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THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

Edited by Donnie Adams and David Gurr



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The contributors in this volume are educational leaders engaged in education policy, practice, and research. In each chapter, they focus on the integration of artificial intelligence, online learning, and distance education prompted by global events like the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide insights, strategies, and case studies to help readers navigate this dynamic landscape effectively. The chapters offer clarity to complex issues and offer evidence-informed practices for shaping technology integration and digital leadership in the years ahead.

The book will be of relevance to educational leaders, scholars, policymakers, and educators who are preparing for a future shaped by rapid technological change. It can also be a supplementary reading to those interested in staying abreast of the evolving educational landscape or enhancing their understanding of technology and digital leadership's role in shaping the future of learning.

Donnie Adams is based at the Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne. He was awarded the Emerald Young Researcher Award 2021 by Emerald Publishing. He is Editor-in-Chief for Educational Research and Evaluation and Editor for Cogent Education.

David Gurr is a Professor of Educational Leadership in the Faculty of Education at the University of Melbourne. David is a prolific writer and presenter focused on all aspects of educational leadership, including successful school leadership and middle leadership.

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Technology and Digital Educational Leadership

The Future of Education

Edited by Donnie Adams and David Gurr

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Preface

The rapidly evolving landscape of education, driven by relentless advances in technology, has fundamentally transformed the ways in which students learn, and educators teach. The current context of education is marked by a digital revolution with recent changes such as the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), widespread adoption of online learning and distance education due to global events like the COVID-19 pandemic. Given these factors, school leaders, educators, scholars, and policymakers are actively seeking guidance on how to harness the potential of technology while safeguarding the core values of education.

This book responds to that call. It showcases insights, strategies, and case studies from educational leaders who are deeply engaged in policy, practice, and research across diverse educational contexts. The contributors bring clarity to complex issues and offer evidence-informed practices for shaping technology integration and digital leadership in the years ahead. The book will be of relevance to educational leaders, scholars, policymakers, and educators who are preparing for a future shaped by rapid technological change. It can also be a supplementary reading to those interested in staying abreast of the evolving educational landscape or enhancing their understanding of technology and digital leadership's role in shaping the future of learning.

Chapter 1, by Donnie Adams, sets the stage by exploring the integral role of leadership in navigating digital transformation. The chapter clearly distinguishes between digital leadership and technology leadership and recommends practical strategies that leaders can adopt for the effective integration of educational technologies in schools.

In **Chapter 2**, David Gurr introduces two leadership models: the Leadership in Uncertain Times Domains and Capabilities Model and the Futures Thinking Model. These models equip educational leaders to navigate a complex, technology-driven world, support strategic planning, and anticipate the future needs of their schools.

The potential of AI to transform school leadership development is explored by Donnie Adams, Kee-Man Chuah, and Pauline Thompson in **Chapter 3**. Their chapter highlights how generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, can serve as virtual coaches for aspiring school leaders, offering personalised coaching, on-demand guidance, and simulation-based experiences.

Chapter 4, by Justin Bathon and Jayson W. Richardson, examines how school leaders use technology to enable deeper learning, drawing from a global case study of 30 innovative schools. The authors showcase how strategic technology use fosters innovation, authentic assessment, and community-connected learning in schools.

In **Chapter 5**, Sara Dexter presents the CANLEAD model, a year-long, research-based intervention that demonstrates the power of team-based instructional leadership in edtech integration. The chapter offers both theory and validated tools for building sustainable leadership capacity across schools.

Chapter 6, by Pauline Thompson, Robert Sbaglia, and Helen Stokes, draws on interviews with school leaders across Australia. They identified five key leadership actions that support effective data use in schools. The chapter also discusses how leaders can cultivate a data-informed culture to drive instructional improvement.

The focus then shifts to digital inclusion in **Chapter 7**, where Muhammad Mujtaba Asad and Mansoor Hussain examine the role of school leaders. Despite significant resource challenges, their findings illustrate how school leaders promote teacher training, infrastructure development, and digital equity in the context of Education 5.0.

Chapter 8, by Sok Yee Leong and Hamdan Said, investigate the digitalisation of teacher recruitment in international schools in Malaysia. Their qualitative study reveals both the efficiencies and limitations of e-recruitment and highlights the strategic role leaders play in guiding digital Human Resource practices.

Teacher leadership in the digital age comes into focus through the work of Qi Xiu, Peng Liu, and Xuyang Li in **Chapter 9**. Based on research in a Chinese turnaround school, the chapter uncovers how teachers take on digital leadership roles, foster digital culture, and navigate challenges during the pandemic.

In **Chapter 10**, Lokman Mohd Tahir and colleagues share the technological challenges encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the shift to online learning. They highlight insights from school leaders in Malaysia on critical barriers, including infrastructure limitations and teacher readiness, and propose leadership responses to foster digital resilience.

In **Chapter 11**, Tahani Hassan and Izhak Berkovich investigate how principals' digital leadership during the pandemic influenced teachers' motivation and commitment. Their study of Bahraini schools found that principals' leadership practices, particularly in communicating vision and values, helped foster supportive work environments in remote learning contexts.

Dorothy DeWitt and Norlidah Alias confront the often-overlooked topic of ethical and responsible technology use in **Chapter 12**. Through case studies involving digital leaders across diverse institutions, they highlight the importance of proactive strategies for co-producing ethical practices in an era of emerging technologies.

The final chapter, **Chapter 13**, by Donnie Adams and David Gurr, offers a forward-looking and provocative call to action. The authors argue that digital

leadership is not merely about managing educational technologies; it is about boldly imagining new possibilities for teaching, learning, well-being, and equity. In a world of growing complexity and accelerating change, school leaders who are bold enough to lead imaginatively can become the creators and drivers of the future of education.

Collectively, the chapters in this book offer a timely, research-informed, and practical contribution to the field of technology and leadership in education. As schools continue to evolve in response to digital disruption, this book serves as a valuable resource for those who lead, teach, and research digital and technology leadership. We hope this book will contribute meaningfully to shaping a future of education built on hope, innovation, and excellence for all.

**Melbourne, Australia
Donnie Adams and David Gurr**

About the Editors



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3 Leveraging Artificial Intelligence to Transform Leadership Development

*Donnie Adams, Kee-Man Chuah, and
Pauline Thompson*

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming the way learning and teaching are implemented in schools (Adams & Chuah, 2022). In particular, the emergence of Generative AI (GenAI) technologies, such as ChatGPT, has significantly impacted the field of education in recent years (Chiu, 2024). These AI tools support personalised learning by analysing its users' performance data and tailoring educational content to individual needs (Hwang et al., 2020). GenAI also enables the creation of original content such as text, images, and videos based on specific prompts (Adams et al., 2024). One of its unique features is its ability to produce humanlike conversational dialogue (Chiu, 2024), and it can simulate various roles, such as teachers, administrators, students, or school leaders (Adams & Thompson, 2025).

While the implications of AI for teaching and learning have been widely examined (Adams & Chuah, 2022; Levine et al., 2025), its potential to support leadership development has received far less attention in the literature. This gap is particularly noteworthy given that effective leadership is essential for navigating the increasingly complex challenges facing educational organisations (Mincu, 2022). To address this gap, this chapter explores how AI, particularly GenAI can be leveraged to enhance leadership competencies in educational settings, an area that is critically important yet underexplored.

This chapter begins by tracing the development of AI and its evolution into today's transformative force in education. It then examines the intersection of AI and educational leadership, highlighting how aspiring school leaders can harness GenAI technologies as virtual coaching tools. These tools have the potential to supplement traditional leadership training by offering personalised, on-demand guidance and simulation-based learning. The chapter concludes by discussing the broader implications of AI for leadership development and offers recommendations for integrating AI into leadership preparation and practice.

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AI and Education

The field of AI has evolved significantly from its conceptual beginnings in the mid-20th century, with early explorations focusing on simulating human creativity through computational methods (Confalonieri et al., 2021; Manyika, 2022). The 21st century witnessed a revolution in AI with the emergence of deep learning, where multi-layered neural networks demonstrated remarkable effectiveness in learning patterns from vast amounts of data known as large language models (LLMs). These LLMs, as explained by Feuerriegel et al. (2024), were later further enhanced to create user-centric GenAI tools, which allow anyone to create various content through a simple conversational-like command or prompt.

Among various types of GenAI tools, OpenAI's ChatGPT in particular has demonstrated the greater accuracy and flexibility for its use in the context of education (Welsby & Cheung, 2023). Apart from generating content, it can design assessments and translate languages (Adeshola & Adepoju, 2024; Elbanna & Armstrong, 2024). These capabilities open up numerous avenues for transforming traditional teaching practices. As highlighted by Memarian and Doleck (2023), educators can utilise GenAI to personalise learning experiences by tailoring study materials to individual student needs. Trust et al. (2023) also added that the technology can also aid in the creation of diverse instructional resources, including texts, images, and videos. The rapid creation through AI tools can potentially save educators time and enhance the variety of learning materials available.

ChatGPT also offers significant benefits for students in their learning journeys. They can serve as personalised tutors that can adapt to individual learning paces while providing clarifications on complex concepts (Tu, 2024). Students can receive assistance with homework and projects without the fear of disturbing their teachers. This habit can foster greater autonomy in their learning processes (Chuah & Sumintono, 2024; Van Horn, 2024). Besides that, ChatGPT is a valuable aid in research activities and academic writing (Levine et al., 2025). Students can overcome writer's block, generate ideas, and improve their grammar and writing skills. Table 3.1 illustrates the diverse potential uses of GenAI for students across various educational tasks.

AI and Educational Leadership

Today's school leaders need both knowledge and technical know-how to effectively integrate technology into their schools (Zhang et al., 2022a). Zhang et al. (2022b) further emphasised that school leaders must take responsibility for staying abreast and being prepared by equipping themselves with the latest technological knowledge and skills. The rapid evolution of technology and its use in education have necessitated the need for more tech-savvy school leaders (Adams, 2023; Tyson & Sauers, 2021). Richardson et al. (2015)