



Editorial

This issue of *USHUS* collates thoughtfully curated contributions that, while diverse in focus, converge on a shared concern: how individuals and institutions navigate change, pressure, and possibility in a rapidly evolving world. From students reflecting on the urgent need to align education with employability, to a deeply humane exploration of self-compassion as a response to inner distress, the edition moves fluidly between the external demands of performance and the internal work of resilience. It extends further into the often-unseen emotional landscapes of frontline responders, where psycho-spiritual care and accountability intersect, even as it captures the shifting contours of consumer behaviour in the digital age through social media engagement. Anchoring these discussions is a reflective engagement with the transformative presence of artificial intelligence in education, inviting a rethinking of how we teach, learn, and remain meaningfully human. Taken together, these research papers do not merely present findings; they are layered on adaptation and care, across personal, professional, and institutional spheres.

"Upskilling for Employability: A Study of Student Perceptions in Higher Education," confronts the pressing misalignment between traditional academic curricula and the dynamic demands of today's job market. Through a survey of 167 undergraduate students, primarily from commerce disciplines, the study reveals a strong awareness of upskilling's role in bridging this gap, with most respondents prioritizing technical skills like digital marketing alongside soft skills such as communication and leadership to enhance career prospects. Yet, barriers like time constraints and inadequate guidance persist, underscoring the need for institutions to embed skill-building programs - internships, workshops, and certifications - directly into education, fostering proactive collaboration with industry to cultivate resilient, employable graduates.

Amid rising workplace stress that diminishes both meaning and wellbeing, this research positions self-compassion as a disciplined and transformative resource for recovery. Drawing on spiritual traditions, psychological theory, and recent research (2020 - 2025), it defines self-compassion as the integration of self-kindness, shared humanity, and mindful awareness, challenging its mischaracterisation as indulgence. The review connects evidence to practice, showing that compassion-based interventions reduce burnout, interrupt rumination, and aid physiological regulation. It further extends the concept beyond individual coping to organisational life, arguing that leaders and caregivers must model

empathy, cultivate psychological safety, and normalise rest and reflection. Ultimately, self-compassion is framed as a shift from self-judgment to humane self-understanding, enabling not only resilience but a more sustainable and meaningful engagement with work.

"Beyond Stress and Burnout: Psycho-Spiritual Innovation and Pastoral Accountability in Frontline Care for Emergency Response Workers and Police" rigorously examines the concealed repercussions of moral injury and chronic trauma experienced by police and emergency personnel, positing chaplaincy as an essential, evidence-based adjunct to conventional psychological services. Grounded in a Critical Interpretive Synthesis, the work articulates virtues such as self-compassion, humility, and meaningful detachment as mechanisms to ameliorate burnout, remediate moral distress, and foster psychosocial safety. This is achieved through confidential pastoral interventions, strategic referrals, and the utilization of integrated metrics, including the Moral Injury Outcome Scale. This comprehensive framework not only authorizes chaplains to exemplify humane resilience but also mandates institutional integration of spiritual care into systemic wellness protocols, thereby reconciling professional accountability with the inherent sacredness of pastoral presence to ensure sustained frontline efficacy.

This study explores the factors influencing consumers' adoption of online purchasing through social media, based on a descriptive analysis of 138 respondents from Chennai. The findings reveal that platform usage, particularly Instagram, alongside transactional conveniences such as cash on delivery and door delivery, significantly shape purchase behaviour, with most consumers engaging in need-based buying. While social media enhances accessibility and decision-making, concerns relating to product quality, fraud, and impulse purchasing remain pertinent. The study thus emphasises the importance of informed and balanced consumer engagement, while indicating scope for broader empirical extension.

Teaching with AI (2nd ed.) positions artificial intelligence not as a peripheral tool but as a force that compels a fundamental rethinking of education itself. Bowen and Watson move beyond simplistic debates, offering a measured yet incisive lens through which AI is understood as an epistemic shift. One that reorients learning from output to inquiry, from isolated effort to reflective co-engagement with intelligent systems. Grounded in principles of transparency, process-focused assessment, and intentional cognitive re-engagement, the book balances practical guidance with a clear awareness of institutional complexities and inequities. Its deeper resonance, however, lies in its quiet insistence on preserving the distinctly human dimensions of learning - curiosity, judgment, and ethical

reflection - amid accelerating technological change. In doing so, it reframes the conversation: not how education can keep pace with AI, but how it can remain meaningfully human in its presence.

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