shiftXchange 2024

A Practice-Based Approach to
Rethinking Leadership in the Digital Era

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Book of Abstracts

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Message from Prof. Mari Jansen Van Rensburg

Dear Participants, Partners and Sponsors

It is a great privilege to welcome you to the first ShiftXchange conference, resulting from fruitful collaborations between Stadio, Business Mauritius, and Middlesex University Mauritius.

Technology has become essential in the workplace, and as organisations continue to adopt digital transformation, the roles and responsibilities of leaders are evolving. The rise of hybrid office models and the increasing number of Gen Z employees contribute to a unique and continuously changing work environment. In this digital era, leaders are expected to be more empathetic, collaborative, and inclusive. They should cultivate a culture of innovation that encourages teams to experiment and take risks. Additionally, leaders need to be flexible and adaptable, able to adjust quickly to new technologies and market conditions. Effective leadership includes creating a sense of purpose and meaning for employees, which is particularly important for the Gen Z workforce, who prioritise meaningful work and purpose-driven careers. This conference explores the notion that leadership encompasses more than technology, emphasising the need to rethink leadership in the digital era.

Aligned with Middlesex University's commitment to creating knowledge and driving positive change for fairer, healthier, and more prosperous societies, the conference's theme and objectives support our commitment to pursue excellence by participating in impactful coalitions with practice and academia to help shape the direction of knowledge-producing communities. Our university recognises the importance of collaboration in finding solutions to complex problems. We are confident that this conference will provide a valuable platform for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to share their knowledge and experiences and collaborate on solutions.

We encourage you to actively engage in the multisectoral deliberations and discussions throughout the conference. Together, we can contribute to the transformation agenda required to address the pressing challenges of our time. Let us seize this opportunity to connect, learn, and inspire one another, ultimately positively impacting our workplace and communities.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all participants, sponsors, and organisers who have made this conference a reality. Your contributions and presence are invaluable, and we look forward to a fruitful and inspiring event.

Warm regards,
Prof Mari Jansen Van Rensburg
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Middlesex University
Campus Director, Middlesex University Mauritius

Message from Prof. Divya Singh

Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Friends

It is with profound anticipation - and a sense of suspense - that I welcome you to the inaugural 2024 Shift Xchange Conference under the theme *Rethinking Leadership in the Digital Era: A Praxis Based Approach*. For the last many years phrases such as "technology-driven organisations", "systems-led learning", "AI in the workplace", and "the digital revolution" have abounded in formal and popular media and probably with real justification as we all experience the remarkable changes wrought by technology in our short lifetimes. However, whether technology will lead is to a utopian or dystopian future is a factor of our choosing; a question of how those responsible for its design, development, deployment, and use handle the new opportunities and solutions presented to them. In this era, there is also no gainsaying that the fusion of academic rigour and hands-on experience is key.

This Conference brings together a select group of practitioners and academics, all of whom are leaders in their fields of practice - but who also understand the opportunities and challenges of technology - to share best practices and experiences that complement the ongoing dialogue on leading with responsible technology.

As we navigate the complexities of a rapidly evolving digital landscape, the role of leadership has never been more crucial. During the conference my hope is that we will engage robustly to explore not just the theoretical underpinnings of leading with technology, but also the practical applications that make a real difference in our organisations and communities of practice. At STADIO Higher Education, we know that to remain relevant, the institution must integrate praxis into its curricula to equip the next generation of leaders with the skills they need to thrive in a digital world. I believe that this Conference is an opportunity for us to reflect and learn from one another on how we can strengthen our own unique spaces as we are called upon to lead in a digital age.

STADIO is excited about its partnerships with Middlesex University, Globethics, Contact North I Contact Nord, and Business Mauritius. I believe that this collaborative Conference sets the stage for a rich and dynamic tapestry of shared ideas that underscores the collective commitment to shaping a more informed, capable, responsible, and innovative leadership for tomorrow. As we navigate this digital transformation, where change is constant and often unpredictable, I believe that opportunities for ongoing sharing will create a stronger, more accountable, more responsible, more adaptive, and more resilient leadership for the future.

Thank you for joining us, and welcome.

Prof. Divya Singh
Chief Academic Officer
STADIO Higher Education

Message from Ms. Zaahira Ebramjee

Dear Participants

Business Mauritius is pleased to partner with Middlesex University Mauritius and STADIO Higher Education South Africa for this inaugural ShiftXchange Conference. The 3-day event is a unique opportunity which brings together academic pioneers, thought leaders, industry experts, and policymakers to explore new paradigms of leadership in the digital age.

The Conference offers a platform for participants to gain valuable insights into leveraging cutting-edge technologies to drive innovation and enhance team performance. It is an exceptional opportunity for networking and learning, providing attendees with the tools to navigate the complexities of modern-day leadership.

A key focus of the industry segment will be on how Enterprise AI and data sciences can be harnessed to address complex business challenges, moving beyond the generative AI conversation. Business Mauritius will facilitate discussions with industry experts to delve into these critical issues.

Additionally, the carefully curated plenary sessions and lively panel discussions will underscore the importance of fostering stronger connections between academia and industry. By aligning academic research with practical industry needs, we aim to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and innovation, thereby accelerating the application of academic advancements practical, real-world challenges.

The ShiftXchange Conference is designed for a wide audience, from seasoned executives and emerging leaders, to business strategists and tech start-ups. It is indeed a great opportunity to collaborate and shape the evolving landscape of leadership through this transformative experience

Zaahira Ebramjee
Head of National Economic Collaboration
Business Mauritius

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A Proposed Model for Leadership-driven Responsible Technology Adoption

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The rapid evolution of technology significantly impacts all aspects of life, particularly how organisations conduct their business. Embracing technology in this digital era is not a choice but a mandatory reality that requires the adoption thereof. To thrive in the ever-changing business world and leverage technological advancements, leaders should be open to evolving their roles and adapting their leadership styles. Additionally, embracing technology involves more than just adapting to digital transformation. It also requires considering the potential impact of technology on individuals, society, and the environment, and taking steps to minimise any negative consequences. Leaders must, therefore, ensure that the adoption of technology is based on responsible technology principles that will encompass ethics, deployment, and the use of technology.

A study was conducted to examine the impact leadership has on driving responsible technology deployment and usage. The methodology used by the researcher was a qualitative research design, using desktop research with content analysis using secondary sources. The research results revealed that effective leadership is essential for driving innovation and technology adoption while considering the importance of creating a positive work environment and ensuring overall business success. However, embracing technology presents challenges, such as legal and ethical issues, resistance to change, employee capabilities, cultural legacies, work processes, and resource constraints.

Based on the study results, the researcher concluded that it is necessary to develop a proposed framework for digital transformation. This proposed framework encompasses a comprehensive strategy to address identified challenges and aims to assist leaders in effectively driving responsible technology adoption in their businesses.

Keywords: Leadership; digital transformation; responsible technology

Navigating the Age of Online Learning and Artificial Intelligence: Identifying and Managing Assessment Risks in Private Higher Education in South Africa

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Research suggests that the forced adoption of online or virtual modalities for business operations due to the global COVID-19 pandemic may have increased the exposure of businesses and individuals to risks such as data loss or breaches, impersonation and fraud, amongst others . In the education sector, it is widely acknowledged that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that offer their programmes online or transitioned online due to the disruptions of COVID-19 have experienced a surge in academic assessment malpractices and other unethical behaviours thereby exposing them to compliance and reputational risk. Also, the current surge in easily available AI tools, poses questions about academic integrity and ethics in the higher education context. Recent research shows that lecturers and administrators are experiencing an increase in e-cheating and challenges developing methods to adequately assess student learning in online environments while maintaining academic integrity. As a result, there is a growing concern about the authenticity of student work in online learning environments in many HEIs. The forgoing has major implications on the academic integrity and sanctity of qualifications offered by HEIs in a technologically driven world.

Guided by an interpretivist research paradigm and the Committee of Sponsoring Organisations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework, this paper sought to explore the risk management protocols implemented by a private higher education institution in South Africa in their online distance learning programmes.

 An exploratory qualitative research approach was employed in collecting data from fourteen participants who were purposively selected. The participants are key stakeholders in online distance learning with considerable lecturing and managerial experience in different formats of online and technology-mediated learning. The paper is guided by the following questions:

- What are the main risks associated with assessment and academic integrity in online distance learning programmes of a Private Higher Education Institutions in South Africa?
- What are the risk management protocols for assessment implemented by a private higher education institution to ensure that academic integrity in online distance learning programmes is maintained?

The paper revealed that **rapid technological advancement and academic dishonesty** are major risks to assessment and academic integrity in online distance learning programmes. Embedded in this are risks associated **with technological acceleration** as well as **epistemic and infrastructural deficiency**. To address the identified risks, the paper posits that **formulation and implementation of assessment**

policies along with the deployment of technological tools are some of the core risk management protocols adopted at the institution to ensure that academic integrity is maintained.

The paper, which is based on a Masters' dissertation by the first author, recommends for continuous training of students and academic staff on the ethical use of tools and technologies for assessment purposes and academic integrity in the online learning environment.

Keywords: Online Distance Learning; Academic Integrity; Assessment Dishonesty; Risk Management Protocols; Private Higher Education.

Smart Talk: Utilising Large Language Models for Inclusive Assessment Practices

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This research explores the use of Large Language Models (LLMs) in the formulation of inclusive assessment questions and feedback in higher education. Reflecting on experiments that employ an LLM conversational agent in the teacher, assessor and student roles and personas, this research aims to shed light on the value of LLMs to ensure inclusive assessments.

Grounded in Denise Batchelor's theoretical framework of inclusive education, this research follows a collaborative auto-ethnographic approach to uncover the Practical Epistemological and Ontological Voices observed in these experiments. In Batchelor's framework, the practical voice refers to the application of inclusive teaching practices and strategies to meet diverse student needs. The epistemological voice focuses on understanding and validating different ways of knowing and learning, ensuring that diverse perspectives are recognised and valued, and the ontological voice refers to the acknowledgment and affirmation of each student's identity and existence, fostering a sense of belonging and self-worth within the student community.

The three authors, academics based at a large private higher education institution in South Africa, reflected on their respective experiments conducted in conjunction with an LLM conversational agent. Data was collected through three live online sessions conducted on Teams and recorded. The automatic transcriptions were thematically analysed and coded. LLMs were used by the authors to provide an additional voice, as sounding board and critical friend, the process of which was meticulously recorded.

Although the practical voice is most directly associated with the lecturer role, the epistemological voice with the assessor function, and the ontological voice with the student persona, it was found that the three voices were present in all three sets of experiments.
The study underscores the potential of LLMs to help ensure the inclusivity and effectiveness of assessment practices in higher education by addressing practical, epistemological, and ontological dimensions. In addition, it was found that Denise Batchelor's theoretical framework of inclusive education provides a useful lens to consider the different ways that LLMs can help ensure inclusive education assessment practices.

Keywords: Large Language Models; Artificial Intelligence; Higher Education; Authentic Assessment.

The Influence of Digital Technology on Decision-Making in the South African Police Service: A Critical Analysis

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In the contemporary landscape of law enforcement, the integration of digital technology has emerged as a pivotal factor shaping decision-making processes within policing agencies worldwide. This study delves into the specific context of the South African Police Service (SAPS) to scrutinize how digital technologies guide, steer, and influence decision-making among its leadership cadre. Through a qualitative research approach encompassing interviews, document analysis, and observation, this research investigates the multifaceted interplay between digital technology adoption and decision-making within the SAPS leadership framework.

Drawing upon theoretical frameworks from organizational behavior, technology adoption, and decision science, this research explores the mechanisms through which digital technologies interface with the decision-making dynamics of SAPS leaders. By examining the utilization of digital platforms, data analytics tools, and communication technologies, this study elucidates how these technological interventions inform strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making processes within the SAPS hierarchy.

Moreover, this research scrutinizes the challenges and opportunities presented by digital technology integration, including issues of data privacy, cybersecurity, and the adaptation of traditional policing paradigms to the digital age. By analyzing the experiences, perceptions, and practices of SAPS leaders in leveraging digital technology for decision-making, this study offers insights into the evolving role of technology in law enforcement governance and accountability.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the burgeoning discourse on digital transformation in policing contexts, offering recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers seeking to harness the potential of digital technology to enhance decision-making efficacy and organizational performance within the South African Police Service.

Keywords: Digital technology, Decision-making, South African Police Service (SAPS), Leadership, Policing.

Exploring the Lived Experience of a Community Involved in a Sustainability Initiative

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The importance of corporate sustainability forming an integral part of business operations is established. Organisations demonstrate sustainable leadership by embedding sustainability practices into their strategies and operations and by adopting an integrated view of sustainability (Le Roux & Pretorius, 2016; Tushar, 2017; Sharafizad, Redmond & Craig, 2022). As part of their commitment, organisations invest considerable amounts of resources towards sustainability initiatives that emanate from the sustainability policies and strategies of an organisation (OECD, 2022). These sustainability initiatives and investments are usually made public through corporate communication channels such as integrated reports and corporate websites and they attract environmental, social, and governance (ESG) conscious investors (Rim & Song, 2017; Omran, Zaid & Dwekat, 2020). Given the importance of being considered a sustainable organisation and listing the requirement of Integrated reporting (Le Roux & Pretorius, 2019; Corvino, Doni & Martini, 2020), the organisation's sustainability strategy and perspectives are widely communicated. What is not well communicated are the lived experiences of communities involved in corporate sustainability initiatives (Taylor, Vithayathil & Yim, 2018).

Stakeholder feedback is instrumental in implementing and improving sustainability initiatives through developing a collaborating relationship between the organisation and the community (Horisch, Schaltegger & Windolph, 2015; Wanner & Probstl-Haider, 2019). The application of a two-way sustainability communication model allows the community's experience to be considered as a critical perspective when drafting sustainability strategies that will be executed by sustainability leaders (Mkombe & De Beer, 2020).

To explore the phenomenon, we asked; what are the lived experiences of the community members involved in a company's sustainability initiative? How does a community experience its involvement in a sustainability initiative? How is the community affected by the sustainability initiative? How does the community experience the relationship with the company? What recommendations can be made to companies regarding their corporate sustainability initiative based on the lived experience of the community? A phenomenological research strategy and qualitative single case study design was adopted to better understand the lived experiences of community members involved in a company's sustainability initiative (Gustafsson, 2017). The selected case company is a leading retail company in South Africa that prides itself in embedding sustainability into their core business strategy and therefore represented a revelatory case (Yin, 2014). The participants were selected through non-probability purposive sampling, and the data was gathered using semi-structured interviews and observations. The data was thematically analysed using inductive reasoning, where the findings were established through the themes and sub-themes (Thomas, 2006).

The findings revealed that the community's experience with sustainability initiatives is enhanced by a transparent and consistent relationship with the organisation. The findings from this study are likely to benefit managers in understanding the importance of stakeholder engagement when formulating sustainability strategies. This understanding may lead to improved effective use of resources and ultimately improve the organisation's bottom line.

Keywords: Corporate Sustainability; Sustainability Initiatives; Stakeholder Engagement; Sustainability Embeddedness; Lived Experience.

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Rethinking Leader's Social Responsibility: An Exploration of CSR Funding Towards Anti-Domestic Violence Initiatives in Mauritius

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Purpose: The charitable sector grew increasingly competitive globally, particularly for causes like domestic violence (Charities Aid Foundation, 2022; Immordino et al., 2020, Sung et al., 2023). Although there was a rise in charity giving in developed countries, a decline was noted in developing countries such as Mauritius which was among the biggest fallers from 2017 to 2021 (CAF World Giving Index, 2022). This emphasizes the urgency for resilient and impactful advertising strategies that can encourage audiences to donate. An ongoing doctoral research (Seedoyal-Seereekissoon et al., 2024) was carried out to determine the impact of two contrasting message frames on actual individual donation behaviours in anti-domestic violence advertising campaigns. Building on this context, an exploratory study was conducted to investigate about the alignment between individual donation behaviours and the allocation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds by Mauritius' leading private companies, particularly focusing on anti-domestic violence initiatives.

Methodology: This study explored a detailed review of the CSR activities of the top 10 private companies in Mauritius (The Top 100 Companies, 2023; Fidele, 2023). Data was collected from publicly available corporate reports and websites, focusing on initiatives that directly or indirectly support anti-domestic violence efforts. The analysis aimed to assess both the scope of these initiatives and the proportion of overall CSR resources dedicated to them. Moreover, a comparative analysis was conducted using data from ongoing doctoral research about the individual donation behaviours towards anti-domestic violence charities and the CSR activities to understand potential alignments or disparities.

Findings: The survey of individual donation behaviours demonstrated that while majority of respondents (i.e. 86.6%) have donated to charities, very few had contributed to anti-domestic violence charities specifically (i.e. 13.7%) in the past. This significant gap in donor engagement with domestic violence issues relates to the findings by Immordino et al. (2020). From the exploratory research, findings indicated that among the top 10 companies, only one had directly collaborated with an NGO focusing on supporting victims of domestic violence. The majority of CSR activities were directed towards the empowerment of vulnerable groups, education, poverty alleviation, protection of environment and social inclusivity. Interestingly, it was noted that three companies engaged in supporting initiatives against child abuse which is another critical form of violence.

Recommendations: The observed disparity in donations between general and anti-domestic violence charities necessitates a critical reassessment of CSR priorities to ensure a more balanced allocation of resources. Corporations are encouraged to realign their CSR strategies more closely with social issues faced in the country, including domestic violence, to maximise their impact on community wellbeing.

Moreover, anti-domestic violence charities should intensify targeted advertising and awareness campaigns to communicate more effectively their causes and attract increased funding and collaboration from companies.

Keywords: Charity Donations; Rethinking Social Responsibility; Social Marketing

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Exploring the Role of Trust as a Strategic Enabler for Competitive Advantage: A Case Study of South African Manufacturing Company

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Trust is considered to be a "must-have" in the data-driven digital economy, making it a critical core competency for organisations looking to gain an advantage and be sustainable in today's competitive and rapidly changing, digital climate (Jajji, 2019; Lin, 2007; Mahdi et al., 2019). The digital transformation imperative has led organisations to embrace new business models, however, to unlock the value of digitalisation, organisations need to make trust a core pillar of their transformation (Jaggi, 2019).

Existing research confirms the connection between trust and competitive advantage (CA) (Forbes, 2022; Ha et al., 2021; Ismail et al., 2017; Qureshi & Evans, 2013; Silvestri et al., 2023) and has deepened our understanding of the components of CA, (e.g.,Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2022; Ha et al., 2021; Mahdi et al., 2019; Silvestri et al., 2023; Simons, 1990; Wright et al., 1994). Other studies have explored trust in the context of employee behaviour, sustainable leadership, performance and human resource management (Afsar et al., 2021; Alaaraj et al., 2018; Gabel Shemueli et al., 2022; Ilyas et al., 2020; Islam et al., 2020; Karhapää et al., 2022; Kidron et al., 2016; Men et al., 2020; Paschina, 2023; Wohlgemuth et al., 2019). Despite these studies contributing to an improved understanding of trust in organisations, most studies have either been quantitative or focused on specific components of trust or CA. Few studies have offered a better understanding of the role of trust as an enabler of CA by including the lived experiences of those in practice (Hakanen et al., 2019; Rasool et al., 2019; Shen et al., 2019; Vanhala, 2019), thus highlighting the fundamental gap and purpose of this research.

To explore the phenomenon, we asked; How do practitioners perceive the role of trust in enabling competitive advantage? What are the antecedents of trust's role in enabling competitive advantage? A single case study design is adopted to gather qualitative data cross-sectionally within an industry-leading company. The organisation boasts a nine-year tenure, holds a market-leader position across many industry categories and is committed to sustainability, thus making it an information-rich and suitable site for data gathering. 12 senior and mid-level managers will be interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide to gain their insights. These data will be triangulated against data emerging from focus groups and documents to provide a holistic and rigorous view of the role of trust as a strategic enabler. The data will be inductively and thematically interpreted using Atlas.ti software.

The study's findings will benefit leaders in fostering a culture of trust vital for strategic decision-making, effective leadership, ethical governance, and sustainability (Ilyas et al., 2020; Vanhala & Tzafrir, 2021). The findings can also be leveraged to develop trust-building initiatives in practice to enhance employee commitment, job satisfaction, engagement, and performance (Wang et al., 2018; Werner & Balkin, 2021). This study offers these practical benefits whilst also contributing a theoretical

and conceptual framework for an improved and deeper understanding of the phenomenon where limited research exists thus illuminating avenues for further empirical research.

Keywords: Trust; Competitive Advantage; Strategic Enabler; Sustainability; Qualitative.

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The Role of Ethical Leadership and Technology in Creating Sustainable Higher Education Institutions

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Purpose: This study aims to develop a comprehensive framework with key performance indicators (KPIs) for creating and measuring sustainable and high-performance Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). As evidenced in existing literature, HEIs worldwide have grappled with myriad challenges over the past two decades, including accountability pressures stemming from increased demand for access, issues of inequality, responsible adoption of emerging technologies, resource limitations, competitive forces, ethical concerns, financial viability, leadership ethics, academic quality, student retention, customer satisfaction, and the disruptive impact of events like the Covid pandemic. Numerous scholars contend that since the 1990s, HEIs have been under mounting pressure regarding their accountability to furnish organisational performance indicators and measurements that demonstrate their value to stakeholders, alumni, and prospective students. The study adhered to a robust methodology for crafting a comprehensive framework for developing sustainable HEIs.

Methodology: The research adopts a positivist and constructivist stance within an ontological paradigm, employing a case study strategy. Using a qualitative approach and semi-structured interviews, data were gathered from six case studies (N=30). The participants selected for the case studies were individuals with significant experience and contributions to Higher Education. Inclusion criteria mandated a minimum of a master's degree and ten years experience in Higher Education. An inductive thematic analysis (ITA) identified a comprehensive list of seventy-three performance indicators.

Key Findings: In a study titled "An Integrated Framework for Measuring the Organisational Performance of Higher Education Institutions," expert panels identified ethical leadership, citizenship, and progressive, responsible use of technology as three pivotal KPIs in the framework for establishing sustainable and high-performance HEIs. The study underscores the critical role of ethical leadership in ensuring the overall success and sustainability of HEIs, emphasising elements such as clear vision and mission, measurable goals, accountability across activities, strategic implementation, technological integration, financial stability, academic excellence, brand reputation, staff satisfaction, and student achievement. Additionally, essential attributes are active citizenship, community and environmental stewardship, flexibility, agility, and resilience in planning and delivery.

Recommendations: The study strongly advocates for ethical leadership characterised by an open-door policy and empowerment of teams to drive institutional progress. It underscores the importance of leadership development at all levels, fostering a culture of innovation, and integrating technology into teaching practices to uniquely contribute to the academic discipline. Recognising the symbiotic relationship between academia and business, the study emphasises the need for a solid institutional culture aligned with the institution's vision, mission, and core values to motivate staff and attract

students. Moreover, the study supports leveraging technology and innovation to enhance academic excellence and competitive advantage while emphasising the significance of community and industry engagement as critical contributors towards building high-performance institutions. Finally, the study suggests that implementing the comprehensive framework can provide higher education institutions (HEIs) with a significant advantage in establishing sustainable and resilient institutions capable of preparing students for the future world of work.

Keywords: Ethical Leadership; Sustainability; Higher Education; Academic Excellence; Technology.

Micro-credentials: The Janus of Higher Education

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The use of micro-credentials in South Africa holds immense potential to address the challenges of traditional higher education, particularly in terms of accessibility, employability, and inclusivity. This study delves into the rise of micro-credentialing in South Africa and its evolution in the digital learning landscape post the COVID-19 pandemic. With a high number of people owning cell phones and a tech-savvy younger generation, micro-credentials are poised to pave a promising pathway for both education and career advancement.

The research aims to explore the potential of micro-credentials to complement the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and assess their value in South Africa, where they are currently viewed as non-credit-bearing qualifications. Using a qualitative approach, this study analyses policy documents, published articles, and case studies of micro-credentialing initiatives in South Africa by using an integrative literature review approach.

According to initial research, micro-credentials have the potential to provide adaptable and targeted learning opportunities. These can be combined and aligned with industry standards, bridging the divide between traditional education and the evolving requirements of the job market. This adaptability instils confidence in the relevance of the education system. Micro-credentialing is a new way of recognising and certifying skills. It is more inclusive and challenges traditional education models, offering a lifelong learning and employability framework.

Keywords: Micro-credentialing, South Africa, Education, Workforce Development, Lifelong Learning

The Relationship Between Hope and Optimism, Ethical Leadership, and Person – Organisation Fit

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Ethical leadership is viewed as a challenge globally, with person-organisational fit, as well as hope and optimism, being regarded as an essential element of employee wellbeing and, ultimately, productivity. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the employees' perceived ethical leadership in the organisation and the employees' person-organisational fit, hope and optimism. A typical positivist methodology – based on an empirical approach, using a cross-sectional design and the quantitative analysis of the data obtained from the surveys – was utilised in this study. Employees of 30 organisations in South Africa were sampled and there were 1 663 respondents. It was found that there is a strong, positive relationship between ethical leadership and hope and optimism (as a composite construct). It was further found that person-organisational fit mediates this relationship. Recommendations were made to enhance hope and optimism from an institutional (including HRD) as well as leadership level. Recommendations were also made for further research.

Keywords: Ethical Leadership; Hope; Micro -, Meso -, Macro levels; Optimism; Person-Organisation Fit.

How AI Impacts Leadership: A Developing Country Perspective from the Financial Sector

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Overview: The transformative role of AI has been acknowledged in several industries. While presenting enormous opportunities, AI beckons a careful implementation strategy, especially in those sectors which are regarded as the backbone of numerous economies, such as financial services (EY, 2020). In this process, organizational leadership undoubtedly plays a key role in ensuring the implementation and transition strategy towards AI-enabled organisations.

Purpose: While several studies discuss the role of AI and their implications for different sectors, this paper seeks to establish how the traditional leadership role is impacted through the adoption of AI in the financial sector, from a developing country perspective, like Mauritius. Understanding the interaction of AI within the financial industry dynamics is significant as this would to a large extent dictate policy and regulatory policies for such technologies; which is certainly an imminent task for policy-makers in the near future.

Methodology: This study is designed towards a qualitative approach based on purposive sampling, mostly due to the fact that AI is still in its nascent stage, especially in most developing/emerging economies. Also, the intention is to gauge the primal perception about how AI might impact or is already impacting leadership roles in the financial sector. Towards this end, IT managers, HR managers and COOs are the intended participants in this study. While Mrwebi and Cici (2019) focused on the innovative role of leadership in one of the banks in South Africa, this study seeks to extend the research to participants from 18 banks 9 insurance companies and 2 P2P operators in Mauritius who will be surveyed via emailed questionnaires. Depending on the responses, the survey will be followed by interviews to have an in-depth understanding of the issues involved.

Expected findings: Pertaining to the comprehensive list of financial service operators in Mauritius, it is expected that responses gathered will be invaluable towards understanding the right leadership style in the financial sector and work-related policy implications for the successful implementation of this new technology, with regard to small emerging and tech-transitioning economies. From an organizational perspective, the contribution of this study will hover around devising strategies to ensure that relevant resources continue to create value for the business and improve productivity.

Keywords: AI and Financial Services; AI and Leadership; Developing Countries; AI.

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Implementation of the Traffic Light Model – Sharing Good Practices in a Higher Education Institution

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The utilization of Artificial Intelligence in assessments is making headway and is increasingly changing the landscape of the field of education. It is therefore imperative that institutions of higher education are cognizant of the complex use of AI by acknowledging the importance of preparing students to participate effectively in the global community. Furthermore, the leaders and policymakers of these institutions understand the significance of ensuring that AI is used responsibly and ethically. Implementing the three-tier categorisation for the use of AI in assessments, known as the Traffic Light Model (Mormando, 2023), provides a mutual understanding between the student and the lecturer regarding the usage of AI in a specific assessment. However, what needed to be established was the good practices that the model presented, to ensure the continuity of the Traffic Light Model.

The successful implementation of the Traffic Light Model in higher education institutions depended on sharing good practices. The goal of this study was to document the application of the Traffic Light Model in a higher education institution. The article aimed to share good practices for implementing the Traffic Light Model in assessments. The study was guided by the research question: What are the measurable outcomes of the practice-based approach used by implementing the Traffic Light Model in assessments in a higher education institution?

This article provides discourse on the good practices that have been evident in a higher education institution in four provinces in South Africa. The inquiry was underpinned in an interpretive paradigm where a qualitative research design was employed, and data were collected through unstructured interviews. The population of the study included lecturers who were implementing the Traffic Light Model in assessments across four campuses. The theoretical framework that underpinned the inquiry is John Dewey's educational philosophy, based on four core principles namely, utility, interest, experience, and integration (Qosimov, 2023). The philosophy allowed an interdisciplinary approach where AI and the Traffic Light Model were integrated into assessments across programs.

The results of this inquiry provided a platform for policymakers to establish the improvements that can be made regarding the implementation of the Model, as well as to train more lecturers and build on the good practices shared. Furthermore, the recommendations about the practices shared had the potential to provide lecturers with an effective early warning system for identifying at-risk students and ultimately offering appropriate interventions to help them. Recommendations for future studies must therefore include the integration of AI in assessments. Essentially, the good practices shared aimed to promote a culture of accountability and responsibility among students, with effective lecturer guidance in assessments. The sharing of good practices promoted knowledge exchange and the widespread adoption of effective student assessment programs in higher education, hence

documenting these practice-based approaches was imperative for the continuity of the Model within the institution.

Keywords: Traffic Light Model; Higher Education; Assessments; Artificial Intelligence; Good Practices.

A Leadership Capability Model for the South African Higher Education Environment

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Overview: Rapid change and disruption including climate change, globalisation, economic developments, the fourth industrial revolution, technological advancements, artificial intelligence, social changes, Covid-19 pandemic and political changes are at the order of the day. Furthermore, South Africa Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are faced with transformation, reduced government subsidies, increased competition, rising costs, increased enrolments, declining resources, the announcement of free higher education, increased politicisation and the increased need to use information technology. The rapid changes and disruptions require that leaders in South African HEIs have the capabilities to lead successfully.

Purpose of the research: This study aimed to identify the leadership capabilities required to lead successfully in rapidly changing and disruptive times within South African HEIs.

Methodology: The study was approached from an interpretive perspective within the constructivist paradigm. This study followed a grounded theory qualitative research design methodology because the aim was to identify, understand and describe theory and design a model of the capabilities needed.

South African HEIs leadership research has not focussed on identifying and describing the capabilities needed to lead successfully during rapid change and disruption.

Key findings: This research adopted the finding that South African HEIs leaders coped with the rapid changes and disruptions. However, there is reason for concern as just under half of the participants indicated that their HEIs did not cope. This research identified and described a leadership capability model for leadership levels and formulated a theory to explain the relationship between rapid change and disruption, the capabilities required to practically deal with rapid change and disruption.

Recommendations: This research identified and described the capabilities needed to lead successfully in South African HEIs during rapid change and disruption. The findings indicated that the type and magnitude of rapid change and disruption vary and that they influence the country, the higher education sector, South African HEIs, the employees and leaders. South African HEI leaders were not trained and/or prepared for rapid change and disruption, and they felt abandoned by the government and ruling party.

The result was that a considerable number of HEIs (i.e. 46%) and their leaders (i.e. 28%) did not cope. The education sector recognized a potential crisis dating back to as early as 1997 with the White Paper 3, and as late as 2001 with the South African National Plan for Higher Education. However, the actual implementation of necessary changes has been sluggish, likened to a metaphorical "ticking time bomb."

The term managerialism was "tossed" around in literature on higher education as if it is a contagious disease that belongs "out there". The researcher even dares to conclude that higher education sees itself "above those things" as the "know-it-all" and "can do it all" superhero who refuses to accept that the world is changing and that there is a good chance it could be replaced. At the heart of the ability to remain relevant is the leadership of South African HEIs, on all levels.

Keywords: Rapid change, Disruption, Leadership Capabilities, South African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Managerialism.

Authentic Leadership in the Digital Age: Measuring Leaders' Perceptions and Readiness to Employ Authenticity as a Strategy Against Corruption

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Purpose of the Research: Corruption is a prevalent problem that affects individuals, businesses, industries, and governmental entities (Castro, Phillips, & Ansari, 2020; Farrales, 2005; Pertiwi & Ainsworth, 2020; Qi et al., 2020). The advent of the digital era has significantly transformed the landscape of business and communication, introducing new challenges such as increased corruption through cybercrime, data breaches, and online fraud (Malik & Froese (2022). This research explores the perceptions of leaders in regard to the potential of authentic leadership as a means to mitigate corruption in the finance sector and it also aims to measure these individuals' readiness to integrate authentic leadership practices to deter corrupt activities. In recent years, there has been a growing fascination with this style of leadership, emerging as a reaction to the prevailing distrust in the business realm stemming from the irresponsible and unethical behaviours exhibited by select leaders (Alvesson & Einola, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2020). Authentic leadership is rooted in the principles of self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing of information, and moral perspective (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). By demonstrating these qualities, authentic leaders are able to promote both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate and also build strong relationships with their followers by fostering positive self-development (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Therefore, authentic leadership, characterized by transparency, ethical behaviour, and trust, is posited as a potent antidote to the pervasive corruption risks presented by digital advancements in the financial sector.

Methodology: This study shall adopt primary research to explore both perception and readiness level of leaders toward the practice of authentic leadership to combat corruption in the digital era. Quantitative data will be collected by conducting an online survey among leaders operating in the Banking and Finance sector in Mauritius. The questionnaire shall be designed in line with the four core principles of authentic leadership: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing of information, and moral perspective, as outlined by Avolio and Gardner (2005). Participants will be assessed on how they perceive authentic leadership and how its principles are manifested in their leadership practices. This comprehensive approach aims to provide insights into how leaders perceive the potential of authentic leadership to mitigate corruption and it also aims to analyse the readiness level of these same leaders to embrace authentic leadership as a strategic tool to foster corruption-resistant environments.

Key findings: It is anticipated that organisational leaders who believe that authentic leadership has significant potential to combat corruption in the digital age are more likely to be prepared to adopt these leadership practices than their counterparts. Furthermore, it is expected that organizations

under the guidance of authentic leaders will demonstrate reduced levels of corruption and uphold higher ethical standards.

Recommendations: Organizations should focus on developing leadership programs that enhance the authentic leadership qualities of their executives. Training should emphasize ethical decision-making, transparency, and the development of a moral compass. Additionally, policy frameworks should be established to support and encourage the practice of authentic leadership within all levels of management.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership; Corruption; Perception; Readiness; Digital Era.

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Defining Micro-Credentials: Clarifying Distinctions and Implications for Lifelong Learning in Higher Education

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In the rapidly evolving landscape of the modern workforce, traditional higher education models are being challenged to adapt to new types of students and the principles of lifelong learning, including the need for continuous professional development. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have traditionally used short learning programs (SLPs) to meet this demand. However, the recent emergence of micro-credentials in the Higher Education landscape lacks a standardized definition, leading to confusion with SLPs. This paper aims to clarify these definitions, propose criteria for distinction, and establish a unique definition for micro-credentials.

Statutory bodies may not yet be prepared for undergraduate programs with open curricula and flexible electives, where students construct qualifications through a series of integrated micro-credentials. This open process requires rigorous quality assurance and structural processes. Despite the entrenched nature of current qualification frameworks, international qualification authorities will be cautious in adopting such revolutionary changes. Nevertheless, digital platforms and new technologies offer immense possibilities, making timely adaptation crucial.

Micro-credentials reflect a shift towards lifelong learning, essential for career progression and adaptability. For employers, they provide a reliable means of assessing competencies, developed in collaboration with industry stakeholders to ensure relevance. For individuals, they offer a pathway to upskill or reskill without the significant time and financial commitments of traditional degrees.

This paper will conduct a systematic literature review of publications since 2018 on the definition and application of micro-credentials, employing thematic analysis to identify key trends and gaps. Preliminary findings suggest that micro-credentials are more flexible and industry-aligned compared to traditional SLPs. Based on the literature review, we propose a clear and distinctive definition of micro-credentials, emphasizing their role in enhancing employability and supporting lifelong learning. The conclusions drawn from this study underscore the need for HEIs and statutory bodies to adopt standardized frameworks for micro-credentials to maximize their potential benefits.

Keywords: Micro-Credentials; Short Learning Programmes; Curriculum; Life-Long Learning; Technology.

Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: A Journey of Opportunities, Challenges, and Transformative Learning

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Purpose: This exploratory practice-based research investigates the application of generative AI models in higher education, particularly within digital marketing. It aims to explore how AI technologies can be integrated into educational practices to enhance learning experiences and prepare students for the evolving digital marketing landscape (Bates, 2015; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014).

Methodology: The study engaged 74 undergraduate students aged 18 to 24, all with a background in digital marketing at an international university. A curated selection of generative AI models, including large language models (ChatGPT), text-to-speech (ElevenLabs), and text-to-image generators (Midjourney, DALL-E), was employed based on their educational potential and relevance to marketing practice. The methodology was grounded in informal classroom discussions and thematic analysis, focusing on the practical application of AI technologies in educational tasks (Luckin et al., 2016).

Key Findings: The research demonstrated that generative AI models significantly enhance the learning experience by providing innovative methods for ideation and concept presentation. Students reported improved engagement and digital competencies. The AI tools promoted academic resilience by enabling personalised learning experiences and real-time feedback. However, the study also highlighted several challenges such as potential over-reliance on AI tools, ethical concerns related to data privacy (Zuboff, 2019), and the risk of exacerbating existing educational inequalities due to varying levels of access to technology. Students expressed a need for guidance on balancing AI use with traditional learning methods to avoid dependency and maintain critical thinking skills.

Recommendations: The study proposes best practices for ethically incorporating AI into educational settings. It emphasizes the need for balanced integration, ensuring AI tools support rather than replace traditional teaching methods. Continuous practice-based research and upskilling are crucial for both students and educators to effectively use AI tools, ensuring all participants benefit from the technology. Clear ethical guidelines must be established to address data privacy concerns and promote responsible AI use. Additionally, providing equitable access to AI technologies is essential to mitigate the risk of deepening educational inequalities (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Luckin et al., 2016). Further exploration into AI's role in education should focus on longitudinal impacts, ensuring the technology is used to enhance learning outcomes sustainably.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Higher Education; Generative Models; Teaching and Learning; Student Assessment.

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Policies, Leadership, and Ethics in Higher Education in the Digital Era of Neoliberal Globalization: Whose Leadership?

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The acceleration of the digital era globally is neither innocent nor serendipitous. It is marked by an underlying socio-historical global capitalist agenda rooted in the principles of neoliberalism and hastened by policies. The onset of Covid-19 further catalyzed a global push for increased digitalization and technological use particularly within the context of education. More specifically within the context of higher education, institutions were again hijacked by existing neoliberal global policies anchored in corporatization decreeing the deployment of technology for the purposes of producing a technologically competent competitive workforce, and secondly, to disseminate knowledge for the knowledge economy through galvanizing online teaching and learning across both the "developed"/Global North and "developing"/Global South world. This knowledge sharing paper provides a halt to the prevailing ideologies pressing for the acceleration of technological and digital use within the context of higher education by critically unpacking the context of this global agenda vis-à-vis a policy document analysis and calling into question the ethical logic, if any. This paper raises evidence-based concerns of the onto-epistemic deepening of neoliberalism's dogma within higher education, and its seizure of education in pursuit of "development." While international organizations such as the United Nations argue that increased technological use will alleviate global poverty and related social ills, the evidence indicates that the rates remain at an all-time high. It is argued that leaders, formal and informal, need to rethink leadership by also possessing a counter-perspective of "development" irrespective of North-South geopolitical location, and critically call into question the ethics of the imposition of technology and digitalization within the context of higher education and other global spaces with a view to ethically ensure the inclusion of all perspectives.

Keywords: Policies; Leadership; Globalization and 'Development'; Global North-South; Ethics.

Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Business Innovation and Future of Work: A Case Study of United Arab Emirates

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Purpose of the research: The advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has been reshaping business landscapes and workforce dynamics globally. The World Economic Forum predicts that by 2027, 81% of companies are expected to have adopted AI. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) aims to become the world leader in AI by 2031. This study examines the UAE's current strategies and future roadmap in achieving its objectives, including the National AI Strategy 2031. It explores the impact of AI on business innovation and the future of work, highlighting the transformation in job roles and skills, and the proactive actions adopted by the UAE to address skill shortages.

Methodology: The UAE is a global leader in AI readiness and in integrating AI to enhance service delivery and economic growth. According to the Oxford Insights 2023 survey, the UAE ranks first in the region and 18th worldwide in AI readiness. Therefore, the UAE provides an ideal case study setting to understand the leadership strategies required at a national level. A secondary research methodology was employed, integrating reliable data from multiple sources including industry and consultancy reports, government reports and policy documents, news articles, websites, successful use cases, and published interview data and transcripts.

Key findings: The study findings revealed various hard and soft leadership strategies required to develop a fertile and scalable AI ecosystem at a national level. The results showed that data infrastructure for storage and computation, including robust cloud infrastructure and secure servers, are critical for leveraging AI technologies. However, these need to be supported by a conducive legislative environment that includes robust AI policies, ethics principles, and guidelines. Also, a concerted effort is required to support the private sector, especially SMEs and startup firms. For instance, the federally funded High-Performance Computing Cluster, composed of the most advanced GPU systems optimized for machine learning computations, is open to all researchers and startups based in the UAE. Additionally, the UAE is working towards providing shared, open, and standardized AI-ready data, collected through a consistent data standard for the private sector. An AI-ready workforce is essential for a country aiming to harness AI's potential. Various strategies adopted by the UAE to bridge the AI talent gap include future-proofing leaders, AI training for the general public, upskilling students (particularly those in STEM), training for government employees, and providing employment transition support for those affected by AI.

Recommendations: The case study findings of the UAE's AI strategy provide a benchmark for other nations and companies aiming to leverage AI for economic and social advancements. For countries looking to leverage AI, managing the speed of regulation with the speed of innovation is critical. This means avoiding stagnation if the policy is too restrictive, or harmful compromises if it is too permissive. Further, strategic actions such as future-proofing leaders, capitalizing on AI capabilities,

automating routine jobs, and reimagining roles are recommended to maximize the benefits from AI advancements. However, the results also show that privacy and security issues, and inherent biases pose threats to leveraging AI effectively.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; UAE; Leadership; National Strategy; Readiness;

The Use and Value of Strategic Management Tools in South African Organisations

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Overview: As any cursory review of a strategic management textbook or a strategic management course will show, the field of strategic management is replete with tools, frameworks, and techniques to assist strategists in analysing and better understanding the organisation and its environment and making better strategic choices. Yet despite the availability of this plethora of tools and techniques, there is comparatively little evidence to support the extent to which these tools and techniques are used by strategists, when and how they use it, and whether they derive value from its use, especially in a South African context. Research in this field has generally focused on what strategic management tools are popular (e.g. Nakayama, 2018) and how specific tools are used in a specific context (e.g. Williams & Lewis, 2008).

Research Purpose: This research sets out to determine the use of a range of strategic management tools by organisational strategists, its perceived value to its users, and its effect on the perceived strategic management performance of the organisation.

Motivation for the Study: Strategic Management courses spends a large amount of time and effort to introduce students to a variety of tools and techniques to assist them in becoming better strategists. Without understanding the value of such tools and techniques to strategists, there is simply no way of knowing if courses are adding value to the development of strategists, and in what way.

Research Methodology: The paper draws on a survey conducted over the last five years involving about 60 respondent organisations from the South African private and public sector. Multiple responses per organisation were obtained, resulting in thousands of respondents from a variety of managerial levels and functional areas.

Main Findings: Preliminary findings identified the most-used strategic management tools and techniques from the set of tools and techniques identified, and the extent to which its users feel that they add value. Regression analysis will be used to determine which specific tools and techniques have the highest impact on the perception of strategic management quality in the organisation. The findings also suggest that the more strategic management tools are used, the higher the strategic management performance of organisations are rated. This finding seems to suggest that the use of strategic management tools and techniques contribute to the confidence that the employees have in the strategic management efforts of the organisation.

Managerial Implications: The findings can assist strategists and managers in identifying the relative value of strategic management tools and focusing their efforts on the highest-impact tools and techniques. It can also assist strategic management educators in identifying those tools that have a higher value to its users.

Contribution: The study contributes a deeper understanding to a topic that is under-studied in the South African context and helps us to better understand not only the extent to which strategic management tools and techniques are used, but also its value in the wider strategic management ecosystem.

Keywords: Strategic Management; Strategic Decision Making; Strategic Management Tools; South Africa.

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Gender Parity in Flexible Work: Investigating Work-Life Balance in Serviced-Based Sector

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Women's career equality is of growing concern in the field of the future of work. For instance, SDG 5 speaks to realising gender equality for women and young girls by 2030 (UN, n.d.). The empowerment of women is a vehicle for gender equality, allowing women key decision-making power and contributing towards a more equal society. "Integrating gender equality and sustainable development" is a necessity and "central requirement of an ethical world order" (Leach, Mehta, and Prabhakaran, 2016: 3). Regardless of this, women face many barriers in career advancement, including prejudice, negative stereotypes, and unsupportive organisational structures, among others (Bullough, Moore, and Kalafatoglu 2017:212; Kalaitzi et al. 2017:458, 468; Kaur, Jauhar, and Mohaidin 2017:365; Madsen and Scribner 2017: 233). For Africa, the disparity is one that cannot be overlooked and calls for a strategic approach to improve women's advancement opportunities and retention in the pipeline to leadership. As the future of work disrupts the workplace our focus shifts to how these changes will affect career equality, particularly in terms of remote work, which has become more common across serviced-based corporate businesses post-COVID. In 2023 Villamor et al took to explaining the understanding of how virtuality impacts gender equality, revealing a double-edged sword. The study revealed mixed concerns about how remote work affects the caregiving responsibilities of women.

Our understanding is therefore that remote work brings the flexibility needed to balance work and life demands but also potentially exacerbates inequalities. It can empower women by enabling greater work-life balance and participation in the labour force. Conversely, it can also intensify work-family conflict due to higher family role expectations and may reinforce biassed perceptions of women. Amid the challenges, deep-rooted cultural values hindering gender equality are still prevalent in African cultures (Kabaseke 2018: 90). A study targeting women in service-based companies would significantly enhance understanding and shape the future of work within the African context. By examining the intersection of gender, caregiving responsibilities, and employment in a sector pivotal to the nation's economy, such research would yield insights that are pivotal for crafting gender-sensitive policies and fostering a conducive work environment for women. It would also offer a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by flexible work arrangements, leading to strategies that ensure work-life balance. The findings could serve as benchmarks for gender equity, especially in leadership within the service industry, providing a template that can be scaled across the continent. In essence, this research holds the promise of informing a more inclusive, equitable, and productive future of work for Africa, where the unique contributions of women are fully realised and valued.

Keywords: Gender equality, Women's career advancement, Remote work, Work-life balance, African context.

Addressing Quantitative Skill Gaps in Management Education: The Potential of Micro-Credentials

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This paper investigates the deficiency in basic mathematical skills, statistical knowledge, and numerical sense among management and leadership students, which hinders their ability to make data-driven decisions. These quantitative abilities are increasingly vital for effective decision-making in today's data-driven business environment. The aim is to explore the potential of micro-credentials as a solution to address existing skill gaps in these areas.

The study employs a comprehensive literature review to examine the evolving landscape of management skills and the rising demand for data literacy. The study explores transferable skills within investigative abilities, logical and critical thinking, and creativity in problem-solving, associated with a strong quantitative ability. It examines their impact on various facets of management, including informed decision making at higher levels. The literature review includes a systematic analysis of empirical research reports on students' experience and success rates in management disciplines where quantitative skills are taught.

The findings reveal a significant gap in quantitative skills among management students and a strong industry demand for improved data literacy. The analysis indicates that micro-credential programs tailored to enhance foundational mathematical and statistical skills can effectively address these deficiencies. The research concludes that targeted micro-credentials focusing on statistics for business, data visualization, and basic numeracy, integrated with relevant technologies for data analysis, are likely to be beneficial. These conclusions are supported by the alignment of industry needs with educational gaps identified through the study.

Keywords: Quantitative Skills; Data Literacy; Management Education; Micro-Credentials; Decision-Making.

The New Kid on the Block Takes us to the Fifth Industrial Revolution

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As organisations progress through digital transformation, they enter the Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR) era, marked by enhanced connectivity and personalised interactions among humans, machines, and technology. This study employs a comprehensive literature review to deepen the comprehension of conscious leadership, a leadership style identified by scholars that aligns with the principles essential for leadership in the 5IR. A secondary goal is to explore the theoretical assumption that conscious leadership is rooted in Heidegger's concept of Dasein and Viktor Frankl's logotherapy, thereby establishing a theoretical framework for conscious leadership. From an African perspective, the third aim is to examine the concept of Ubuntu in contextualising conscious leadership within the African context. By employing an integrative methodology, the study contributes to formulating a theoretical framework and lays the foundation for future research and application in this domain. Heidegger's concept of Dasein, which underscores self-awareness, ethical leadership, and relationship-building, aligns with the principles essential for leadership in the Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR). Viktor Frankl's logotherapy, emphasising the quest for meaning, is also imperative for effective leadership in this new epoch. Furthermore, the Ubuntu philosophy emphasises our interconnectedness and the impact of our decisions on others. Conscious leadership integrates genuine existence, purpose, and ethical responsibility and aims to achieve enduring, sustainable success. By integrating Heidegger's insights, Frankl's emphasis on meaning, and Ubuntu's stress on interconnectedness, conscious leaders can guide organisations towards a purposeful and cohesive future in the 5IR.

Keywords: Conscious leadership; Digital transformation; Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR); Integrative Literature Review; Ubuntu.

When Teaching Gen-Zers: Should We Rethink Lecturer Leadership in the Classroom?

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Teaching in this digital era is more than ever complex and challenging. We now live in a digital world where new technologies are constantly evolving at a breathtaking rate (Coldwell, 2019). As our world increasingly adopts digital technologies, education undergoes a transformation in its functioning. The growing use of Artificial intelligence in education even raises the question of whether teaching is still necessary (Ghita & Stan, 2022).

Teachers who are in majority digital immigrants as they were exposed to digital technologies in adulthood (Prensky, 2009), are facing multiple challenges. Scholars argue that teachers should acquire not only new digital skills, but rather a holistic set of digital competences. (Castañeda et al., 2022) Moreover, teachers also face intergenerational issues as they teach undergraduate students who are mostly from the generation Z. This generation of students also known as digital natives was the first generation born into a globally connected world and they 'live and breathe' technology. (Cilliers, 2017) Gen-Zers have been found to possess a different student profiling than before (Hernandez-de-Menendez, Escobar-Díaz, & Morales-Menendez, 2020).

The majority of research studies done to better understand and find solutions to the challenges faced by teachers in this digital era focus on either the use of innovative technologies or implementing caring pedagogy. (Ghita & Stan, 2022; Jogezai, Koroleva, & Baloch, 2023; Castañeda et al., 2022; Hernandez-de-Menendez, Escobar-Díaz, & Morales-Menendez, 2020; Miller and Mills, 2019) However, it has been noted that there is a limited amount of research done to explore the role of teacher leadership in the classroom needed to address these challenges. Indeed, being a teacher is being a professional and confident leader. Research studies have clearly shown that teachers with good leadership skills are more likely to perform high-quality teaching and achieve good educational outcomes (Tångring & Öhman, 2023). This research study thus intends to fill this research gap. It aims at finding answers to the following research questions:

1. From lecturers' perspective, has there been a prominent change in the attitude, behaviour, learning styles and expectations of undergraduate students during these last ten years?
2. Have there been major changes in the way lecturers teach undergraduate students in the past ten years?
3. Did lecturers need to adopt new teacher leadership styles or skills in classrooms to adapt to this digital world and the generation Z students?

The research is a small-scale and short-term study. A qualitative approach is chosen as the purpose of the research is to get an in-depth and detailed understanding of the challenges faced by lecturers in this digital era and the leadership styles and skills that they have adopted to navigate those challenges. Semi-structured, individual and face to face interviews will be conducted with ten lecturers working

at Middlesex University Mauritius. The selected lecturers will be those who have been teaching undergraduate students for more than ten years. This research study is still at the data gathering stage.

This research study will help to get a better understanding of the generation Z student profile in Mauritius and African countries and the leadership styles and skills that are the most appropriate for teachers to adopt to teach in this digital era.

Keywords: Digital Immigrants; Generation Z; Teacher Leadership.

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The Emergence of Blockchain as a Useful Tool In E-Learning - Theoretical View

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The blockchain is a distributed ledger technology that is continually updated by an infinite number of users and advised by many that it is impossible to be corruptible. It is an open, trustworthy and advanced shared ledger application that allows transportation of assets over cyberspace. It is an increasing list of records, called blocks, which are linked using cryptography. It is a list of uninterrupted records in blocks. Its centre thought being that it is a public, common and tamper-proof ledger that allows one-on-one people who do not see or even trust each other to allot information in the form of a reliable book of account, where any disembodied information can be stored. Blockchain is one of the most popular and controversial topics of conversation among technology leaders in finance and banking, and recently in conveying electronic educational content. There exists a need not only to ensure conveyance of quality educational electronic material, but also ensure security and cryptography in those educational learning records. There is a plethora of several digital podiums available to store and disseminate electronical education media, but none so far can guarantee the authenticity of retrieved electronic media. This lack of guaranteeing authenticity of educational learning records, designates that there is a need to implement the blockchain within education institutions, to store and convey scholar personal, financial, learning, educational and qualification records safely, where they can never be tampered with once recorded in the distributed ledger .Thus, the purpose of this study will be to create a theoretical model that uses a distributed ledger technology such as blockchain in managing and ensuring security on Electronic Learning and Educational Records.

Keywords: Blockchain, Distributed Ledger Technologies; E-Learning; Educational Institutions; Learning Records; Security.

Balancing Innovation and Integrity: A Constructively Aligned Approach to Generative AI Tools in Essay Writing

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Overview: This pilot project explores the ethical and responsible use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools within a foundation-level module (UK Level-3) at a private Higher Education Institution in Mauritius. The module caters to students entering the Law program and relies on academic essays for assessment.

The advent of readily available GenAI tools has raised concerns about plagiarism and the potential erosion of academic integrity. A "police-catch-punish" approach focusing solely on detection is deemed ineffective. This project proposes teaching activities that are already 'constructively aligned' (J. Biggs, 2014; J. B. Biggs & Tang, 2011; Ruge et al., 2019) with the module's intended learning outcomes to equip students with the skills to use GenAI tools ethically and responsibly.

Research Purpose: The primary purpose of this project is to develop and implement a teaching approach that fosters responsible use of GenAI tools in academic writing. This approach aims to:

- Enhance students' critical evaluation skills, or 'evaluative judgment' (Boud et al., 2018; Tai et al., 2018) enabling them to discern the strengths and limitations of AI-generated text.
- Develop students' understanding of appropriate use cases for GenAI tools in academic writing.
- Encourage ethical and responsible use of GenAI tools, promoting academic integrity.

Methodology: The project employs a design-based research methodology. Two seminar sessions, specifically focused on GenAI tools, were designed and implemented.

- Session 1: This session utilises Tome AI to guide groups of students through the ethical considerations surrounding GenAI use.
- Session 2: This session is focused on understanding how GenAI tools based on large language models work and acknowledging their use in academic assessments. They will also practice proper referencing if they choose to leverage GenAI tools like OpenAI's ChatGPT.

Evaluation and Next Steps: The teaching seminars will be evaluated through feedback forms, records of observations, and noted changes in student behaviour by monitoring how students use and acknowledge GenAI tools in their submitted work. While the seminars are gradually being iteratively refined and adapted based on student feedback and a reflective process, there is a dire need for a broader conversation within the department and university regarding the ethical use of GenAI tools in teaching and learning. Exploring alternative or authentic assessment methods that move beyond traditional essays to encourage deeper learning and reduce reliance on AI-generated content is also envisaged.

Keywords: Generative AI; Academic Integrity; Constructive Alignment; Evaluative Judgement; Essay Writing.

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The Role of Leadership on Mitigating Quiet Quitting for Improved Organisational Performance in the Digital Era: Perspectives from Generation Z

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In today's digital era, the phenomenon of quiet quitting poses significant challenges to organisational performance, particularly among Generation Z employees, (Mahand & Caldwell, 2023). This study explores the important role of leadership in mitigating quiet quitting and enhancing organisational performance from the perspective of Generation Z employed within higher education sector. Quiet quitting, a phenomenon where employees disengage from their work while still maintaining their positions, poses significant challenges to overall productivity, talent retention and morale, (Mahand & Caldwell, 2023). In an increasingly digital work environment, where remote work and digital communication tools are prevalent, the subtle signs of quiet quitting can be even harder to detect, (Smith, 2022).

The aim of this qualitative research is to investigate the factors influencing quiet quitting within Generation Z and its implications for organisational performance in the digital age, while also identifying effective leadership approaches to mitigate quiet quitting among Generation Z employees. A qualitative research method, characterised by its exploratory nature, will be employed for this study. Data will be collected through interviews using semi-structured questions, allowing for in-depth exploration of participants' perceptions and experiences. A thematic data analysis approach will be utilised to identify patterns and themes within the collected data. Anticipated findings suggest that leadership, characterised by transparency, ethical behaviour, and genuine interaction, can significantly reduce the incidence of quiet quitting by fostering a more inclusive and supportive work environment. This study expects to highlight the importance of trust, open communication, and personal integrity in leadership roles, demonstrating how these qualities contribute to higher levels of employee engagement and organisational commitment.

Ultimately, this research is expected to provide valuable insights into the dynamics of quiet quitting among Generation Z employees and the role of leadership in addressing this phenomenon. The study acknowledges limitations, recognising the dynamic nature of the digital era, which means that the factors affecting quiet quitting and leadership effectiveness may evolve over time, necessitating further research. Additionally, the limitations of qualitative research, such as potential biases in data collection and interpretation, will be considered.

Nonetheless, the findings of this study can inform organisational leaders and human resource practitioners about effective leadership approaches to retain and engage Generation Z talent in the workplace. The study offers practical recommendations for organisations aiming to enhance their leadership approaches, thereby reducing instances of quiet quitting, and promoting sustainable organisational success in the digital era.

Keywords: Quiet Quitting; Sustainable Organisational Success; Organisational Performance; Leadership Approaches; Generation Z.

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Exploring Ethics and Sustainable Leadership Competence of Academic Managers in a Private Higher Education Institution in South Africa

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According to scholars, many leaders lack ethical leadership, and higher education institutions; both private and public, are not exempted. There are growing pressures on private higher education institutions to deliver on their academic commitments due to increased competition among the private higher education providers, parents and sponsors' scrutiny, and the need for ethical and effective management systems. More so, in South Africa, private higher education institutions have grown in number to more than 90, compared to the 26 public universities that exist. Globally, it was forecast that the number of students who will enrol in higher education will increase from 97 million in 2009 to 262 million in 2025. Therefore, the necessity to have accountability, fairness, a strong work ethic, and justice in the private higher education space would strengthen the integrity of the programmes and work ethics of that institution.

However, if the ethics and sustainable leadership competence of academic managers, who are middle-level managers, is ignored and neglected, there is the likelihood that the institution is at risk of poor service delivery and the reputation of the organisation could be at stake.

The purpose of the study is to explore the ethics and sustainable leadership competence of academic managers in a private higher education institution in South Africa, how academic managers develop this leadership competence and what are the challenges that the academic managers face when implementing this leadership competence.

In addition, Transformational Leadership theory was used as the theoretical framework for analysing and interpreting the data that was generated in this study. A qualitative research approach and a case study design that utilised the interpretivist paradigm were used. The study was conducted in a private higher education in South Africa and convenience and purposive sampling were used to identify the participants for the study. Nine academic managers out of 13 from the institution took part in the study. Data was gathered through focus group interviews and reflective journals. The data generated was analysed by using the ATLAS.ti qualitative data analysis software to generate the themes. Thematic content analysis was employed to further analyse the data alongside the literature.

The findings that emerged from the study revealed that integrity and ethical leadership are core leadership competencies that academic managers in a private higher education institution should have. It also emerged that the academic manager participants in private higher education institutions develop ethical leadership competence through lifelong learning and introspection. Moreover, the challenges that academic manager participants in a private higher education institution face when

implementing ethical leadership competence are time pressure, resource constraints, and change implementation.

Recommendations made from the study included the organising of regular specialised leadership training and development initiatives, such as ethics and sustainable leadership courses, for the academic managers by their institution; Alleviating the stress and time pressures experienced by academic managers so that they can perform their duties effectively and ethically. Moreover, academic managers should prioritise self-development to improve their ethical knowledge in managing students and their subordinates. Further research was also recommended.

Keywords: Academic Manager; Ethics and Sustainable Leadership Competence; Integrity; Private Higher Education; Transformational Leadership.

Micro-Credentials and the Future of Learning: Replacing Degree Education?

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Despite the lack of a widely accepted definition, scope and regulation (Varadarajan, Koh and Daniel, 2023), Micro-credentials (MCs) have gained significant traction globally in the education and training space. They present a number of benefits and opportunities, such as flexibility, enhancement of employability, graduate and employee upskilling and support life-long learning and career mobility (Alasmari and Alzahrani, 2024; Mcgreal and Olcott, 2022; Pirkkalainen et al., 2023). They promote inclusivity in education and training and they align with the younger generations' mindset (Reed, 2023). One study reports that 86% of students are more likely to enroll in degree programs that offer industry micro-credentials (Shireman 2023) and yet higher education providers seem to be lagging behind in adopting and offering them (Lang and Sharp, 2023).

There remain challenges and unanswered questions that mostly emanate from lack of clarity regarding applicable quality standards and regulatory frameworks and the undefined breadth of their scope and function (Varadarajan, Koh and Daniel, 2023; Wheelahan and Moodie, 2021; Raj et al., 2024; Gauthier, 2020). Are they (or should they be) credit bearing? How are their learning outcomes (skills and knowledge) assessed? Are there widely recognised and applied quality standards? The inconsistencies across various regulatory frameworks adopted at the regional and domestic levels do not support wider adoption of MCs. Furthermore, the reluctance of academic institutions to recognize credits and/or prior learning awarded through MCs, coupled with the prevalence of fraudulent claims about authenticity and integrity, create further barriers in their growth (Oliver; Orman, Simsek and Kozak Cakir, 2023).

With scholarship and research in the area being underdeveloped, the paper explores and distinguishes the different types of MC offerings and critically evaluates their suggested benefits as well as the various inconsistencies and gaps in the MC landscape that shape and support relevant criticism. It does so through a critical analysis of government, international organisations and regulators' reports, existing literature and research studies.

Taking into account the positions and interests of various stakeholders, including Higher Education Institutions, governments, international organisations, employers and learners, recommendations are made with a view of promoting effective adoption and optimization of the integration of MCs in the education and training space. Opportunities for synergies between relevant stakeholders are highlighted to support flexibility, inclusivity and widening of access and participation, in order to enable MCs to bridge existing gaps between higher education and the workplace, in the context of significant disruptions that shape the future of both.

Keywords: Micro-Credentials; Higher Education; Training; Employability; Future of Learning.

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The Impact of AI Requires Integration Across K-12 and Tertiary Learning

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Overview: This paper investigates the adoption and impact of artificial intelligence (AI) within K-12 education in South Africa and its potential implications for literacy as students move through the K-12 phases and then progress to higher education. The diverse educational landscape in South Africa, marked by socio-economic disparities, ranges from severely under-resourced schools to highly advanced institutions. In addition, at the start of each year many thousands of school leavers face disappointment when their applications for tertiary study are rejected. Educators face a myriad challenges, including inadequate infrastructure and mixed receptivity to technological innovations like AI. By applying Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory, this study classifies teachers into five categories of technology adopters, from Innovators to Laggards, to gauge their openness to AI integration in educational settings. Special emphasis is placed on the crucial role of Early Adopters in successfully implementing AI technologies. The paper argues that strategic focus on training and supporting Innovators and Early Adopters could significantly improve literacy rates within South African primary and secondary schools. Such enhancements could also elevate literacy standards in tertiary education. Furthermore, the paper explores the transformative capacity of AI to overhaul conventional educational frameworks, moving from traditional methods to a dynamic, AI-enhanced learning model. This study aims to examine the interconnected aspects of AI's influence on advancing literacy across the educational spectrum in South Africa, proposing a holistic integration of AI from K-12 to higher education levels.

Purpose of Research: To investigate the adoption of AI in classrooms within the specific context of individual South African teachers. Furthermore, to establish whether they see AI as having benefits for their classrooms or view AI as presenting more of a threat. This may possibly have a marked impact on the literacy levels of students at schools and upon entering higher education. The findings could inform the direction of the educational planning and implementation of AI in South Africa. This might include aspects such as: potential implications for curriculum development, teacher training, the integration of AI in the classroom and in higher education modules and its impact on literacy levels.

Methodology: This constructivist interpretivist, qualitative case study of South African teachers in primary as well as secondary schools purposively targeted teachers in primary and secondary schools to share their views on the application of artificial intelligence in the classroom. The unit of analysis was the individual teacher who was engaged through semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The criteria for inclusion of teachers was:

- Teachers in the private and public sector
- Teachers from all age groups
- Teachers with differing years of experience

- Teachers from all genders

Using Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory (1962, 2003), participants were interviewed and placed into one of the five categories, thereby offering insights into the realities of AI adoption by teachers in South African K-12 schools.

A generic, qualitative thematic analysis was employed using a deductive approach. Following the work of Saldana (2021), when completing data analysis, several key elements should be considered. These elements ensure a rigorous and systematic analysis of the collected data to generate meaningful findings.

The guiding principles of thematic analysis informed the deductive and inductive coding and data interpretation undertaken. Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Software (CASQDAS) in the form of Atlas.ti software assisted with the analysis of the data collected.

Key Findings and Recommendations: In South Africa, educators exhibit a predominantly positive stance towards adopting artificial intelligence (AI) in classrooms, showing enthusiasm across demographics and school types. Identified themes include engagement with AI, its integration into professional life, and ethical concerns such as plagiarism and exacerbation of educational inequalities. The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced these perspectives, leading to a spectrum of optimism and skepticism.

This qualitative study, conducted within a specific South African context, underscores the need for further research to address its limitations. Future studies could explore AI's impact on different educational levels and settings or investigate AI literacy and adoption among various teacher demographics. Comparing perceptions in rural versus urban or public versus private schools could yield valuable insights. Investigating the literacy levels of various cohorts linked to the degree of AI adoption could be informative and offer significant direction for future planning. The possible differences between males and females could also offer valuable insights.

Considering South Africa's aging teacher population and the challenges of digital access and resource availability, further research into professional development for AI integration is suggested. Additionally, cultural and ethical considerations specific to the South African context should be examined, particularly how AI adoption affects educational equity and literacy among disadvantaged groups.

The findings highlight both the promise and the challenges of integrating AI in education, emphasising the need for a comprehensive approach that includes educators, policymakers, and technology developers. This research not only reveals the complex dynamics of AI adoption but also serves as a foundation for ongoing discussions aimed at enhancing educational outcomes through technology. As the educational landscape evolves, this study advocates for a collaborative approach to ensure AI integration is effective and equitable, paving the way for a transformative educational paradigm in South Africa.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; AI Literacy; AI in K-12 education; AI in Higher Education; Perceptions of AI.

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Exploring Middle Managers' Sensemaking and Sense-giving Practices in a Hybrid Work Environment

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The important role of middle managers, as critical mediators between the organisational levels, and in interpreting and communicating organisational strategy is well documented (Barmeyer et al., 2019; Christianson & Barton, 2021; Kohtamaki et al., 2021; Brower, 2022). Middle managers act as the central linking pins in strategy processes (Ou et al., 2017) and actively translate organisational policies by higher management hierarchies (Kras, Rudes, & Taxman, 2017; Samson et al., 2022). Not only are middle managers responsible for aligning organisational resources and performance to goals and policies (Radaelli & Sitton-Kent, 2016; van Niekerk & Jansen van Rensburg, 2022), but middle managers have an instrumental role in innovation implementation and change management (Birken et al., 2012; Kras et al., 2017; Appiah-agyekum, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic was an event that changed the world of work. It caused many businesses to transform their operating models to include remote and hybrid work options. Companies that survived the effects of COVID-19 did so by using technology for daily operations (Nyamunda, 2022; Iwu, Bama, Makoza, Ogunlela & Nchu, 2023). Recent literature (Barmeyer et al., 2019; Kohtamäki et al., 2021; Schutte, 2022) has begun exploring how hybrid working models disrupt the processes by which middle managers gain and give sense through action and interpretation in their work environment (Cassim et al., 2024; Iwu et al., 2023; Nyamunda, 2022; Yozi & Mbokota, 2024: Teng-Calleja et al., 2024). These studies have illuminated the need for further research that explores the experiences and sensemaking practices of middle managers in transitioning to and managing teams in hybrid work. This study responds to these calls, thus highlighting the fundamental gap and purpose of this research.

By examining middle managers' sensemaking and sensegiving practices within the complexities of a hybrid work environment, we contribute a better understanding of the role of technology in business and to an improved understanding of the changing world do work.

A single case study design was used to explore middle managers in a large company in the FMCG industry in South Africa. Qualitative data was gathered through 12 semi-structured interviews with middle managers. Participant selection was guided by inclusion criteria, and the online semi-structured interviews continued until data saturation was reached. We asked the following research questions: How do middle managers make and give sense within a hybrid work environment? What practices are utilised by middle managers to interpret and transmit the strategic message in a hybrid work environment?

This study contributes a conceptual framework on middle manager sensemaking and sense giving practices. The findings emphasize the importance of rephrasing and rationalising the strategy message and that failure to adopt these practices resulted in a breakdown in transmitting the strategy message

to lower organisational levels. The study identified the rising need for informal communication networks to expand on the sensemaking of middle managers.

Middle managers' role in sensemaking and sense-giving was confirmed as being essential in hybrid work environments. To enhance strategy transmission managers should break down the strategy message through clear team deliverables and goals while creating robust social networks.

Keywords: Hybrid Work Environment; Middle Managers; Sensegiving; Sensemaking.

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Conference Programme

Tuesday, 27 August 2024 **09:00 – 15:00** **Lunch @ 12:00**
Pre-conference Workshops
WORKSHOP 1 **(Venue EG01)** *Responsible leadership in the digital era and the age of technology* **Dr Carike Noeth, Globethics**
or
WORKSHOP 2 **(Venue EG02)** **"Red-Robot // Green-Robot: Ready or not, here [AI] comes!"** *Policy standards for accountable technology: Practical and good practice frameworks* **Avani Singh** **Independent digital rights and information law specialist; Attorney of the High Court, SA**

Wednesday, 28 August 2024 9:00 – 16:30	
09:00 – 10:00	REGISTRATION
10:00 – 10:30 Lecture Theatre CG02	WELCOME (10:00 – 10:10) Prof Mari Janse van Rensburg Pro Vice-Chancellor, Middlesex University
	OPENING ADDRESS (10:10 – 10:30) Kevin Ramkaloan, CEO of Business Mauritius
10:30- 12:30 Lecture Theatre CG02	PLENARY 1 Innovative leadership: Navigating the digital frontier (Facilitator: Prof Mari Janse van Rensburg) *Leadership in the digital era* (10:35 – 11:10) Dr Stephen Murgatroyd Research Associate, Contact North I Contact Nord, Canada
	IVA's practical journey in understanding the role of metaverse and AI in education (11:15 – 12:00) John Luis CEO, IVA Global School
	Respondents • Esther Venter, STADIO (12:05 – 12:15) • Marc Israel, CEO Aetheis (12:15 – 12:25)
12:30 – 13:15	LUNCH
13:15 – 14:45 EG01/02/03	PARALLEL SESSION 1 EG01 - Track 1: Ethics and sustainable leadership EG02 - Track 2: Leadership in the digital era
	EG03 - Track 3: Corporate social responsibility and global citizenship
14:45 – 15:00	SHUFFLE BREAK
15:00 – 16:30 EG01/02/03	PARALLEL SESSION 2 EG01 - Track 1: Tech in business – risks and opportunities EG02 - Track 2: Digital challenges and leading practices in education
	EG03 - Track 3: Technology and the changing world of work
18:00	OPENING RECEPTION

Thursday, 29 August 2024 **9:00- 16:00**	
9:00 – 10:00 Lecture Theatre CG02	PLENARY 2 *Responsible technology use and deployment* (Facilitator: Assoc Prof Girish Bekaroo) Keynote Address (9:05 – 9:35) Avani Singh Digital Rights and Information Law Specialist, Attorney of the High Court, SA Table Buzz (9:35 – 9:45) Plenary Engagement (9:45 – 10:00)
10:00 – 10:10	Industry Talk: Mr Awad Kaidoo, Vice President – Product and Technology. Topic: Dayforce's approach to "Rethinking Leadership"
10:10 – 10:30	SHUFFLE BREAK
10:30 – 12:45 EG01/02/03	PARALLEL SESSION 3 EG01 - Track 1: Micro-credentials and the world-of-work EG02 - Track 2: Using avatars and AI to promote learning and teaching
	EG03 - Track 3: AI and digital technology – sharing good practices
12:45 – 13:30	LUNCH
13:30 – 14:35 Lecture Theatre CG02	PLENARY 3: *Rethinking leadership in the digital era* (Facilitator: Dr Truida Oosthuizen) PANEL DISCUSSION Prof Anton Grobler, UNISA (13:30 – 13:45) Brad Huddleston, Author and Consultant, Responsible Technology, U.S.A. (13:45 – 14:05) Ann Taukoordass - Chief Transformation Officer Medine (14:05 – 14:20)
	Mediated Conversation with Panellists (14:20 – 14:35)
14:40 – 14:50	Industry Talk: Mr Kaylin Mendes, Chief Marketing Officer and Ms Terje Mark, Marketing Manager, Edge Education
15:00 – 16:00	PARTICIPANT/SPEAKER SPEED DATING Delegates will have the opportunity to spend time with speakers and colleagues in pursuit of strengthening scholarship and academic ties.
18:00	CONFERENCE DINNER Dress code: Informal BBQ Trent Park Terrace

Friday, 30 August 2024 **9:00 – 13:30**	
9:00 – 10:15 Lecture Theatre CG02	PLENARY 4 *Beyond generative AI: Leveraging enterprise AI and data sciences to solve complex business challenges* Hosted by Business Mauritius and facilitated by Zaahira Ebramjee
	- Introductory Remarks – Zaahira Ebramjee, Head of National Economic Collaboration, Business Mauritius [09:00 – 09:05] - Keynote address – Mahen Govinda, the CTO of Ciel Group [09:05 – 09:15] - Presentation – Dr Mohamed Es Fih, Co-Founder of DataInFact Ltd [09:15 – 09:35] - Panel discussion [09:35-10:15] - Dev Hurkoo, Managing Director of Rogers Capital - Shateeaum Sewpaul, CEO of Excelerate Consulting Ltd - Vrigesh Futta, Director of Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council (METC) (TBC) Jenny Chan, Managing Director of Astek Mauritius Ltd & President of Outsourcing and Telecommunications Association of Mauritius (OTAM) - Q & A
10:15 – 10:25	Industry Talk: Mr Vinay Ramyead, Senior Trainer at Dale Carnegie Training, "How to Win Friends and influence people in the Digital Age"
10:25 – 11:30 Lecture Theatre CG02	PLENARY 5 *Workplace AI and technology – what stays and who goes* (Facilitator: Prof Divya Singh) Panel Discussion: Prof Dr Amele Ekue, Academic Dean, Globethics, Geneva (10:25 – 10:40) Lelane Bezuidenhout, CEO, Financial Planning Institute, SA (10:40 – 10:55) Dr Suraj Juddoo, Executive Director Mauritius Digital Promotion Agency (10:55 – 11:10)
	Q & A (11:10 – 11:30)
11:30 – 11:45	BREAK
11:45 - 13:00 Lecture Theatre CG02	CLOSING CEREMONY (Facilitator: Prof Divya Singh) *Leading ethical technology in a tsunami: Avoiding business dystopia* (11:45 – 12:15) In conversation with Dr Vincent Maphai, Chairman of the Board of STADIO Holdings Ltd and Sibanye-Stillwater, both JSE-listed entities

	Q & A (12:15 – 12:45)
	 Vote of Thanks and Closure
	    (12:45 – 13:00) Prof Divya
	    Singh
	    CAO: STADIO Higher Education

13:00 – 13:30	LUNCH

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: Sunset Catamaran

Departure at 17:00 from Black River to Tamarin Bay (ends at 21:00) to watch the Sunset and BBQ dinner

PARALLEL SESSION 1

Wednesday 28 August 2024
13:15 – 14:45

Track 1 Ethics and Sustainable Leadership EG01 Facilitator: Dr Bridget Manyaga	Dr Emetia Swart, Prof Flip Schutte REGENESYS, STADIO The new kid on the block takes us to the Fifth Industrial Revolution Dr Oluwakemi Adebayo STADIO Exploring ethics and sustainable leadership competence of academic managers in a private higher education institution in South Africa Prof Anton Grobler UNISA The relationship between hope and optimism, ethical leadership, and person – organisation fit
	Group engagement on papers
Track 2 Leadership in the digital era EG02 Facilitator: Dr Catriona Planel-Ratna	Boodeo Nem Middlesex, Mauritius How AI impacts leadership: a developing country perspective from the financial sector Dr Tejwant Mohabeer Mauritius Institute of Education Policies, leadership, and ethics in higher education in the digital era of neoliberal globalization: Whose leadership? Prof Sonja Grobler, Dr Michael Stanley Cloete UNISA A leadership capability model for the South African Higher Education environment
	Group engagement on papers
Track 3 Corporate social responsibility and global citizenship EG03	Dr Catherine le Roux, Lebogang Mametja, Prof Annemarie Davis UP, UNISA Exploring the lived experience of a community involved in a sustainability initiative Denisha Seedoyal Seereekissoon MIDDLESEX, MAURITIUS Rethinking leader's social responsibility: An exploration of CSR funding towards anti-domestic violence initiatives in Mauritius

Facilitator: Jeanette Smit	Dr Mikidadi Muhanga, Dr Edwin Ngowi (TBC) UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, TANZANIA Corporate social responsibility and sustainable businesses experiences: A discourse on the leadership tasks and functions
	Group engagement on papers

PARALLEL SESSION 2

Wednesday 28 August 2024
15:00 – 16:30

Track 1 Tech in business – risks and opportunities EG01 Facilitator: Prof Flip Schutte	Prof Peet Venter UNISA The use and value of strategic management tools in South African organisations Dr Bridget Manyaga STADIO The role of leadership on mitigating quiet quitting for improved organisational performance in the digital era: perspectives from generation z. Keeanne Jimmy, Dr Catherine le Roux UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA Exploring middle managers' sensemaking and sense-giving practices in a hybrid work environment
	Group engagement on papers
Track 2 Digital challenges and leading practices in education EG02 Facilitator: Denisha Seedoyal- Seereekissoon	Marisha Justine Jean MIDDLESEX, MAURITIUS When teaching Gen-Zers, should we rethink lecturer leadership in the classroom? Henk de Jager, Calvin Mabaso STADIO The role of ethical leadership and technology in creating sustainable Higher Education Institutions Sheryll Kisten, Prof Divya Singh STADIO Technological competence of academics in higher education
	Group Engagement on papers

Track 3 Technology and the changing world of work EG03 Facilitator: Dr Godson Nwokocha	Dr Olebogeng Selebi UP Gender parity in flexible work: Investigating work-life balance in serviced-based sector Jeanette Smit, Dr Phillip Vuma STADIO, SAPS The influence of digital technology on decision-making in the South African Police Service: A critical analysis Baboo Ramkissoon MIDDLESEX, MAURITIUS Authentic leadership in the digital age: Measuring leaders' perceptions and readiness to employ authenticity as a strategy against corruption
	Group engagement on papers

PARALLEL SESSION 3

	Thursday **29 August 2024** **10:30 – 12:45**
Track 1 Micro-credentials and the world-of-work EG01 Facilitator: Dr Oluwakemi Adebayo	Prof Flip Schutte STADIO Micro-credentials: The Janus of Higher Education Ruda Oosthuizen EDUVOLVE/STADIO Addressing quantitative skills gaps in management education: The potential of micro-credentials Prof Tenia Kyriazi, Mohammad A Meraj MIDDLESEX, DUBAI Micro-credentials and the future of learning: Replacing degree education? Dr Truida Oosthuizen STADIO Defining micro-credentials: Clarifying distinctions and implications for lifelong learning in Higher Education Robyn Ruiters, Dr Maupi Letsoalo, Prof Sam Lubbe, Prof Henry Mynhardt STADIO The emergence of blockchain as a useful tool in e-learning: Theoretical view Group engagement on papers

Track 2 Using avatars and AI to promote learning and teaching EG02 Facilitator: Assoc Prof Girish Bekaroo	Dr Catriona Planel-Ratna MIDDLESEX, MAURITIUS Integrating artificial intelligence in Higher Education: A journey of opportunities, challenges, and transformative learning Charles Wiggill STADIO The impact of AI requires integration across K-12 and tertiary learning Dr Godson Nwokocha, Dr Jolanda Morkel STADIO Navigating the age of online learning and artificial intelligence: Identifying and managing assessment risks in Private Higher Education in South Africa Sipho Twala (TBC) ROSEBANK COLLEGE Using avatars and artificial intelligence to promote learning and teaching Guffran Rostom (TBC) MIDDLESEX, MAURITIUS Balancing innovation and integrity: A constructively aligned approach to generative AI tools in essay writing Group engagement on papers
Track 3 AI and digital technology – sharing good practices EG03 Facilitator: Prof Divya Singh	Dr Ron Owston Research Associate, AI in Higher Education Contact North I Contact Nord AI and digital technology – sharing good practices Arantxa Barnard STADIO Implementation of the Traffic Light Model – Sharing good practices in a Higher Education Institution Dr Sreejith Balasubramanian & Sony Sreejith Middlesex, Dubai Leveraging artificial intelligence for business innovation and future of work: A case study of United Arab Emirates Dr Vanessa Grootboom STADIO A proposed model for leadership-driven responsible technology adoption Dr Catherine le Roux, Scott G Lawrence UP Exploring the role of trust as a strategic enabler for competitive advantage: a case study of South African manufacturing company Group engagement on papers

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