Chapter 96
Transhumanism and Innovative Leadership:
A Question of Quality

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ABSTRACT

Rethinking leadership at all levels is required to reach the goals of learning and education in 2030 through which learners will take the lead in orchestrating the process and manner of their own learning and in choosing their personal learning journeys. The fourth industrial revolution will continue to change the ways we act, perform, live, work, and learn. Therefore, there is a need for a social revolution that includes the understanding of transhumanism and its effects. The term "cutting edge" does not concern technology as much as it concerns humans. Accordingly, transhumanism is crucial for a sustainable ecosystem of learning with and through technology and digital transformation, which encompasses all levels of institutions—macro, meso, and micro. This chapter is focused on future trends, issues, and challenges in management and leadership as well as on issues and challenges in communication, which is essential in both leadership and smart learning.

INTRODUCTION

Transhumanism, which is often abbreviated as H+ or h+, is an international philosophical movement that advocates the transformation of the human condition by developing widely available sophisticated technologies that greatly enhance human intellect and physiology (Boström, 2005). Advocates of transhumanism study the potential benefits and dangers of emerging technologies that could overcome fundamental human limitations as well as the ethical limitations of using such technologies. Emerging technologies are those perceived as capable of changing the status quo. These technologies are generally new, but they include older technologies that are still controversial and relatively undeveloped in their potential. Rotolo, Hicks, and Martin (2015) considered that emerging technologies are characterized by

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radical novelty, relatively fast growth, coherence, prominent impact, uncertainty, and ambiguity. They argued that emerging technologies could be defined as having a certain degree of coherence that persists over time as well as the potential to exert considerable influence on the socio-economic domain, which is observed in the composition of actors, institutions, and the patterns of interactions among them, including the associated processes of knowledge production. The predominant influence of emerging technologies, however, lies in the future; therefore, in the emergence phase, they are still somewhat uncertain and ambiguous. O'Reilly (2008) argued that emerging technologies include a variety of technologies, such as educational technology, information technology, nanotechnology, biotechnology, cognitive science, psychotechnology, robotics, and artificial intelligence. In short, the link between transhumanism and emerging technologies promises us freedom from the biological limitations inherent in our nature. It aims to enhance the physical, emotional, and cognitive capacities of humans, thus opening up new possibilities and horizons of experience.

Sisman-Uğur & Kurubacak (forthcoming) argued in the call and outline of this book, that:

[T]transhumanism must advocate the moral right to use technologies to extend individual capacities, to surpass natural limits, and to improve humans not only physically and psychologically but also educationally. In other words, cutting-edge technologies must be used to improve humans by enabling them to live longer, healthier, and more intellectual lives. At this point, transhumanists must be progressive, advocating the use of emerging technologies to improve not only human lives, including cybernetics, artificial intelligence, social networks, space colonization, cryonics, and curing aging but also human learning. Transhumanism, therefore, must be a sound philosophy by valuing scientific facts, reason, and logic above spiritual principles as well as viewing humankind as controlling its transformation and promoting rational thinking, freedom, tolerance, democracy, and concern for human beings. Improving human learning means improving the human organism so that it can transform beyond its natural and biological limits.

In contributing to this book, this chapter considers a futuristic view of how transhumanism can achieve sustainability in the context of human learning to promote human intelligence in the future. The objectives of this chapter are to emphasize the need for a social revolution in response to the influence of transhumanism and the fourth industrial revolution, which is much more than a technical and digital revolution. The fourth industrial revolution and its accompanying social revolution will change the way we act, perform, live, work, communicate, and interact with each other and society, and hence the way we learn. The term "cutting edge" does not concern to technology as much as it concerns humans. Accordingly, the influence of transhumanism is crucial in a sustainable ecosystem of learning with and through technology and digitization. The digital transformation encompasses all levels of institutions—macro, meso, and micro. This chapter is focused on future trends, issues, and challenges in management and leadership as well as on issues and challenges in communication, which is essential in both leadership and smart learning. Rethinking leadership at all levels is required to reach the goals of learning and education in 2030 through which learners will take the lead in orchestrating the process and manner of their own learning and in choosing their personal learning journeys. This chapter is informed by the author's research and experiences in this field as well as by the relevant current literature. This chapter delineates a position rather than providing case studies, although some models are presented.