

Educational Transformation at the Crossroads of Artificial Intelligence and Pedagogical Innovation

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EDITORIAL

Higher education presently stands at a decisive epistemic and pedagogical juncture, increasingly shaped by the accelerating influence of artificial intelligence (AI), digital transformation, and evolving educational philosophies. Technological innovation is no longer external to educational systems; rather, it has become deeply embedded within pedagogical design, institutional governance, curriculum development, and knowledge production itself. Educational institutions are today more than ever challenged to prepare individuals not only with technical knowledge but also with critical thinking, emotional resilience, ethical awareness, and the capacity for innovative action (Kefalaki & Diamantidaki, 2026). Furthermore, educators and universities are increasingly called upon to acknowledge the value of fostering meaningful student participation in the design and implementation of academic strategies (Solano, 2026). Consequently, educational institutions worldwide are increasingly compelled to reconsider not only how learning occurs but also the ethical, intellectual, and social purposes that education continues to serve in technologically mediated environments.

The June 2026 issue of JEICOM, entitled *Educational Transformation at the Crossroads of Artificial Intelligence and Pedagogical Innovation*, contributes to this urgent scholarly conversation by presenting interdisciplinary investigations into the changing dynamics of teaching, learning, and institutional development across diverse educational contexts. The issue examines the use of AI systems into the teacher philosophy, instructional design, digital transformation in higher education, and concludes with a review of a major handbook on AI in higher education.

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More particularly, the June 2026 issue of JEICOM brings together studies that examine the pedagogical implications of large language models, evolving teacher philosophies within international educational frameworks, instructional innovation, and pathways toward digital transformation in higher education. Collectively, these contributions illuminate how educational ecosystems are increasingly characterised by the interaction between human expertise, technological systems, and institutional adaptation.

Contemporary scholarship increasingly recognises that educational transformation cannot be understood exclusively through technological determinism. Rather, innovation in education emerges through the complex interplay between digital affordances, pedagogical intentionality, institutional readiness, and human agency (Setiawardani et al., 2026). While AI technologies continue to reshape educational practice, their pedagogical significance depends fundamentally upon the interpretative, ethical, and reflective capacities of educators and institutions. In this regard, recent scholarship has stressed the importance of cultivating pedagogical frameworks that remain critically attentive to inclusivity, intercultural dialogue, creativity, and reflective learning within digitally enhanced educational environments (Kefalaki & Diamantidaki, 2022; Kefalaki & Diamantidaki, 2024).

Indeed, the accelerating integration of artificial intelligence into educational practice has generated both optimism and apprehension across higher education. Debates surrounding generative AI frequently oscillate between concerns regarding academic integrity, authorship, and epistemic reliability, and enthusiasm for personalised learning, adaptive educational design, and enhanced scholarly productivity. Such tensions necessitate a balanced and critically informed approach that neither idealises nor dismisses technological innovation but instead examines its educational implications through theoretically grounded and ethically conscious inquiry. As Kefalaki and Diamantidaki (2022) argue on transformative educational environments and digital pedagogies, meaningful educational innovation requires sustained reflection upon the human dimensions of technological change, particularly regarding agency, identity formation, and collaborative learning.

The contributions assembled in this issue offer precisely such multidimensional perspectives. Moving from investigations of AI-supported academic prompting and the pedagogical possibilities of large language models to analyses of teacher philosophy formation, entrepreneurship education, and institutional digital transformation, the issue reveals that educational innovation is fundamentally relational, organisational, and pedagogical rather than merely technological.

The opening article, *Evaluating ChatGPT's Memory and Conversation Continuity: Insights from Academic Prompting* by Meena Jha, Sanjay Jha, Goldie Gabrani, Monika Kansal, and Anuradha Mathrani, critically examines the implications of ChatGPT's memory functionality within academic contexts. Through structured prompting activities involving academic participants, the study investigates issues of coherence, responsiveness, contextual continuity, and relevance in AI-assisted scholarly tasks. The findings offer important insights into the evolving capacities and limitations of conversational AI in supporting curriculum alignment, assessment design, and academic feedback processes, while simultaneously raising broader questions concerning trust, reliability, and human oversight in educational technology.

The second contribution, *Understanding the Shaping of Teachers' Educational Philosophies within International Baccalaureate Contexts in Japan* by Rika Nakano, Hyeun Yun, and Tasha Eunjoo Lee, shifts attention toward the transformative role of educational environments in shaping pedagogical identity. Drawing upon semi-structured interviews with experienced Japanese language teachers, the study demonstrates how International Baccalaureate frameworks may foster more reflective, student-centred, and future-oriented educational philosophies. Particularly significant is the study's emphasis upon reflective practice and long-term pedagogical thinking—dimensions increasingly recognised as essential within globally interconnected educational systems.

The third contribution, authored by Evriklea Dogoriti and entitled *Exploring Keller's ARCS Instructional Design Model and Bloom's Taxonomy in Teaching Entrepreneurship in Translation and Interpreting Studies* further expands the pedagogical focus of this issue through an examination of instructional design frameworks in higher education. Situated within translator and interpreter training, the study explores how Bloom's Taxonomy and Keller's ARCS model may be meaningfully integrated to support entrepreneurship education. While Bloom's Taxonomy offers a widely recognised framework for the classification of learning objectives and cognitive development, Keller's ARCS model foregrounds learner motivation through the dimensions of Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. By bringing these frameworks into productive dialogue, the study proposes a coherent and theoretically grounded pedagogical approach that strengthens curriculum design, student engagement, and entrepreneurial competence within translation and interpreting studies (Dogoriti, 2026). Importantly, the contribution reinforces broader discussions regarding the necessity of interdisciplinary pedagogical innovation capable of responding to increasingly dynamic professional and educational landscapes.

The fourth article, *New Quality Productivity: Factors and Paths for Digital Transformation of Yunnan's Higher Education* by Yingdong Geng, directs attention toward the structural and institutional dimensions of educational transformation. Grounded in the perspective of education economics, the study undertakes a comprehensive investigation into the factors shaping digital transformation in higher education through a methodological combination of literature review, Delphi method, and the DEMATEL–ISM analytical model. The research identifies sixteen interrelated factors associated with “new quality productivity,” conceptualised as central drivers of educational modernisation and institutional innovation. Findings highlight the modernisation of teaching content, diversification of instructional methods, enhancement of teaching evaluation systems, and the development of intelligent campus management as particularly influential pathways in facilitating sustainable digital transformation within higher education institutions (Geng, 2026). In doing so, the study offers an important contribution to ongoing scholarly debates concerning institutional readiness, digital governance, and the systemic conditions necessary for educational innovation.

The fifth contribution, *We Talk About the Risks, What About the Gains? Large Language Models and Learning in Mathematics, Statistics* by Valentine Owan, returns the discussion to the increasingly debated role of artificial intelligence in higher education. Against a backdrop of persistent institutional concerns regarding academic integrity, overreliance, and epistemic

uncertainty, the article offers a carefully argued counterpoint by foregrounding the pedagogical opportunities associated with large language models in quantitative learning environments. Drawing upon an extensive review of recent international and African scholarship in mathematics, statistics, and computational education, the paper advances a conceptual and argumentative framework that highlights how large language models may strengthen learning outcomes when implemented through ethically informed policies, responsible institutional guidance, and sound pedagogical design (Owan, 2026). Particularly significant is the article's effort to move beyond polarised debates concerning risk, instead advocating for a balanced and evidence-informed understanding of AI as a potentially transformative educational resource.

The issue concludes with a thought-provoking book review authored by Pauline Seah of the *Handbook of Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education*, edited by Stefan Popenici, Jürgen Rudolph, Fadhil Ismail, and Shannon Tan (Edward Elgar Publishing). As artificial intelligence increasingly reshapes higher education globally, this volume emerges as an essential scholarly resource for educators, researchers, institutional leaders, and policymakers seeking to navigate the complex ethical, pedagogical, and strategic implications of AI integration. As Seah (2026) insightfully observes, the handbook functions as a critical cartography of artificial intelligence in higher education—mapping not only emerging possibilities but also the contested conceptual, institutional, and ethical terrain underpinning educational transformation. The review highlights the volume's progression from institutional decision-making and pedagogical collaboration to broader structural critique and global perspectives, underscoring its value as both a practical and reflective guide for higher education communities confronting rapid technological change.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Taken together, the contributions assembled in this issue reaffirm that educational transformation in the age of artificial intelligence extends far beyond questions of technological adoption alone. Rather, meaningful innovation emerges through the dynamic interplay between pedagogy, institutional vision, ethical reflection, and human agency. Whether through analyses of conversational AI, instructional design, educational philosophy, digital transformation, or quantitative learning, the articles collectively encourage readers to engage critically and creatively with the opportunities and challenges that define contemporary education. At a moment when technological acceleration continues to reshape educational realities worldwide, this issue invites scholars, educators, and policymakers alike to reflect upon how innovation may remain aligned with the enduring values of meaningful, inclusive, and transformative education.

Importantly, this issue invites readers to consider how educational institutions might navigate the opportunities and uncertainties associated with AI-enhanced learning environments without compromising foundational educational values. Questions concerning equity, accessibility, teacher autonomy, and epistemic responsibility remain central to contemporary educational discourse. As institutions increasingly integrate intelligent technologies into teaching and administration, the challenge lies not merely in implementation but in ensuring that innovation remains aligned with broader humanistic and pedagogical aims.

In bringing together diverse methodological approaches and international perspectives, the June 2026 issue of JEICOM contributes to an expanding body of scholarship concerned with the future of education in technologically mediated societies. The studies presented herein collectively suggest that the future of educational innovation depends not upon replacing human capacities with technological systems, but upon fostering productive and ethically grounded relationships between them. Educators and universities should take the opportunity to transform any past mistake, with the help of technological innovations, among other things. We owe it to the young generation, to show the way and make this world a better place, sharing good practices and examples (Kefalaki et al., 2022).

We extend our sincere appreciation to the authors, reviewers, and editorial contributors whose scholarly commitment has made this issue possible. We hope that the discussions advanced in this volume will stimulate further interdisciplinary dialogue and inspire educators, researchers, and policymakers to engage critically and creatively with the evolving intersections of artificial intelligence and pedagogical innovation.

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