

# Editorial

Dolina Dowling

In a rapidly changing world, education must evolve to meet the needs of learners and address the talent demands required for a nation's growth and prosperity. With the accelerating pace of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), educators need to embrace adaptability and innovation. As the World Economic Forum notes, 'traditional learning falls short at equipping young people with the knowledge they need to thrive in today's society'. Continuous learning, upskilling, and reskilling are essential in the light of technological disruptions and evolving job markets.

Pedagogical innovation is fundamental to provide a successful learning experience. Inclusive and participatory pedagogy is essential for creating equitable, engaging, and impactful learning experiences in which deep learning takes place. This is a prerequisite for critical thinking, problem solving and meaningful learner engagement. In addition, innovative pedagogy encompasses 21st-century skills such as teamwork, collaborative learning, and adaptability. These approaches are needed to prepare learners to thrive in increasingly interconnected and AI-driven environments.

Pedagogical innovation refers to the introduction of new and creative teaching methods, strategies, or approaches aimed at improving the learning experience and outcomes for students. It often involves rethinking traditional educational practices to better align with the needs of modern learners.

Teaching methods that prioritize inclusiveness, collaboration, and learner engagement prepare learners for the coming challenges and opportunities. UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) emphasises the need for 'inclusive and equitable quality education' and to ensure that 'every learner matters equally'. These are the foundations for social progress. Inclusive education systems must address barriers to participation, ensuring that all learners, regardless of their background or abilities, can achieve their potential. Inclusivity in pedagogy encompasses a range of learning styles, different abilities, cultures, and languages. Multimodal teaching supports diverse learning needs to be met. This includes the use of, *inter alia*, visual, auditory, textual and digital resources including interactive AI (Artificial Intelligence) apps, which enhance engagement and encourage creativity. All these aspects have an important role to play in inclusive education.

Participatory teaching methods are also needed as this encourages ownership of learning through collaboration and dialogue. Learners engage actively with peers, educators and resource materials, building knowledge collectively. This fosters critical thinking, creativity, and

resilience, empowering learners to apply their skills in real-world contexts. Learner engagement is a cornerstone of effective education. Without meaningful engagement, the potential for deep learning diminishes. Education practices must evolve to address the diverse needs of learners and ensure the relevance and currency of teaching materials. The need for pedagogy to be inclusive and participatory with engaged learners is a *sine qua non*.

Innovative pedagogy is reshaping education to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving world. In this 2025 20(1) edition of the *IJTL*, the articles reflect this through exploring key aspects such as adaptability, inclusivity, collaboration, and learner engagement, showcasing how these approaches prepare learners to thrive. The articles range from pre-school to university education and are broad in disciplinary content.

The first three provide examples of innovative pedagogy at the higher education level. The author in the first, using an exploratory research approach evaluates Musical Theatre and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) modules for theatre productions. The findings show that such a multidisciplinary educational framework fosters entrepreneurship and collaboration. This prepares students to thrive in a competitive and dynamic industry. The following two articles are concerned with digital and gamified learning. The first investigates teaching African-themed video game design through a participatory culture framework. This provides a model for inclusive education that promotes collaboration and teamwork. In the second, research into the design and implementation of a programme on African Digital Literacy demonstrates the strength of integrating cultural narratives and game elements to engage students.

The next two articles are concerned with early childhood education. In the first, the authors examine the perspectives and practices of 154 pre-service preschool teachers regarding sustainable environmental education. The findings show positive attitudes towards integrating sustainability into their future classrooms. These emphasize the need for tailored educational strategies to effectively engage all students and to foster a more sustainable future. The second explores the use of visual tools in early childhood education to enhance learning in a rural context. The findings show that using a visual daily programme aids young children's development and demonstrates the resourcefulness of teachers in creating collaborative learning environments.

In the following article the authors explore the role of Learning support advisors (LSAs) in supporting inclusive education. Using a qualitative study in public mainstream schools in the Western Cape, South Africa, the authors findings showed both the positive impact of advisors on learning as well as identifying challenges to be addressed.

Post-graduate supervision in higher education can be challenging both for supervisors and supervisees. The final article reports on a study of computer science students in which the need to enhance group supervision methods is highlighted. The authors identify gaps that need to be addressed to better support students and lead to improved research outcomes.