how the individual management education scholar experiences the impact policy agenda and institutional level impact policy/ies.
- We identify coping narratives amongst women impact case leaders. Some see themselves as self-starters, who succeed despite entrenched institutional inequalities through significant self-sacrifice and serendipitous interactions that allow for collaborative synergies despite [gendered] Sisyphean struggles of seemingly endless academic labour to produce impactful scholarship.

*'I would suggest that it needs to receive greater institutional recognition as something that is potentially career enhancing and not career limiting, because I think it's very difficult to ask women to do impact case studies if they know it's not going to help them enhance their career when already they are disadvantaged, I would say on the whole, and in fact it may have a less positive impact on their career if they have to then publish less as a result for example' (Participant 5)*

## Key Findings- Archetypal narratives of women impact case leaders

Fortuna



Bringing good fortune, (self-made) luck, serendipity, beneficial behaviors

Fortuna, the Roman goddess of good fortune and personification of luck

Hestia



Engaged in social and political interactions that create synergies around a focal point despite sacrifices

Hestia, the Ancient Greek goddess of the hearth where members of the community congregated to make sacrifices in the sanctuary of the fireplace.

Sisyphus



Relentless, repetitive and punishing labor with limited sense of progress on tasks that others (and the individual) may consider futile

The third archetype is Sisyphus in Greek mythology, who was repeatedly forced to roll a huge boulder uphill which subsequently fell back down the hill every time it neared the pinnacle



## Key findings- 'Fortuna' serendipity

- Stories of good luck emerged, with scholars feeling fortunate about engaging with impact and benefiting from what they regarded as serendipity. For example, through seeing opportunities for stakeholder engagement, funding.
- Also underpinned by behaviours of self-starters and academic entrepreneurs who are alert to opportunities to create their own luck.
- Krefting (2003) argues that being 'lucky' is a gendered phenomenon within the intertwined discourses of merit and gender, entrenched further by perceived [gendered] status and role discrepancies (Bourabain, 2020: 4).

➤ A serendipity narrative was evident in comments like: *'One thing leads to another. You have to be visible'*  
*'This is not my main research stream, but I keep getting invited to do research projects in this sector.*  
*I'm one of the few women academics around so I'm in a fairly fortunate position.'* (Participant 12)

*'so we decided very clearly that we wanted to do some activist work and become more involved,*  
*no thoughts about impact agenda or REF related stuff, it was all about we wanted to*  
*make a difference in the real world'* (Participant 4)



## Key findings- 'Hestia' – creating synergies

- Despite many impact cases published by women being sole-authored, we found positive accounts of management scholars collaborating
- For instance, one senior professor described how the case functioned as a kind of energizing focal point, like a fire-place or hearth, where people could be brought together to create synergies
- Impactful scholarship entailed personal sacrifices to create time to build and sustain social capital. For example, one case leader remarked:

*'I don't have any caring responsibilities any more as my kids are grown up. So, I'm always the one who can front the impact project, go to industry conferences, dinners, travel overseas. We do try to share the load, but I go well beyond what's in our project funding to ensure we connect with key stakeholders.'*

(Participant 4)

*'I think there's quite a lot of synergy and fit between and impactful research, or research that has pathways to impact. So, the connection then is if that's the kind of research that women need to do, or want to do, or are doing, then the impact agenda might provide them with more spaces, then there used to be. I do think there is this thing though about the time it takes and that we kind of have these contradictory tendencies going on, so there is this impact agenda, but I still think that that very, very strong agenda of individuals publications, linear careers, all that type of stuff, is still there as well'*

(Participant 3)



## Key findings 'Sisyphus'-the endless struggle

- Even the most up-beat interviewees commented on the academic labour required to generate scholarship. Despite tangible successes, the theme of Sisyphus was explicitly stated in several remarks about relentless hard labour and seemingly little, if any, progress at times and with no reward or recognition.

*'it's like pushing a rock up hill every morning' 'it's a constant uphill battle.'*

- Another individual commented: *'at the centre, they keep telling me to tighten up my impact case but there's no gratitude or offer of help, just criticism about writing and re-writing the case. I do things in my own time as a professor. I guess, at least they don't interfere.'*
- *'while I'm grafting on this research impact case, my colleagues are writing theoretical papers and getting professorships and my career is going nowhere. I came from practice as an organizational psychologist. I would do external engagement without being required to demonstrate impact. I enjoy it but it's very time consuming and there are personal and professional opportunity costs.'*





# AACSB and Societal Impact

## Aligning With the AACSB 2020 Business Accreditation Standards

February 2023

Source:  
<https://www.aacsb.edu/insights/briefings/aacsb-and-societal-impact>  
(retrieved:  
28/03/2023)

## What Is Societal Impact in the AACSB Context and What Is It Not?

The corporate trend from a purely shareholder focus to more of a stakeholder focus is reflected in the 2020 business accreditation standards, which elevate societal impact as an important component of a quality business school. For our purposes, **societal impact encompasses activities undertaken by business schools that over time lead to meaningful, discernible change for the betterment of people, economies, and the environment.** While the 2020 standards set an expectation that AACSB-accredited schools make a positive impact on society, the standards are not prescriptive in telling schools which or how many societal impact initiatives to focus on. (ibid., AACSB, 2020)

# Key points on inclusion in the Impact Agenda

- ✓ Our contributions seek to be rooted in *making a difference*, though casting light upon how we can ensure contemporary egalitarianism in the scholarly impact agenda.
- ✓ We call for systemic changes to ensure more equitable opportunities in business schools in terms of who 'does impact'. Inclusive faculty development requires our research insights to impact ourselves and to shift beyond traditional heroic paradigms of academic labour (Harley, 2019).
- ✓ Although the impact agenda is 'extending the big table' (Foster, 2020) of management research to wider beneficiaries beyond business schools, the practical implementation of impact policy appears to lack incentives and institutional infrastructure for faculty inclusion.
- ✓ To support the increasing attention to the impact agenda, we recommend that metrics in rankings, accreditations, and in awarding research funding seriously take into account how business schools ensure equity and equality of opportunity in practice internally.
- ✓ Impact case study author 'packages' which include funding for childcare, travel, and WAM allowance
- ✓ Further clarification of funding and resources available and clarification of resourcing during maternity leave

## Discussion points & questions

- 1. Please describe the journey of producing your impact case(s) from the initiation to after submission.**
2. What systems and activities supported successful elements of your case impact writing?
3. Please provide examples of your experiences of creating your own luck, self-reliance, autonomy, collaborations.
4. What was the composition of your team in terms of gender and what were the individuals' different contributions over time (design, fieldwork, engagement, communications, promotion, taking credit)?
5. To what extent has the impact case helped your career?
6. How do you think women can be supported to engage with the impact agenda?
7. What advice would you offer people who are interested in engaging with the impact agenda?

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# Thank you

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