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## Featured researcher: Ken Jackson

Ken is a retired academic, who currently holds the position of adjunct research Professor at AIS, as well as that of an honorary academic in Development Studies at the University of Auckland.

His research interests and resulting publications have focused on various topics and geographical areas of economic history, economics and development. The more recent specialisations have included:

- studies of the long term drivers of economic growth
- innovation and technology
- migration and remittances
- resource use
- trade agreements
- economic liberalisation
- aid effectiveness
- institutional change
- economic infrastructure
- poverty issues

These have resulted in two edited volumes and a large number of refereed publications, mostly sole authored. Other publications have been collaborative, most notably an involvement in the major work on *Global Electrification* which appeared under the authorship of Professors

William J. Hausman, (College of William & Mary), Peter Hertner (Martin Luther University) and Mira Wilkins (Florida International University). The Paris workshop and presentation of papers in 2003, on my way back to New Zealand from my first visit to what was then only just a post-conflict Kosovo, is still etched in my memory, not least owing to the Électricité de France funding and the organisers' apology that lunch was restricted to only two hours! A fortunate chapter in a richly rewarding research life. Eastern Europe was rewarding, not for the wine, but for the experience of working with some remarkable mature colleagues and some of their very bright and keen students, engaged in the difficult venture of recovery and reconstruction.

May 2013 saw a presentation of continuing research into the drivers of economic growth to an international audience in Pristina, Kosovo, representing a culmination of more than ten years of working visits and email collaboration with the RIINVEST Institute on a range of issues. That presentation has undergone further research and revision in 2014 with a symposium presentation at Saga University, Japan in January, and is currently being re-worked and revised for another presentation in China in September.

The impact of outcomes of much work and effort to improve the Kosovan economy over that period has not been as great as it might have been, or as great as some of us would have wished for. Applied economic research and attempts at informed practical policy formulation can be frustrating and difficult. It showed that textbook training may not prepare the researcher adequately, or may not provide anything other than an "ideal world" set of tools. The reality is that custom, tradition, the political and social structures and ways of thinking cannot be lightly assumed away; all else is not always easily held equal.






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*“The ideal outcome is that your research proves useful to some, and that others will benefit and further develop your own contribution”*

Is this a problem with research that should cause researchers to tear their hair out? The answer is no; it is a problem certainly, but not one for despairing over (and anyway many of us older researchers do not have enough hair left to start tearing). The problem makes the challenge of research that much more challenging and interesting. A reading of Douglass North’s work, such as *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* on institutional change and issues of “path dependency”, is encouraging rather than daunting in this regard, but it cannot provide a simple blueprint or manual on how to approach the issue. Rather, it is a cautionary tale. Similarly, the work of Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, and his work on the capabilities and entitlement approaches, represents another challenging but vitally useful philosophical approach to growth and development, which are not one and the same by any means. North and Sen can enlighten and

inform and give some guidance to the individual researcher to develop their own analysis, approach or model, which should take account of the multiplicity of factors that feed into growth and development.

W.W. Rostow’s post Bretton Woods blueprint encapsulated in *The Stages of Economic Growth* and subsequent writings including the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition published in 1990, may appear relatively easy to operationalise, but is not really an effective, useful or practical prescription. The current Millennium Development Goals and their imminent deadline of 2015, share some of the Rostow problems in this regard, including the reliance on the supposed superiority of outside ideas and objectives, largely disregarding the value of the ideas and objectives of those on the receiving end. If there is one big thing that 40 or more years of research has suggested to me, it is that real and fully sustainable growth and development is principally achieved from within the society

itself. For Kosovo, it is those bright young students who are now taking the reins and driving things who represent the inside. I am optimistic enough in my belief that they will succeed. They, and others like them in other societies, can and should be assisted and fostered from outside, but the germ of ideas and policies needs to take hold inside to be self-sustaining. This needs to be a far richer notion or concept than the narrowly economic focus of Rostow’s stages three and four and self-perpetuating growth.

The ideal outcome is that your research proves useful to some, and that others will benefit and further develop your own contribution. In concluding my reflections, I would add that the students who have produced the more than 20 completed doctoral theses and much larger number of masters and honours theses and dissertations I have been associated with over the years, have certainly done this. As with all research, there is much to learn and many others to contribute to the learning process.

Hausman, W. J., Hertner, P., & Wilkins, M. (2011). *Global electrification: Multinational enterprise and international finance in the history of light and power, 1878–2007*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

North, D.C. (1991). *Institutions, institutional change and economic performance*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rostow, W. W. (1960). *The stages of economic growth: A non-Communist manifesto* (1<sup>st</sup> edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1990).

Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom* (1st ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2001).

## Writing questionnaire items

To understand common problems with questionnaire items, let me throw you in at the deep end. Try to complete the following questionnaire. You may find that some of the items are difficult to answer. Why?

- 1 Name: .....
- 2 Age: .....
- 3 Sex: .....
- 4 What is your annual income? .....
- 5 Do you think our company should open an on-site child-care centre as a means of ensuring the welfare of employees' small children?  
 Yes  No
- 6 Our company should spend less money on advertising and more money on infrastructure development.  
 Agree  Disagree
- 7 In your opinion, what is the major cause of high student turnover?  
 inadequate heating/air-conditioning  
 financial problems  
 poor recreational facilities  
 poor studying conditions  
 inadequate pastoral care
- 8 When did our company open? .....
- 9 Do you think children require strict discipline?  
 Yes  Not sure/don't know  No
- 10 How long have you been in New Zealand?  
 less than 1 year  1-2 years  2-3 years  more than 3 years

Questions 1 - 3 are usually the first three that people write. However, we must ask whether we need this information. If you are never going to contact the respondent again, you don't need their name.

You don't need their sex unless you are going to analyse all the subsequent data in terms of male vs female.

The same is true of age and, of course, many people may be embarrassed and unwilling to tell you their age.

Similarly, many respondents may not be willing to let you know how much they earn. In addition, they may not be sure to the nearest dollar. If you really need this information, consider using bands ( \$40,000 - \$50,000, etc).

Question 5 is a leading question, in that it is worded in order to guide respondents to your preferred response. Who is not concerned about ensuring the welfare of employees' young children? Surely, nobody. So, given that the child-care centre is presented as a (the?) means of ensuring this, how could anyone respond "No". A similar problem occurred in the 2007 New Zealand referendum: "Should a smack as part of good parental correction be a criminal offence in New Zealand?" The problem is the word *good*. Why would anyone object to something that was presented as being good? (Leave out the word *good*, and the item is now far less leading.)




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*"Why would anyone object to something that was presented as being good?"*

The problem with question 6 is that someone who thinks the company should spend more on advertising and also more on infrastructure development cannot respond *Agree* or *Disagree*. The question is, in fact, two unrelated questions, and should be written as two questions. A similar problem was contained in the 2012 New Zealand referendum: "Do you support the Government selling up to 49% of Meridian Energy, Mighty River Power, Genesis Power, Solid Energy and Air New Zealand?" A respondent may be against selling the power companies, but in favour of selling the airline; do they answer *Yes* or *No*?

A respondent may think that a major cause of high student turnover is poor heating, which makes studying difficult. That is, there may be overlap between the first and fourth responses.

Questions like #8 should not appear in questionnaires at all. It sounds like a quiz question, and the answer can be found by looking at the company annual report, etc. You do not need to ask it in a questionnaire. Questionnaire items should be asking about two kinds of thing: (i) personal information about the respondent, eg nationality, income, and (ii) opinions. Both of these differ from respondent to respondent.

As Colosi (2006) explains, "asking 'Do you think children require strict discipline?' requires each respondent to answer based on their own definition of 'strict'. In contrast, asking 'Is it appropriate to spank a child who breaks your rules?' is much more specific." The

word *strict* is thus ambiguous: it can mean very different things to different people. An example of such ambiguity comes in the 1977 Woody Allen film *Annie Hall*. In a split-screen scene, both Woody Allen's character (Alvy Singer) and Diane Keaton's (Annie Hall) are asked by therapists how often they have sex. Singer replies, "Hardly ever. Maybe three times a week," while Hall replies, "Constantly. I'd say three times a week."

Imagine you have been in New Zealand exactly two years, to the day. Which response do you tick in question 10?

Here are some dos and don'ts for questionnaire items (adapted from Ober, 2007):

### Content

- Do not ask for information that is easily available elsewhere.
- How many items are there altogether in the questionnaire? How big is each question? How long will the questionnaire take to complete?
- Have a purpose for each question. Make sure that all questions directly help you to solve your problem. Avoid asking for unimportant or merely interesting information.
- Use precise wording so that no question can possibly be misunderstood. Use clear, simple language, and define any term that may be

unfamiliar to the respondent or that you are using in a special way.

- Use neutrally worded questions and deal with only one topic per question. Avoid loaded, leading or multifaceted questions.
- Ensure that the response choices are exhaustive (that is, that there is an appropriate response for every one).
- Ensure that the response choices are mutually exclusive (that is, that there are no overlapping categories).
- Be especially careful about asking sensitive and embarrassing questions, such as information about age, salary or morals. Consider using broad categories for such questions (instead of narrow, more specific categories).
- Pilot your questionnaire on a few people to ensure that all questions function as intended. Revise as needed.

### Organisation

- Arrange the questions in some logical order. Group together all questions that deal with a particular topic. If your questionnaire is long, divide it into sections.
- Arrange the alternatives for each question in some logical order, such as numerical, chronological or alphabetical.

- Give the questionnaire a descriptive title, and provide whatever directions are necessary.
- Add an introductory paragraph explaining what the questionnaire is about. A final 'thank you' is nice too.

### Format

- Use an easy-to-answer format. Tick-off questions with boxes () draw the most responses and are easiest to answer and tabulate. Use free-response items only when absolutely necessary.
- Think about the answers: all possible answers, how the respondents will answer (tick boxes, circle numbers, etc). How many items can respondents tick: one or more?
- If there is a choice of answer, how large is the choice: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7-point scale?
- If you use 'Strongly agree' – 'Strongly disagree', the item must be a statement, not a question.
- If you use 'Other', add '(Please specify).....'
- Pay attention to layout.
- Spell check!



The following formats are often used for questionnaire items.

**1 Free-response**

Name: .....  
 Other (please specify): .....  
 Any other feedback? .....

**2 Yes/no**

Are you a member of the union?  Yes  No  
 Do you support the management’s latest initiative?  Yes  Not sure/don’t know  No

**3 Single / multiple choice from a list**

What is the major reason you eat at McDonald’s? (Tick one / Tick all that apply)

- Price
- Taste
- Range
- Freshness
- Environment
- Other (please specify): .....

**4 Agreement with a statement**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Auckland should invest more in public transport.					
Auckland should develop its railway system.					
Auckland should build more motorways.					

***Local conferences***

24 – 25 September 2014  
 Vaka Pasifiki Education Centre Conference  
 “Weaving Theory and Practice in teacher education for Oceania”  
 Nukualofa, Tonga  
 Contact: moale.otunuku@usp.ac.fj

23 – 26 November 2014  
 Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ascilite) Conference  
 Rhetoric and Reality: Critical perspectives on educational technology  
 University of Otago, Dunedin  
<http://ascilite2014.otago.ac.nz>

26 - 28 November 2014  
 Association of Tertiary Learning Advisors of Aotearoa New Zealand  
 Enhancing Student Success in a changing World  
 AUT University, Auckland  
[www.atlaanz.org/conference/2014-conference](http://www.atlaanz.org/conference/2014-conference)

8 – 9 December 2014  
 World Business, Finance and Management Conference  
 Rendezvous Hotel, Auckland  
[www.newzealandconfo.com](http://www.newzealandconfo.com)

9 – 12 December 2014  
 New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference  
 “Tourism in the Asia Pacific Region”  
 University of Waikato, Hamilton  
[gce.orbit.co.nz/ei/images/NZ\\_Tourism\\_Hospitality\\_Research\\_Conference\\_Call\\_for\\_Papers.pdf](http://gce.orbit.co.nz/ei/images/NZ_Tourism_Hospitality_Research_Conference_Call_for_Papers.pdf)

12 – 15 January 2015  
 17<sup>th</sup> Global Risk and International Business World Congress  
 Stamford Plaza, Brisbane  
[www.review-gjsg.com/RePEc/sgv/gjsg01/seoul2011/index.php?page=home](http://www.review-gjsg.com/RePEc/sgv/gjsg01/seoul2011/index.php?page=home)

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enquiry@ais.ac.nz

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See us at:  
[www.ais.ac.nz](http://www.ais.ac.nz)

### We're also on Facebook!

2 – 5 February 2015  
CAUTHE (Council for Australasian University Tourism and Hospitality Education)  
"Rising Tides and Sea Changes: Adaptation and Innovation in Tourism and Hospitality"

Southern Cross University's School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Gold Coast campus  
[www.cauthe.org/services/conferences](http://www.cauthe.org/services/conferences)

12 – 13 February 2015  
3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Management, Leadership and Governance  
AUT University, Auckland  
[academic-conferences.org/icmlg/icmlg2015/icmlg15-home.htm](http://academic-conferences.org/icmlg/icmlg2015/icmlg15-home.htm)

11 – 13 March 2015  
18<sup>th</sup> Accounting, Financial & Economic Research Conference  
Novotel Canberra  
[sgsrconference.review-gjsg.com](http://sgsrconference.review-gjsg.com)

26 – 28 April 2015  
19<sup>th</sup> Global Business, Competitiveness & Risks Planning Conference  
Hyatt Regency Perth  
[gbcric.review-gjsg.com](http://gbcric.review-gjsg.com)

10 – 13 June 2015  
13<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Council On Hotel, Restaurant And Institutional Education (APACCHRIE) Conference, in conjunction with 14<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Forum for Graduate Students' Research in Tourism  
*Hospitality and Tourism in a Greening World: Challenges and Opportunities*  
Viaduct Events Centre, Auckland  
[www.apacchrie2015.com](http://www.apacchrie2015.com)

2 – 4 July 2015  
Centre for Research in International Education (CRIE) conference  
"Trends and issues in international education"  
Auckland Institute of Studies  
[www.crie.org.nz](http://www.crie.org.nz)

## **About Auckland Institute of Studies ...**

Auckland Institute of Studies is a unique tertiary institution with a distinctive international focus. Since its inception, this developing institute has attracted students and staff from countries around the world and has now developed a number of close relationships with leading educational institutions internationally.

### **Our programmes**

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Postgraduate Certificate in Business Administration

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Diploma in International Business (Level 5)

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Bachelor of Information Technology  
Diploma in Information Technology (Level 6)  
Diploma in Information Technology (Level 5)

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Bachelor of Tourism Management  
Diploma in Tourism Management (Level 6)

Diploma in Tourism Management (Level 5)  
National Certificate in Hospitality (Cafés) (Level 3)

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Bachelor of Hospitality Management  
Diploma in Hospitality Operations Management (Level 6)  
Diploma in Hospitality Operations (Level 5)

English as a Foreign Language  
English for Academic Purposes  
IELTS Preparation  
Cert TESOL

\* Subject to NZQA approval

The AIS research newsletter (ISSN 2357-2426) aims to establish and foster collegial partnerships in common research interests, through high quality research outputs and sharing research ideas and resources. Correspondence about the newsletter should be sent to Christine Edwards at the above address, or email [christinee@ais.ac.nz](mailto:christinee@ais.ac.nz). The editors are Dr Adam Brown ([adamb@ais.ac.nz](mailto:adamb@ais.ac.nz)), Dr Ershad Ali ([ershada@ais.ac.nz](mailto:ershada@ais.ac.nz)), and Rubaiyet Khan ([rubaiyetk@ais.ac.nz](mailto:rubaiyetk@ais.ac.nz)).