

HIGHER EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

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INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND
LEARNING VOLUME 53

HIGHER EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES: BEST PRACTICES AND BENCHMARKING

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this series is to publish current research and scholarship on innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education. The series is developed around the premise that teaching and learning are more effective when instructors and students are actively and meaningfully engaged in the teaching-learning process.

The main objectives of this series are to:

- 1) Present how innovative teaching and learning practices are being used in higher education institutions around the world across a wide variety of disciplines and countries.
- 2) Present the latest models, theories, concepts, paradigms, and frameworks that educators should consider when adopting, implementing, assessing, and evaluating innovative teaching and learning practices.
- 3) Consider the implications of theory and practice on policy, strategy, and leadership.

This series will appeal to anyone in higher education who is involved in the teaching and learning process from any discipline, institutional type, or nationality. The volumes in this series will focus on a variety of authentic case studies and other empirical research that illustrate how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning is any approach, strategy, method, practice or means that has been shown to improve, enhance, or transform the teaching-learning environment. Innovation involves doing things differently or in a novel way in order to improve outcomes. In short, innovation is a positive change. With respect to teaching and learning, innovation is the implementation of new or improved educational practices that result in improved educational and learning outcomes. This innovation can be any positive change related to teaching, curriculum, assessment, technology, or other tools, programs, policies, or processes that lead to improved educational and learning outcomes. Innovation can occur in institutional development, program development, professional development, or learning development.

The volumes in this series will not only highlight the benefits and theoretical frameworks of such innovations through authentic case studies and other empirical research but also look at the challenges and contexts associated with implementing and assessing innovative teaching and learning practices. The volumes represent all disciplines from a wide range of national, cultural, and organizational contexts. The volumes in this series will explore a wide variety of teaching

and learning topics such as active learning, integrative learning, transformative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, meaningful learning, blended learning, creative learning, experiential learning, lifelong and life-wide learning, global learning, learning assessment and analytics, student research, faculty and student learning communities, as well as other topics.

This series brings together distinguished scholars and educational practitioners from around the world to disseminate the latest knowledge on innovative teaching and learning scholarship and practices. The authors offer a range of disciplinary perspectives from different cultural contexts. This series provides a unique and valuable resource for instructors, administrators, and anyone interested in improving and transforming teaching and learning.

Patrick Blessinger
Founder, Executive Director, and Chief Research Scientist,
International HETL Association

Enakshi Sengupta
Independent Researcher & Scholar

PART I

TRANSFORMATION IN
HIGHER EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES: BEST PRACTICES AND BENCHMARKING

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ABSTRACT

Education in an emergency refers to the accessibility of education among populations that have faced an unforeseen situation in their home country resulting in disruption of their normal lives, including the deterioration of the educational system prevalent in that country. Emergency typically arises from armed conflict or natural disasters. The world has been disrupted by more than 50 armed conflicts since the World War. In recent times, the entire world came to a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely disrupted the prevalent education system. Emergency also affects the economic system of a country, and higher educational institution (HEI) struggles due to lack of funds. Lack of funds and other educational resources, as well as lack of physical security or environmental disasters, lead to a sudden halt in the educational system, throwing students into limbo. The book volume discusses how curriculum needs to be adaptive and collaborate with stakeholders to formulate a teaching learning method that is cognizant of the latest technologies and scientific discoveries. Several interventions have been successfully implemented across the globe and have been discussed in chapters contributed by well-known academics working

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in the arena of imparting education that is resilient and can deliver quality education in times of crisis.

Keywords: Crisis; emergency; education; teaching and learning; pandemic; technology; physical security

INTRODUCTION

Human rights advocates that every individual has the right to live with dignity and respect. International agencies are trying their best to ensure that everyone, mainly the vulnerable communities, gets assistance in a manner that is consistent with human rights and includes the right to participation and non-discrimination. One such right is the right to education, a right that has been articulated in numerous conventions and documents and has been a part of policymaker's debate. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951); the Geneva Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War; the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); and the Dakar World Education Forum Framework for Action (2000) have been promoting education.

Higher education in emergencies calls for a recognition that individuals do not forfeit their right to education, even in emergency situations, and that it must remain priority on the agenda of humanitarian debate. While providing access to education in emergency, it doesn't allow compromise as far as quality and accountability of delivery of education. An integrative and rigorous review of interventions and theories will help mitigate such situations soon.

Higher education in emergency has various roles to play apart from just imparting formal education. It includes the psycho-social needs of children affected by trauma and displacement, protecting the vulnerable and developing study skills needed for peace-building efforts, environmental education and education for world peace and citizenship behavior. Faculty members must be trained to ensure that they have the capability to deal with such situations. A rapid response team, with capacity building of both teaching and administrative staff and creating leadership capabilities among youth, remains the focus of higher education in emergencies. Education in such situations is meant to be durable with a focus on resilience and providing the ability to think critically and propose a solution to the myriad of problems faced by people who are fraught with acute forms of emergencies in their daily lives.

The challenge lies in incorporating immediate skills to respond to crisis along with survival and peace-building messages in to the regular curriculum. Programs need to be contextual in supporting the under-represented and those who are most affected by emergency situations. HEIs need to strengthen their commitment toward preparedness to combat such scenarios, which would include resource allocation, staffing and adequate training. Inter-agency cooperation can help institutions reduce the risk and cover topics related to scholarship for crisis-affected youth and community-based healing activities.

Quality control and value creation remain the top priorities of those that are working in emergency-affected areas and to design a curriculum that would serve as a tool of protection from exploitation and prevention of harm. This would include natural disasters and man-made emergencies caused by conflict and civil unrest. There are no “one size fits all” prescriptive standards, and it involves continuous development and evolution of new features as we keep battling with situations that were hitherto unheard.

Linking humanitarian action to education helps ensure that support for education is not neglected as a form of relief aid. The approach toward education in emergency is created with an interest in improving the lives of beneficiaries beyond catering to their basic needs and expanding it further than traditional activities (Sengupta, 2023).

The word “emergency” has several meanings but is commonly used to signify “natural disasters” and “complex emergencies” (Stephensen, 2011). There exists a uniqueness in every situation, but there are certain commonalities that characterize a typical emergency with failing and breakdown of existing systems and limited assistance from external actors, at least in the initial state of emergency (Pigozzi, 1999). Should such a situation arise, then all efforts, including relief work, should be directed toward removing all obstacles that inhibit the flow of normal life (Pigozzi, 1999). During an emergency, developing countries with fragile systems are vulnerable to being the most disadvantaged as a result (Mosselson, Wheaton, & St. John Frisoli, 2009). These countries already suffer from weak and inefficient governance structures, lack of resources and poor infrastructure, with an emergency exacerbating and worsening an already fragile and unprivileged situation (Mosselson et al., 2009).

Responsibility for imparting higher education in emergencies primarily rests with the national government. However, in crisis affecting third-world countries, the United Nations’ agencies and non-governmental organizations play a vital role in getting assistance quickly to the affected areas. Internationally, the community plays a vital role in assisting the local government to restore education without disruption. Institutions of higher education are working in a collaborative manner with private and public partnership to ensure a seamless flow of education in times of crisis.

CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

“Response of Higher Education Leadership in Times of Crisis: A Global Insight” by Armend Berisha, Elif Bengü, Renate Nantschev and Nissim Harel. In this chapter, the authors talk about the COVID-19 pandemic which necessitated that HEIs respond quickly and transform their teaching in to a remote learning environment. Prior to the pandemic, HEIs had already implemented some degree of remote teaching and e-learning. The success of these initiatives depended on the leadership’s decisions regarding their implementation before the pandemic and their rapid implementation during the initial days of the lockdown. This study aimed to assess the level of preparedness and the response of HEI leadership to the health crisis by surveying a global

audience of HEI institution professionals in academic and administrative roles. The results obtained from their responses highlight the areas of success and the concerns about whether remote teaching will be required in the future. The authors analyze these findings in the context of the broader implementation of e-learning and remote teaching in HEIs.

With the advancement in technology and industry standards, there is a continuous need to match industry expectations to the theories taught in higher education institutes. Curriculum developers are constantly facing issues in matching industry expectations to curriculum development and then delivering it as per expectation. The main objective of this study is to analyze the process of curriculum development and identify the gap. The gaps have been classified as data gap, benchmarking gap, perception gap, and learning gap. The proposed framework aims to increase the collaboration between the stakeholders and develop a broader vision that suits all. The framework is developed based on multidisciplinary literature and thus provides a comprehensive view of the curriculum gap. This study strengthens the existing literature through a methodological approach to curriculum gap identification.

HEIs have also embraced technology as an essential part of their teaching-learning process, and the use of educational technologies is offering today's learners access to numerous information sources just with a simple click of a mouse. Also, technology assists teachers in providing better learning experiences for students. The role played by educational technology was much more evident during the coronavirus pandemic, wherein almost all the schools, colleges and other HEIs across the globe have changed the way they operate by shifting online. The present study is an attempt to describe the transition that has happened in academia during the pandemic and to suggest suitable mechanisms to address such issues during emergencies.

“Beyond the Emergency Civilization: The Urgency of Educating Toward Unpredictability” by Piero Dominici is about the ongoing anthropological transformation that urges the rethinking of education, underlining the inadequacy of our schools and universities in dealing with hyper complexity, that is, with the global extension of all political, social and cultural processes and with their indeterminateness, interdependence and interconnection. The idea that educational processes are questions of a purely technical/technological nature, solely a problem of skills and know-how, is the “great mistake” of the hyper-technological society, based on the illusion of being able to measure and quantify everything, to eliminate error and unpredictability and to achieve total control and rationality. It is necessary to rethink education radically because the extraordinary scientific discoveries and the dynamics of the new technologies have completely overturned the complex interaction between biological and cultural evolution, doing away with the borders between the natural and the artificial. Emergence and emergency itself are structural features of complex systems (living, social and human systems), rendered hypercomplex through today's acceleration and virality, regarding not only education and socialization but also the representations and perceptions of all systemic processes. The merging of fields of knowledge and an epistemology of error become essential for the analysis and interpretation of this hypercomplexity and the unpredictability that distinguishes it.

Alternatively, the HEIs needed to implement online or remote teaching with rapid curriculum transformation. However, due to limited time constraints, the curricular transformation happened rapidly without sufficient preparation. Therefore, in this chapter, the concept of emergency remote teaching (ERT) including its application and evaluation is thoroughly discussed. The study draws on constructivism theory to assess the effectiveness of the adopted model, and qualitative data were collected online by taking samples of students from a particular curriculum. Besides, questionnaire responses via Google Forms, experiences, beliefs and challenges encountered by the educator and students on the ERT were used and analyzed. The collected information was analyzed, and based on the outcomes, recommendations were given to serve as an input for future strategies and to improve the performance of teaching, and learning activities under similar circumstances.

“Post-disaster Research Study: An HBCU’s Academic Resilience in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria” written by Kula A. Francis and Kenny A. Hendrickson presents a research study that examined post-disaster authentic university academic care resilience (PAUACR) at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU). PAUACR is a university’s and its students’ capacity to bounce back from post-disaster educational challenges. PAUACR requires a caring response and authentic academic care environments. For the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), PAUACR following Hurricanes Irma and Maria was crucial to ensure students successfully completed the academic year. To assess UVI’s PAUACR, this study utilized a university academic caring carescapes framework (UACCF) and caring about academic caregiving inventory (CAACI). The conceptual framework and a 49-item instrument were used to gain students’ discernment of post-disaster authentic university academic care (PAUAC). Data were collected from a convenience sample ($n=210$). An exploratory quantitative research design was used. Based on the factor-score correlation, associations were found between points of UVI’s academic caregiving (e.g., operations, colleges/schools, instruction, and academic advisement). Along with the findings of this research, this chapter also offers practical lessons drawn from the experience of conducting post-disaster research.

“Challenges Facing Educators and Displaced Students During Emergencies: Implications for Higher Education” by Rose Cardarelli is about educating students during emergencies which is no longer an occasional occurrence; it has become a common scenario due to mass migration, conflict, poverty, health crises and climate changes. Educating all students worldwide, migrants and refugees included, improves global security and economic viability, and should be the goal for all stakeholders. Using three illustrative case studies, this chapter provides an overview of the fundamental considerations for implementing learning support structures in uncertain and emergency circumstances. It outlines improvements needed to help educators meet today’s requirements for effective quality education during crisis, including overcoming issues with language, culture, curriculum, teacher training, and national and international policies. It also includes implications for higher education, calling for better approaches to address learning deficiencies, particularly given today’s protracted migrant circumstances.

“The Influence of an SQD-Based Practicum Experience on Student Teacher’s TPACK-Practical Development: Opportunities and Challenges” by Youmen Chaaban and Rania Sawalhi explores that a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, teacher education in Qatar, like many countries around the world, witnessed a succession of disruptions to the way it operated. The disruption continued throughout much of 2020, and the need to adapt to arising changes and concerns permeated all aspects of teacher education, particularly the practicum experience. The chapter presents our attempt to investigate the influence of an adapted practicum experience based on the Synthesis of Qualitative Evidence (SQD) model on the development of six student teachers’ technology knowledge and skills. Using a qualitative case study research design, we collected data from multiple data sources, including pre-post interviews and weekly reflection logs. Quantitative data collected from a pre-post administration of the SQD survey and Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK)-practical survey were used to triangulate the qualitative data. Findings from the thematic analysis and descriptive statistical analysis revealed evidence for participants’ increased TPACK-practical knowledge and skills, specifically in the domains of practical teaching and curriculum design. However, an emerging theme revealed that participants considered technology before pedagogy during instructional design. Findings also revealed two challenges to participants’ further development, namely working within a restricted learning environment and experiencing limited mentoring opportunities. We illustrated several implications for the design of the practicum experience and the required institutional support within the context of continued disruption to education and thereafter.

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