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Editorial: Digital era and blended learning: exploring pathways to redefining and reconstructing teacher education

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Editorial on the Research Topic

[Digital era and blended learning: exploring pathways to redefining and reconstructing teacher education](#)

The sudden shift to remote teaching ushered in by the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the gradual shift from traditional to online educational methods, hastening the transition of all stakeholders in education to explore new methods and techniques to usher in new norms of normalcy. This article collection examines the different elements at stake in the process of sudden adaptation of online modes of teacher training, including professional training preparation of teacher knowledge, pedagogical models to facilitate online learning, experience practicing teaching, understanding of the social context of the school, and recognizing emerging and recent trends in hybrid learning so that changes and challenges in teacher education pedagogies can be explored and effective strategies and techniques formulated to manage them. This Research Topic includes seven research papers, six of which are based on original research and one of which is an opinion paper.

The first paper, “360° Video Integration in Teacher Education: A SWOT Analysis” by [Roche et al.](#) focused on guiding facilitators’ and researchers’ choices and decisions when selecting resources for teacher education, specifically 360° videos for preparing student internships, for self-reflection, peer discussion, and case studies. The authors used a SWOT analysis that showed that 360° videos could be useful tools for allowing virtual internships in remote learning situations and guiding pre-service teachers during their internship. The SWOT analysis identifies the need to minimize weaknesses, build on strengths, counter threats, and seize available opportunities to interpret and recognize specific interpersonal aspects of classroom management, in addition to augmented aspects that provide in-depth learning about teaching-learning situations.

[Xu et al.](#), in their study titled “*Mentoring and Tacit Knowledge Transfer in Novice Teachers From Chinese Middle Schools: Mediating Effect of Job Crafting*,” explored the relationship between mentoring and tacit knowledge transfer among Chinese middle school novice teachers. They also studied the role of job crafting as a mediator in this relationship. The findings contribute significantly to the increased focus on improving teachers’ tacit knowledge transfer, and they also highlight the importance of mentors in creating a comprehensive support system for novice teachers that includes academic support, culture transfer support, social and psychological support, and interpersonal skills, in addition to providing positive reinforcement to augment practical experiences through trial and error processes.

The study “*Distance Lesson Study in Mathematics: A Case Study of an Italian High School*” by Capone et al. examined how the roles of observers, teachers, and students changed during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as the only available medium of communication. The study emphasized the effectiveness of social resources like G Suite Classroom in both distance learning and face-to-face modes for recording and sharing the activities of students. Additionally, the methods and resources adopted in the experiment could also be practiced in a face-to-face setting, thereby paving the way for the use of such resources in regular teaching practices.

Singh et al., in their study “*Virtual Professional Learning for School Teachers to Support Them in Online Environments*,” shed light on the process of professional preparation of teachers in India to switch to virtual learning due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The work focused on addressing questions pertaining to the mental preparation of teachers, overcoming challenges of learning digital online techniques, and meeting deficiencies of electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, and so on in a limited period. It also highlighted best practices employed by the state of Punjab that helped that territory top the National Performance Grading Index among all states of the country.

Karkina, Singh et al., in their research “*Multicultural Opportunities in Music Teacher Education: Sharing Diversity Through Online Competitions*,” emphasized the importance of conducting online competitions to provide multicultural opportunities in music teacher education. This study used 75 vocal performance records from Russia, India, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and China to study cultural diversity in vocal records. The findings showed that the participants demonstrated cultural diversity and that online competitions enabled the sharing of national traditions and played a valuable role in their preservation. A comparison process stimulates cultural interaction and activates motivation to understand other cultures and native traditions.

In another paper titled “*Performance Practice in a Pandemic: Training Ensemble Skills Using E-tivities in Music Teacher Education*,” Karkina, Faizrakhmanova et al. discussed training students’ music ensemble skills by employing so-called “E-tivities.” With the help of various online tools, students created videos of their musical recordings. According to the study, the online environment requires the implementation of a novel student-teacher interaction called E-tivity, which refers to an interactive and dynamic learning process conducted online and led by an e-moderator. This research demonstrated a new strategy to teach musical skills to prospective music teachers as a part of remote learning during the lockdown.

Agrati and Vinci, in their paper “*Evaluative Knowledge and Skills of Student Teachers within the Adapted Degree Courses*,” drew attention to the ways in which assessment competencies are exercised and translated into components of teacher training curricula in the Italian context. The study, which involved 320 students (130 primary school student-teachers), discussed how student teachers’ assessment competencies are supported and exercised in the online environment and the effect of online resources on student-teachers’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes through a mixed methods investigation. This work highlighted the effect of adapting and changing assessment skills of student teachers, and indicated the need for preparation of different forms of evaluation. The study also highlighted the need for research on the professional development of teachers in the context of training in an online environment.

This issue’s research contributions will add to the existing literature on the challenges and opportunities posed for pedagogical, theoretical, and practical components of teacher education when adopting e-modes, and the innovative ideas for using e-learning will pave new pathways for reconstructing and redefining education for the digital era.

Author contributions

Both authors listed have made a substantial, direct, and intellectual contribution to the work and approved it for publication.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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