

EDITORIAL

Learning for Development: Lessons from Diverse Contexts and Perspectives

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There has been a contemporary trend in educational delivery, as also in education research studies, toward technology-enabled learning, which offers scope for contextualisation and appropriateness for effective and quality individual and group learning. This trend, though, does not preclude the age-old and conventional campus-based learning. The trend, in fact, has more been toward diversified forms of ‘blended teaching-learning’ – with the nature of the ‘blend’ varying according to the context and current provision in respective educational/ national contexts. In the developing countries, the discourse is more vulnerable in respect of appropriate decision-making for an equitable and inclusive educational provision. Practical field experiences, as also rigorous research studies, should significantly contribute to such decision-making at governmental, institutional and faculty level. Keeping this in view, we have put together, in this issue of the *Journal*, the following research articles/ studies, case studies, reports from the field, and book reviews which may inform us in further visualising and implementing our actions.

The “*Research Articles*” section contains seven papers. Our first research paper focuses on a *wiki as a social technology tool in teaching-learning* for school students. This interview-based research indicates that teachers who had experience in learning wikis in their higher studies not only found it useful for their school students but also it contributed to online collaboration, construction of new knowledge, and technology integration. In the next research paper on *mobile as a teaching tool in secondary schools*, the author reports the findings of a phenomenological research (documentary review, semi-structured interview, focus group discussion) on school teachers, which suggests that while teachers not only did not use the full potential of mobile in their teaching, there was also misuse of mobile phones in schools, and so there is a need to develop contextual guidelines and frameworks on ethical use and integration of mobile technology in teaching and learning.

In the third paper on *anxiety and depression of college students caused by COVID-19*, the authors found that the Covid distress factors had significant impact on distress, though they could not predict the level of depression symptoms. The suggestions given by the authors shall be useful to teachers and parents in other institutional and social contexts and in both conventional and online provision. The next paper explores the relationship between *educational growth and growth in employment in the secondary education sector* in Turkey, and the author provides for alternative education delivery strategies, including especially online and blended learning, to enhance access to quality education and to build skilling and employability into the school curricula.

The fifth paper reports the findings of a study on the *factors influencing student use of an online LMS*. The findings suggest that behavioural intention factors comprising performance expectancy, effort



expectancy, facilitating conditions and hedonic motivation explained up to 75% variance in student use of the LMS. These findings shall be useful for those engaged in enhancing the large-scale use and effectiveness of an LMS in online and blended learning. The subsequent study reports on the positive *attitude of students towards online teaching during Covid-19* across academic programmes. A possible factor included higher online teaching skills by teachers and higher digital skills by the students, possibly due to increasing use of social networks. The researchers suggest practitioners should take note of the factors of student perception and teacher effective communication to improve the effectiveness of online teaching-learning. The final paper in this section reports a comparative study of the *effectiveness of paper and pencil approach and digital technology approach* in teaching 3D geometry. While prior knowledge and experience was crucial for the success of the paper and pencil approach, digital technology provided for more handy and richer resources (in cases where prior knowledge was fragile). However, the authors suggest that both approaches need to be judiciously combined in the teaching of geometry.

We have included seven papers in the “*Case Study*” section. The first case reports on school teachers’ *self-efficacy in technology integration* for teaching. The findings suggested that teachers had a moderate level of technology integration self-efficacy, and that gender and professional development in technology integration affected teacher self-efficacy, so these factors, therefore, need to be considered in technology mainstreaming initiatives. The second case analyses open and innovative schooling in Mozambique, and suggests that while minimal technology conditions were created in the schools, institutional leaders and policy makers should consider factors like digital literacy and technology redistribution in their policy and implementation strategies for open schooling.

Effectiveness of the intervention of *constructivist digital learning heutagogy* is the theme of the third case study. The findings suggest that a significant training intervention for senior school mathematics teachers based on the model of Constructivist Digital Learning Heutagogy can positively affect the emotions, academic achievement, learning engagement, and, to an extent, peer relationship of students, and contribute to breaking class monotony. The fourth case is on teacher training and the *role of self-assessment in increasing learning outcomes* of students. The findings suggest that self-knowledge, self-directed learning, self-designed projects, and self-reported assessment positively influence student learning outcomes. From the fifth case study on *learning preferences of undergraduates* of this generation, the two important findings shall be of interest to teachers and researchers alike: high preference for multimodal learning, as well as for unimodal learning styles, among different student populations.

The last two case studies focus on the context of COVID-19-related *anxiety and depression*, and the *role of mothers as teachers*. In the case on depression, the results suggest that while the distress factors do not have any influence on the overall level of depression, they do impact the general level of anxiety of the students. In the latter case, the authors found that mothers were affected by the pandemic and had to deal with issues relating to teaching their own children, supervision of studies, modular schooling, and children’s learning vis-à-vis mothers’ learning. The authors suggest that schoolteachers need to consider these factors and make necessary interventions to support mothers as teachers.

In the “*Reports from the Field*” section, the authors report on a *process improvement approach in online business education* through Lean Thinking, and suggest related guidelines on taking care of online business education post-pandemic.

The two book reviews — one on open education and self-directed learning in Africa reviewed by Ephraim Mhlanga, and the other on ODL for youth and adult literacy reviewed by Catherine Beukes-Amiss — should be useful to planners, teachers and researchers dealing with ‘learning for development’.

This has been a bumper issue for this Scopus-indexed journal. We have been receiving a growing number of new submissions, and the referral and editorial processes have been further capacitated to take on the additional load, while still maintaining full objectivity and rigour. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank Tony Mays (Managing Associate Editor) and Alan Doree (Copy Editor) who have meticulously followed the process of review and put together this important issue of the *Journal*. While we hope that this issue shall be of use to our readers, we would also be glad to receive more rigorous (qualitative and quantitative) research papers, case studies, and field experiences on themes relating to ‘learning for development’.

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