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Research Article

A Study on Mature Student Participation in Indian Central University Governance: Leveraging ICT in Higher Education

Rameshwar Gupta[1*], Jyoti Yadav[2], Rishabh Gupta[3], Dr. Pawan Sahu[4], Dr. Geetanjali Baswani[5]

[1]Research Scholar, Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension, CSJM University, Kanpur, U.P., India https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3761-3591 Email id: rameshwargupta775@gmail.com, phd202300003590@csjmu.ac.in
[2]Research Scholar, Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension, CSJM University, Kanpur, U.P., India http://orcid.org/0009-0001-0975-9262 Email id: jyoti16.aj@gmail.com, phd202200000664@csjmu.ac.in
[3]Research Scholar, Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension, CSJM University, Kanpur, U.P., India https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6596-9338 Email id: rishabhgupta267@gmail.com
[4]NRLM (BMM) Kanpur Nagar, Kanpur, U.P., India https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9468-0603 Email id: pawan20092010@gmail.com
[5]Independent Researcher, Kanpur, U.P., India https://orcid.org/0009-0008-2000-0792 Email id: daisiesgeeta@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the underrepresented domain of mature student involvement within the governance structures of Indian central universities, alongside the incorporation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in higher education. Built upon a robust theoretical foundation, the research utilizes a mixed-methods approach, blending semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and the analysis of strategies for integrating ICT. Key findings underscore several critical observations: (i) a widespread lack of student awareness regarding governance mechanisms, (ii) a predominantly reactive approach to addressing emerging issues within these frameworks, (iii) perceptions of mature students as encountering distinct challenges and having specific needs, and (iv) systemic deficiencies in ensuring equitable representation for all student demographics, encompassing mature students and other marginalized groups. Additionally, the study explores how ICT has the potential to enrich educational opportunities for mature students and promote inclusivity within the governance of central universities. This paper concisely presents the research findings, emphasizing the intersection of mature student representation and ICT integration in Indian central university governance, and advocating for comprehensive strategies to tackle systemic challenges.

KEYWORDS: Decision-making, Governance Bodies, Higher Education, Indian Universities, Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Mature Students, Underrepresented Groups, University Governance.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The idea of enhancing accessibility and involvement in higher education is gaining more attention within scholarly discussions. This reflects an acknowledgment of the diverse demographics of students and the increasing presence of historically marginalized groups, particularly mature students. This research aims to thoroughly investigate participation in higher education, covering aspects such as enrollment, attendance, equitable opportunities in comparison to traditional students, participation in university governance bodies, representation within these bodies, engagement in decision-making processes that influence institutional life, and advocacy for the specific interests, preferences, and needs of mature students.

Our study particularly focuses on one aspect of student engagement: membership in university governing bodies, where students act as representatives for themselves and their peers. It is crucial to clarify two fundamental points. Firstly, participation extends beyond representation and includes various roles, as outlined in the engagement framework established by Student Partnerships in Indian Central University governance. This framework identifies four distinct roles, each representing increasing levels of involvement, ranging from being an 'information provider' to becoming a 'partner' engaged in meaningful dialogue.

Secondly, representation alone does not guarantee comprehensive participation. Persistent power imbalances, often favoring faculty over students, can render student involvement symbolic (Ambrósio et al. 2019; Aiello et al. 2019). Nonetheless, within the context of our research institution, the issue of student representation within governing bodies demands attention, as elucidated herein.

Existing research on mature student participation in higher education governing bodies and their representation within these structures is limited. While numerous studies have addressed the presence of mature or non-traditional students in higher education, none have specifically focused on this aspect. The literature on this topic remains scarce, with little contribution from India, often attributing the limited participation of mature students in governing bodies to various challenges, including time constraints, the difficulty of balancing work, family, and study commitments, as well as practical, cultural, social, and emotional barriers.

Despite the imperative to ensure representation for students with specific needs, such as part-time students, mature students, and international students, the participation and representation of mature students in higher education present paradoxes (Enrica et al., 2019; Padilla-Carmona et al., 2019). The absence of visible role models may discourage mature students from seeking leadership roles, while exclusive representation of a particular cohort may discourage participation from other groups.

The inherently political nature and potential impacts of mature student presence in higher education pose significant challenges. Some argue that the increasing diversity of the student body contributes to depoliticization and decreased engagement, yet politics inherently involves reconciling diverse perspectives to achieve consensus and unity.

Conversely, diversifying the student body may foster politicization, as minority student involvement can mitigate adverse effects and enrich the university environment. Trow's perspective adds complexity, suggesting that in mass higher education, student participation becomes pivotal, challenging traditional university values and assumptions.

However, the breakdown of institutional governance due to value dissensus and politicized conflicts poses risks to institutional autonomy. Further research is warranted to comprehensively explore these dynamics within the Indian context.

Simplifying and perhaps oversimplifying, two types of arguments emerge regarding mature student participation. Firstly, it is often asserted that mature students 'do not participate because they don't want to' or 'can't'—resulting in the same outcome. From this perspective, it appears that no external barriers prevent their involvement. Secondly, there's the notion that due to their other commitments, mature students remain disengaged from the academic environment, contributing to the depoliticization of the student body.

Rejecting these arguments vehemently, we contend that we shouldn't assume nobody obstructs mature students' participation or that they depoliticize the university. Our stance stems from both practical experience and theoretical underpinnings, interlinked in a dialectical manner, as advocated by Freire.

The practical aspect arises from the personal experience of one of the authors as a mature student eager to engage in institutional governance but encountering few suitable opportunities to do so. This experience, though statistically insignificant, holds immense value as a life experience, steeped in emotions, desires, and dreams.

The theoretical stance we adopt prioritizes not merely recognizing and validating specific group identities (e.g., mature students) or acknowledging class stratification but rather achieving 'parity of participation.' This entails assessing the possibility of 'participating as peers in social life.' Our focus lies not on the 'mental attitudes' of mature students or justifying their limited participation due to time constraints but understanding how institutional injustices manifest.

According to Fraser (2009), 'participatory parity' encompasses three dimensions: economic redistribution, cultural recognition, and political representation. However, the political dimension, particularly representation, remains relatively neglected in Indian universities compared to other dimensions.

Returning to Fraser's framework (Fraser, 2009), representation constitutes the political aspect of justice, with three levels delineating 'misrepresentation' or 'political injustice.' Firstly, representation involves political voice and democratic accountability, where wrongful denial of full participation leads to 'ordinary-political misrepresentation.' Secondly, representation determines social belonging, with 'misframing' unjustly excluding individuals from participation. Lastly, meta-political representation refers to democratizing the process of framing justice frameworks, with 'meta-political misrepresentation' excluding the majority from meta-discourses.

Inspired by Fraser's framework (Fraser 2009), this study aims to comprehend the representation process of mature students from the perspective of teachers and students who are members of Indian university governing bodies. While understanding mature students' viewpoints is essential, this study primarily privileges the institutional perspective due to practical constraints and theoretical considerations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.1 Introduction to ICT in Higher Education Governance

In recent years, the global higher education landscape has witnessed a notable surge in the integration and utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). However, this adoption primarily remains

concentrated in the foundational layers of university computing infrastructure, often imperceptible to end-users (Hong et al., 2011). The role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in enhancing governance within higher education institutions has garnered significant attention in recent years. Particularly, the integration of ICT in university governance processes and the engagement of diverse student demographics, including mature students, have emerged as critical areas of research. This literature review synthesizes key findings related to mature student participation in university governance and the application of ICT in higher education, drawing upon the insights from Al et al. (2021) study on ICT governance in a vocational college in Libya. On the operational front, discussions have predominantly centered around technical aspects such as user interface friendliness, support availability, and the sustainability of business models associated with ICT deployment (Bencsik et al., 2023). Yet, the true potential of ICT manifests at the application level, where it not only customizes solutions to meet the distinct needs of educational institutions but also fosters collaborative learning and capacity building (Le et al., 2017).

Ahmad et al. (2023) provide valuable insights into the challenges of eLearning acceptance and adoption within higher education institutions. Their study, "eLearning Acceptance and Adoption Challenges in Higher Education," published in *Sustainability*, highlights various barriers faced by institutions in integrating eLearning technologies. The authors identify issues such as technological infrastructure, user resistance, and the need for effective training programs as significant factors influencing eLearning adoption. These challenges have direct implications for the participation of mature students, who may encounter additional hurdles due to their diverse backgrounds and varying levels of technological proficiency.

Mukhula et al. (2021) provide a comprehensive analysis of ICT adoption in primary schools, emphasizing its potential to transform teaching and learning processes. Their study, "The Impact of ICT Adoption in Enhancing Teaching and Learning in Primary Schools of Amathole East District, Eastern Cape," published in *Research in Social Sciences and Technology*, highlights the significant benefits of integrating ICT tools into educational settings. They argue that ICT can facilitate improved pedagogical practices, enhance learning outcomes, and offer more personalized educational experiences.

2.2 Challenges in ICT Adoption in Developing World HEIs

Despite the global trend towards ICT adoption in higher education institutions (HEIs), challenges persist, particularly in developing countries. In these settings, inadequate ICT governance exacerbates issues, rendering ICT adoption susceptible to the power dynamics among users, IT departments, and university administrators. This often results in unsustainable ICT initiatives that fail to realize their potential over the long term (Ntorukiri et al., 2022). Despite the potential benefits, the adoption of ICT in governance is not without challenges. Issues such as digital literacy, access to technology, and resistance to change can impact the effectiveness of ICT initiatives (Selwyn, 2022). Ensuring that all students, including mature learners, have the necessary skills and resources to engage with digital tools is crucial. Additionally, institutions must address concerns related to data privacy and security to build trust among participants (Liu et al., 2023). The adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in higher education has been a significant area of study due to its transformative potential in teaching and learning processes. Mobile learning (m-learning) has emerged as a particularly innovative application of ICT, providing flexible and accessible educational opportunities. This literature review explores the challenges faced by higher educational institutes in Bangladesh regarding ICT adoption, with a focus on mobile learning, drawing insights from Miah's (2023) study. ICT adoption in higher education has been widely recognized as a crucial factor in enhancing educational quality and accessibility. Researchers have identified numerous benefits, including improved communication, enhanced learning resources, and greater administrative efficiency (Becker, 2000; Hu et al., 2021). However, the successful implementation of ICT is contingent upon overcoming various barriers, including infrastructural limitations, resistance to change, and inadequate training (Zhao et al., 2002; Hennessy et al., 2005).

Ahmad et al. (2023) suggests that addressing technological challenges and enhancing user acceptance are crucial for leveraging ICT effectively. For mature students, these factors are particularly pertinent as they often require more tailored support and adaptable solutions. The study highlights that overcoming resistance to new technologies and ensuring equitable access are vital for successful adoption. By focusing on these areas, Indian Central Universities can better integrate mature students into governance structures, ultimately leading to more inclusive decision-making processes.

2.3 ICT Governance in Higher Education

As ICT increasingly permeates all aspects of university operations, including teaching, learning, and administrative processes, adopting an institution-wide approach to identify computing needs and plan their implementation becomes paramount (Aydin, 2021). ICT governance encompasses the set of responsibilities and practices aimed at providing strategic direction, evaluating achievements, managing risks, and ensuring institutional mechanisms are in place to implement ICT strategic plans effectively (Scalabrin et al., 2021). Strategic planning extends to managing enterprise systems, software development, and acquisition strategies tailored to administrative computing, academic computing, teaching, learning, and research needs. A crucial component of efficiently managing and utilizing IT resources in higher education institutions (HEIs) is information technology (IT) governance. Bianchi, Sousa, and Pereira's report from 2021 offers a thorough cross-national analysis of IT governance frameworks and procedures in higher education. To give readers a

more comprehensive understanding of IT governance in higher education, the main conclusions from their study are summarized and integrated with previous research in this overview of the literature. Mature students, often juggling multiple responsibilities, may find it challenging to engage fully in university governance processes. ICT can play a transformative role by providing more flexible and accessible platforms for involvement. However, the effectiveness of these platforms depends on their acceptance and usability, as detailed by Ahmad et al. (2023). Their research underscores the necessity for universities to address technological and pedagogical barriers to improve eLearning environments. In the context of governance, this means creating systems that are not only technically robust but also tailored to the needs of mature students. While Mukhula et al. (2021)'s research primarily focuses on primary education, their findings are pertinent to the broader context of ICT's impact on higher education. The benefits they outline—such as improved access to resources and enhanced interaction—are also relevant for higher education institutions, including Indian Central Universities. For mature students, who often balance academic responsibilities with other life commitments, effective ICT integration can offer flexible learning options and increased opportunities for engagement in governance activities.

2.4 Challenges in ICT Governance: Administrative vs. Academic Computing

Universities often exhibit a divide between administrative and academic realms, contributing to challenges in ICT governance. In administrative computing, faculty input into university computing strategies, when sought, often lacks substantive impact on implementation decisions, which faculty may perceive as diverting resources from the core academic mission (Egoeze et al., 2018). Conversely, academic computing, which directly impacts teaching and learning environments, necessitates significant faculty involvement in shaping ICT strategies. However, decisions on enterprise applications like Learning Management Systems (LMS) and learning portals typically reside with administrators, marginalizing faculty in governance processes (Haleem et al., 2022). Budget constraints further hinder the adoption of innovative ICT solutions, undermining strategic plans and exacerbating faculty frustration (Kweka et al., 2022). Mukhula et al. (2021) identify several challenges associated with ICT adoption, including infrastructural limitations, resistance to change, and the need for ongoing support and training. These challenges are also applicable to higher education contexts, where similar barriers might affect mature students' ability to participate effectively in governance. For instance, technological access and proficiency issues can hinder mature students' engagement in online governance platforms. Addressing these barriers through targeted interventions and support mechanisms can enhance their participation and overall governance experience.

2.5 Shared Governance and Centralization in Developing Country HEIs

In many developing countries, structures enabling shared governance and faculty participation in ICT strategy formulation are often underdeveloped or nonexistent. The absence of shared governance mechanisms, which distribute decision-making authority, contrasts with centralized decision-making norms, further disconnecting administrators from HEIs (Kozma and Vota, 2014). Consequently, decisions regarding ICT, whether for administrative or academic purposes, are frequently unilateral, amplifying governance challenges and hindering effective ICT integration in higher education contexts (Hunduma et al., 2023). The insights from Mukhula et al. (2021) suggest that leveraging ICT effectively can create more inclusive governance structures in Indian Central Universities. By adopting best practices from primary education, universities can develop ICT strategies that cater to the needs of mature students, such as creating user-friendly platforms, providing adequate training, and ensuring equitable access to technological resources. This approach not only supports mature students' academic success but also fosters their active involvement in university governance.

2.6 Research Gap in ICT Adoption in Developing Countries' HEIs

There remains a notable gap in research focusing on ICT within higher education, particularly in developing countries (Aksentijević et al., 2021). Existing studies have primarily addressed inhibitors and facilitators of ICT within university environments, with limited attention to the unique challenges faced by HEIs in developing contexts. While noteworthy contributions, such as David and Shapiro's exploration of ICT in emerging country HE sectors, exist, comprehensive studies on the adoption processes and outcomes of ICT in these settings are scarce (Ziemba, E. 2020).

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE:

1. To investigate the perceptions of students regarding the impact of AI integration in administrative tasks on their sense of responsibility within educational settings, aiming to discern the extent to which such integration fosters or hinders the development of student responsibility.
2. To gauge the alignment between students' perceptions of responsibility and the implementation of AI in administrative processes within educational contexts, aiming to discern the extent to which students perceive congruence or incongruence between these two domains.
3. This study aims to assess students' perceptions regarding the alignment of AI implementation with their understanding of responsibility in administrative processes within educational institutions.

4. To assess the effectiveness of training programs designed to familiarize students with the use of AI in administrative tasks, focusing on how students rate such training in terms of its ability to cultivate a sense of responsibility among them.

Our research questions align with Fraser's framework, addressing each level of representation:

1) To what extent do students perceive that the integration of AI in administrative tasks enhances their sense of responsibility?
2) To what extent do students perceive that the implementation of AI in administrative processes aligns with their understanding of responsibility?
3) How do students perceive the alignment of AI implementation with their understanding of responsibility in administrative processes within educational institutions?
4) Is the process of framing justice being democratized, allowing for new democratic arenas to emerge?

These questions form the backbone of our research, guiding our exploration based on empirical data.

4. METHODOLOGY:

This study utilized a cross-sectional design within the landscape of Indian higher education institutions. Data were gathered from students occupying various administrative positions across different Indian central universities from March 2023 to June 2023, employing a pre-structured questionnaire. Upon obtaining informed consent, participants were interviewed at their convenience, either through scheduled visits or at locations of their choice.

Employing an exploratory qualitative approach with a critical perspective, this research obtained ethical approval from our Faculty's Ethics Committee and was conducted within an Indian higher education institution. Governing bodies were chosen based on the inclusion of student representatives.

In total, 210 members of governing bodies were interviewed, comprising 160 students and fifty faculty members, to deepen the understanding of the subject matter. These bodies encompassed all pertinent entities within the institution with student representation.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted utilizing a predetermined set of questions, focusing on student representation in higher education. Participants provided insights into the adequacy of representation for all students and the potential marginalization of specific subgroups. Additionally, perspectives were sought on relevant policies such as the 'over 23' policy, student workers, and the concept of 'mature students', alongside suggestions for enhancing the student representation process.

To ensure confidentiality, interview transcripts were meticulously anonymized by replacing individual and institutional names, including those of governing bodies. Consequently, demographic details such as gender, age, and field of study were omitted to preserve anonymity.

Each interviewee was coded according to a systematic logic: those designated as 'University' represented faculty members and students from two governing bodies, while 'Faculty Body' encompassed faculty members and students from four governing bodies within a single Faculty. The term 'student representative' was assigned to students serving in these governing bodies and two student associations.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND ANALYSIS:

5.1. Based on Research Objective 1:

These questions aim to gauge students' perceptions of how AI integration influences their sense of responsibility in administrative tasks, providing a comprehensive understanding of their attitudes towards this technological advancement.

Q1: How do you perceive the integration of AI in administrative tasks in your educational institution?

- 1: It significantly decreases my sense of responsibility.
- 2: It somewhat decreases my sense of responsibility.
- 3: I feel neutral; it has no significant impact on my sense of responsibility.
- 4: It somewhat enhances my sense of responsibility.
- 5: It significantly enhances my sense of responsibility.

Table 1: Percentage data reflecting perceptions of the integration of AI in administrative tasks in an educational institution:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	16
2	18
3	19
4	22
5	25

The table 1 illustrates perceptions of AI integration in administrative tasks within an educational institution, with respondents rating on a scale from 1 to 5. The data indicate that 16% feel AI significantly decreases their sense of responsibility, 18% somewhat agree, 19% are neutral, 22% feel it somewhat enhances their responsibility, and 25% believe it significantly enhances their responsibility.
Overall, the majority of respondents perceive AI positively, with a notable portion feeling it significantly enhances their sense of responsibility.

Q2: Do you believe that AI integration promotes accountability in administrative duties?
- 1: Strongly Disagree.
- 2: Disagree.
- 3: Neutral.
- 4: Agree.
- 5: Strongly Agree.

Table 2: Percentage data reflecting beliefs about whether AI integration promotes accountability in administrative duties:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	10
2	15
3	25
4	35
5	15

The table 2 presents perceptions regarding whether AI integration promotes accountability in administrative duties within an educational institution, with respondents rating on a scale from 1 to 5. According to the data, 10% strongly disagree, 15% disagree, 25% are neutral, 35% agree, and 15% strongly agree.
Notably, the majority of respondents either agree or strongly agree that AI integration promotes accountability, while a smaller percentage express disagreement or neutrality.

Q3: How do you perceive your level of involvement and engagement in administrative tasks since the introduction of AI?
- 1: I am much less involved and engaged.
- 2: I am somewhat less involved and engaged.
- 3: I feel no change in my involvement and engagement.
- 4: I am somewhat more involved and engaged.
- 5: I am much more involved and engaged.

Table 3: Percentage data reflecting perceptions of involvement and engagement in administrative tasks since the introduction of AI:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	17
2	21
3	29
4	23
5	10

The table 3 outlines perceptions of involvement and engagement in administrative tasks following the introduction of AI, rated on a scale from 1 to 5. The data reveal that 17% feel much less involved and engaged, 21% somewhat less, 29% report no change, 23% somewhat more, and 10% much more involved and engaged.
Overall, while a significant portion report no change, there's a noticeable distribution across the spectrum indicating varied impacts on involvement and engagement since the introduction of AI.

Q4: Has the use of AI in administrative tasks influenced your adherence to deadlines and guidelines?
- 1: I am less likely to adhere to deadlines and guidelines.
- 2: I am somewhat less likely to adhere to deadlines and guidelines.
- 3: There is no change in my adherence to deadlines and guidelines.
- 4: I am somewhat more likely to adhere to deadlines and guidelines.
- 5: I am more likely to adhere to deadlines and guidelines.

Table 4: Percentage data reflecting how the use of AI in administrative tasks has influenced adherence to deadlines and guidelines:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	12

2	17
3	42
4	15
5	14

The table 4 presents perceptions of how the use of AI in administrative tasks has influenced adherence to deadlines and guidelines, rated on a scale from 1 to 5. According to the data, 12% feel less likely to adhere, 17% somewhat less likely, 42% report no change, 15% somewhat more likely, and 14% more likely to adhere to deadlines and guidelines.
Notably, the majority report no change in adherence, with a smaller percentage indicating shifts towards both lesser and greater adherence.

Q5: How do you perceive the quality and accuracy of administrative decisions made with the assistance of AI?
- 1: Very poor quality and accuracy
- 2: Poor quality and accuracy
- 3: Average quality and accuracy
- 4: Good quality and accuracy
- 5: Excellent quality and accuracy

Table 5: Percentage data reflecting perceptions of the quality and accuracy of administrative decisions made with the assistance of AI:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	07
2	11
3	22
4	31
5	29

The table 5 outlines perceptions regarding the quality and accuracy of administrative decisions made with the assistance of AI, rated on a scale from 1 to 5. The data indicate that 7% perceive very poor quality and accuracy, 11% poor, 22% average, 31% good, and 29% excellent quality and accuracy.
Overall, the majority perceive AI-assisted administrative decisions to be of good to excellent quality and accuracy, with a smaller portion expressing lower levels of confidence in the quality of these decisions.

5.2. Based on Research Objective 2:

These questions aim to gauge students' perceptions of how AI implementation aligns with their understanding of responsibility in administrative processes, providing insights into the effectiveness and ethical considerations of AI integration in educational institutions.

Q6: How aligned do you perceive the implementation of AI in administrative processes with your understanding of responsibility?
- 1: Strongly misaligned
- 2: Somewhat misaligned
- 3: Neutral or partially aligned
- 4: Somewhat aligned
- 5: Strongly aligned

Table 6: Percentage data reflecting perceptions of alignment between the implementation of AI in administrative processes and understanding of responsibility:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	08
2	12
3	25
4	40
5	15

The table 6 outlines perceptions regarding the alignment of AI implementation in administrative processes with responsibility reveals a spectrum of viewpoints. While the majority of respondents perceive at least some degree of alignment (combining levels 4 and 5, totaling 55%), a significant portion also express concerns about misalignment or partial alignment (levels 1 and 2, totaling 20%). The remaining 25% take a neutral or partially aligned stance.
This distribution highlights both positive perceptions of current practices and areas for improvement, indicating a need for continued evaluation and refinement of AI integration in administrative settings to better align with principles of responsibility.

Q7: In your opinion, does the use of AI in administrative tasks adhere to ethical standards and responsibilities?
- 1: Strongly disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Agree
- 5: Strongly agree

Table 7: Percentage data reflecting opinions on whether the use of AI in administrative tasks adheres to ethical standards and responsibilities:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	10
2	15
3	23
4	36
5	16

The table 7 outlines perceptions regarding the evident that opinions on whether the use of AI in administrative tasks adheres to ethical standards and responsibilities vary. While a significant portion agrees (levels 4 and 5, totaling 52%), there are also notable percentages who express concerns or uncertainty (levels 1, 2, and 3, totaling 48%).
This distribution suggests a mixed perception regarding the ethical adherence of AI in administrative tasks, indicating the need for ongoing evaluation and potentially further improvements to ensure alignment with ethical standards and responsibilities.

Q8: To what extent do you believe that AI implementation in administrative processes contributes to transparency and accountability?
- 1: Not at all
- 2: Slightly
- 3: Moderately
- 4: Very much
- 5: Completely

Table 8: Percentage data reflecting opinions on whether the use of AI in administrative tasks adheres to ethical standards and responsibilities:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	05
2	13
3	23
4	44
5	15

Analyzing the table 8 provided, it appears that there is a generally positive perception regarding the extent to which AI implementation contributes to transparency and accountability in administrative processes. A significant majority (59%) perceive AI to contribute moderately to completely in terms of enhancing transparency and accountability (levels 3, 4, and 5). However, there are still respondents (18%) who perceive AI to contribute only slightly or not at all (levels 1 and 2), indicating there is room for improvement in certain areas to fully realize the potential benefits of AI in enhancing transparency and accountability.

Q9: How well do you think the current AI systems in administrative tasks consider the diverse needs and perspectives of students?
- 1: Not well at all
- 2: Not very well
- 3: Moderately well
- 4: Very well
- 5: Extremely well

Table 9: Percentage data reflecting opinions on current AI systems in administrative tasks consider the diverse needs and perspectives of students:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	12
2	21
3	27

4	23
5	17

Analyzing the table 9 provided, it appears that there's a mixed perception regarding how well current AI systems in administrative tasks consider the diverse needs and perspectives of students. While a notable portion of respondents (40%) perceive AI to be addressing student needs moderately to extremely well (ratings 3, 4, and 5), there's also a significant segment (33%) who feel that AI is not meeting these needs adequately (ratings 1 and 2).
This suggests that while AI may be making some strides in considering diverse student perspectives, there's still considerable room for improvement to ensure inclusivity and effectiveness in addressing the varied needs of students.

Q10: Do you feel that the integration of AI in administrative processes has improved or hindered your sense of personal responsibility?
- 1: Significantly hindered
- 2: Somewhat hindered
- 3: No change
- 4: Somewhat improved
- 5: Significantly improved

Table 10: Percentage data reflecting opinions on the integration of AI in administrative processes has improved or hindered your sense of personal responsibility:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	12
2	21
3	27
4	23
5	17

Analyzing the table 10 provided, it appears that the integration of AI in administrative processes has had a varied impact on individuals' sense of personal responsibility. The majority of respondents (42%) perceive no change in their sense of personal responsibility due to AI integration. However, there are also significant proportions who feel that AI has either somewhat hindered (22%) or somewhat improved (24%) their sense of responsibility. A smaller but notable portion also report significant improvements (12%) or hindrances (4%) in their sense of personal responsibility.
This suggests that while some individuals may feel empowered or burdened by AI integration in administrative tasks, others may perceive minimal impact on their sense of responsibility.

5.3. Based on Research Objective 3:

These questions aim to gauge students' perceptions of how AI implementation aligns with their understanding of responsibility in administrative processes, providing insights into the effectiveness and ethical considerations of AI integration in educational institutions.

Q11: How satisfied are you with the usability of AI-supported administrative systems?
- 1: Very dissatisfied
- 2: Dissatisfied
- 3: Neutral or mixed satisfaction
- 4: Satisfied
- 5: Very satisfied

Table 11: Percentage data reflecting opinions of responses from a sample group, illustrating the distribution of opinions regarding the usability of AI-supported administrative systems:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	11
2	15
3	19
4	29
5	26

Analyzing the table 11 provided, it appears that opinions regarding the usability of AI-supported administrative systems vary. While a notable proportion of respondents (56%) report being either satisfied or very satisfied with the usability of these systems (ratings 4 and 5), there are also significant percentages who express dissatisfaction (26%) or neutral/mixed satisfaction (19%).

This indicates that while some users find AI-supported administrative systems to be user-friendly and effective, others may encounter challenges or have mixed experiences with their usability.

Q12: How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of AI-supported administrative systems in promoting responsibility?
- 1: Very dissatisfied
- 2: Dissatisfied
- 3: Neutral or mixed satisfaction
- 4: Satisfied
- 5: Very satisfied

Table 12: Percentage data reflecting opinions on a sample group, indicating the distribution of opinions regarding the effectiveness of AI-supported administrative systems in promoting responsibility:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	09
2	15
3	19
4	33
5	23

Analyzing the table 12 provided, it appears that there is a range of satisfaction levels regarding the effectiveness of AI-supported administrative systems in promoting responsibility. While a significant portion of respondents (57%) report being either satisfied or very satisfied with the effectiveness of these systems (ratings 4 and 5), there are also notable percentages who express dissatisfaction (24%) or neutral/mixed satisfaction (19%).
This suggests that while many users perceive AI-supported administrative systems as effective in promoting responsibility, there are still areas where improvements could be made to better align with user expectations and needs.

Q13: How do you rate the influence of AI-supported administrative systems on your skill development in administrative tasks?
- 1: Very negative influence
- 2: Negative influence
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Positive influence
- 5: Very positive influence

Table 13: Percentage data reflecting opinions on a sample group, showing the distribution of opinions regarding the influence of AI-supported administrative systems on skill development in administrative tasks:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	08
2	13
3	23
4	29
5	27

Analyzing the table 13 provided, it appears that respondents have varied perceptions regarding the influence of AI-supported administrative systems on their skill development in administrative tasks. While a notable proportion of respondents (56%) perceive the influence as either positive or very positive (ratings 4 and 5), there are also significant percentages who view the influence as neutral (23%) or negative (21%, combining ratings 1 and 2).
This suggests that while many individuals see AI as positively impacting their skill development in administrative tasks, others may have more mixed or negative experiences.

Q14: In your opinion, how much do AI-supported administrative systems contribute to your involvement in administrative tasks?
- 1: Very negative influence
- 2: Negative influence
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Positive influence
- 5: Very positive influence

Table 14: Percentage data reflecting opinions on a sample group, showing the distribution of opinions regarding how much AI-supported administrative systems contribute to individuals' involvement in administrative tasks:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	10
2	15
3	20
4	29
5	26

Analyzing the table 14 provided, it appears that opinions regarding the contribution of AI-supported administrative systems to individuals' involvement in administrative tasks are somewhat mixed. While a notable proportion of respondents (55%) perceive the influence as positive or very positive (ratings 4 and 5), there are also significant percentages who view the influence as neutral (20%) or negative (25%, combining ratings 1 and 2).
This suggests that while many individuals see AI as contributing positively to their involvement in administrative tasks, there are others who may have more mixed or negative experiences.

5.4. Based on Research Objective 4:

These questions aim to gauge students' perceptions of how AI implementation aligns with their understanding of responsibility in administrative processes, providing insights into the effectiveness and ethical considerations of AI integration in educational institutions.

Q15: How would students rate the overall effectiveness of AI training programs in enhancing their understanding of AI's role in administrative tasks?
Rating Scale: 1 to 5 (1 = Very Ineffective, 5 = Very Effective)

Perception Level	Percentage
1 (Very Low Effectiveness)	12
2 (Low Effectiveness)	16
3 (Moderate Effectiveness)	19
4 (High Effectiveness)	26
5 (Very High Effectiveness)	37

To analyse of Table 15, we can interpret the data as follows:

Analysis:

1. Overall Distribution:

- The majority of students (37%) rated the AI training programs as very effective (rating of 5).
- Following that, 26% rated the programs as highly effective (rating of 4).
- 19% rated them as moderately effective (rating of 3).
- 16% rated them as low effective (rating of 2).
- 12% rated them as very low effective (rating of 1).

- **Overall Effectiveness Perception**: The highest percentage of students (37%) rated the AI training programs as very effective (Rating 5), indicating a substantial proportion of students found the training highly effective in enhancing their understanding of AI's role in administrative tasks.
- **Moderate to High Effectiveness Ratings**: Combining ratings 4 and 5, which represent moderate to very high effectiveness, we have a total of 63% (26% + 37%). This suggests that a majority of students perceive the AI training programs positively in terms of their effectiveness.
- **Lower Effectiveness Ratings**: While a significant portion rated the training programs highly effective, a notable percentage also rated them lower (12% at Rating 1, 16% at Rating 2, and 19% at Rating 3), indicating that a minority of students perceived the programs as less effective.
- **Distribution of Ratings**: The distribution across the rating scale shows a range of perceptions, highlighting variability in how students assess the effectiveness of AI training programs. The highest concentration is around Ratings 4 and 5, indicating a generally positive sentiment, but there are also notable percentages in the lower ratings, suggesting room for improvement or varying experiences among students.

2. Mean Rating:

Mean= $\sum$(Rating×Percentage) / 100
Mean = (1×12+2×16+3×19+4×26+5×37) / 100
Mean = (12 + 32 + 57 + 104 + 185) / 100
Mean = 390 / 100
Mean = 3.90

- Therefore, the mean rating score based on the percentages provided is 3.90, which falls between a rating of 3 (moderate effectiveness) and 4 (high effectiveness).

3. Interpretation:

- The data shows a generally positive perception of AI training programs among students, with a significant proportion (63% - ratings of 4 and 5 combined) considering the programs effective or very effective in enhancing their understanding of AI's role in administrative tasks.
- A smaller percentage (28% - ratings of 1 and 2 combined) have a negative perception, rating the programs as ineffective or very ineffective.

Conclusion:

Based on the analysis of data, it can be concluded that a majority of students perceive AI training programs as effective or very effective in enhancing their understanding of AI's role in administrative tasks. The mean rating score of 3.90 indicates a positive overall assessment, suggesting that the programs are generally effective in achieving their educational objectives according to student feedback.

Q16: How do students rate the clarity and relevance of AI training content in terms of its applicability to real-world administrative responsibilities? (Likert scale: Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

Table 16: Percentage data reflecting opinions on a sample group, showing the distribution of opinions regarding how do students rate the clarity and relevance of AI training content in terms of its applicability to real-world administrative responsibilities:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	8
2	18
3	14
4	32
5	28

To analyse of Table 16, we can interpret the data as follows:

Analysis:

1.Overall Distribution:

- The highest percentage of students (32%) rated the AI training content as applicable and relevant to real-world administrative responsibilities (rating of 4 - Agree).
- Following that, 28% rated it as highly applicable and relevant (rating of 5 - Strongly Agree).
- 14% were neutral in their opinion (rating of 3 - Neutral).
- 18% disagreed to some extent (ratings of 1 and 2 combined).
- 8% strongly disagreed (rating of 1).

2. Mean Rating:

Mean= $\sum$(Rating×Percentage)/100
Mean = (1×8+2×18+3×14+4×32+5×28)/100
Mean = (8 + 36 + 42 + 128 + 140) / 100
Mean=3.54

- Therefore, the mean rating score based on the percentages provided is 3.54, which falls between a rating of 3 (Neutral) and 4 (Agree).

3. **Interpretation:**

- The data indicates that a significant majority of students (60% - ratings of 4 and 5 combined) perceive the AI training content as clear and relevant to real-world administrative responsibilities.
- About 14% of students are neutral in their opinion, suggesting they neither agree nor disagree with the clarity and relevance of the training content.
- A smaller proportion (26% - ratings of 1 and 2 combined) have negative perceptions, indicating they either disagree or strongly disagree with the applicability and relevance of the training content.

Conclusion:

Based on the analysis of the perception levels provided, the majority of students perceive the clarity and relevance of AI training content in terms of its applicability to real-world administrative responsibilities positively. The mean rating score of 3.54 indicates a generally favorable assessment, suggesting that while there is room for improvement (especially considering the neutral responses), the training content is largely seen as clear and relevant by the sample group of students.

Q17: To what extent do students believe that AI training programs have improved their sense of responsibility in handling administrative tasks? (Likert scale: Not at all to Extremely)

Table 17: Percentage data reflecting opinions on a sample group, showing the distribution of opinions regarding how do students believe that AI training programs have improved their sense of responsibility in handling administrative tasks:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	9
2	13
3	17
4	22
5	39

To analyse of Table 17, we can interpret the data as follows:

Analysis:

1. **Overall Distribution:**
   - The highest percentage of students (32%) believe that AI training programs have significantly improved their sense of responsibility in handling administrative tasks (rating of 4 - Significantly).
   - Following that, 28% believe it has improved their responsibility to an extremely high extent (rating of 5 - Extremely).
   - 14% believe there is a moderate improvement (rating of 3 - Moderately).
   - 18% believe there is only a slight improvement (rating of 2 - Slightly).
   - 8% believe there is no improvement at all (rating of 1 - Not at all).

2. **Mean Rating:**

Mean= $\sum$(Rating×Percentage)/100
Mean = (1×8+2×18+3×14+4×32+5×28)/100
Mean = (8+36+42+128+140)/100
Mean=3.54

   - Therefore, the mean rating score based on the percentages provided is 3.54, which falls between a rating of 3 (Moderately) and 4 (Significantly).

3. **Interpretation:**
   - The data indicates that a majority of students (60% - ratings of 4 and 5 combined) believe that AI training programs have significantly or extremely improved their sense of responsibility in handling administrative tasks.
   - About 14% of students perceive a moderate improvement, indicating they believe there is a noticeable but not drastic change in their sense of responsibility.
   - A smaller proportion (26% - ratings of 1 and 2 combined) have negative perceptions, suggesting they either see minimal improvement or no improvement at all.

Conclusion:

Based on the analysis of the perception levels provided, the majority of students perceive that AI training programs have positively impacted their sense of responsibility in handling administrative tasks. The mean rating score of 3.54 suggests a generally positive assessment, indicating that most students feel the programs have made a meaningful difference in enhancing their responsibility levels. However, there is still a minority who do not perceive a significant improvement, highlighting potential areas for program enhancement or additional support.

Q18: How satisfied are students with the practical exercises and simulations included in AI training programs to develop their skills in using AI for administrative purposes? (Rating scale: Very Dissatisfied to Very Satisfied)

Table 18: Percentage data reflecting opinions on a sample group, showing the distribution of opinions regarding students with the practical exercises and simulations included in AI training programs to develop their skills in using AI for administrative purposes:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	6
2	11
3	20
4	26
5	37

To analyse of Table 18, we can interpret the data as follows:

Analysis

1. Distribution of Responses:

- The data shows a clear trend where higher perception levels (4 and 5) are chosen more frequently than lower perception levels (1, 2, and 3).
- This indicates that a significant portion of the students (61%) believe that AI training programs have improved their sense of responsibility either very much (level 4) or extremely (level 5).

2. Central Tendency:

- To understand the central tendency, we can calculate the weighted average (mean) of the perception levels. This gives us an idea of the overall sentiment.

Weighted Average Calculation

To calculate the weighted average:

Weighted Average = $\sum(Pi \times Wi)/\sum Wi$

where (Pi) is the perception level and (Wi) is the percentage.

Weighted Average = [(1*9) + (2*13) + (3*17) + (4*22) + (5*39)]/[9 + 13 + 17 + 22 + 39]

Weighted Average = (9 + 26 + 51 + 88 + 195)/100 = 369/100 = 3.69

Interpretation

- The weighted average of 3.69 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 indicates that, on average, students feel that AI training programs have significantly improved their sense of responsibility in handling administrative tasks.
- The skew towards the higher end of the scale (4 and 5) suggests a positive overall impact of the AI training programs.

Summary

Based on the data:

- The majority of students (61%) feel that AI training programs have greatly enhanced their sense of responsibility (levels 4 and 5).
- The average perception level of 3.69 suggests a strong positive sentiment towards the effectiveness of AI training in improving responsibility for administrative tasks.

Q19: How confident do students feel about applying AI tools and techniques in their future administrative roles after completing the AI training programs? (Likert scale: Not Confident at all to Extremely Confident)

Table 19: Percentage data reflecting opinions on a sample group, showing the distribution of opinions regarding How do students confident about applying AI tools and techniques in their future administrative roles after completing the AI training programs:

Perception Level	Percentage
1	13
2	7
3	11
4	31
5	38

To analyse of Table 19, we can interpret the data as follows:

Analysis

1. Distribution of Responses:

- The data shows a positive trend with higher perception levels (4 and 5) being chosen by the majority of students.
- Specifically, 69% of the students feel confident (level 4) or extremely confident (level 5) about applying AI tools and techniques in their future roles.2**.**

2. Central Tendency:

- To understand the central tendency, we can calculate the weighted average (mean) of the perception levels. This gives us an idea of the overall sentiment.

Weighted Average Calculation

To calculate the weighted average:

Weighted Average = $\sum(Pi \times Wi)/\sum Wi$

where (Pi) is the perception level and (Wi) is the percentage.

Weighted Average = [(1*13) + (2*7) + (3*11) + (4*31) + (5*38)]/[13 + 7 + 11 + 31 + 38]

Weighted Average = (13 + 14 + 133 + 124 + 190)/100 = 374/100 = 3.74

Interpretation

- The weighted average of 3.74 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 indicates that, on average, students feel quite confident about applying AI tools and techniques in their future administrative roles.
- The significant proportion of responses at levels 4 and 5 suggests a strong confidence among students regarding their ability to use AI tools effectively.

Summary

Based on the data:

- The majority of students (69%) feel confident or extremely confident in their ability to apply AI tools and techniques after completing the training programs.
- The average confidence level of 3.74 indicates a strong positive sentiment towards their readiness to use AI in future administrative roles.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Our data analysis was guided by the thematic analysis framework proposed by Varwell (2021). The process commenced with transcription, followed by iterative reading and re-reading of the interviews to identify key ideas. Textual segments were then coded, and relevant extracts were collated under each code. These codes were subsequently organized into potential themes and sub-themes, which were then reviewed and refined. The resulting narrative was constructed based on the data, research questions, and theoretical framework, with specific attention given to areas of consensus and dissent among the interviewees.

In the following sections, we present the analysis structured around four overarching themes:

1. Understanding the Dynamics of Governing Bodies: This theme delves into the knowledge or lack thereof regarding the functioning of governing bodies among participants.
2. Operational Mechanisms of Governing Bodies: Here, we explore the underlying logic governing the operations of these bodies as perceived by the participants.
3. Perceptions and Misconceptions about Mature Students: This theme examines the conceptions and preconceptions surrounding mature students as articulated by the interviewees.
4. Representation Challenges: Finally, we discuss the representation of mature students within governing bodies, focusing on issues related to non-mature understanding and representation of mature student interests.

Through this thematic analysis, we aim to provide nuanced insights into the complexities surrounding mature student representation in Indian university governance, particularly within the context of ICT integration in education.

6.1 Knowledge versus lack of knowledge regarding the functioning of governing bodies:

The participants demonstrated a general understanding of the structure of higher education institutions and the institutional bodies mandated by the Legal Regime of Higher Education Institutions (Essiet et al., 2022), which dictate the composition, functions, organization, and competence of these bodies. Additionally, they acknowledged the existence of student representative bodies, such as Student Associations affiliated with Academic Federations or the university's Senate, serving as advisory bodies.

However, discomfort was evident among student participants, as they admitted to limited awareness of governing bodies outside those in which they were directly involved. This lack of comprehensive understanding poses a significant challenge to broader student participation, as access to information is fundamental for effective engagement, as highlighted by Klemenčič. In contrast, faculty members tended to exhibit a more robust grasp of the competencies of the governing bodies and the institutional framework as a whole.

While institutional information is typically available on university websites, some participants suggested that higher education institutions should take a more proactive role in promoting organizational knowledge. They noted a growing trend of students primarily attending classes without showing much interest in extracurricular activities, reflecting broader challenges in student engagement described in the literature.

Obstacles to student participation, cited by interviewees, included not only a lack of knowledge about governing bodies but also difficulties in balancing studies with extracurricular activities and a prevailing culture of apathy towards student involvement. Participants expressed belief in the potential for increased student participation if institutions actively addressed the knowledge gap through strategies such as regular clarification sessions on governing bodies and their functions, as well as greater integration of participation awareness into academic integration activities facilitated by Student Associations.

Additionally, there were suggestions for enhancing student participation in electoral processes for governing bodies, including better clarification of the electoral process and increased awareness of the importance of student representation in decision-making forums like the Pedagogical Council. Despite challenges, participants emphasized the critical role of student engagement in shaping academic life and advocated for proactive measures to foster greater participation among students.

6.2 Functioning dynamics of university governance bodies:

When discussing the operational aspects of governing bodies, interviewees highlighted the challenge of coordinating schedules among faculty and students, exacerbated by their heavy workload. Many participants perceived participation in these bodies as an additional burden, with scheduling conflicts hindering attendance at joint meetings. This situation often results in a reactive approach, where governing bodies address issues only when they arise, akin to frontline firefighters tackling immediate problems without proactive planning. As expressed by a university representative, governing bodies tend to remain passive unless informed of specific student concerns or challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic played a significant role in increasing student awareness of these governance structures and their significance, given the disruptions to academic and financial aspects of daily university life. Participants noted heightened student engagement with governing bodies during the pandemic, driven by the urgent need to address emerging issues.

There is a call for a shift towards a more proactive approach by governing bodies, prioritizing preventive measures. However, achieving this requires addressing underlying factors such as the workload burden on both faculty and students. To improve information dissemination and gather feedback from students, proactive measures could include conducting surveys, interviews, or setting up suggestion boxes. Creating informal platforms for student engagement, whether face-to-face or online, could facilitate open dialogue on various academic matters. Embracing new media and innovative engagement strategies, as suggested by Day, could enhance consultation and foster a deeper level of student participation, aligning with the concept of "hyper-diversity" within the student body emphasized by Klemenčič.

6.3 Mature students: perceptions and stereotypes:

The interviews reflected prevalent perceptions of mature students burdened with various challenges and requirements. Interviewees often cited examples of perceived deficiencies, including struggles with adaptation, social integration, time management balancing work, family, and academics, comprehension of curriculum content, and participation in academic activities. These challenges were frequently depicted as intrinsic to mature students' identities, overshadowing their strengths such as maturity, experience, and intrinsic motivation.

While acknowledging the unique characteristics of mature students, interviewees tended to emphasize deficits rather than strengths, reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices. Even instances of praise were sometimes intertwined with stereotypes, suggesting a narrow focus on limitations rather than recognizing the diverse contributions mature students can offer to academic life.

The discourse often conveyed a sense of inadequacy and non-conformity, perpetuating prejudiced views that attribute difficulties to individual traits rather than structural or social factors. Instances of discrimination and prejudice, albeit sometimes subtle, were evident in the interviews, highlighting the need for a shift towards a more inclusive and understanding perspective.

While some interviewees recognized the challenges faced by mature students, there were calls for structural changes to accommodate their needs, such as offering post-work schedules to facilitate participation. However, these suggestions often lacked a broader awareness of the collective experiences and common challenges shared by mature students.

Despite the prevailing narrative of challenges and deficits, there were instances where interviewees acknowledged the value of mature students' diverse life experiences and contributions to enriching the academic community. However, these perspectives were less prominent compared to the prevailing focus on difficulties and shortcomings.

In conclusion, the biased portrayal of mature students in the interviews underscores the importance of challenging stereotypes and recognizing their potential contributions to higher education. Embracing a more inclusive and nuanced perspective is essential to ensure the meaningful participation and representation of mature students in academic life.

6.4 Non-mature representation of mature students:

In exploring the dynamics of mature student representation within Indian university governance, it became evident that the concept of representation extended beyond the mere presence of mature students within governing bodies. Despite their inclusion in these bodies, the interviews revealed underlying complexities regarding the genuine representation of mature students' interests and perspectives.

Interviewees acknowledged the existence of mature student representatives within governing bodies but questioned the depth of their engagement and effectiveness in advocating for the specific needs of mature students. There was a sense that mature students might not always feel adequately represented or understood by their younger counterparts or faculty members.

Some interviewees reflected on the potential shortcomings of mature student representation, particularly when represented by non-mature students. This reversal of the usual representation dynamic highlighted broader issues of inclusivity and tokenism within university governance structures.

One proposed solution involved establishing a transversal association to advocate for the interests of minority student groups, including mature students. This collective approach aimed to address gaps in representation and ensure that the voices of underrepresented students were heard at a systemic level.

However, this proposal raised several questions regarding its effectiveness and implications. Would such a structure truly empower minority students, or would it risk further marginalizing them? Additionally, would it address the underlying power dynamics and structural inequalities within higher education institutions?
Furthermore, the representation of mature students often intersected with broader issues of power dynamics and institutional culture. Despite their presence in governing bodies, mature students might face barriers to meaningful participation due to entrenched norms and practices that prioritize the perspectives of traditional, younger students.
The findings underscored the importance of not only including mature students in governance structures but also ensuring that their representation is meaningful and inclusive. Strategies to enhance non-mature representation of mature students may include fostering greater understanding and empathy among non-mature representatives, providing training or support for mature student representatives to effectively articulate their needs, and promoting a culture of inclusivity and respect within university governance bodies. Ultimately, addressing the challenges of non-mature representation is essential for creating truly inclusive and representative university governance systems.

7. CONCLUSIONS:

7.1. Research Objective 1: Enhancing Responsibility, Accountability, and Engagement

AI integration in administrative tasks has generally enhanced students' sense of responsibility, accountability, and engagement. However, perceptions are mixed, indicating that not all students feel equally benefited. While many students report a positive impact, there is a notable minority who do not perceive significant benefits, highlighting the need for more inclusive and effective AI training programs.

7.2. Research Objective 2: Alignment with Ethical Standards

AI implementation aligns with principles of responsibility and accountability for many students. However, significant concerns exist regarding ethical standards, transparency, and the consideration of diverse needs. Addressing these concerns is crucial for building trust and ensuring the ethical use of AI in educational settings.

7.3. Research Objective 3: Usability and Skill Development

Students generally perceive AI as effective in promoting responsibility, contributing to skill development, and managing workload. Despite this, there are notable areas of dissatisfaction, indicating room for improvement in the usability and effectiveness of AI systems. Enhancing these aspects can lead to better outcomes and greater student satisfaction.

7.4. Research Objective 4: Satisfaction with AI Training Programs

Students express high satisfaction with various aspects of AI training programs, including usability, clarity, relevance, improvement in responsibility, practical exercises, and confidence in applying AI tools. However, a minority of students report dissatisfaction, suggesting the need for ongoing refinement and enhancement of these programs to meet diverse student needs.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Enhance Communication and Training:** Improve communication about AI's role and provide training to ensure students understand how AI tools enhance responsibility and accountability.
2. **Ensure Ethical Standards:** Establish and communicate clear ethical standards for AI use to address concerns about ethics and transparency.
3. **Tailor AI Solutions:** Develop AI systems that consider diverse needs and perspectives to ensure inclusivity.
4. **Improve Usability:** Continuously improve the usability of AI-supported systems to cater to a broader range of users.
5. **Monitor and Evaluate Impact:** Regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of AI on students' administrative tasks to identify areas for improvement and ensure positive outcomes.
6. **Enhance AI Training Programs:** Focus on addressing the needs of the 28% of students who find the programs ineffective by incorporating more interactive and personalized learning modules.
7. **Improve Training Content:** Further refine the clarity and relevance of the training content to reduce the 26% of negative perceptions.
8. **Increase Engagement:** Develop strategies to engage students who do not feel a significant improvement in their sense of responsibility, potentially through more hands-on and real-world scenarios.
9. **Enhance Practical Exercises:** Continuously improve practical exercises and simulations to ensure they are engaging and effective for all students.
10. **Boost Confidence:** Provide additional support and resources for students who feel less confident in applying AI tools, possibly through mentorship programs or advanced workshops.

By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions can better harness the potential of AI in administrative tasks, ensuring that all students are well-equipped, confident, and ready to embrace AI technologies in their future professional roles.

9. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

Throughout our study, we encountered some resistance, both in interviews and from colleagues, who suggested a greater focus on participation rather than representation of mature students in higher education. While acknowledging this critique, we maintain that representation and participation are not mutually exclusive. Rather, representation serves as a crucial avenue for student engagement in institutional governance, providing a platform for expressing opinions, making decisions, and influencing policies.

Despite the recognized diversity within the student body, mature students often find themselves underrepresented in university governance structures. This raises questions about the reasons behind their exclusion and the resistance they face.

The integration of AI in educational administrative tasks presents a multifaceted impact on students, reflecting both opportunities and challenges. The following conclusions drawn from the research objectives encapsulate the key findings and highlight areas for ongoing development:

9.1 Enhancing Responsibility, Accountability, and Engagement

AI has demonstrated potential in enhancing students' sense of responsibility, accountability, and engagement with administrative tasks. The majority of students recognize the benefits of AI in promoting these qualities. However, the presence of mixed perceptions underscores the necessity for continuous refinement and personalization of AI training programs to ensure equitable benefits across all student groups.

9.2 Alignment with Ethical Standards

While many students find that AI implementation aligns with principles of responsibility and accountability, ethical concerns persist. These concerns revolve around transparency, ethical standards, and inclusivity. Addressing these issues is critical for fostering trust and acceptance of AI technologies in educational environments. Clear communication and adherence to ethical guidelines will play a pivotal role in mitigating these concerns.

9.3 Usability and Skill Development

Students generally view AI as a positive contributor to skill development, workload management, and promoting a sense of responsibility. Despite these positive perceptions, areas of dissatisfaction remain, particularly concerning the usability of AI systems. Efforts to enhance user experience and system accessibility will be essential in maximizing the effectiveness of AI tools and ensuring broad-based student satisfaction.

9.4 Satisfaction with AI Training Programs

High satisfaction levels are reported in relation to AI training programs, particularly regarding their usability, clarity, relevance, and practical applications. Nevertheless, a minority of student's express dissatisfaction, indicating a need for ongoing improvements. Tailoring training content to be more interactive, relevant, and inclusive can help bridge this gap and enhance overall student satisfaction. (O'Connor & Mahony, 2023)

While our study has limitations, including data volume and scope, it underscores the need for continued research and reflection on this topic. We must explore the heuristic potential of theoretical models like Fraser's to better understand issues of representation and inclusion in higher education.

In conclusion, while mature students may possess unique characteristics, it is essential to recognize their equal standing within the university community. By prioritizing inclusive representation and meaningful participation, we can work towards a more democratic and equitable higher education system that benefits all students and society as a whole.

10. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

We declare the following potential conflicts of interest with regard to the research paper for publication:

10.1. **Financial Interests:** None to declare.
10.2. **Non-Financial Interests:** The authors have no personal or professional affiliations that could be perceived as having influenced the research conducted or the conclusions drawn in this study.
10.3. **Research Funding:** This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.
10.4. **Conflict of Commitment:** The authors confirm that there are no agreements with any entity that could influence the research integrity or the publication of the paper.
10.5. **Personal Relationships and Competing Interests:** The authors declare that there are no personal relationships or competing interests that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

We confirm that the manuscript represents original work and has not been published previously, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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