

Global Higher Education Practices in Times of Crisis

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Global Higher Education Practices in Times of Crisis: Questions for Sustainability and Digitalization

EDITED BY

DIEU HACK-POLAY

Crandall University, Canada and University of Lincoln, UK

DEBORAH LOCK

Birmingham City University, UK

ANDREA CAPUTO

University of Lincoln, UK and University of Trento, Italy

MADHAVI LOKHANDE

WeSchool, India

AND

UDAY SALUNKHE

WeSchool, India



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India – Malaysia – China

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About the Editors

Dieu Hack-Polay is Professor of Management at Crandall University (Canada) and Associate Professor in Organizational Behaviour and Management in the Lincoln International Business School, University of Lincoln, UK. He worked for several years in various sectors of activity including the voluntary sector and local government as a human resources and training practitioner in the UK. He also has several years of experience as an academic. He worked for various institutions in the UK, Canada, and China. His main research interest is in the economic performance of migrants in host countries and international human resource management. He has authored two textbooks and several book chapters as well as published several research articles in international journals. His professional affiliations include chartered fellowship of the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, and fellowship of the Society for Education and Training.

Deborah Lock is a Professor and Deputy Dean, Faculty of Business, Law and Social Science at Birmingham City University, UK. She is an experienced academic leader with more than 20 years strategic level experience in higher education. As a career-hopper, she has had numerous jobs (Bid Writer, Business Development Manager, Director of Enterprise, College Director of Education to name a few) through which she has developed a reputation for the successful delivery of education related change management projects. She is passionate about ensuring HE business education provides students and graduates with the opportunity to develop the skills required to enhance their employability prospects irrespective of whether they are at market entry or career progression level. She was awarded her professorship in 2019 based on her work around inclusive education practices.

Andrea Caputo is an Associate Professor in Management at the University of Trento, Italy, and at the University of Lincoln, UK, where in 2018, he co-founded with other academics the UNESCO Chair in Responsible Foresight for Sustainable Development. He received his PhD from the University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy. His main research interests include entrepreneurial decision-making, negotiation, digitalization and sustainability, internationalization, and strategic management of small- and medium-sized enterprises. He is the Editor of the book series *Entrepreneurial Behaviour* (Emerald), and Associate Editor of the *Journal of Management & Organization*, *Management Decision*, and *BRQ*

Business Research Quarterly. His award-winning research was published in over 100 contributions, including articles in highly ranked journals, for example, *HRM Journal*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of Small Business Management*, *Small Business Economics*, *International Small Business Journal*, *International Journal of Conflict Management*, *Studies in Higher Education*, *Business Strategy and the Environment*, and *IEEE TEM*, among the others. In 2021 and 2022, he was ranked among World's Top 2% Scientists List of outstanding researchers prepared by Elsevier BV, Stanford University, USA.

Madhavi Lokhande is the Dean at Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, WeSchool, Bengaluru. She is a Fellow of the Cost Accountants of India and the Institute of Management Accountants, USA. As a researcher, she has published several papers and case studies in leading journals and international and national case clearing houses. She was awarded by the Higher Education Forum for Excellence in Contribution to Management Education. She also holds the position of National Vice President – Homepreneurs Council, Women's India Chamber of Commerce and Industry and is the President of the Institute of Management Accountants, Bangalore Chapter. Her recent accolades include the prestigious fellowship from the Executive Leadership Academy from UC Berkeley. Her work with women micro entrepreneurs helped her get a PhD from SNTD Women's University and also led her to be a mentor for the ISB Goldman Sachs 10k programme. Her other interests are: She founded 'Padhaai', a charitable trust that promotes the cause for inclusive education. She is the cofounder of Imagilytica Leadership Consulting LLP that curates learning programmes using the philosophy of kinaesthetic learning.

Uday Salunkhe has headed WeSchool as its Group Director for over two decades. His passion for leadership, design thinking, and innovation, supported by 'Disruptive thinking' and encouraging 'Opposing minds', has helped WeSchool carve a niche in the space of design thinking and innovation-led management education. A strong believer in self and positivity, driven by a philosophy of 'Force Multiplier' effects, he has been singularly responsible for taking WeSchool Global, by building several partnerships worldwide, be it with his alumni, business, or the academia circle. A strong networker himself, he believes that one's net worth is determined by their network. An 'Edupreneur', with PhD in Turnaround Strategy and a recipient of the prestigious Eisenhower Fellowship, USA, he has also been a scholar at the Linnaeus–Palme programme at the Malardalen University, Sweden. He has to his credit various pioneering programmes and initiatives along with many research publications. Beyond his role at WeSchool, he is Chairman of the Education Committee of the Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India, a former President of Association of Indian Management Schools (AIMS), among other regulatory and governing bodies in the strategic and advisory capacity.

List of Contributors

Farah Arkadan	<i>American University of Dubai, UAE</i>
Andy Bown	<i>University of Tasmania, Australia</i>
Loan Dao	<i>University of New South Wales, Australia</i>
Benny Godwin J. Davidson	<i>University of the Fraser Valley, Canada</i>
Hema Doreswamy	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Karnataka, India</i>
Gnanendra M.	<i>Christ University, India (ORCID ID: 0000-0001-7972-9221)</i>
Aradhana Goutam	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Siddhartha Goutam	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Azeem Gul	<i>National University of Modern Languages, Pakistan</i>
Syed Arslan Haider	<i>Capital University of Science and Technology, Pakistan</i>
Anita Heywood	<i>University of New South Wales, Australia</i>
J.-F.	<i>Crandall University, Canada</i>
Santosh Rupa Jaladi	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Karnataka, India</i>
Rameesha Kalra	<i>Christ University, India (ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6274-6324)</i>
Niloofar Kazemargi	<i>University of Pescara-Chieti, Italy</i>
Masoumeh Khanzadeh	<i>Nuh Naci Yazgan University, Turkey (ORCID ID: 0000-0003-4606-0490)</i>
Aurobindo Kiriyaakere	<i>Presidency University, India</i>
Abhishek Kori	<i>Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Maharashtra, India</i>
Soad Louissi	<i>Grenoble Ecole de Management, France</i>

xii List of Contributors

J. Meenakumari	<i>Surana Educational Institutions, India</i>
Michelle Mielly	<i>Grenoble Ecole de Management, France</i>
Pratika Mishra	<i>Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Ragini N. Mohanty	<i>Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Sridhar Chakravarthi Mulakaluri	<i>XIM University, India</i>
Nagamani Nagaraja	<i>Centre for Learning, Leadership and Excellence, India</i>
Jai Raj Nair	<i>Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Karnataka, India</i>
Remya Nair	<i>University of Mysore, India; Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Karnataka, India</i>
Sujatha Natarajan	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India (ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5568-2059)</i>
Satarupa Nayak	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Naomi Nelson	<i>Federation University Australia, Australia</i>
Maeve O'Dwyer	<i>Dublin City University, Ireland</i>
Vandana Panwar	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Maharashtra, India</i>
Swapna Pradhan	<i>Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Darren Pullen	<i>University of Tasmania, Australia</i>
Vijay T. Raisinghani	<i>Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Bharath Rajan	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India (ORCID ID: 0000-0003-3015-5401)</i>
Ramakrishnan N.	<i>Christ University, India</i>
Sriharish Ramakrishnan	<i>Bosch Global Software Technologies, India</i>
Stacie Reck	<i>Maplehurst Middle School, Australia</i>
Daniel Rogers	<i>Tangent, Trinity's Ideas Workspace, Ireland</i>

Khalid Sultan	<i>National University of Modern Languages, Pakistan</i>
Zi Siang See	<i>University of Tasmania, Australia</i>
Shehnaz Tehseen	<i>Sunway University Business School, Malaysia</i>
Anu Thomas	<i>Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Maharashtra, India</i>
Obaid Ullah	<i>National University of Modern Languages, Pakistan</i>
Radhika Uttam	<i>Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Karnataka, India</i>
Kiran Vazirani	<i>Christ University, Karnataka, India (ORCID ID: 0000-0001-5591-6874)</i>
Helena Winnberg	<i>Tasmanian Department for Education, Children and Young People, Australia</i>
Yang Yang	<i>University of Tasmania, Australia</i>

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Preface

This book of collected works comments on some of the major changes and shifts in higher education teaching practices which emerged because of the COVID-19 pandemic socio-economic and political turbulence in the past four years. While the sector had been slowly moving towards hybrid delivery prior to this, the rapid acceleration of digital adoption due to lockdown restrictions provided academics and institutions alike with the opportunity to experiment with innovative ways of teaching and develop new pedagogies which reflect the nature of digital citizenship in an age of technological transformation. With the dramatic development of artificial intelligence, the past few years, new challenges have emerged that educators have to deal with to maintain standards and stimulate the learning environment. Many of the examples in this book highlight some of these key challenges for higher education which are constant themes irrespective of geographical boundaries and/or political systems: accessibility and inclusiveness, and how to use innovative learning technologies to the best effect to ensure students develop the skills and competences required to be successful.

As noted by George Couros (leader in innovative teaching, learning, and leading), ‘Technology will never replace great teachers, but in the hands of great teachers, it’s transformational’, and this book aims to capture some of the transformations which have taken place over recent years. This book also raises fundamental questions about the future of teaching and learning and the necessity for the education sector to evolve alongside technological development. This book is an invitation to stakeholders in academia to continuously engage with debate and share experiences and good practice. Undoubtedly, the fast changes in the higher education environment command a greater flow of information sharing among practitioners to ensure comparability of the student’s level of education, particularly as both student and professor mobility is increasingly normalized and on the increase. The significant number of chapters in this book and other similar books denote the fact that technological change is one of the greatest managerial and educational challenges of our time. The survival of the higher education sector and quality within it tightly hinges on the sector capacity to adapt.

This book provides a variety of chapters covering various socio-economic and cultural contexts. However, we were pleased to incorporate many chapters from the Global South whose good practices are often not heard of enough and integrated to global higher educational practices. Such practices have become important owing to the intertwining of global higher education systems, the increased mobility of teachers, graduates, and professionals. We hope that the readers will enjoy this additional text.

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Introduction

Dieu Hack-Polay^{a,b}, Deborah Lock^c, Andrea Caputo^{b,d} and Madhavi Lohkande^e

^aCrandall University, Canada

^bUniversity of Lincoln, UK

^cBirmingham City University, UK

^dUniversity of Trento, Italy

^eWeSchool, India

Our new book *Global Higher Education Practices in Times of Crisis: Questions for Sustainability and Digitalization* aims to shed some light on strategies that higher education practitioners and researchers have developed for the higher education sector to cope with crisis times (Tilak & Kumar, 2022). This new book is a good complement to our two earlier books (Caputo et al., 2022; Lock et al., 2022) addressing issues or borderlands higher education. The subject of the new book is topical given the successive crises that the world has gone through in the past three decades, e.g. economic crises, recessions, health pandemics, including the recent COVID-19 crisis which had significant economic and social ramifications (Hack-Polay, 2020; Lock et al., 2022). During these crises, the sector has undergone significant challenges but also innovations, including the deployment of technology and strategic partnerships in order to survive (Caputo et al., 2022). This book is therefore expected to provide a comprehensive contemporary portrayal of higher education practices from the perspective of sustainability and digitalization.

The principal premise of this book is to characterize the international environment of teaching in higher education institutions during crisis times and examine the challenges faced and how the sector has weathered those (Hack-Polay, 2022). Whether economic crises, political crises or health crises, these have often led higher education institutions across the globe to think outside the box and develop innovative practices suited for turbulent times (David, 2011; Hack-Polay, 2020). The global aspect of this book recognizes the intertwining of socio-political and economic realities which also encapsulate the higher education domain, with the increasing globalization of curricula and practices (Caputo et al., 2022). These are the good practices that this book aims to capture and disseminate widely.

**Global Higher Education Practices in Times of Crisis:
Questions for Sustainability and Digitalization, 1–3**

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Madhavi Lohkande**

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The content of this book is purposefully kept broad to leave room for educators and practitioners around the globe to have their specific input and share what they deem engaging educational responses to crisis times. The various chapters of the book particularly reflect the global dimension that we sought to cover given that higher education realities are increasingly intertwined in our modern world. The themes covered are varied and include:

- Perspectives on higher education globalization
- Pedagogical issues in crisis time
- Crisis leadership and sustainability in higher education
- Economic issues in higher education
- Technological responses to structural transformations
- The post-crisis chrysalis effect and emergence of the digital citizen
- Educational innovation and digitalization during crises
- Resilience and the entrepreneurial university in turbulent times
- Crisis leadership
- Deglobalization of higher education during crisis time

Identifying good practices in these domains can enable higher education to rethink their development strategies and approaches to teaching and learning in crisis times which are becoming the new normal. The proposed contents allow me to say that it would be a timely and well-structured book.

We are seeking chapters on topics that are fluid, comprehensive, and cover coherent critical issues for research and discussion, and which could enable reflection in more than one socio-economic and political context of higher education. We encourage contributors to be creative and critical in telling their stories of resilience in crisis time. Relevant and attractive themes covering entrepreneurial higher education approaches in times of crisis are welcome.

The chapters submitted were initially presented at our Lincoln International Higher Education Practices conference in Bangalore. The conference was held at the Welingkar School of Management, Bangalore, India, in November 2023. This provided significant feedback to enhance the chapters. But in order to operate in the spirit of globality of this book, the editors have decided to draw on chapters from around the world. The chapters selected fulfil the aim and spirit of our book.

Taking forward the notion of the scholar without borders, this book provides a critical review of the teaching practices in higher education in international contexts in the post-COVID era. Sticky problems and debates about inclusivity, diversity, and cultural representation in the curriculum and classroom are explored through the eyes of the academics who negotiate complex teaching landscapes either on a temporary or permanent basis. The aspiration for universal nuanced teaching practices that reflect individual and national identities, along with newly emerging global ones that represent virtual academic citizenship that crosses geographical and political borders is presented as a foundation on which to instil borderless higher education. COVID-19 has challenged the international environment of higher education teaching. This has led colleagues

and institutions across the globe to think outside the box and develop innovative practices suited for turbulent times. But often, these are confined to the local or regional levels. These are the good practices that this book aims to capture and disseminate widely.

This book will appeal to researchers in academia, higher education leaders and teachers, as well as postgraduate students. We hope that all who read this book will appreciate the significant topical issues that we raised and contribute to the ongoing debate on the globalization of higher education and its evolving context. We welcome comments and feedback that will help shape the next issue.

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Chapter 1

Next-Generation Innovative Teaching Ecosystems for Futuristic Management Education

Ragini N. Mohanty, Anu Thomas and Abhishek Kori

*Welinkar Institute of Management Development and Research
(WeSchool), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India*

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted global education, with over 190 countries closing educational institutions, affecting 1.6 billion learners worldwide. This crisis led to a staggering 70% increase in Learning Poverty in low- and middle-income countries, with estimated lifetime earnings loss amounting to \$17 trillion. In response, institutions swiftly implemented emergency remote learning (ERT), transitioning to online platforms and leveraging artificial intelligence and adaptive learning tools. This shift, embraced by all stakeholders, facilitated continuity in education amid unprecedented challenges. Moreover, social media platforms emerged as vital tools for promoting learning, fostering engagement, and facilitating global collaboration among students. However, sustainable education requires more than technological dissemination; it necessitates a holistic approach integrating technology, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, social media, and innovative pedagogies. This chapter explores the implications of these advancements in higher education, amid a deglobalized world, emphasizing the need for an integrated and futuristic approach to address contemporary challenges.

Keywords: Innovative learning ecosystem; social media; living labs; pedagogical innovations; educational technology

Introduction

Students must learn how to discard old ideas, how and when to replace them. Tomorrow's illiterate will not be the man who can't read; he will be the man who has not learned how to learn. (Toffler, 1971, p. 414)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, administrators, educators, and students struggled to sustain teaching and learning due to the inability to rapidly migrate and acclimatize to technology and pedagogical shifts. The global pandemic also triggered newer opportunities for the education industry. Insights in the form of a relook at curriculum design and structure, newer approaches of pedagogy and assessments, changes to the roles of educators and students, organization policies, culture and governance are found to be significant to help build more resilient educational systems that can adapt to the unforeseen future demands. Resilience is considered as the capacity of people, groups, and systems to deal with risks brought on by unforeseen external occurrences (Weick, 1993). Futuristic innovative and smart teaching ecosystems should offer enhanced learning experiences based on learning features, preferences, and progress and support mobile learning, flexible learning, personalized learning, adaptive learning, and mixed learning. Such systems should make it easier for people to have access to knowledge, engage and participate in activities, get feedback and assistance, utilize rich media, and get on-the-go mentoring (Singh & Hassan, 2017). Further, due to an increased emphasis on students' mental health and well-being and holistic development, the importance of soft skills such as emotional intelligence, resilience, adaptability, and empathy will be acknowledged.

Next-Generation Innovative Teaching Ecosystem: Dimensions and Implications

'Next-generation innovative teaching ecosystems and environments' refers to the integrated features, plans, and settings that encourage active, interactive, and immersive learning. Their goal is to aid transformation through knowledge with an emphasis on critical and analytical interdisciplinary thinking, collaboration, and practical skill development, and the curation of student mindset to prepare for success in their future career roles with sustainable impact. In doing so, technology is leveraged to enhance educational outcomes, boost student engagement, and personalize the learning experience. The emergent trends in education (Fig. 1.1) can be categorized as:

1. Global Citizenship and Global Citizenship Education
2. Technology Integration in Education
3. Innovative Learning Approaches and Pedagogy
4. Innovation in Content Creation
5. Social Media and Living Lab

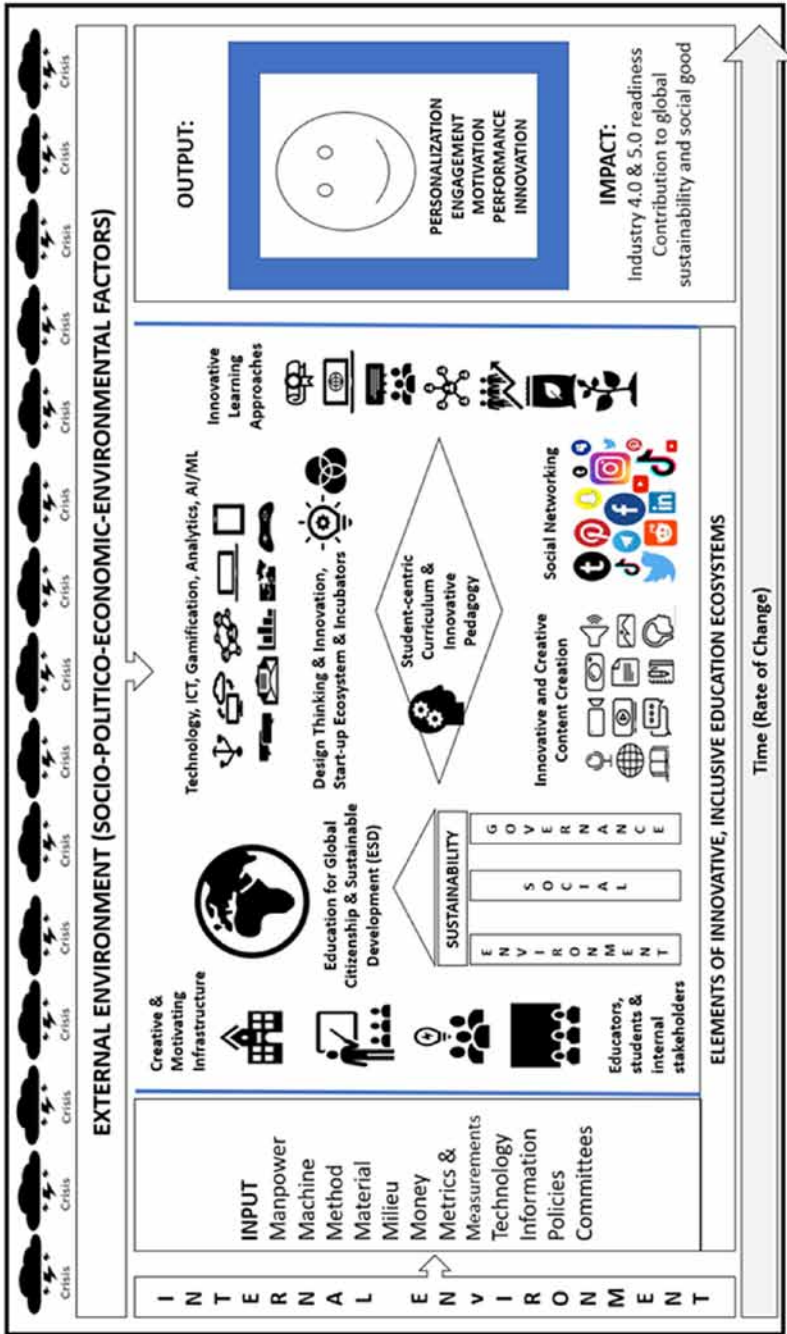


Fig. 1.1. Emergent Trends in Education. *Source:* Authors' representation.

Global Citizenship and Global Citizenship Education

Establishing more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, and safe communities has become crucial, and hence the acknowledgement of the critical role of education for global citizenship has grown. Universities have a crucial role to sensitize and educate students on global citizenship and the impact of their behaviour and actions on the global society. According to the United Nations' (UN) Global Education First Initiative, 'It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count'. Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development place a high priority on relevant and efficient education with the objectives being to advance humanity, respect for all people, and assist students in becoming responsible and actively engaged global citizens. This will promote global citizenship, intercultural sensitivity, and the capacity for success in a multicultural society. Such complementary approaches using civic education enable individuals with the critical thinking abilities required to make educated decisions and actively participate in projects to solve challenges that address local, national, and worldwide social, political, economic, and environmental issues. Exposure of learners to a variety of cultures, opinions, and experiences through virtual exchanges, international partnerships, and cultural immersion programmes will promote global citizenship, intercultural sensitivity, and the capacity for success in a multicultural society. Real-world projects and activities will promote critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and cooperation abilities, during which learners can work in collaborative groups to tackle challenges and use their knowledge in real-world circumstances. *Example: The National Education Policy (NEP 2020) of India has introduced the Global Citizenship Education (GCED) that will support students in becoming informed about and active supporters of societies that are more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable. The major themes included in NEP 2020 are "Global Governance Systems, Structures, and Issues; Cultural Diversity and Tolerance; Inequality; Gender Equality; Human Rights Education; Peace and Non-Violence; Combating Climate Change and Its Impact; and Environmental Sustainability'.*

Technology Integration in Education

The panorama of educational practices is rapidly changing to Education 4.0 as technology advances. Exposure and experience with the next-generation methodologies and technology tools has helped to improve industry-relevant learning. 'Virtually everywhere' may be the futuristic place of learning and enhanced learning experiences. Cloud computing, information and communication technology (ICT), Internet of Things, big data, artificial intelligence (AI), learning analytics, robots in education, and learning personalization are all gaining popularity. Online courses, foreign specialists, worldwide partnerships, searchable databases, and libraries are just a few of the many learning options offered virtually. Recently, machine learning using large language models and generative AI have opened up