

(Re)Learning to Teach in Contexts of Crises

Editors: Nyna Amin and Rubby Dhunpath



Alternation African Scholarship Book Series, Volume #08

Alternation African Scholarship Book Series (AASBS)

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A list of 2020 and 2021 published titles follows overleaf

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Ramrathan, L., N. Ndimande-Hlongwa, N. Mkhize & J.A. Smit (eds.). 2020. *Re-thinking the Humanities Curriculum in the Time of COVID-19. Volume #01.*

Ndimande-Hlongwa, N., L. Ramrathan, N. Mkhize & J.A. Smit (eds.). 2020. *Technology-based Teaching and Learning in Higher Education during the Time of COVID-19. Volume #02.*

Mkhize, N., N. Ndimande-Hlongwa, L. Ramrathan & J.A. Smit (eds.). 2020. *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in the Time of COVID-19. Volume #03.*

Smit, J.A., N. Mkhize, N. Ndimande-Hlongwa & L. Ramrathan (eds.). 2020. *Learner and Subject at the Dawn of Digital Humanities Online Research-Led Teaching and Learning. Volume #04.*

Manik, S. (ed.). 2020. *From High-risk Sports to Sports as High Risk: Crisis, Capitulation and Creativity during COVID-19. Volume #05.*

Kumalo, R.S. Kumalo, C. Lynch, C. Kimedjo, A. Adomako & M. Penda (eds.). 2021. *Critical Investigation of Humanitarian Aid in Africa. Volume #06.*

Singh, U.G., P.S. Reddy, M.W. Phiri & P. Appavoo (eds.). 2021. *Global Trends in Management, IT and Governance in an E-World (E-MIG 2019 International). Volume #07.*

Amin, N. & R. Dhunpath (eds.). 2021. *(Re)Learning to Teach in Contexts of Crises. Volume #08.*

Bob, U. (ed.). 2021. *The COVID-19 Pandemic: Impacts of the Corona Virus on Sport and Society. Volume #09.*

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Preface

Emerging first in Wuhan, China, followed by its spread to other parts of the world, COVID-19 has had governments globally, systematically initiate a variety of forms of intervention, to curb its spread. These include lockdowns, the restriction of movement, forms of social distancing and sanitizing practices, as well as the requirement that citizens wear face-masks. Since the responses took place according to regional exigencies and directives, and were not uniform and equally comprehensive, they have also had diverse effects. Ranging from shortcomings in medical and health care provisioning, through economic downturns and fears of the increase in practices of governance surveillance, to the disrupting of schooling and tertiary education systems, sports, and cultural and religious events and practices, COVID-19 bodily, mentally, materially and socially, destructively affected the whole world. Apart from its continued deadly impacts, and barring the arrival of a universally effective vaccine, the spectre of COVID-19's expected second surge in 2020, with the arrival of winter in the northern hemisphere, also have had populations across the world readying themselves to learn to live with the presence of infection on a continuous basis.

Given this very brief and though limited scenario, this Preface provides the context for the first few volumes of the *Alternation* African Scholarship Book Series (AASBS), dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Focused on the impacts of COVID-19 on the Higher Education sector, at all levels, including curriculum, the first four volumes were in principle conceptualised by the *Alternation* Editorial Committee (AEC), on 31 March 2020. This initial project problematisation has grown into eleven research groups with eight AASBS volumes, and five *Alternation* Journal issues in production. Indications are that even if the world is rid of COVID-19 – which might not happen in the near future – its impacts will be lasting. These dynamics are being traced in the research, in-, as well as outside academe, as we learn to transform and adapt to new realities, possibilities, and drawbacks, of digital media.

The research produced by the *Alternation* research groups constitute a small part of how academia is attempting to both provide academic leadership as well as engage the conundrums of the effects and impacts of COVID-19.

Prof Johannes A. Smit
Editor-in-Chief: *Alternation*

A Note from the Editors

This book arose from an invitation to contribute a volume on the impacts of COVID-19 on higher education institutions by the Editor-in-Chief of *Alternation*. We received close to sixty manuscripts. Twenty-seven were sent out for double-blind peer review and a final selection of fifteen was made. The chapters cover a range of issues pertinent to higher education and the authors include recent PhD graduates, postdoctoral fellows, and experienced social scientists and philosophers.

The number of submissions gives a clear indication of the influence of the current conditions on higher education knowledge production. It is our belief that this body of scholarship adds value to our understanding about teaching during a crisis and beyond that, to unexpected conditions that will arise without forewarning in years to come. Its contribution is pertinent for our emotional and cognitive well-being because it is evidence of resilience, and deep and insightful learning that those in higher education have gained – and more importantly, that it does not matter where, and when the (re)learning, learning and unlearning takes place. It matters that all kinds of learnings are taking place and are worth sharing.

We do not offer a commentary on each chapter. Instead, we leave it to readers to interpret the texts based on their own contexts, and philosophical, conceptual and theoretical preferences. However, we must declare, that the first chapter by Amin, Dhunpath and Devroop, outlines conceptually and theoretically the notion of ‘(re)learning to teach’ as a problematic imperative emerging from the pandemic-generated crisis. It is not a conception that we imposed on the authors. We provided a wide berth for interpretation of the notion. Furthermore, there was no expectation for a particular paradigm or ideology despite our preferences for critical, poststructural and deconstructive worldviews. With more than seven billion individuals inhabiting the planet, it would be foolish to imagine that particular worldviews should dominate the interpretation and analysis of our inquiries.

The inclusion of the Spivak chapter in a format that differs from the rest in the compendium reflects our commitment to dissension. We chose not to amend the chapter for the sake of uniformity as its impact and power is expressed in the style the author is renowned for. We think you will agree with our decision.

In keeping with the editors’ minimalistic approach, we chose not to thematize the chapters or to place them within sections. Each chapter, readers

will note, raises multiple issues and concerns, and the restrictions placed by themes and sections undermine complexity and connectivity. As a result, the sequencing of chapters is based on the logic (and convenience) of the alphabetical order convention (of the first author in each case). The chapters are interesting takes and include philosophical posturing and case studies in a variety of contexts and countries.

We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Laura Campbell for overseeing the peer review process, Dr. Connie Israel and Ms. Barbara Kabange for the language editing of the texts, Mr. Abdulbaqi Badru (PhD candidate) for the cover design, and Prof. Chats Devroop for formatting all chapters and assisting with troubling matters of the ‘technology kind’.

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Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>Johannes A Smit</i> Series Preface | v |
| <i>Nyna Amin & Rubby Dhunpath</i> A note from the Editors | vi |
| <i>Nyna Amin, Rubby Dhunpath & Chatradari (Chats) Devroop</i> Uncertainties and Ambiguities of (Re)Learning to Teach in the Context of Crises | 1 |
| <i>Aruna Ankiah-Gangadeen, Yesha Mahadeo-Doorgakant & Seema Goburdhun</i> A DisAffection for Affection in Times of Crises? From TPCK to TPECK | 26 |
| <i>Victor M.H. Borden, Joshua L. Davis & Senia Borden</i> How Will or Should the COVID-19 Pandemic Change Higher Education? | 47 |
| <i>Tejwant K. Mohabeer Chana</i> Te[a]chnolog[able]y: A Move/me[a]nt to Counter the Neoliberal Global Pandemic | 78 |
| <i>Bridget Horner</i> Distancing Learning from [the spatiality of] Higher Education to [the context of] the Home | 94 |
| <i>Tertsia Ikyoive & Ayub Sheik</i> De-humanising the Humanities Curriculum: Social Distancing and Virtual Learning in Post-COVID-19 Higher Education in South Africa | 115 |
| <i>Jonathan D. Jansen</i> What Does it Mean to Teach in the Shadow of COVID-19? A Critical Reflective Essay on the Future of Online teaching in South African Pandemic | 132 |

Karen J. Koopman & Oscar Koopman
The Dark Side of Online Teaching and Learning in South African Universities 145

Nhlanhla Landa & Sindiso Zhou
Using Emoticons to Reduce Transactional Distance: Navigating the Contextual Complexities of COVID-19 Imposed Virtual Learning Spaces 169

Sonja Loots, Francois Strydom, Anneri Meintjies, Rohan Posthumus & Hanlé Posthumus
Do Learning Management Systems Live Up to their Potential in Times of Crises? 194

Hyleen Mariaye & Michael Anthony Samuel
From Digital Leap to Epistemic Leap: The Challenge of Transitioning Two International Doctoral Programmes to an Online Mode of Delivery 218

Krystle Ontong & Zayd Waghid
Hybridising Cybergogy and Sense of Place: A Response to Remote Multimodal Teaching and Learning in South African Higher Education 246

Michael Anthony Samuel
Access, Acclimatisation and Attitude: Negotiating Postgraduate Education Online 276

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
Learning to Teach Differently 302

Waaiza Udhin, Vicky Avinash Oojorah & Anand Pultoo
Sustaining Education in a VUCA World: Experiences of Higher Education (Re)designers of School Curricula in Mauritius 314

Reviewers 340



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