

# Emerging Perspectives

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## Review of the book *Developing Self-Regulation of Learning and Teacher Skills among Teacher Candidates*

by Héfer Bembenutty, Marie C. White and Miriam R. Vélez  
New York, /USA: SpringerBriefs in Education, 2015, 134 pages  
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### Reviewed by

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Zimmerman and Schunk (2011) defined self-regulation learning as “the processes whereby learners personally activate and sustain cognitions, affects and behaviours that are systematically oriented toward the attainment of personal goals” (p.1). These processes make learners cognizant of their academic strengths and weaknesses. In their book, Bembenutty, White and Vélez (2015) shared an integral account of a 4-year, longitudinal case study that reports the success of enhancing self-regulatory skills, self-efficacy and the sense of agency of undergraduate students in their teacher preparation program (p. 1).

The book has seven chapters, preceded by the editors’ preface and two forewords by W. McKeachie and A. Kitsantas, respectively. Each chapter has a well-crafted discussion of the topics that make the book particularly easy to follow. However, each chapter also has its own abstract, keywords and a list of references that interferes with fluent reading of the book. This text is targeted to an audience of education college and university instructors. Unfortunately, it is loaded with particular research details of the study reported. In chapters, one, three, four and six, the authors introduce and develop in detail their research methodology. This book describes step by step the case study design used; however, I would have liked to see more attention to the findings and their contribution to similar contexts and future research. Instead, the book devotes most of its pages to document one specific study. Chapter seven presents a brief but clear examination of the major findings. Here lies some of the main contribution of this section and the book itself, which is that it reveals that teacher candidates can be more effective teachers if they have training on self-regulation and have strong support from their peers, their instructors and their institution.

There is much of value in this book for teacher education program stakeholders seeking to foster self-regulatory strategies in teacher candidates’ learning experiences. I suspect; however, that students reading alone will find the book limited to a report of a study. The theoretical heart of the book, though short, is the chapter that deals with the theoretical contributions and brings into perspective the issue of student self-regulation. It is an asset that

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takes a look at the understanding of self-regulation and self-efficacy. To be specific, self-efficacy is approached by examining its role in learning and in teachers' beliefs where Bandura (1997) and Zimmerman's (2000; 2002) theoretical constructions are the basis of understanding. This chapter then explains the cyclical phases and developmental levels of self-regulation. Furthermore, the book presents research evidence of the contribution of these theories in the documented experiences of four teacher candidates.

Supporting themes in this book are derived from the main findings described in chapter seven. The researchers reported motivation, cognition, resource management and academic environment as the main themes each of them with a list of subcategories. For example, self-efficacy beliefs for learning and teaching, intrinsic motivation, and goal setting were important guides for student-teachers' actions and motivation. Similarly, organizational skills and metacognitive self-regulation informed cognition. Regarding resource management, control of time and study, and academic delay of gratification were key findings. Finally, four external environmental factors influenced participants' learning and teaching endeavours: The resources available, instructor expectations, the nature of learning activity and the nature of the social context and level of support. Along with these main findings, the role of social skills such as seeking for help and asking questions was a distinguishing characteristic of the teacher candidates.

This book's greatest strength is that it shows how self-regulation can be fostered and studied in teacher preparation training. In addition to proving of particular interest for professional and graduate student audiences interested in self-regulation issues, the book should provide a valuable resource for teacher trainers examining self-efficacy, self-control, help seeking and support from the institution for teacher candidates and in-service teachers. The authors give a report on their case study and share an extensive reference list. They highlight the importance of taking a proactive and strategic approach by teacher trainers.

The main limitation of this book is that it is restricted to be a brief report of a single research in a particular context; however, it certainly makes the reader want to delve deeper into the subject. Regarding research procedures, the limited participant sample size (four student-teachers) makes the conclusions reported restricted to four Hispanic teacher candidates in an urban setting. Also, the findings report in chapter seven is shorter than expected. The lack of a thick description when putting all pieces together in this section makes for too brief of an account.

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