

Editorial

The education sector in the world, which was hitherto slow to change, has witnessed a massive transformation recently with changing job landscape, technological disruptions, demand for quality education. The COVID-19 pandemic caused further shocks to the system with schools forced to shut down during the lockdown period, and the transition of students and teachers to online teaching-learning. The pandemic posed several challenges in public and private schools which included an expected rise in dropouts, learning losses, and increase in digital divide. COVID-19 also has acted as a catalyst for digital adoption in education. This transition has to consider the learning losses which had happened over the previous year as well take a futuristic approach to build a resilient system which can withstand any future shocks. This first issue of IJOS presents 10 thematic and research papers on a variety of themes and issues under Open and Distance Learning Education.

It is in this context, the present issue of “International Journal of Open Schooling” discusses some related areas in the field of open schooling, which could be directly or indirectly related to the today’s concerns. The issue covers themes such as E-learning, implementation of open schooling, barriers to open schooling, emergency remote education, media and information literacy, educational ecosystem, philosophies of open and distance learning, the paradigm shift to online learning, evaluating offshore open school learners their challenges and problems, new methods for promotion of open schooling, Virtual reality of open schooling and business process management for an interactive and intraorganizational open schooling system. These are thematic papers as well as empirical research based papers. The journal will also unfold discussions on some important thematic areas of open schooling education in the post pandemic period such as path leading to quality relationship between learner and facilitator, role of digital technology in impacting teaching-learning process, solutions bridging the learning gaps in curriculum, pedagogy and assessments and strategies for ensuring sustainability in open schooling. The Journal may act as a reference for all concerned stakeholders on post pandemic recovery of the education system with a focus on building an equitable, inclusive, and holistic education system for the world.

The Critical Evaluation of Barriers Inhibiting the Successful Implementation of e-learning: Implications for Open Schooling by David Egbe Ola & Christian Udno Osiah discusses the ravaging scourge of COVID-19 and how human institutions have adapted to the virtual platforms. The move to remote and online teaching revealed that learning can comfortably take place using e-learning technologies. The main thrust of this research is to critically evaluate barriers to e-learning utilisation using an example from Nigeria as a case study.

The paper by Mr. Juan Carlos Romero Diaz shows the Impact of Online Education on Academic Performance of Beginners Spanish Students at the University of Guyana during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This article compares the academic results obtained by the students of the course SPA1003 (Beginners Spanish) of the University of Guyana during the face-to-face modality and after the migration to emergency remote education in mid-2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study proposes an approach to evaluating the effectiveness of online learning of Spanish at the University of Guyana.

Implementation of Media and Information Literacy in the Educational Ecosystem of a Public University in Northern Mexico by Cristina Rosamaria Cadena Figueroa and Julieta demonstrates that As a result of the pandemic, The Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León (UANL) created a number of digital strategies. This was done in order

to enhance the teaching-learning process by utilizing new platforms in addition to those already in use at the institution. The modifications were made in order to adapt education to virtual environments. This article provides a theoretical analysis to aid in the implementation of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) at UANL.

Andragogical Assumptions and Integration of Philosophies in the Open and Distance Learning: A Theoretical Analysis by Peter Kisusi Charles discusses the emergence of major cross-cutting issues such as climate change and diseases like HIV/AIDS and COVID-19 in the 21st century has significantly contributed towards making the open and distance learning popular globally following role plays in educating individuals who are out of the formal education system. Recently, there has been an ongoing debate on how individuals learn better in any circumstance. This paper aimed to analyze the assumptions of andragogy, namely: the learner's need to know, self-directed learning, prior experiences of the learner, readiness to learn, orientation to learning/ problem solving, and motivation to learn.

Chrissi Nerantzi article titled *Towards defining uncreative teaching as an act of normalised open educational practice and the ethical sharing of pedagogical ideas is a think piece and is an exploration into uncreative writing, a literary movement, and its potential connection to open education and creativity that may be of interest to educators in primary, secondary, further and higher education when reflecting on their practice and sense making to create stimulating learning experiences for their students through the cross-fertilisation of ideas as part of normal educational practice.* Uncreative teaching as a concept is defined and shared in this article to trigger a discussion with the wider educational community to further deepen our understanding in this area and identify possible connections between uncreative writing, open education and teaching itself.

Use of Online Tools in School Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic:A Paradigm Shift by Ms Vinita A Shrouthy and Dr Narendra D Deshmukh shows the unexpected turn towards online teaching due to COVID-19 brought many challenges to the education community including school, teachers, students and parents. The abrupt decision to shift from traditional to online teaching confronted teachers and students with an adventitious move, since they were at the forefront. This paradigm shift from a well-established situation to an unprecedented move left many teachers and students with various challenges from not having internet access to getting the proper tools for succeeding despite the limitations of online classes. In this study, researchers explored the roles of school, teacher, student and parents during the pandemic, so its findings are also useful for open schooling. Online education promotes conceptual understanding and student-centered classes where learners are responsible for their self-directed learning.

Evaluating Offshore Open School Learners of Bangladesh Open University: Challenges and Problems by Syed Humayun Akhter and Md. Mizanoor Rahman explains how technology has been a part of everyone's life thanks to the influx of social media. It is no longer an option. It is now essential. More people are getting connected through self-integrated technology (i.e. social and open-sourced platforms), and getting used to technology-enabled activities which has been the strength. Educational institutions in Bangladesh have capitalised on this force to overcome the challenges of schooling, particularly in proctoring exams, no comprehensive research actually addressed the challenges and problems associated with technology-enabled exams., Open School of Bangladesh Open University introduced open school programmes for NRBs in Qatar and researched to explore the challenges posed by technology mediated evaluation. The data reveals that use of online platforms for delivery of classes prepared learners to support online proctoring of exams in spite of challenges and problems. This article

has also thrown some outstanding arguments on current debates about using technology for learners' evaluation in hardship contexts.

Schooling: New Era, New Relevance, New Methods by Sir John Daniel manifests the COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating impact on education systems, undoing years of progress towards the goal of having all children complete primary and secondary education. In the new post-COVID-19 era, open schooling will be more relevant than ever, becoming a vital tool for repairing the damage done by the pandemic in poor and rich countries alike. Open schools are ready for the challenge. Their methods have matured greatly in recent years as they have taken advantage of new technologies to extend their reach, intensify their interactions with pupils and adapt their programmes to employment needs.

Kezia H. Mkwizu article titled Virtual Reality and Open Schooling: Challenges and Opportunities shows that Virtual Reality (VR) literature exists in relation to education, but the disruption caused by the Coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) ensuing in a global pandemic has forced a paradigm shift to online teaching and learning to sustain the educational sector. Due to this, the scope in studying open schooling (OS) needs to be extended to further understand VR in relation to OS. The aim of this paper is to examine virtual reality and open schooling and specifically analyze VR technologies and OS programmes focusing on challenges and opportunities in the context of Africa.

Business Processes Management and Knowledge Management System for an interactive-intraorganizational communication in Open Schooling by Patricia Rayón Villela and Nelly Rigaud Téllez discusses Open and Distance Education systems represent an effective solution to the rapidly increasing demand for tertiary education. To meet the needs of Mexican students in Open and Distance Universities during the COVID-19 pandemic, alternative approaches mediated by open, distance, and online methods and technologies seek to ensure learning continuity. Naturally, developing mechanisms for a flexible education requires support from administrative and academic procedures. This paper proposes a model of the procedure evolution supported by a system that interacts with its different stages to communicate representations of the work, document current states, and improve understanding of how processes create and deliver customer value supported by Business Processes Management and Knowledge Management System.

This issue of "IJOS" extends our conversations about education during the COVID-19 pandemic, as we reflect upon the changes and challenges brought on by the new normal. In conclusion, the educational impact of an extraordinary and unexpected event such as the COVID-19 pandemic needs to be deeply investigated. We hope that our readers will be able to relate their personal experiences with the issues and concerns discussed by the authors of these articles or research papers. We also look forward to suggestions and comments on the articles published. We invite our readers to contribute to the journal by sharing their knowledge in the form of articles, research papers, case studies and book reviews.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar Singh

Chief Editor