Editorial – Volume 20, Issue 2

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Welcome to the second issue of 2019. These last few months has seen a whirlwind of activity for *IRRODL* with transitioning to a new online journal system this year, as well as coping with the continued increasing number of excellent submissions that is, quite frankly, testing our capacity. You will have noticed that as of May 1, 2019 we will be taking a short break from accepting submissions (not more than six months) and will be moving to a regularized publication schedule in 2020.

The first article by **Maletić**, **Barać**, **Naumović**, **Bogdanović**, and **Radenković** investigates the role of crowdvoting techniques on competing student projects to increase active participation and interest in the e-learning process.

In the following paper, **Petrovic**-**Dzerdz** examines the improvement of long-term knowledge retention by employing gamification principles in online, open-book, multiple-choice tests in order to motivate students to engage in repeated retrieval-based learning activities.

While media diversity is commonly viewed as a vehicle to increase learner interest and engagement **Fanguy**, **Costley**, **Baldwin**, **Lange**, and **Wang** have shown that higher levels can actually lead to lower levels of student performance. This study provides some insight on student behavior that can affect learning and opens the discussion on seeking that level of media diversity that is optimal.

Given the importance of interpersonal contact to students' sense of community **Berry** explores how and where online students form relationships outside of class. A three-day in person orientation provides further insights on how this is enhanced and the important role of extracurricular activities in building community in both digital and physical spaces.

Knowing parent involvement can play an important role in lowering online high school student attrition rates. **Borup**, **Chambers**, and **Stimson** have identified ways parents can effectively engage in their child's online learning experience. The study also flags problems faced by parents in this process, as well as obstacles encountered by teachers and facilitators when they attempted to support parents.

With the increased use of social media professionally, **Jordon** examines how academics use their online networks in the context of their formal roles and academic identity. The study identified several strategies in their use of social networking sites and notes that prioritization of these can be associated with different career stages.

Leal, **Navarro-Corona**, and **González** systematically explores the existing literature (2015-2018) on massive and open learning courses (MOOCs), which confirms that participation patterns and instructional design appear as the main topics of interest in the field, but also reveals that a considerable increase in published articles on academic engagement. Given the low completion rate of learners in MOOCs, having a better understanding of how students participate in this educational modality is vital.

Zhang, **Bonafini**, **Lockee**, **Jablokow**, and **Hu** focus their investigation on the degree to which different variables, like demographics and motivation, affect the completion of a MOOC. Among other results, completion rates appear to increase with reputation of institution, when the MOOC provides experiences that add to students' current academic background, and with older learners (age > 50 years).

In their paper, **Kara** and **Can** explore non-thesis Master's students' perceptions and expectations of good tutors and advisors in distance education programs and their relation to student characteristics including age, gender, university, program, semester, and previous online learning experience.

Stracke discusses the need to innovate education due to global changes to keep its status as a human right and public good and introduces Open Education theory, and the subsequent development and application of the OpenEd Quality Framework, to fulfil these requirements.

High school students' educational use of YouTube can be predicted by performance expectancy and social influence. **Bardaki** examines one of the most prevalent social media sites across the globe to examine the intention to use and acceptance by young learners

Muggli and **Westermann** examine learner perceptions and performance using two open educational resources (OER) compared with a traditional commercial textbook for first-year mathematics courses. In both face-to-face and blended scenarios, student use of OER resulted in better performance but lower attendance.

In the next article, **Cross**, **Sharples**, **Healing**, and **Ellis** investigate how and where distance learners use handheld devices and the impact this has on learning habits, access to learning content and quality of work. The study concludes by proposing two new concepts building on Castells' framework: the *flow of places* and *place of space*.

Despite the advancement of mobile communication technology to interconnect the world, the rising generation is lacking some of the skill and capacity to examine societal issues and work alongside those of various backgrounds to make a change. **Fox** proposes that in addition to linking the world, mobile devices can also be used to strengthen global competence in university students.

We then go to an m-learning literature review with an important geographic focus. Increased access to mobile technologies offers an opportunity for transformational change in both medical education and practice in the remote and resource-constrained locations of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). **Yunusa**, **Umar**, and **Bervell** provide a review (2010-2018) and analysis of the state of distributed medical education in SSA, culminating in key recommendations for improvement.

This issue finishes with one field note from **Ally** who carefully identifies competencies required by the digital teacher of the future to function effectively. The end product of the research is a Competency Profile for the Digital Teacher, which can be used to train and eventually orient future educators.