# REIMAGINING HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES IN A DIGITAL AGE

*Being*
**A Keynote address presented**

**By**

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**PROTOCOL AND THE PROLOGUE**

Esteemed colleagues, honoured guests,
Your presence here today signifies our collective dedication to explore the intersection of the Humanities, Sciences, and the Digital Age.

So far, the distinction between Humanities and Sciences raises an important question: Should we continue to uphold the traditional dichotomy or is it time to bridge the gap and forge a more unified approach?

This question brings us to the core concept of Reimagining — which challenges us to think outside the box or beyond the conventional and embrace new ways of thinking like trying to explore how we can improve their integration.

This challenge calls for an open mind as we seek to redefine what is possible when these realms are brought together and more when they are powered by the tools of technologies in a Digital Age.

**RESHAPING OF THEWORLD VIA DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**

When discussing technology in the digital age, one question that consistently comes to mind is: How do we navigate a world where digital tools are unlocking the secrets of the universe and reshaping our world at an unprecedented pace? I believe we all agree that our world is being transformed by digital tools. And I can offer compelling evidence to support this assertion.

i) **INFORMATION METAMORPHOSIS:**

Here our access to information is profoundly altered. From physical archives to digital repositories, and from handwritten notes to instant messaging,

ii) **ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE**

    Here Businesses are transforming, from traditional supermarket stores like

ShopRite to global e-commerce platforms (Amazon) redefined by automation and robotics.

iii) **WITH REGARD TO GLOBAL INTERCONNECTEDNESS:**
Here we've transitioned/ from geographically isolated communities and obscure villages to a globally networked society.

iv) **Regarding TEACHING AND LEARNING IN UNIVERSITIES**
It is evident that the tools we use to think, learn, and conduct research are evolving at an astonishing pace, driven by digital tools and technologies for example:

Video conferencing platforms like Zoom have revolutionized communication among scholars, promoting peer learning and enhancing collaboration.

Online teaching and learning have transformed traditional classrooms, while multimedia resources are making education more engaging and interactive.

Lastly, from an ethical perspective, university lecturers are becoming increasingly vigilant about plagiarism in all its forms, as AI-powered plagiarism detection tools now make it easier to identify academic dishonesty.

**FORECASTING FURTHER DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD**
The rapid pace of digital transformation keeps me wondering how our future will look like and as a result, I started to venture a forecast and I came up with the following predictions.

1. (**Houses**) will be completely roofed no longer with **LONGSPAN ZINK** but with **SOLAR PANELS** that will store electricity during the day to be utilized at night. As a result, EEDC staff will soon be out of market.

2. (**Software and robots**) will seriously **DISRUPT MOST TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES** and businesses especially staff wise in the next couple of years and workers will be either downsized, rationalized or thrown out of job.

3. You don't need to buy a car anymore because you can call **AUTOMATED CAR** with your phone and the nearest **CAR WITHOUT A DRIVER** will appear to take you to your destination. Drivers will lose their jobs.

4. Finally, for **SMARTWATCHES/ PHONES** my prediction (applying the principle of logical order) is that **SMART PHONES** will be able to do
- a retinal scan and blood samples,
- analyse your breathing,
- diagnose your disease and

- give you a prescription.

With this development, many medical doctors will loose quorum of clients.

The picture of the future is closer than you think because these **SMART WATCHES ARE ALREADY COMING WITH AMAZING FEATURES LIKE:**
- health and fitness tracking
- heart rate monitoring
- blood pressure measurement
- sleep tracking
- and calories one has burned in an exercise

## INTRODUCING THR FOUR VARIABLES IN THE OF THE CONFERENCE

Dear colleagues

With these entry behaviour opening thoughts, let us now sharpen our focus on the key concepts of theme for this conference:

Humanities

Sciences

Digital Age and

Reimagining

## THE COMPONENTS OF HUMANITIES

Humanities can be referred to as the discipline that study human culture. This includes the study of Languages, literature, history, Religion, and Philosophy.

## THE COMPONENTS OF SCIENCES

This is divided in three namely:

## NATURAL SCIENCE:

Which studies Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy.

## FORMAL SCIENCE

Which looks at Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer science.

## SOCIAL SCIENCE:

Which handles: Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Anthropology, Geography, History and Religion

## THE COMPONENTS OF DIGITAL AGE

With regard to Digital Age, the key components are

internet of things (IOT),

artificial intelligence, AI

Machine learning (ML,)

Mobile Devises. MD and

Emotional intelligence

## EXAMINING THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

Here I invite you to take a look at fig 1, on six areas of Relationship namely:
Partnership,
Similarities,
Focus
Subject of study
Quest for truth and
Criteria for Success

1. **The PARTNERSHIP** between science and humanities is not new, but its importance has significantly increased in the last decade. While science provides the technical backbone of innovations, humanities ensure these innovations serve humanity's broader needs.
2. **SIMILARITIES:** Both fields enhance each other, to improve lives, address societal challenges, and respect ethical boundaries.
3. **FOCUS:** Science focuses on the natural world; the humanities focus on the affairs of humans.
      Humanists tend to focus on the text or a historical event whereas scientists generally want to understand the underlying laws.
4. **CRITERION MEASURES:** Success in the sciences is often measured by empirical discovery, innovation and the ability to predict and control phenomena. The humanities, however, evaluate success based on insight, understanding and the ability to interrogate and interpret human experiences
5. **SUBJECT OF STUDY:** Humanities studies human beings and their behaviour, while natural science studies the physical world.
6. **ON SEEKING FOR TRUTH:** Scientific Truth as External: Scientific truth, ideally, is considered external because It's GROUNDED in observable phenomena, testable hypotheses, and empirical evidence.

Its **GOAL** is to uncover objective laws and principles that govern the universe, regardless of what humans think or feel about them.

The **FOCUS** is on what 'is', not what 'seems' or what 'we desire' to be Humanistic truth, on the other hand, is deeply ROOTED in human experience, interpretation. Which is largely subjective in assessment of things.

After looking at the Symbiotic relationship between science and humanities the next thing I try to do is to take a broader look at the three variables of Humanities, Sciences and Digital Age using a conceptual framework to determine their joint responsibilities

## The Conceptual Framework

Here I tried to use a diagrammatic representation to construct a conceptual framework of the three key variables under probe for this Conference.

You see three major overlapping circles and there internal overlapping circles. For the Major overlapping Circle the first is labelled "humanities" the second is labelled "Sciences" and the third is labelled " The digital age"

The three Minor internal overlapping Circles are numbered four, five and six:

Circle 1 and 2
Are the overlapping of HUMANITIES and DIGITAL AGE
This overlapping means that digital Technology are used to study and preserve information associated with research enquires in Humanities

Circle 2 and 3
Are the overlapping of SCIENCES and DIGITAL AGE
This overlapping refers to the application of data analysis, AI, EI or MD in scientific research or in helping students to solve their take home assignment.

Circle 1 and 3
Are the overlapping of HUMANITIES and SCIENCES
This overlapping means that our research efforts should go interdisciplinary in other words we should bring scientific methods to make better and compelling sense in our enquires in humanities studies, in religion, philosophy and psychology etc

Both areas should be mutually reinforcing.
The Internal Tripple overlapping circle of 4, 5 and 6
Is suggesting that the digital age should have an overriding influence that transforms both fields of humanities and sciences

## Reimagining as a Process of Transformation

For university lecturers, re-imagining means rethinking what we teach, rethinking how we teach, rethinking the way we inspire this generation and rethinking how best to be generational thinkers

Reimagining involves taking an existing concept, idea or approach and transform it into something new or bringing some worthwhile innovation.

In the Faculty of Education essentially for teacher training we call Reimagining TRANSFER OF LEARNER (TOL) which is the process of applying knowledge, skills, and strategies to new situations.

A student uses knowledge of polynomial equations to solve similar problems for homework. For better illustration on reimagining, let us use a typical university library.

1 instead of long rows of bookshelf, the library will be redesigned to have **OPEN AREAS WITH COMFORTABLE SEATS** and collaborative work spaces.

2➙ There will be sections for
- art shows,
- workshops and
- community events.

3➙ Instead of physical books, the library will house
- e-books,
- online courses,
- and digital archives all in an effort to make the library accessible to a wider audience.

4➙ Rooms can be configured for various purposes like:
- meetings,
- study groups, or
- creative workshop.

5➙ Reimagining expects library to host events such as
- book clubs,
- educational seminars,
- cultural events thereby allowing for community interaction.

There are two reasons for Reimagining libraries as explained above:
1. To promote more dynamic and multifunctional collaborative learning
2. To broaden the scope of library services

**The Blessing of the Digital Age**
Let us take a quick look at the wonderful dividends of the Digital Age
I have grouped the blessings of the digital age under five major categories
i)    **INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY**-   Vast amounts of information is readily available to anyone with internet access
ii)    **COMMUNICATION** REVOLUTION - Allows for easier, faster/ instant and more global communication,
iii)   **AUTOMATION & EFFICIENCY -** Are achieved through computerization and AI, which increases productivity and efficiency in various
iv)   **E-COMMERCE & DIGITAL MARKETS**- Online marketplaces like JUMIA, KONGA, have revolutionized how we buy and sell goods and services.
v)    **SOCIAL MEDIA & GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY -** Both have enabled social interaction and information sharing on a global scale, fostering a connected world.

These five intertwine and contribute to the overall advantages of the Digital Age.

**The Risks Associated with the Blessings**

After downloading the blessings of the digital age, my mind went to a comment made by a spiritual writer. He said and I quote:

> "whenever you build a church the devil will construct a chapel near it. In other words. In the case under discussion. This means that the advent of the digital technology brought extraordinary wonderful opportunities but it has brought and harbours significant risks in the process.

So, it is only right and proper that after looking at the success story of Digital technologies, we should also examine some of its worrisome dividends

1. **AI services** are essentially routed in western data which runs the risk of being a tool for digital colonization.
2. **AI aided answers** to student term paper and assignments is a modern expo causing a lot of academic Laziness among students who recycle ignorance when the assistance from AI is not available
3. **Privacy and Data Security:** With the growing collection of personal data, the risk of breaches, misuse/abuse in the name gleaches, securing sensitive information from hackers and unauthorized access remains a significant concern.
4. **Cybersecurity Threats**: The rise of cyberattacks, including ransomware, phishing, and malware, poses a major threat to individuals, businesses, and governments.
5. **Digital Divide:** Despite technological advancements, there is still a gap between those with access to digital tools and the internet and those without, especially in rural or underdeveloped areas, leading to inequality in opportunities.
6. **Misinformation and Fake News:** The spread of false information, especially through social media platforms, can have serious consequences on public opinion, politics, and societal trust.

**Continuing the Risk**

7. **Mental Health Impact**: The overuse of digital technology, including social media, has been linked to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and decreased self-esteem, especially among young people.
8. **Job Displacement and Automation**: As AI and automation technologies improve, many jobs, especially in traditional industries, are at risk of becoming obsolete, leading to unemployment and economic instability.
9. **Surveillance and Loss of Freedom:** The growing presence of surveillance technologies, both by governments and private entities, raises concerns about individual freedoms, privacy, and the potential for abuse in the use of digital camera,

10. **Dependence on Technology**: Over-reliance on digital tools can lead to skills degradation and a lack of resilience in situations where technology fails or is unavailable.
11. **Intellectual Property Issues**: The ease of copying and distributing digital content has led to challenges in protecting intellectual property rights, including piracy and unauthorized use of copyrighted material.
12. **Addiction to Technology:** Excessive use of digital devices and platforms, especially among children and adolescents, can lead to addiction, social isolation, poor academic performance, and unhealthy lifestyle choices.

**The Antidote to the Risks of Technology**

From the paper, we can safely conclude that the digital age presents the world with extraordinary opportunities and significant risks as well which is why I want to say that

> *"To be an enemy of Technology is Dangerous and*
> *To romance with and be its friend is Fatal*

This means that on one hand to oppose technological progress is dangerous, perilous, potentially leading to social, economic, and personal stagnation.

Conversely, to be the friend of technology is Fatal meaning that our overreliance on technology may lead to unintended and equally damaging, consequences like:
- The loss of privacy,
- increased vulnerability to cyber threats,
- erosion of mental health, or
- social alienation.

The key, therefore, is to strike a delicate balance. In other words. We need technology to thrive, but we must remain vigilant against its potential pitfalls. Responsible use, mindful awareness of limitations, and a refusal to let technology dictate our lives are paramount. As one sage observed, "We must be masters of circumstance, not its slaves."

**The Response of Humanities and Sciences to the Challenges of the Digital Age**

I want to draw attention to innovation and creativity as one big challenge to the tools of the digital age. I guess My illustration on creativity will fascinate you.

Recall that on 1 October 2024, Iran launched a barrage of 180 to 200 ballistic missiles against Israel and about three weeks later, precisely on 26 October 2024,

Israel launched a retaliatory air strike that shocked the world and made waves in global defense circles with a grand breaking technology.

From the sky, Israel was able to neutralize all Iranian defense capabilities and operated freely with incredible ease and unprecedented accuracy.

It was an impressive show of superior military power using a master plan of technology to strategically dodge all Iran anti aircrafts defenses with ease.

Israel was able to manoeuvre through Iranian air spaces largely undetected as Iran's anti-aircraft missiles became a futile military exercise.

So, my question to you all is:
how was Israel able to do all this?
The answer lies in just on three word:
Digital Technological Innovation.
And what was that innovation. They call it "AI SPY PLANE".
That was a flying super computer and an innovation of an advanced technology developed by Israel to be their Eye and Ears in the sky
It was designed to:
*Scan vase regions,*
*Define patterns,*
*Collect details from the ground with accuracy,*
*Analyse collected data and process it in seconds for immediate military offence and defense.*

It does all these with minimum human risk to their soldiers and with maximum impact on their enemies.
Respected audience
I want to let you know that the Israel that did this was not the Israel of the biblical times BUT the Gen-Z Israel, an Israel that was open to innovation and Technology. What I'm saying is that the scholars that will embrace technological innovation is not the scholars of the last century but scholars of the Digital age: You and I
Mark you
Israel ingenuity in developing more advanced innovative and sophisticated capabilities made all the difference.

What does this mean for lecturers in humanities and sciences? It means that they have to embrace technological innovations which demand a reimagining of and making a difference in:
*research efforts,*
*curriculum design,*
*pedagogical approaches and*
*interdisciplinary collaboration* in the pursuit of academic excellence. To embark on this academic journey, imply that they must have a team spirit and adopt a team work as a tool for effectiveness and efficiency.

You know very well that the word Team is made up of four letters TEAM where
T  stands for together
E   stands for empower each other
A stands for achieve and
M stands for more and more
Put in a sentence the word **TEAM** is saying to scholars from humanities and Sciences:
***Together we empower each other to achieve more and more***

**The Epilogue: A Clarion Call to Shift Perspectives**
Esteemed colleagues,
distinguished guests, and
fellow seekers of knowledge
For the past 30 minutes I have addressed this audience on issues regarding
The reshaping of the world through digital technology
I made a number of forecast regarding number of transformation we expect in the world.
I browsed through the four variables in the theme of the conference and downloaded the components of humanities, sciences and digital age and recommended some structural adjustments in the reimagining of the library.

I examined the symbiotic relationship between humanities and sciences and used a conceptual framework to explain the message behind the overlapping between humanities, sciences and digital age.

I explored the concept of reimagining as a process of transformation.
Showcased the blessings of Digital age.
Highlighted the risks associated with the blessing and
Suggested the antidote to the risks.
I drew the attention of lecturers on what should be their response to the challenges of the digital age and

Finally, I ended with a clarion call on some areas where lecturers need a transformative shift in perspective.

Dear Colleagues,
What you received isn't merely a Keynote Address;
it's a moment of profound reflection. A shared realization that the future is not some distant horizon. But a tomorrow that has already arrived.

I want to believe that:
The digital age is not a tool at our disposal; it is a lens through which we can witness the deep interconnectedness of the Humanities and the Sciences like the union of theory and practice.

As we part ways from this conference, let us carry with us not just the rich discussions, but a transformative shift in perspective.

Let us recognize that the Humanities and the Sciences are not competing forces, but rather, complementary partners in our quest for knowledge and understanding.
Let us engage with the digital world not with fear or blind reverence, but with a spirit of critical curiosity.

May this digital revolution not only reshape our understanding of the world, but elevate our capacity to understand each other in Humanities and Sciences. Thanks for listening.

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