

Research Outlook

Message from the Chairman

ICL Education Group is back over a thousand students for the first time since the pandemic, and with a substantial intake to come in November for the Graduate Business School, we expect to exceed our all-time record from November 2019 of 1176. The Group bottomed out at 250 in June 2022 as a result of border closure; so to have quadrupled in 15 months is a significant achievement. Last time we grew from 250 to a thousand it took us eight years! The reason we are back with a vengeance is because of the quality of our graduate and postgraduate portfolio and our reputation, which has grown while schools have closed. The star performer of our recovery is the Graduate Diploma in Teaching ECE, with 165 students. Both our Master's degrees are over 100, and even our level 5 NZDB has regrown from 3 to 22.



The rapid growth brings us logistical challenges and we have opened a lecture room on Level 8 which can take up to 80 students. Class size brings teaching and marking issues to the fore and I thank our academic staff for bearing with us while we consider alternative models.

Throughout the pandemic our research activity has continued to prosper, much of it rooted in the applied projects of our Master's students. At present we have over thirty under supervision for their projects and next year this number will reach over 100. We will be increasingly spoilt for choice in sourcing our ICL Journal papers.

Ewen Mackenzie-Bowie
Principal and Chairman

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Welcome to the September 2023 research update!

As we approach the final stretch of the year, it's a time-honoured tradition to pause and reflect on the past months while setting our sights on the future. For us at the ICL Graduate Business School, 2024 promises to be a milestone year. We are thrilled to announce the accreditation of our Bachelor of Business Information Systems (BBIS), a forward-thinking program designed to equip the next generation of professionals with the fusion of technical prowess and business acumen. Learners can look forward to enrolling for the term starting in March 2024.



Reflecting on our recent achievements, it's with immense pride that we share the results of a successful monitoring visit for our graduate and postgraduate study programs in Business, Management, and Business Informatics. Such positive feedback is a testament to our commitment to academic excellence and the outstanding outcomes our graduates consistently achieve. We owe a debt of gratitude to our dedicated teams across academia, administration, and student support, whose collective efforts have maintained and elevated our high academic standards.

The large interest in our Master's degree study programmes is yet another highlight, with enrolment numbers soaring in these study programmes to over 200 students. This unprecedented growth speaks volumes about the quality and relevance of our offerings.

To cater to this surge in student numbers and maintain our personalized approach to education, we've welcomed new research-active faculty members to our ranks. Their expertise and dedication will no doubt enrich the learning experience and drive our research initiatives forward.

Looking to the horizon, we are currently in the process of developing a Master by Research in Business Informatics and a Master of Health Management that will be aligned with our current Master of Management study programme. These programmes are being carefully crafted to meet the growing demands of the labour market and to provide our students with the competitive edge they need to thrive in their careers.

As we chart new territories and build on the strong foundation laid in previous years, our commitment to excellence in education remains steadfast. We are ready to embrace 2024 with open arms and an unwavering spirit, ready to welcome the opportunities and successes that lie ahead.

Ngā mihi nui,
Markus Klose
Academic Director - ICL Graduate Business School

ICL Research Seminars

Research active staff and those with research interests regularly gather at research seminars. Here are some exciting research papers presented by academic staff from May to September 2023. More research-sharing sessions are scheduled in 2023.

Presenter	Topic	Date
Dr Maria Umali	<p style="text-align: center;">Coping strategies of university students during the Pandemic: a qualitative analysis of their Mental Health Reflective Journals</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>The first few years of the COVID-19 pandemic have been tough for most people, especially students. University students experiencing high levels of stress while they learned remotely have been reported. Students' social development has also been affected as they missed out on experiencing University life. Such unfortunate circumstances can truly impact one's mental health and development. People cope differently with every challenge. Effective coping strategies can protect one's mental health. The qualitative study aimed to shed light on the types of coping strategies that tertiary students utilized, as well as discuss the things they felt grateful for during the early part of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using the content analysis method, reflective journals of students from an online mental health course were examined. Data were sourced from the photo collages and essays of students providing answers to the questions: "What coping strategies do you use to cope with the pandemic?" and "What are you thankful for during the pandemic?" One hundred diverse male and female participants were randomly selected from a total of 150 Business students coming from five sections that took the zero-credit online course. Anchored on Lazarus' theory of coping and Seligman's model of happiness and wellbeing, the findings were discussed. Findings revealed that students employed a variety of cognitive and behavioral coping strategies during the pandemic. These included maintaining social connections, engaging in leisure or recreational activities, taking care of one's physical body, using self-management techniques, engaging in religious and relaxation activities, and self-reflection. Findings also showed how students remained hopeful amidst the global health crisis, by being grateful to God and their families for their social support, ability to maintain good health and safety, having access to basic needs and certain privileges, having an opportunity for self-reflection and being inspired by certain community members during the pandemic. The study may still need to be subjected to several procedures (e.g. add more audit trails, involve multiple coders, etc.) in order to achieve the rigor that can strengthen the reliability and validity of the findings, suggestive of future research direction.</p> <p>Keywords: coping, gratitude, pandemic, mental health, well-being</p>	May 2023

<p>Dr Syed Jamali</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Usage of Online Platforms by International Students to Choose New Zealand as an Education Destination</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>As a result of foreign student enrolments and globalisation, universities all over the globe are competing for students by advertising their institutions and studying programmes or courses in different ways. At the same time, aspiring international students use a variety of information sources to conduct a global university search, decision-making, and selection criteria. Traditional information methods like newspapers, mass media, broadcasting, educational fairs, and academic institutions' websites dominated well before the emergence of social media. As many youngsters and students communicate, cooperate, and interact in these internet groups, social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google, and YouTube have become additional educational sources of information.</p> <p>This research examines how social media impacts international students' course or university choices. A questionnaire survey gathered demographic data with multiple-choice, open-ended questions. One hundred thirty-four international students in New Zealand completed the survey form. The findings show: (1) that international students use social media extensively, (2) the impact of social media platforms affect international students' course and academic institutional decisions, and (3) the significance of social media in addressing their required information. Overall, this research provides a deeper understanding of which online platforms international students use while selecting New Zealand as an international study destination and why. It also gives colleges ideas for developing social media engagement and selection techniques.</p>	<p>July 2023</p>
<p>Meripa Toso</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">A piece of Pineapple Pie: Adult learning through blended learning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions.</p> <p>This whakatauki refers to the need for creative thinking, adaptability and perseverance. In order to solve a problem you need to have all of these. Learning is a change in human disposition or the capability which may be retained, and which is not simply ascribable to the process of growth (Gagne, 1965,p.5). Adult learners have a deep need to be self-directing therefore, the role of the teacher is to engage in a process of mutual inquiry with them rather than to transmit his or her knowledge to them and then evaluate their conformity to it. This presentation explores the use and effectiveness of blended learning for adult learners as an innovative concept that embraces the advantages of both traditional teaching in the class spaces and ICT supported learning inclusive both offline learning and online learning. This has the scope for collaborative learning (AKO), constructive learning and computer assisted learning (CIA). The overview of blended learning in Aotearoa New Zealand's education system is also discussed. This korero seeks to explore how blended learning is changing rapidly within learning and teaching as a future affirmative stance to xué wú zhǐ jìng learning is limitless.</p>	<p>September 2023</p>

Keywords: Andragogy, Ako, blended learning, learning and teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand

These sessions help boost ICL’s research culture. They allow for discussing possible collaborative projects and exploring research topics from previous recommendations.



Meripa Toso at an ICL research seminar

Professional Development

As part of professional development, staff members attended and facilitated short training sessions conducted by ICL Graduate Business School and other professional organizations.

Dr Syed Jamali, Programme Manager (Postgraduate) and Senior Lecturer, attended the following Webinars organised by The Education Hub:

- Mātauranga Māori in education – 17th of August 2023. This webinar explores questions related to mātauranga Māori in education, including:
 - *What is mātauranga Māori?*
 - *How should schools and teachers be conceptualising and addressing mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning?*

- *What are some of the key questions, issues, and ideas surrounding mātauranga Māori in education?*
- Curriculum Design in Schools -5th of September 2023. This webinar explored the key ideas, questions and recommendations raised in the report.

Michèle E.M. Akoorie, ICLGBS research professor, attended a Sage Publishing Webinar titled “How to do Research and Get Published Webinar”.

Hemal Manaktal, ECE Lecturer, also attended a Webinar titled “‘Student Selection and Fitness to Teach’ ITE symposium” organised by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa, New Zealand, on 16 August 2023.

Research Projects Undertaken by Master of Business Informatics (MBI) and Master of Management (MM) Students

Cohort 25 and 26 have finished their final Applied Project Reports of 15,000-20,000 words under their supervisors. These research projects have been completed and submitted on time. In addition, the students have investigated some exciting and relevant areas:

Researcher	Topic	Supervisor
Danni Ma	Challenges faced by healthcare workers in New Zealand during COVID-19 and the support they need.	Dr Zarqa Shaheen
Qian Qu	The COVID-19 pandemic effect on student attitudes towards online music education.	Dr Michèle Akoorie
Xiang Ouyang	Impact of Instagram on adults' physical activity and fitness development for customers' retention in gyms during Covid-19	Dr Michèle Akoorie
Ivan Zhang	Factors influencing New Zealand customers' purchase of healthcare products on e-commerce platforms during COVID-19.	Dr Zarqa Shaheen

Publications

Akoorie, M., Ali, Z. S. & Arachchi, N. (2023). Got an App to Ride? A Qualitative Study of Uber Driver Experiences in Auckland, New Zealand. *Global Business & Organizational Excellence: A Review of Research and Best Practices*. Paper in progress.

Akoorie, M., Ali, Z. S., Scott, J., Kennel, S. & Tse, P. (2023). *Factors influencing tertiary students use of ChatGPT in their education: The New Zealand Context*. Paper in progress.

Jamali, S. (2023). *Inquisition of Teaching Philosophy*. Paper in progress.

Editor: Dr Syed Jamali