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Conference Report and Intelligence Briefing

The 10th Asian Conference on Education & International Development (ACEID2024)
The 14th Asian Conference on Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences (ACP2024)
The 10th Asian Conference on Aging & Gerontology (AGen2024)

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The International Academic Forum (IAFOR)

2024-II
ISSN: 2759-4939

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Contents

4	1. Introduction
6	2. 'Positive Ageing' and the Generational 'Other' 2.1 The Self, the 'Other', and Society 2.2 Missed Opportunities
9	3. Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Human Security
12	4. Peace, Education, and Civil Society
15	5. What Can Be Done?
17	6. Conclusions and Future Outlooks
19	Conference Networking and Cultural Events
20	ACEID/ACP/AGen2024 Key Statistics
21	Conference Photographs



Introduction

In line with the International Academic Forum's (IAFOR) mission of interdisciplinarity, we successfully held one of our most popular interdisciplinary conferences in Tokyo, Japan last month. [The 10th Asian Conference on Education and International Development \(ACEID2024\)](#) took place alongside the [14th Asian Conference on Psychology and Behavioural Science \(ACP2024\)](#) and [The 10th Asian Conference on Gerontology and Aging \(AGen2024\)](#) from March 25-29, 2024. Altogether, the joint conferences welcomed over 700 delegates from more than 60 countries from around the world.

The central theme connecting the three conference programmes focused on communication and education for peace. Under the rubric of peace, dialogue, and the role of education, keynote speakers and panellists addressed issues on the generation of fear, threat, and violence; the interaction with the 'other' through psychological concepts and the physical threat present within international relations; the idea of saving others through Official Development Assistance (ODA); the importance of perception of the older or generational 'other' and the debate on ethics and care as we transition to an AI-dominated world.

All these concepts are fundamentally built on issues surrounding perceptions, identity construction, and expectancy. In a panel moderated by [Dr Joseph Haldane](#), on "*Communication and Education for Peace*", [Professor Brendan Howe](#) from Ehwa Womans University in South Korea, and [Professor Dexter da Silva](#) from Keisen University, Japan, elaborated on this idea, setting the perspective through which these issues can be viewed. A key argument is based on the 'self-other' concept and the process of 'othering', which is defined as the perception of our in-group as positive and entitled while alienating the out-group who are seen as antagonistic, negative, and unentitled. The issue of violence is inevitably connected to perceptions of entitlement; the more we feel we are entitled to and the less we get, the more

frustrated we become, and this frustration turns into aggression. Political exclusion and disenfranchisement, inequality, and marginalisation all flow from the view of the 'other' group as non-conforming to the social norms of the dominant in-group within society.

Professor Da Silva went as far as to suggest that different industries are using this knowledge of human cognition to manipulate society's behaviour. The marketing, entertainment, and media industries understand that the process of 'othering' is naturally occurring within the three levels of social psychology; namely, social thinking, social influences, and social relations, and these industries socially manipulate behaviour that leads to many crises and conflicts. In a sense, he is worried that the field of Psychology itself is in crisis and failing society at large. Both panellists agree that 'otherness' is identified as the most important government challenge of the 21st century and poses a significant source—and tool—for conflict.

As an organisation facilitating an academic platform specifically for diverse voices to be heard, IAFOR has also encountered the issues inter-group conflict and the process of 'otherness' provoke. Dr Haldane mentioned that on many occasions, IAFOR has been asked to de-platform individuals from certain countries or take a stance on a given matter, drawing from sentiments of morality, justice, and ethics. 'How can you let someone from country X speak?' or 'What is IAFOR's stand on X matter?' are among the very questions with which we continue to grapple.

IAFOR firmly believes there needs to be a space to discuss on-the-cusp issues without immediately politicising them; providing a platform for international, intercultural, and interdisciplinary dialogue requires not having a given point of view on a given topic, yet understanding that they are inherently political. However, we must ask ourselves; how does one stand for something, without standing for nothing?

With this provocation in mind, one of the key takeaways from this conference is that 'morality', 'justice', or 'ethics' are concepts that take on very different meanings for different people and cultures. It is difficult to reach a consensus when it comes to universal definitions. The keynote presentations and panel discussions at this conference have illuminated this point.





'Positive Ageing' and the Generational 'Other'

Ageing Society is not a new phenomenon, yet society continues to struggle with finding viable solutions for recurrent issues such as ageism, physical and psychological well-being, and unanswered basic needs necessary for elderly care. These issues hinder intergenerational understanding, a key element for a harmonious society, and bar opportunities across academic and business sectors. The keynote presentations dove straight into these issues, providing their insights for practical solutions as well as further academic discussions. These themes were echoed in many of the delegates' presentations; their solutions included integrative technological advancement, raising awareness and promoting understanding among groups within the society, and cooperation from the individual to international levels. Interdisciplinary solutions and international cooperation are crucial in fostering harmonious societies in response to the current needs and necessary preparation for the future in a fast-changing world.

The Self, the 'Other', and Society

Ageism is an obstacle to building age-friendly environments: 'ageing' and its various definitions and interpretations pose questions to individuals on how one values self and others. In her presentation titled *"On People and Ageing: Opportunities in an Overlooked and Misunderstood Market Segment"*, [Dr Adela Balderas](#) introduced the difference between how people are considered 'officially aged' between 55 to 70 years old on paper, and how they perceive or value themselves with 'subjective age'—how old they feel they are, think they look, act, and show engagement with the world around them, regardless of chronological age. [Dr Miriam Sang-Ah Park](#) highlighted in her presentation *"Getting Old, Staying Young? Studying Older Adults' Well-Being"* that in contrast to the normative view of the elderly as frail, declining, and having less capacity, the individuals' positive perceptions toward themselves allow them to age healthier than their predecessors. These presentations highlighted the role of 'values' in positive ageing and showed how one builds value by taking care of oneself and the younger generations, and the efforts one can put in trying to contribute, stay connected to society, and make one's life more meaningful. Dr Balderas also suggested that showing gratitude gives oneself value, and the public can contribute to building values for older individuals by showing gratitude, and recognising their previous, current, and potential contributions.

However, values are interpreted differently across cultures. One can value self either from what one can contribute, or how one is being treated. Challenges remain in how to bridge the different interpretations of values across society and generations to the present-day reality, in an effort to build an inclusive, harmonious society. In areas where cultural values predominate reality, issues in ageing societies pose wider concerns beyond the aged themselves. [Dr Merrill Silverstein's](#) presentation "*Filial Piety and its Discontents: Variation in Evaluating Adult Children as "Filial" by Older Parents in Rural China,*" highlighted that physical impairments, physically distant relationship with their children, and unmet expectations causes older parents to value their children less (less filial), in response to the younger generation's inability to provide psychological and monetary support. The presentation proposed a more institutionalised, long-term care policy akin to the Japanese experience, to lessen the monetary and cultural burden placed upon the younger generations. This shows that issues in ageing society are not to be neglected as these issues expand beyond the aged themselves, and that it should be viewed from a multidimensional, interdisciplinary perspective.

[Mr Robert E. Claar](#) used Japan as the case study in his presentation "*Japan as a Role Model for Ultra-Aging Societies: Innovation and Sustainability in Universal Access Healthcare*" to discuss the government's role in promoting positive ageing in an ultra-ageing society context at a macro level, citing the successful case of co-pay universal coverage healthcare. However, the longer life expectancy together with low birth rates may pose challenges. Mr Claar proposed possible solutions to address possible hurdles, such as increasing the overall number of workers through immigration, growing the number of care workers through proper compensation, and the possibility of increasing co-pay rates to prevent overutilisation of the overloaded healthcare system. He also proposed digitisation and the creation of a political environment that allows the possibility of introducing innovative and cost-saving technologies in healthcare service sectors.



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Missed Opportunities

Opportunities within the 'silver market' are rising due to an increased ageing rate, but they are often missed due to ageism and the negligence of a thorough understanding of the nature of ageing society and individuals. Dr Balderas proposed that the current Silver Economy mainly provides products and services based on stereotypical ageing, creating the 'Silver Washing' effect; providing products and services that shape and mislead how the public perceives the needs of elders. In reality, people are ageing healthier, wealthier, and more tech-savvy than ever before. Today, older people have more free time and higher purchasing power, and identifying the right marketing strategies will be beneficial to both the business sector and consumers. She identified the businesses with particularly high potential in the silver economy sector as the travel, leisure, and healthcare sectors.

[Dr Bhanu Ranjan's](#) presentation "*Transforming Mental Healthcare While Harnessing Artificial Intelligence*" provided key examples of how older adults can be better served via the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare. Dr Ranjan proposed that AI has great potential to be implemented into health services such as ageing coping strategies, detecting potential health risks, analysing personalised treatment plans, maintaining treatment records and reports, and providing immediate assistance and feedback for patient-driven decisions and treatment options. The potential business opportunities in this sector should aim at improving personalised care for patients, increasing time-efficiency streamlining operations for service providers, and reducing healthcare costs for ageing populations at large. The challenge, Dr Ranjan explained, is how to properly regulate the use of AI-integrated medical technologies while making them accessible and cost-efficient. Ultimately, better mental health will positively impact the overall population's health, hence reducing the long-term cost in multiple aspects of healthcare.

Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Human Security

In today's digitised society, also commonly called the 'Metaverse', the proliferation of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-generated algorithms can contribute to and exacerbate the problem of 'otherness'. AI has already been implemented into mass media platforms as a tool for connection and togetherness through similar virtual and cultural experiences among users worldwide, such as replicating and sharing dances on social media applications such as TikTok. It is also a source of great conflict; algorithms utilised by the very same applications are increasingly choosing what content we observe, resulting in the curation of information which remains unregulated and continuously reinforced by the applications' built-in AI.

A question raised by a delegate during the panel on "*Communication and Education for Peace*" asked whether we can, as educators, psychologists, politicians, and humans, effectively compete against AI-generated or algorithm-generated directions which create 'otherness'. The timely question on the regulation of AI and the curation of information that can fuel hostility and violence poses other, more fundamental questions on ethics and human behaviour: to understand artificial intelligence, we first need to understand human intelligence.

In his keynote presentation on "*Dealing with the New as We Get Old: AI, Aging, and Ethical Issues*", [Professor Keith Miller](#) from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in the United States stated that the concept of human intelligence remains as elusive as when psychologists first started studying it. Professor Miller stressed that it is difficult to define what AI is because we do not yet understand what human intelligence is; the problem is that we are trying to create computers that emulate human behaviour and appear 'conscious', without fully understanding what it means to be human. Essentially, AI is a simulation of a brain using simplified models of neurons that reach conclusions based on probabilistic learning methods. It does not 'understand' as a human; it mimics human behaviour based on what is likely to come out of the 'average human'. It is not emotional, but is instead based on numbers and probabilities. Without understanding where this logic comes from, how is it possible to create AI capable of making ethical decisions?



In fact, the question of ethical decision-making within AI was never a focal point for the scientists who developed it. Professor Miller visually presented this staggering revelation by performing a search of titles on Google Scholar containing 'AI' and 'Ethics' in combination. In 2014—a mere decade ago—the articles discussing AI and Ethics were in a single-digit count. The recent call to caution regarding the unregulated development of AI algorithms and machine learning led to the exponential growth of research on this topic only after 2019. By that time, however, AI had already begun to play a significant role in our everyday lives.

Recently, AI has contributed to advancements in all fields, including human-centric technologies making life more enjoyable for people, especially those with mental health issues and the elderly. While some would see AI as a panacea, offering solutions to various social problems of well-being, others posit that it is merely a temporary, convenient, and expedient salve to far deeper social issues. However, having that debate is essential when considering AI's rampant adoption into nearly every facet of society. More importantly, even if we use AI as a temporary solution that is 'better than nothing', does this warrant its unregulated dissemination of information?

This raised another question on the role of AI in such unregulated dissemination of information, and the speed at which dis/misinformation can be spread. While there are positives to the democratisation of information—as it is incredibly important for keeping governments honest and uncovering gross violations of human rights—it is extremely difficult to control the flow of this information that can easily be manipulated to do just the opposite. There are as many ethical difficulties in censorship and control as there are information spread that is unfettered and free flowing.

Referencing another interview discussion that IAFOR held at [The IAFOR International Conference on Education \(IICE2024\)](#) with [Dr Kālewa Correa](#), the Curator of Hawai'i and the Pacific for the Smithsonian Institution's Asian Pacific American Center, in Hawaii earlier this year, the moderator of this panel, Dr Joseph Haldane, retraced the discussion on *"Questions of Education, Curation, and Artificial Intelligence"* to offer a possible answer to this question. At that time, Mr Correa emphasised [how AI and algorithms work according to how prompt engineers have programmed them](#); it is a matter of who is asking what questions as a prompt engineer. Therefore, the ones responsible for semi-autonomous machines are the prompt engineers, who should be educated in terms of political bias and inclusion, cultural awareness, and issues of marginalisation.





Dr Haldane shared that it is important to have good ideas go viral, because we can get multiple views on the same topic and we can triangulate the information to get an accurate perspective. Agendas can be subsequently pushed in the right way, thus, holding truth to power and holding governments accountable. It is through this connectedness and sharing of the good ideas that the UN Security Council has come under scrutiny for not being able to handle the recent undermining of human security properly.

As Professor Howe elaborated, the UN Security Council is the definitive source of laws and resolutions for international conflicts. It has the power to determine if a nation's actions are a threat to international human security. The national assembly, on the other hand, is made up of all the member states and, while it may not be legally binding, it is more legitimate in terms of global representation. Decision-making processes are difficult to execute within the Security Council due to ideological differences within the council itself and the exercise of the veto.

However, for the first time, the United States has not exercised its veto on the [UN Security Council Resolution 2728](#) against Israel concerning the recent violation of human rights witnessed in the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. That the demand for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, the release of all hostages, and the provision of humanitarian aid is being supported by a nation-state that usually vetoes any decisions restraining Israel, constitutes a turn for the better, as we see the possibility of national governments' cooperative possibilities in international relations. Public pressure can be applied via a supranational organisation to hold nation-states accountable. In the panel, Professor Howe stated that this behavioural change is not due to the US becoming weaker as an international power; instead, a growing global normative campaign is formed to hold Israel, Hamas, and their supporters accountable for the violation of human rights on either side. It seems that people can apply normative, moral pressure even on the strongest states of the council.

This showcases how important it is for good ideas to go viral and create global unity on issues that concern the 'other', by being able to see different perspectives that were given a platform to be heard and seen through AI-algorithms. To make AI choose to push ethically sound perspectives, we need to educate our prompt engineers to recognise what is ethically sound, what constitutes a political bias, and what being culturally aware entails. The next section discusses why this is not an easy endeavour.

Peace, Education, and Civil Society

One solution that is often recommended as a remedy to violence and hostility is peace education. The concept of peace education has been well-developed for over 50 years now. It is incorporated in curricula across all levels of education worldwide, and used in NGOs' and international agencies' practices by taking the form of anti-racism, conflict resolution, multiculturalism, human rights, and sustainable development education. However, this concept is usually taught from the perspective of geographical areas that are in times of peace. How peace education is perceived and conducted in practical terms in actual conflict-affected areas has not been widely discussed. In his keynote presentation entitled "*Healing the Scars of War: Teaching for Peace through Higher Education in Divided and Conflict-Affected Contexts*", [Professor Kevin Kester](#) from Seoul National University in South Korea discussed why peace education is a problematic concept and not the cure-all for violence and hostility.

The prevalent position nowadays is that education can contribute to peace, betterment, and international understanding. Educating young people who are to become future citizens on how to lead peaceful discussions in the classroom can translate to stability and social cohesion, further emphasising the impact that peace education can move beyond the classroom. Such impact is felt when citizens are, for example, critically analysing the government, or opposing decisions that direct taxes toward funding a war. In this sense, educators are at the forefront of bringing about social change.

A lesser-debated perspective is that, especially in conflict-affected areas, education can perpetuate war, division, and violence. In the international architecture of nation-states, de facto states that arise from conflict and peacebuilding efforts operate as 'invisible spaces'. Since they are not internationally recognised as sovereign states, they are treated by the world's nations as if they do not exist. Therefore, they are spaces that represent the contestation between sovereignty and subjugation. Within this contested context, policymakers have to decide whether they want to use education for social change or sovereignty. Oftentimes, it is a question of whether a de facto state desires unification to secure international recognition of its territory and receive a share of limited resources, or if it desires to keep its national pride and

- Peace education as a philosophy and field of practice has grown substantially in recent decades. It is included within global curricular and pedagogical programs of schools, universities, non-governmental organizations, and international agencies. The interdisciplinary field draws on theory and pedagogy from other related educational efforts, including anti-racism education, conflict resolution education, global citizenship education, human rights education, social justice education, and education for sustainable development. International conferences and global agendas of the United Nations and civil society initiatives support the work (Eom & Kester, 2022; Hantzopoulos et al., 2021).
 - Yet, there are few studies as of yet examining peace in/through higher education (HE) in settings affected by conflict. Thus, to fill this void this study aims to explore HE pedagogies for peace with university educators in four divided and conflict-affected contexts. It turns its attention to learning from and across the adaptable and resilient HE pedagogies for peace and reconciliation that have emerged among academics in China/Taiwan, Cyprus, Korea, and Somalia.
- of the research, then, is to examine how these cases to division and conflict, and for scholars to learn from educators who have been successful in other divided and conflict-affected



create a sovereignty of its own, free from the subjugation of the 'other'. In summary, education can create sovereign or subjugated minds.

Based on this explanation, it is easy to understand that 'peace' is a politically loaded term. For some, it can mean unification, the end of violent exchanges, and the acquisition of resources that contribute to the well-being of a resource-depleted society, while for others it can mean freedom from oppressing norms of the 'other' side. Instead of freedom, it can allude to subjugation or suppression depending on the political context. Professor Kester makes this point by analysing the situation in four conflict-affected areas: China and Taiwan, North and South Korea, North and South Cyprus, and Somaliland and Somalia. The concepts of 'peace' and 'unification' in these areas are fraught with contested interpretations and approaches, which makes it hard for a universal definition and curriculum of 'peace education' to emerge.

To further showcase the contested notion of 'peace', [Professor Kiyotaka Takahashi](#) from Keisen University in Japan gave a keynote presentation on the "*Critical Review on Changing Characteristics of Japan's Development Assistance and Some Responses of Civil Society*". Following Japan's defeat during WWII, the Allied forces occupying Japan imposed a new constitution to avoid its rearmament and falling back into a militaristic state. Similar to the German constitution, Article 9 of its [1947 constitution](#) states that 'Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes'. Based on this and the haunting memory of two nuclear attacks, Japan became a pacifist nation, and its society adheres to pacifist values even to this day. For this reason, the Japanese are very careful in expressing strong political opinions and favour harmony within and outside of Japan.

Despite the nature of Japan's constitution and society, recently there has been a political push for the expansion of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to include Official Security Assistance (OSA) by exporting weapons to developing countries. Professor Takahashi argues that this development not only signals the potential for Japan to become a 'normal' country—one capable of and willing to engage in war—but also contributes to human insecurity for the people 'on the ground'. Professor Takahashi states that such developments in foreign policy, combined with recent efforts to amend its pacifist constitution, endanger the democratic system of Japan, potentially causing it to fall into totalitarianism.

In his presentation, Professor Takahashi's main argument for why this is the case is the Japanese society's struggle with strong peer pressure. He argued that politically loaded definitions, such as 'peace' or saying no to war, are seen as an oppressive, political stance that may cause others of a different political view to feel uncomfortable if expressed strongly in public. Such political expressions create disharmony within society, an uncomfortable result as the Japanese respect unity over diversity. Paradoxically, following this logic leads to no open diversity of opinions at all, as differing opinions are generally not welcomed nor encouraged to be expressed publicly. According to Professor Takahashi, if Japan were to become a militaristic state once again, the expansion of ODA to include OSA would not be met with political dialogue within society, allowing the Japanese state to suppress freedom of expression on the basis of societal peer pressure, and create a society of surveillance, thereby falling into totalitarianism. This reflects Dr Haldane's earlier question: how does one stand for something, without standing for nothing?



'It is very hard to get a universal definition of what 'peace' is and how it can be practised across all contexts', said Professor Kester in an interview with IAFOR on the neutrality of peace. 'It needs to be particular and located within that specific context'. The same is true for curriculum design, which is often controlled by national governments. In an interview with IAFOR, Professor Brendan Howe emphasised the importance of curricula being designed in such a way that they interact with the 'other', bringing two sides together. For educators and practitioners, teacher and student exchange programmes can further enhance interactions with the 'other' by situating the 'self' in an unknown environment.

Perhaps, this may be the closest we can get to answering this main question. This is why interdisciplinary dialogue and analyses are important to understand specific contexts from their unique cultural, societal, economic, and political aspects and ways of perceiving contestation. IAFOR practises this by bringing people together and familiarising delegates with the 'other' through interaction and experience across boundaries of nation, culture, and discipline. As Dr Haldane mentioned in his opening speech, it is difficult to caricature, dehumanise, or 'other' when you make the foreign familiar.

What Can Be Done?

The presentations and panel discussions at this conference have highlighted the importance of being able to gain an insight into the mind of the 'other' and understand various perspectives and points of view by educating ourselves. Education is often seen as the remedy for combating hostility but, as shown by Professor Kester, applying educational theory in praxis can be quite complicated, if not controversial, in some contexts.

The frustration of this was reflected in a delegate's comment that Global Citizenship education is the best way to create more peace and harmony within societies and among countries, and that having multiple identities can also help in understanding the position of the 'other', but the 'how to' in regards to achieving it is not well-understood, because we do not have a clear definition of what it means to be a global citizen.

Professor Brendan Howe agreed that it is difficult to conduct global citizenship education because 'universality' is different for everyone. The Declaration of Human Rights is interpreted differently by different people. Culturally and historically, what we understand as 'rights' has diverged, making it difficult to decide what is universally 'right'. Trying to seek a universal definition of 'global citizenship' or 'peace' further endangers the prevalence of a 'Western domination' of what universal rights are. Instead, Professor Howe proposes asking an alternative, compelling question: what are universal wrongs? Instead of focusing on where our definitions differ, we should be looking at where our definitions converge: no matter what our background is, is there any overlapping consensus on what is unacceptable? Can we agree on what universal wrongs are instead of universal rights?

To reach an agreed definition, it is important to 'meet the other'. We need to see the interaction and conflict from the perspective of the 'other' and, while it is not necessary to agree with others' perspectives, we need to understand their position and gain an insight into their mindset. According to Professor Howe, this can be done through active listening, asking questions, questioning our thought processes,

biases, and assumptions, and communicating with the 'other' to demystify them. To this, Professor Dexter Da Silva adds the importance of psychological literacy within global citizenship education, which includes learning about ethical behaviour, scientific thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, and respect for diversity. Additionally, according to Professor Miller, in order to analyse an ethical situation, it is crucial to identify who the stakeholders are: who are the decision-makers, who might be affected by the decisions, who gains and who loses, who has the power and who might lose it, and what other societal constraints are there?

All these suggestions for how global citizenship education should be taught boil down to a single, yet complex question: what is a global citizen?

IAFOR will respond to this question at our next interdisciplinary conference in May through the introduction of a new, interactive discussion session series joining experts and audience members in the discussion of such complex questions. 'The Forum' was born out of a survey IAFOR rolled out to our members earlier this year, and took its final shape from the question of global citizenship posed at ACEID/ACP/AGen2024. In the survey, we asked our members what they think the key issues are in their fields of expertise and what type of capacity building they would like to see at future conferences. The driving force behind conducting this survey was the observation that there is a lack of representation of 'the people' within global institutions. There is an urge to step away from policy-making narratives within formal institutions and media, and listen to what people on the receiving end of policies have to say. As a result, IAFOR was able to capture common ideas among academics, practitioners, and educators in our community, which differed greatly from the discussions that are on the global institutions' agenda.

'The Forum' will take place for the first time at our joint conferences on May 24, 2024, [The Asian Conference on Arts and Humanities \(ACAH2024\)](#), [The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies \(ACCS2024\)](#), and [The Asian Conference on Social Sciences \(ACSS2024\)](#), where the question of global citizenship will continue the ongoing dialogue on peace and caring for the 'other'.



Conclusions and Future Outlooks

Our March conference attempted to discuss ethics and care regarding the harmonious coexistence with the 'other' through multiple lenses. Experts in education, psychology, ageing and gerontology, AI, and international relations demonstrated how all global crises are interconnected and can be traced back to a single issue: the perception of and dealing with the 'other' that has distinct views, values, and life experiences. All keynotes and panellists agreed that it can be difficult to bring people together and agree on what is right when everyone has a different interpretation of certain values, resulting in discussions that can become highly politicised, contested, and even volatile.

What lies ahead for education, psychology, ethics, AI, and our ageing population in the contested and highly polarising world of the future? Professor Kevin Kester says that the current state of affairs has caused peace educators to look inward and ask themselves whether they are living up to the ideals they are preaching; whether they are pushing for social movements and change; whether they are holding states accountable; or whether they choose to stay silent on a given topic. Peace educators should try to find a way to discuss these issues without taking sides, and live up to their ethics and standards in a way that does not take sides or close down possibilities of listening and working with others.

Professor Dexter Da Silva closed with the statement that perhaps education in itself may not be the cure, but the method and approach of learning and educating are much more important. This includes individual thinking, self-learning methods, and critical thinking. AI is a beneficial tool that can be used to educate younger generations within a world that is becoming increasingly automated, despite its pitfalls and dangers to the democratisation of information. To this, Professor Keith Miller adds that it is imperative for national leaders to take initiatives to regulate AI first within their national governments and then through international treaties. International cooperation on political decisions is hard, but AI is an area that should not be left unregulated.

The digital divide on issues concerning AI and technology is also a problem that needs to be addressed, offering AI as a public good in mind. Both Professor Miller and Mr Robert E. Claar concurred that universal access to information and AI as a service are vital to fostering understanding of the 'other'. Mr Claar argues that upgrading the information technology infrastructure will increase the efficacy of the healthcare system in sharing patient records to be easily accessible by relevant sectors. These big data can be utilised and analysed based on real-world evidence to improve healthcare management, accommodating healthcare users and providers alike. He also encouraged policies to make medical devices accessible in households for easy access to basic healthcare, reducing the cost of hospital visits.

AI and technology remain promising solutions to issues not only within education, but also in matters of ageing and psychology, with intercultural and intergenerational understanding as fundamental elements. Dr Miriam Sang-Ah Park views AI as potentially helpful in fostering positive ageing and proposes a framework to include cultural and cross-cultural aspects in the realisation of context-based positive ageing. Dr Adela Balderas also provided a similar approach, with a focus on inter-generational interactions that will reduce the level of ageism. Similarly, Dr Bhanu Ranjan presented that humour-related generative AI, such as mobile applications, websites, and meme generators, has significantly reduced depression, perceived

stress, and anxiety, with an increase in self-efficacy in patients. Moreover, AI or 'robots' help patients in opening up to talk about their mental health, in cases where they feel less comfortable talking to a person. It can also give preliminary support to patients who do not have the necessary resources to consult a psychologist. All these perspectives highlight the importance of taking into consideration the different life experiences of the generational 'other', including cultural differences and socio-economic statuses. There needs to be collaboration from the ethical, legal, and social aspects to employ the technology responsibly.

'If AI is going to make decisions for us, we need to be made aware of it. If AI changes our lives in a way we don't like, we should demand that it be explained to us. Making AI that can explain its decisions is now a sub-field of its own, but many of the current AI decision-making programmes cannot tell us why they made a decision. This is a danger', says Professor Miller. He urges teachers to educate young people to make their own ethical choices.

For this, social psychology plays a central role. Psychology, which nowadays is not doing its intended job of understanding the human psyche in order to contribute to a peaceful communication with the 'other', needs to revert to its formal role of being used for ethical reasons. First, we need to understand how and why influential industries use social psychology to manipulate social behaviour. Then, education should be about teaching social responsibility in order to mitigate the risk of using social psychology knowledge to make unethical decisions.

Professor Brendan Howe concludes that 'Education is not the grand cure, as it can contribute to insecurity'. As Professor Kester and Professor Da Silva demonstrated, education can be used for either good or bad. It is vital that we get a greater understanding of the delivery systems of education. Regarding the importance of keeping the dialogue on peace and global issues open, Professor Howe says 'It is very important that academics tackle the big issues, because they may get to advise policymakers and because, of course, we are educating the next generation of world leaders. So, if we can inculcate an idea of global social responsibility in the future leaders of this world, then we have served a decent purpose'.

As an organisation that is dedicated to encouraging interdisciplinary discussion, facilitating intercultural awareness, and promoting international exchange, IAFOR will continue striving to discuss often controversial political issues through non-politicised discussions, inspiring future academic and political leadership.





Conference Networking and Cultural Events

While formal presentations are the backbone of IAFOR conferences, the value of informal, yet intellectual, interaction among delegates is not overlooked. Networking events within our conference programmes provide designated spaces for open discussion, forming professional connections, and inspiring collaboration. Cultural events directly integrate the culture of the chosen venue at every conference, providing delegates an opportunity to engage with cultural practices alongside peers and new colleagues.

The conference Welcome Reception was held following the first of two poster sessions on March 25, and featured a special demonstration of karate, a traditional Japanese martial art, by the Karate Club at Waseda University. This performance not only showcased a series of katas—detailed patterns of movements or ‘drills’—but also a choreographed fight sequence exhibiting the katas in action. This is the second time we have collaborated with Waseda University to organise a cultural experience, and we look forward to doing so again. For the next conference to be held in Tokyo this May, we have two cultural events planned which are more interactive: a Kimono Dressing Demonstration with kimono instructor Satoko Yamada, and a Haiku Workshop with instructors Hana Fujimoto and Emiko Miyashita. These will be separated into their own sessions, allowing delegates the chance to experience Japanese culture hands-on. IAFOR’s aim in organising such events is to allow delegates to take on the equalised role of ‘learner’ together, dissolving any preconceptions of hierarchy, for example, between expert and early-career academic. We also form valuable ties with renowned individuals and cultural organisations in the cities in which we operate our programmes.

The Conference Dinner provides a more relaxed setting for networking within our conference programme. Offering such opportunities within our programmes is crucial for new and repeating delegates to assimilate to our growing network of delegates. This is especially true now that IAFOR is establishing more spaces for direct dialogue about pressing, on-the-cusp topics with the forthcoming integration of ‘The Forum’. The Conference Dinner at Shunju Tameike Sanno in Akasaka was a sold out event, and was well-received by delegates who attended. We plan to hold the upcoming ACAH/ACCS/ACSS2024 Conference Dinner in May at Shunju Tameike Sanno once more.

747 DELEGATES FROM 63 COUNTRIES



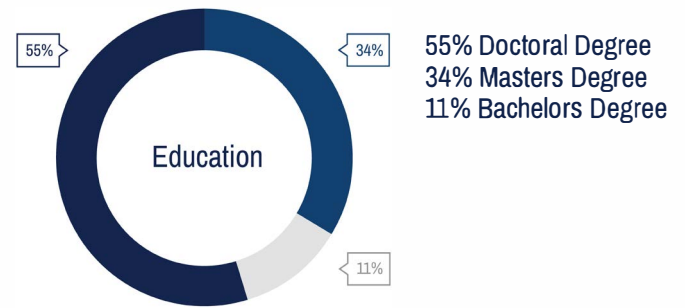
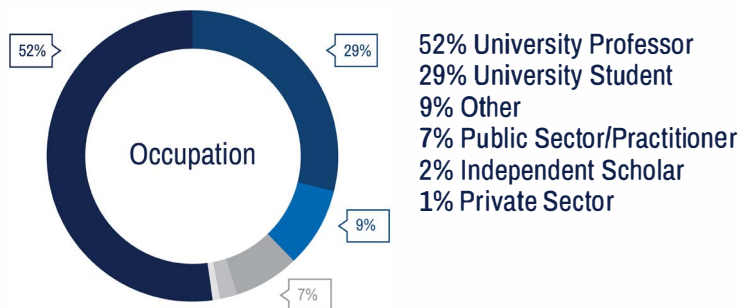
448
Onsite
Presenters



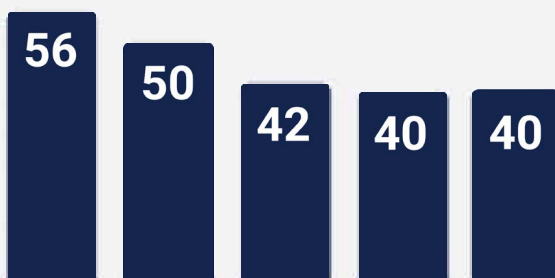
183
Online
Presenters



476
Institutions and
Organisations



- ### Top Five Streams
1. Aging and Gerontology (56)
 2. Mental Health (50)
 3. Psychology and Education (42)
 4. Teaching Experiences, Pedagogy, Practice & Praxis (40)
 5. Learning Experiences, Student Learning & Learner Diversity (40)



Keyword Frequency Across Titles



587
Total
Presentations



251
Hours of
Content



72%
Abstract
Acceptance

Multiple Authored vs. Single Authored Submissions



Conference Photographs

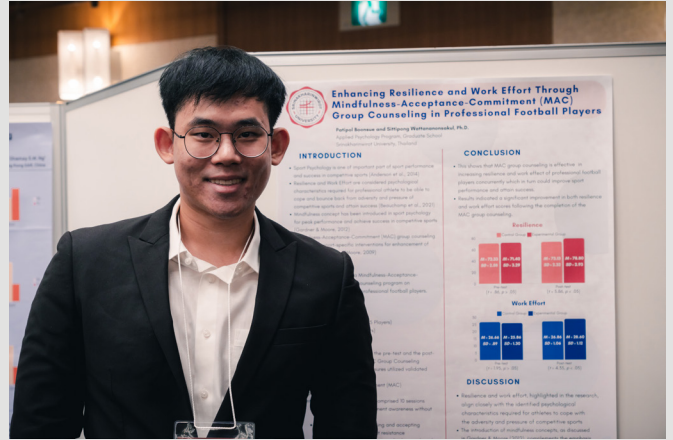












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ISSN: 2759-4939