

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP QUARTERLY

ISSUE 8 - NOV 2023

Welcome to the eight issue of the Research and Scholarship Quarterly!

In this issue, we introduce you to our new Student Support Manager, Emma Buhtina where we find out about her journey and passions. We hear from Oxana Trestianu who is studying a Bachelor of Arts in Business Management, she talks about her research which delved into the intriguing dynamics between social proof and profitability.

Dr Rishiram Aryal; Associate Professor from the School of Business and Enterprise, and Dr Ebikinei Stanley Eguruz from the School of Business and Law, examines theories relating to Regent College London's (RCL)'s perception of inclusivity and diversity pedagogy within UK's higher education industry.

Next, Tanya Tanna, our Student Wellbeing Coordinator, provides insight into peer mentoring support project, "Many Hands" which offered accessible preventative early intervention and ongoing mental health support model for students. Then, Neli Ivanova delves into the fascinating realm of problem-based learning and emotional intelligence, which when engaged in problem-solving activities, shows how emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role.

In addition, Dr Shobha Harebasur, Programme Leader for post graduate programmes, discusses the Stakeholders' perspective of the digital

transformation phenomenon.

Finally, John A Raineri, a lecturer at the School of Economics, writes a great piece on his ideas and experience with students at Regent College London on AI; and bringing AI into assignments and discussions with his students.

In this issue, we recap the autumn series of the Academic Staff Development programme, sharing all the topics covered and thanking all the presenters who contributed to the success of the series. Finally, we make a call to share articles published and presentations presented by our staff.

We hope that this newsletter will continue to inspire you and kindle your curiosity!



**Giselle Kouassi, Scholarship
and Academic Development
Coordinator/ Editor**

Funding 2023 Updates

Academic Staff Development and Scholarship Fund

On the 1st August 23, we launched the Advance HE Fund (AHEF) & Academic Staff Development and Scholarship Fund (ASDSF). Recently, we launched the Regent Research Fund (RRF)

Regent Research Fund (RRF)

The Regent Research Fund (RRF) is a £5,000 annual fund. The purpose of the Regent Research Fund (RRF) is to provide financial assistance to academic staff so that they may undertake short-term research projects which are directly relevant to the College. It is meant to kickstart research activities that support academics in the early stages of their career or help those more established who wish to pursue projects that will lead to further research success at a higher level. It is part of the wider Academic

Staff Development and Scholarship Funding Policy.

This launch will stay open until we have awarded 10 grants. When these have been awarded, this fund will close.

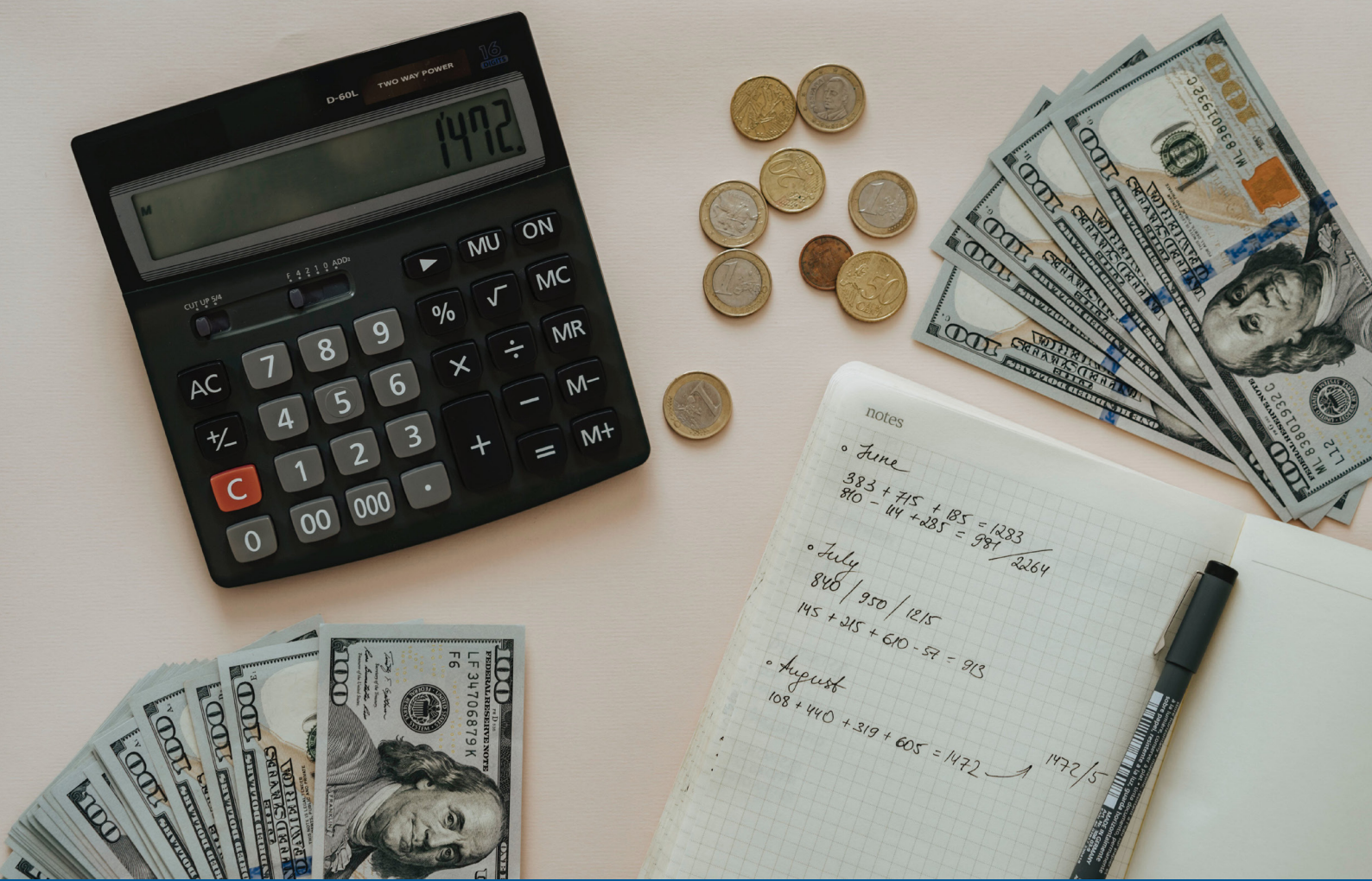
Academic Staff Development and Scholarship Fund (ASDSF)

The Academic Staff Development and Scholarship Fund (ASDSF) provides a total of £45,000 funding for permanent and fixed term contract academics with up to £300 per annum toward the cost of scholarly and developmental activities, while providing MUC academics with up to £100 per annum toward the cost of scholarly and developmental activities.

Such activities may include training programmes; CPD courses; a one-off contribution toward the cost of a

PhD, Masters, PGCE; or a one-off contribution toward annual membership to a professional body (eg. CMBE, Allied Health Professions Federation, British Computing Society, Law Society), amongst others.

For further information please contact: scholarship@rcl.ac.uk.



Emma Buhtina, Student Support Manager at Regent college London, has been awarded Senior Fellowship (SFHEA)



In the ever-changing landscape of higher education, Emma Buhtina shines brightly as a beacon of inspiration. Her recent achievement of Senior Fellowship with the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA) is a testament to her unwavering dedication to changing the lives of students.

Emma's journey in higher education is a vibrant tapestry of student success stories. She is a passionate advocate for student well-being, and her leadership in student services has been a game-changer for students facing mental health challenges, learning difficulties, and disabilities. Emma is a driving force behind creating an inclusive, nurturing learning environment where every student's unique needs are met.

In her current role at Regent College London, Emma continues to be a beacon of unwavering support. Her commitment to nurturing holistic student development has transformed the college into a vibrant community where personal growth and

well-being are just as significant as academic achievement. Her commitment to student well-being, her dynamic teaching, and her unwavering support have nurtured not just academic success but personal growth. It's in the stories of students whose lives have been positively altered by her presence in higher education.

As Emma's journey continues, her influence will extend even further. Her commitment to excellence, innovative leadership, and dedication to student support will shape not just the lives of her students but the future of higher education itself. Emma Buhtina is a true inspiration, reminding us of all the immense transformative power of one dedicated educator.



Insight from dissertation research to Exploring the Influence of social media on Consumer Behaviour

By Dr Oxana Trestianu,
Bachelor of Arts Business
Management



Dynamics of social proof

In the realm where digital connectivity shapes financial decisions, my research delved into the intriguing dynamics between social proof and profitability. Focusing on Vichy as a case study, and the backdrop of social media, the intricate relationship emerged. Recently presented at the CBER-FUE 12th Oxford International Conference, this study kindled dialogues that deepened our comprehension.

Dissemination of findings

Central to my investigation was the fusion of social proof and profitability. Today's consumer landscape, driven by digital platforms, demands a closer look at the forces that guide our choices. The presentation was more than a dissemination of findings; it was a platform for mutual exchange, where questions propelled us towards fresh perspectives. In this dynamic

era, social media serves as both a catalyst and a mirror. It engenders trust through influencers, engineers perceived needs, and triggers the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). We, as consumers, often find ourselves at the intersection of trust and impulse, often oblivious to the orchestrated narrative shaping our decisions.

Insights

The insights gained from this exploration shine a light on the intricacies of the digital age. Understanding the psychology of influence is not just about financial awareness; it is a vital tool in a world where screens are portals to our desires and decisions. The orchestration of digital influence is not haphazard; it is a calculated process beckoning us to immerse, engage, and respond. As I navigated through this landscape, knowledge emerged as a guiding compass. Armed with insights, we can make conscious decisions that align with authenticity and core values. Amidst the interplay of social proof and profitability, we evolve from passive observers to empowered decision-makers.

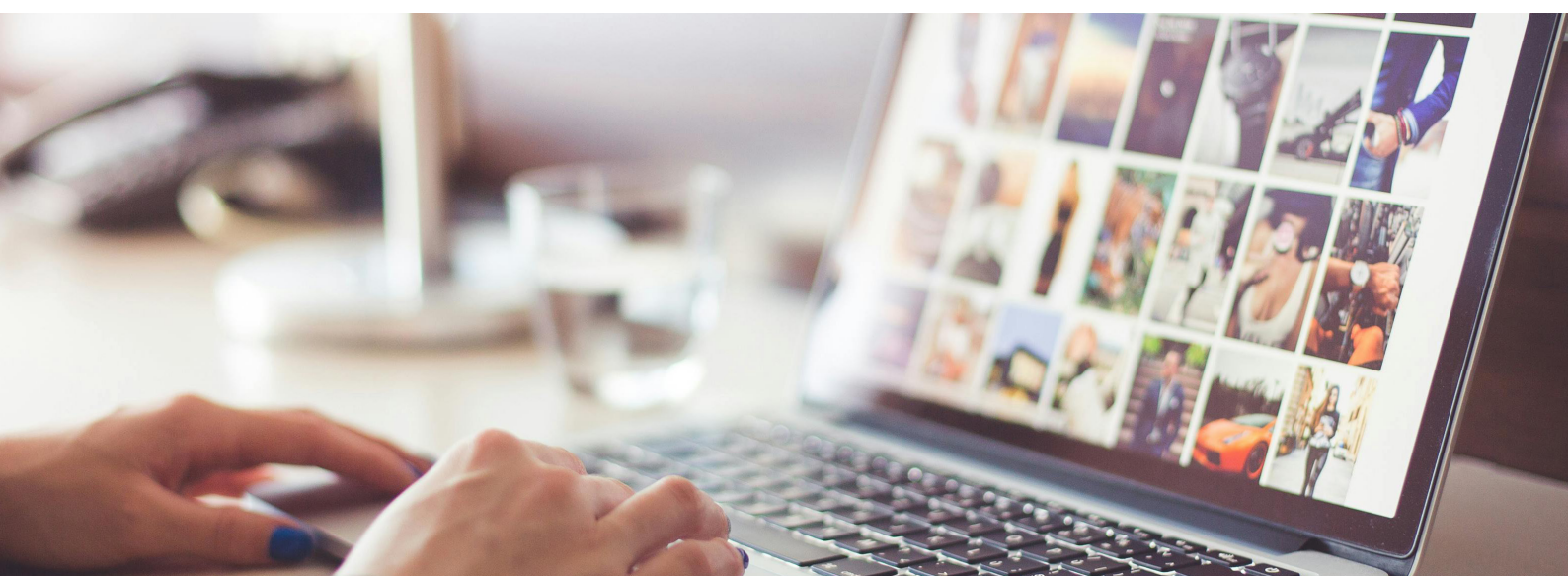
Academic Endeavour

This academic endeavour contributes a cohesive thread to the fabric of knowledge. It maps the evolving consumer journey shaped by digital platforms. As we

traverse this landscape, vigilance becomes key. It is imperative to critically evaluate the influences that shape our choices and employ knowledge as a defence against manipulation. On my exploration of digital influence, propelled by the study on social proof and profitability, reveals a narrative where financial decisions and digital interactions converge.

Looking back and ahead

Looking back at my overall experience that I have gained from undertaking this course, my journey from dissertation to the ROGE Conference has been a crescendo of intellectual growth. As I reflect on this voyage, I am reminded that the pursuit of knowledge is a symphony that evolves, resonates, and enriches the tapestry of academia. This journey has affirmed that every researcher is a conductor, orchestrating ideas into harmonies that contribute to the grand symphony of human understanding. CBER-FUE 12th ROGE International Conference is a platform where this narrative found resonance, sparking discussions that extend far beyond the conference walls financial choices, conducting it with knowledge as our compass. I am deeply grateful for the guidance and mentorship of Dr Palto Datta whose insights have illuminated this path of research and understanding.



Theorising Regent College London's perception of inclusivity Pedagogy within UK Higher Education Industry

Dr Rishiram Aryal; Associate Professor (Dr) Ebikinei Stanley Eguruze, School of Business and Enterprise, Faculty of Business and Law

This review examines theories relating to Regent College London's (RCL)'s perception of inclusivity and diversity pedagogy within UK's higher education industry. This is essential as the twin terms are applied widely in other contexts: legal, social welfare, education, housing, employment recruitment, economic, environmental, and so on.

It also seeks to highlight the implications benefits, risks/consequences for teaching, and for stakeholders more broadly, as the two closely related phenomena are often misunderstood and misconstrued. Yet they are mutually inclusive as per the provisions overcharging legislation on equality, which brought together all the related aspects: race, sex, disability, employment rights, access to education, as other fundamental human rights. Despite the fact these terminologies are widely researched and the relevant authors have made equally meaningful contributions, the implications arising from the theoretical misconceptions have not been sufficiently highlighted in academic journals in connection with learning and deployment within the RCL context. And even if there are, then, such discourse has not been sufficiently published within RCL academic journals. That makes this paper imperative. This paper is designed to fill that niche in knowledge by sharing it through this medium. By examining these phenomena, the paper reflects a strong desire in prompting

an educational environment that works for all stakeholders: students, teachers, management, and policymakers (government and education providers), private sector, and voluntary sectors. By implication the authors would like to see an end to 21st educational world, in which access to education is open to all or whoever needs it, wherever they are. Similarly, barriers to education are a thing of the past: whether it is affordability, age, gender, cultural, geographical location, or regional limitations. This paper advocates an educational world where these factors are no longer barriers or obstacle in whatever shape or form it was practised, which is why RCL is chosen as case study, due to its unique approach to teaching, learning and development, using its TiC philosophy to leverage its vision of a of the 21st century environment where barriers to access to education is minimised, if not completely eliminated.

Thus, the paper adopts RCL as a case study, because it enables us compare RCL's policy on inclusivity with other UK educational institutions of higher learning that were selected randomly. The characteristics that were compared include: admissions, age, gender, race, nationalities, religion, disability, performances, admission, global reach, employment. These were critically analysed and evaluated. Below we highlight the key implications: in the form of benefits and challenges.

Benefits

For students, significant improvements in in-takes rates from across the world). Teachers/Staff, overall quality of teaching improved, as well as time for self-development. Wider Society, more opportunities for productivity and growth arising from

broader thinking, tolerance, and receptive attitude.

Challenges

Possible consequences of lack of inclusivity/inclusion – then some segment of society still might have been left behind and therefore might be subjected to deeper levels of poverty, deprivation, marginalisation, social exclusion, which arose from social disadvantages caused by structural or disproportional structure in society. Based series of previous studies, it is generally thought that education is a good means of eradicating poverty.

The basic findings

The paper found are that inclusivity in UK HE would be a positive step towards the right direction. And noted that to overcome discrimination and social inclusion in higher education, more is needed to be done by collaboratively working together and not in isolation. Moreover, inclusivity policy could not survive without support of all stakeholders, most particularly, top management and top leadership should be the driving force behind it and shaping the underlining culture and value. In all of this, RCL is increasingly becoming a formidable competitive player, within a shorter pace of time. All due to an inclusive, creative, innovative adaptive, and supportive and enabling leadership.

Student mental health and wellbeing for universities

By Tanya Tanna, Student Wellbeing Coordinator



Student mental health and wellbeing for universities has become an increasingly important issue. Regent college London was invited to share best practices and key insights into creating a positive culture where students feel open to disclosing their mental health challenges at Student Wellbeing and Mental Health conference 2023. Student Wellbeing Coordinator Tanya Tanna delivered a presentation "Collaborating with students to amplify their voices on mental health and wellbeing" and showcased peer mentoring support project, "Many Hands" which offered accessible preventative early intervention and ongoing mental health support model for students through an innovative 7 -partner collaboration between small-setting HE providers, digital companies, and experts in access and participation, and mental health.

Many Hands project has been a truly inspirational and transformational journey for Regent.

Initially it was aimed at enhancing mental health support for students at Regent and better supporting students facing barriers to sustained educational engagement and attainment due to mental health by offering peer mentoring support. However, Many Hands offered so much more than that.

Mentees disclosed that having a student mentor really changed their life, they felt cared for and supported through sharing lived experience and empathy, meeting positive role models, and seeing that recovery was possible. Peer support helped them to tackle isolation and motivated to commit to their own recovery. Overall, peer mentoring also helped to challenge stigma around mental health which is a huge barrier for seeking help for majority of students at Regent.

Student mentors also had a life changing impact of the Many Hands journey on them. They revealed that they were greatly influenced by the knowledge and experience gained during the project, they became more confident in having difficult conversations and providing emotional support for others, they found that they became more able to manage their own emotions which helped them to build up their self-esteem and boost their confidence and increased sense of feeling appreciated. Mentors mentioned that helping others helped them to know themselves better and improved the quality

of their life by making it more meaningful.

Regent mentors initiated creating Many Hands mentor community, which became a safe space for them to share their feelings, thoughts, personal experiences and helpful information on personal growth and self-care.

Another aspect of the project, which had a great impact on enhancing mental health support at Regent, was the development and delivery of a mental health awareness training for staff which was aimed to increase knowledge and confidence around supporting student mental health. It has been embedded in Regent's cyclical programme of staff training. The training appeared to be especially useful for members of staff who have been experiencing difficulties in understanding of ill mental health, recognising the signs of it and being able to provide in the moment support for students in need.

Many Hands project finished in July 2023 however Regent mentors decided to carry on providing peer mentoring support at Regent and start piloting "Hand in Hand" student peer mentoring support from September 2023 which will allow putting students' mental health at the heart of student journey as they believe that without wellbeing there is no successful student experience.



Introduction to Problem- Based Learning and Emotional Intelligence

By Neli Ivanova, a Regent College London Business Management graduate. Now works as a Self-publishing author at Amazon.



In this article we will delve into the fascinating realm of problem-based learning and emotional intelligence. These two concepts are intricately connected, as they both play a crucial role in our personal and professional lives. By understanding and harnessing the power of problem-based learning and emotional intelligence, we can enhance our problem-solving skills, foster effective teamwork, and develop a deeper understanding of ourselves and others.

Let us begin by exploring problem-based learning. Traditionally, education has often been centered around a teacher imparting knowledge to passive students. However, problem-based learning offers a refreshing departure from this traditional model. It places the learner at the centre

of the education process, encouraging active engagement, critical thinking, and collaboration. In problem-based learning, learners are presented with real-world problems or scenarios that require them to apply their knowledge and skills to find solutions. This approach not only enhances our understanding of the subject matter but also develops our problem-solving abilities, creativity, and analytical thinking. By immersing ourselves in authentic, complex problems, we are better equipped to navigate the challenges that await us in the real world.

Now, let us turn our attention to emotional intelligence. Often referred to as EQ, emotional intelligence encompasses our ability to recognize, understand, and manage our own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. It involves being aware of our own feelings, empathizing with others, and effectively regulating our emotions in different situations. Emotional intelligence is not only essential for personal well-being but also for building positive and meaningful relationships. By being emotionally intelligent, we can navigate conflicts, communicate effectively, and foster empathy and understanding. It enables us to adapt to different social contexts, collaborate successfully, and inspire and motivate others.

Problem-based learning and emotional intelligence are intrinsically linked. When engaged in problem-solving activities, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role. It helps us navigate the complexities of working in teams, understanding different perspectives, and managing conflicts that may arise during the problem-solving process. Additionally, problem-based learning provides an ideal platform for developing and honing our emotional intelligence skills. By integrating problem-based learning and emotional intelligence into our educational and professional endeavour, we can create a holistic and transformative learning experience. This combination empowers individuals to not only acquire knowledge but also develop the skills and attitudes necessary for success in the ever-evolving world.

In conclusion, problem-based learning and emotional intelligence are powerful tools that can revolutionize the way we learn, work, and interact with others. By embracing these concepts, we can nurture our problem-solving abilities, enhance our relationships, and cultivate a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Together, let us embark on this journey of exploration and discovery, as we uncover the transformative potential of problem-based learning and emotional intelligence.



The Stakeholders' perspective of the digital transformation phenomenon

By Dr Shobha Harebasur,
Programme Leader – PG
programmes



This research study attempts to explore the stakeholders' perspective from their experiences of managing the transition cycle of the digital transformation by unwrapping the fundamental challenges and constraints in practices among the established organisations. This study enables to uncover the critical influential and compelling factors possible barriers in commencing the digital strategy and recommends Capability Funnel Framework as tool to develop digital fluidity in organisational ecosystem towards frictionless customisation of services. So primarily, this research has chosen the traditional Wealth Management services organization as a case study industry.

As per the literature review of the existing body of knowledge, the following are the perspectives that surfaced. Firstly, a set of researchers advocates the imperative technology as a higher focus in integrating the capabilities and resources around it by an organisation (Fichman et al., 2014; Hess et al., 2016; Vial, 2019; Collin et al., 2015). Secondly, another set of researchers, Liu et al. (2011); Morakanyane et al., (2017); Aldrich & Ruef (2006) and Vial (2019) argues of the importance of internal capability development prior to choosing the technology for any successful digital transitioning. This indicates the polarised practices in strategy formation for the digital transformation adaption. According to HBR (2019) study report reveals that around \$900 billion was wasted worldwide until the year 2018 from the total investment of \$1.3 trillion in digital transformation (Behnam et al. 2019). While to supplement

the above outcomes, the report from Forbes (2019), highlights that only 28% of business organizations flourish in adopting digital transition while 70% of business firms are unsure of capabilities for digital navigation.

This brings a necessary attempt to investigate the reasons for ongoing investment wastages in space of the wealth management firms, which is inadequately represented in the current literature body. This project is a spin-off of my doctoral thesis, which explores the boarder-associated complex agenda in the same space.

As this exploratory study identified various critical stakeholders from the industry using a phenomenological approach to understand their perspectives from their lived experiences of managing through massive digital transformation, which includes C-suite executives, IT consultants, investment managers and the customers. This study yielded major six themes drawing attention from the granular level of strategy formation, due to the existing legacy culture within large and traditional wealth service firms, the divide and conquer strategy (Sebastian et al., 2017) is not suited here besides that strategic planning of any transformation is not percolated at all levels effectively triggering state of chaos and polarisation, leading to inertia state among the business and functional level employees. Inadequate knowledge and understanding of dynamic technology at C-suite and board members leaders delays in buy-in decisions, as results from top management highlights a perception of fear on losing out on existing revenue from the existing business model. The second barrier is consistent macro level pressure from emerging fintech enforcing the traditional businesses to evolve their business processes prompting for repetitive digital upgrades, which in turn irate the employees and customers for constant changes.

The perception highlighted by all respondents commonly is about digital mindset, as there is a high level of positivity about digital advancements but there is a lack of unified understanding and adaption mechanisms within organizations, which derails the digital transformation efforts. Another outcome emphasizes on core spirit of this chosen industry the trust and relationship factors, which are slowly diminishing due to the advent of dynamic technology and automation in the investment sector. Additionally, there are many process interruptions identified, which create major barriers among front, back and middle office inter-process towards providing frictionless experiences of investment to the customer. This research study mined the granular barriers which are underestimated in process of implementing the gigantic digital transformation shift.

There are various recommendations by this research, theoretical as well practical primarily focussing on innovative business practices. A major outcome is in the form of a capability funnel framework implementable in three stages, which allows an organization to explore GINC variables (GINC, ISSUES, NEEDS, CAPABILITY) for successful adoption of the digital transformation.

Embracing the AI Revolution in Education, a 2023 Educational Experience

By John A Raineri



With twenty-seven years teaching informatics in higher education, preceded by a career in news media and engineering during the 1980s and 90s, I bring that to my students in class. I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of information technologies in industry and education. In this article, I aim to share with fellow educators my responses to integrating Artificial Intelligence applications (Large Language Models) into my teaching methodologies, particularly in the context of higher education levels 3 and 4.

Reflective Learning through AI Integration: In response to the External Examiners' recommendation, I incorporated reflection of the use of AI into assignments questions. This approach not only aligns with the learning outcomes but also encourages students to critically reflect on the role of AI in their academic pursuits. For instance, in Foundation Projects (HE level 3), questions like "How did AI influence your choice of project topic?" or "How did AI shape your project objectives?" prompt students to consider AI's impact on their decision-making and goal-setting processes.

Balancing AI Utilization with Academic Integrity: A crucial aspect of integrating AI in education is maintaining academic integrity. I repeatedly emphasize to my students the importance of using AI tools responsibly. While these tools can significantly aid research and provide insights, they should not replace students' critical thinking or originality. I advocate for a balanced approach where AI is a supplement, not a substitute, for student intellect, curiosity, and creativity.

AI as a Tool for Enhancing Learning: In the Computing Fundamentals course (HE level 4), I encourage students to use AI tools to assist in understanding complex mathematical techniques. However, I also stress the importance of critical assessment of information provided by AI. Questions like "How did AI tools assist or hinder your problem-solving abilities?" help students evaluate the effectiveness and limitations of AI in their learning process.

AI as a "Study Buddy": One approach I have adopted is encouraging students to use AI as a "study buddy". Instead of relying on AI for answers, students use it to generate questions, which they then research using credible sources. This method not only enhances their research skills but also ensures a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Preparing for the AI Revolution: It is essential to recognize that the AI revolution is akin to past technological shifts, such as the advent of smartphones, the internet, and personal computing. Each of these technologies initially seemed daunting but eventually became integral to our daily lives. Similarly, AI is not a threat but a tool to enhance our capabilities and productivity. As educators, I assume the role to guide students in harnessing AI's potential responsibly and creatively.

Another side to this topic is that understanding and proving academic misconduct in the context of AI usage is a challenge. It requires a significant investment of time and concentration. My approach involves setting early deadlines for assignments. This allows me to identify potential misconduct early and provide formative feedback. This feedback can be private in teams or public in class to guide students to correct their work before final submissions. This deters misconduct and educates students about the importance of originality and ethical academic practices.

The use of formative feedback is important in the learning process, especially when dealing with AI tools.

When students submit initial drafts, I provide feedback, highlighting areas where AI assistance may have overshadowed their original thinking or analysis. This process is not just about correction but about teaching students how to use AI as an aid rather than a crutch. It allows them to refine their work, ensuring that their final submissions are genuinely reflective of their understanding and capabilities.

I want to be encouraging students to engage in collaborative learning. In seminar sessions, students try to share their experiences with AI tools, develop questions, and present problems and potential solutions. This peer-to-peer interaction fosters a learning environment where students learn not only from the instructor but also from each other. It also helps in building a community that is collectively responsible for maintaining academic integrity. By engaging them in discussions about the ethical use of AI and the importance of original work, hopefully they become active participants in maintaining the integrity of the educational process.

The integration of AI in education brings with it challenges that require old or novel approaches. For example, I am considering handwritten exams or assessments for next year's coursework. I try to set early deadlines, using formative feedback effectively, and fostering a collaborative learning environment, to help guide students to use AI responsibly and express their values to navigate the ethical landscape of the digital age.

Academic Staff Development Sessions

We've had another successful term full of Academic Staff Development (ASD) sessions! The sessions have provided developmental support to academics across the schools, ranging from exploring innovative technological tools to learning about colleagues' research to building relationships with students, amongst other learning and teaching practices. The sessions have been well received and generated practical and informative discussions. Thank you to all the presenters who have led us in these conversations!

The following ASD programme sessions have run this past autumn:

SESSION	PRESENTER
Academic Integrity/Misconduct 1	Roma Galvan, Quality Manager ISC
Academic Integrity/Misconduct 2	Roma Galvan, Quality Manager ISC
Understanding Learning disabilities	Lisa Oluyinka, Lecturer, SoHSS
How can ASK@Regent and academics work together to improve students' attainment and retention?	Vanessa Lima, Programme Leader, ISC
Inclusive Teaching	Emma Buhtina, Student Support Manager

We are pleased to share that we've had an average attendance of 25.4 colleagues at each session who have reported an average overall satisfaction rating of 4.5/5!

We look forward to seeing you at the next session! These lunchtime sessions provide a valuable space to engage with colleagues about good practice, to discover new ideas for your own classroom, and to continue your professional development. So, please do come along and feel free to bring your teas and coffees!

We would also love to hear from colleagues who'd like to present as part of the Academic Staff Development Programme's new term! Please get in touch with your ideas around enhancing learning and teaching, improving student experience or engaging with technology for education. You can contact Giselle Kouassi at scholarship@rcl.ac.uk.

If you weren't able to make all the sessions or would like to review them, you will be able to watch all the recordings at a later date.



Call for contributions

We maintain an ongoing call for contributions for brief articles for the Quarterly. We welcome ideas and research from both academic and professional staff at Regent, and are happy to support you to develop an idea into an article.

We also invite members of staff to support future newsletters as part of the editorial team and to recommend student contributions to the newsletter that are well done, original, or innovative.

If you would like to contribute to or support future issues of this newsletter, please contact Dr Giselle Kouassi, Scholarship and Academic Development Coordinator/Editor.