Preface

The ever-changing learning environments as well as the digital characteristics of majority of current learners imply that there are a myriad of global issues in teaching and learning that need to be researched, discussed, and debated on. Some of these issues include: New and innovative approaches to classroom instruction; active student learning and teacher engagement; digital literacy; integration of appropriate technology tools to support effective teaching and learning; mentoring; diversity and inclusion; and innovative strategies for teachers who are interested in improving their pedagogical skills in the 21st century global classroom.

Technology remains a game changer in our schools. Therefore, education planners and policy makers must think beyond technology to keep teachers trained in various pedagogical uses of appropriate technology tools. To overcome the challenges associated with the rigorous realities of teaching with technology, teacher educators will need to reconsider the role of the stand-alone technology course, and shift towards more of an integration approach. Additionally, innovative pedagogical approaches with technology leave students with a more effective learning environment that promotes quality teaching and active student learning (Grabe & Grabe, 2008).

Technology should be integrated into the teacher education curriculum and used during student teaching. Such integration has to take into consideration the need to promote preservice teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs and intrinsic goal orientation as this will make them value instructional technology and the role it will play in their future classrooms. This would also translate to more effective use of such technology with their future students (Chen, 2010). Effective classroom technology integration implies the need for professional development (PD) opportunities that are tailored to the individual teachers’ needs (Linton & Geddes, 2013). Given the vast differences in knowledge and experience with technology, differentiated PD allows participants the opportunity to learn at their own pace and understanding. Further, teacher education programs must balance technological knowledge with content and pedagogical knowledge to effectively prepare teachers who will be required to teach with learning technologies and digital content.

There is also need to prepare future teachers who will be held accountable for student academic achievement. This task can be achieved through innovative methods such as preparing faculty to utilize transformational leadership characteristics along with the implementation of appropriate multicultural education practices. Additionally, multicultural education should focus on helping preservice teachers develop culturally responsive pedagogy and skills that will translate to effective teaching in the increasingly diverse classrooms. Implementing appropriate multicultural education practices will also help to provide equitable education opportunities for all students.

Finally, there is pressing need for college faculty not only to prepare current and future teachers to meet the teaching and learning demands of the 21st century global workforce, but also to address the
critical need to become an effective global educator. There is also need for digital learners to acquire 21st century skills such as learning skills (critical thinking, creative, collaborative, and communicative), literacy skills (information, media, and technology literacy), and life skills (flexibility, initiative, social skills, and leadership) to be successful and productive in an information-based economy. Therefore, *Handbook of Research on Global Issues in Next-Generation Teacher Education* provides a wide range of strategies and frameworks including the benefits, challenges, and opportunities for infusing 21st century skills and technology in teaching and learning as well as to empower the next generation of “transformative and visionary leaders” in teacher education.

Chapter 1 describes the effectiveness of a blended approach to teacher education through the use of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) framework and offers recommendations for improving the quality of the blended program through the use of digital technologies based on the five NSSE benchmarks.

Chapter 2 introduces the notion that behavior of transformational leaders in schools will positively influence teachers’ engagement in their jobs and schools. The comprehensive literature review provides significant implications for researchers studying teacher engagement and school improvement.

Chapter 3 examines one case study teacher within a 21st century learning discourse. The authors interpret and analyze one young student’s creation of a digital text in a movie modality. Attention is paid to how the case study teacher created meaningful digital literacy learning experiences and opportunities for children to create and interact in social, multimodal textual environments, both within and beyond the school.

Chapter 4 explores strategies to adequately prepare teacher candidates to teach with learning technologies and digital content. Specifically, it examines the empirical knowledge of how technology is infused in the teacher education curriculum and used during student teaching, but also the self-efficacy and the self-assessment of candidates’ technological skills.

Chapter 5 reviews the assumption that the current generation of young teachers entering the teaching profession are comfortable with and possess seemingly innate understanding of technology. Using Rogers’ (2003) diffusion of innovations theory, this chapter offers suggestions and recommendation for training millennial teachers to integrate technology and pedagogy for effective teaching and learning.

Chapter 6 is centered on four main ideas: (1) PBL is an appropriate over-arching teaching approach for classroom teachers to address 21st century learning outcomes; (2) PBL teaching provides teachers a relevant setting for media and technology use; (3) PBL implementation requires ongoing professional development and mentoring; and (4) Professional development and PBL teaching can involve both teacher candidates and their mentoring teachers learning from each other.

Chapter 7 examines the importance of an educator’s “teaching philosophy” as a major prerequisite for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Teacher Education. The need for this examination is guided by multiple challenges facing educational institutions including diversity, students’ awareness of their rights, ethnicity and negative ethnicity, information technology, capitalism and commodification of the educational enterprise, and international competitiveness in both teaching and learning.

Chapter 8 describes the implementation of a Project Based Learning (PBL) course in a Bachelor of Education at the University of Namibia, whose aim was to develop student teachers’ 21st century skills. Using Communities of Practice, 21st Century Skills framework and Project Based Learning, this chapter proposes a framework for creating learning communities for teachers.

Chapter 9 attempts to provide a teaching portfolio model aimed at prompting teachers’ reflection over their profession to enhance effective teaching and learning. Such reflection is also a source of in-
spiration, creativity, flexibility and thus, a means to achieve learners’ motivation and interest in active and engaged learning.

Chapter 10 examines the need to enhance and sustain effective teacher education by infusing quality benchmarks in various aspects of teacher education including: Teacher education curriculum design and planning; Curriculum implementation; Principles of good teaching and learning; Interactive and effective teaching methodologies; Appropriate scheming and lesson preparation; Assessment and evaluation; and Class management and discipline.

Chapter 11 examines challenges the higher learning institutions offering blended learning programmes in Tanzania face in enhancing student support services from administrative standpoint. This chapter contends that for blended learning programmes to remain viable, effective, and sustainable, students support services need to be carefully tailored and regularly evaluated.

Chapter 12 is in intended to accomplish the following objectives: 1) give a basic review of the literature on mentoring and digital technology; 2) provide mentoring experiences that relay effective mentoring styles; 3) promote a discussion on the uniqueness of each mentoring experience; and 4) discuss implications and recommendations to enhance learning.

Chapter 13 explores potential or real benefits, the successes and challenges of an existing resident teacher program – an initiative usually organized through the concerted efforts of a college of education and school district – with six beginning teachers enrolled in an elementary education resident teacher program.

Chapter 14 describes a mentorship program that was established to support early career teachers in a technology-rich K-6 school. Specifically, this program included scaffolding for inexperienced teachers in school cultures, pedagogically appropriate technology use, and classroom management. Additionally, it provides an example of how university teacher education can better prepare pre-service teachers to be successful in their future classrooms.

Chapter 15 explores a study that used hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) approach to investigate the impact of school leadership, professional development, gender and teaching experience on professional commitment with a sample of 396 elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators from Kenya.

Chapter 16 examines primary issues confronting preservice teacher preparation in the US public schools. Specifically, this chapter examines efforts by organizations and educational researchers to respond to the phenomenon of demographic changes in US public schools and the need to equip teachers with competencies needed to help students become successful in schools. Additionally, this chapter offers suggestions on how to improve and enhance culturally responsive pedagogical competence among preservice teachers.

Chapter 17 examines an Authentic and Culturally Engaging (ACE) Service-Learning framework as a pedagogical approach in equipping teacher candidates with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to be successful in-service teachers in diverse PK-12 school environments. Additionally, it highlights components of the ACE framework and suggests practical strategies that teacher educators can use in integrating this framework into their courses.

Chapter 18 explores the challenges to 21st century content preparation and pedagogy from the perspective of teaching professionals from different African countries: Cameroon, Ghana, South Africa, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe. Specifically, the study examines the views and experiences of the participants during and after teacher preparation programs. Additionally, this chapter offers suggestions for improve-
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ment based on the views of participants, research-based literature review, and best practices in teacher preparation programs.

Chapter 19 examines the relationship of transformational leadership characteristics in teacher educators and their multicultural education practices as an avenue to prepare and produce more teachers for the increasingly diverse P-12 student population in the 21st century. Additionally, this chapter highlights the need to provide professional development for teacher educators to enhance their transformational leadership characteristics as well as their multicultural education practices.

Chapter 20 discusses the challenges of newly arrived immigrants and refugee youth, and determinants of participation in physical activity and sports. Additionally, it provides some culturally and socially sensitive tips and strategies that professionals in physical education, physical activity and sports can incorporate into their programs and activities in order to increase the participation among newly arrived immigrants and refugee youth.

In summary, this handbook reports current research and other emerging global issues in education and the role of innovative technologies in a rapidly changing society. It features peer-reviewed essays and research reports contributed by an array of scholars and practitioners in education and other education-related disciplines with a primary objective of advancing innovative strategies for teachers and faculty who are interested in improving their pedagogical skills to become successful in the 21st century technology-rich classrooms. Therefore, the hope is that each of the scholarly works presented will help advance the agenda and discourse on the need to review existing pedagogical practices to enhance effective teaching and learning with technology.

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REFERENCES


