Special Issue Title:

Artificial Intelligence in Open and Distributed Learning: Does It Facilitate or Hinder Teaching and Learning?

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I. Overview and Rationale for the Special Issue

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a rapidly evolving field with the potential to revolutionize various aspects of education, especially in the context of open and distributed learning, including distance education, hybrid learning, and blended learning. AI can transform curriculum design, content delivery, assessment, feedback, learner support, and learning analytics (Chen et al., 2020). AI offers personalized and adaptive learning paths based on learners' preferences, needs, goals, and performance, enhancing their educational experience (Holmes et al., 2023). It also provides timely feedback and guidance, fostering engagement and motivation. AI creates interactive and immersive learning environments, such as games, simulations, and virtual reality, sparking learners' interest and involvement. It promotes social and collaborative learning by facilitating communication and cooperation among learners, instructors, and resources (Holmes et al., 2023). Additionally, AI optimizes various tasks like content creation, grading, assessment, and learning analytics, improving the quality and efficiency of education processes. However, AI in education also raises significant challenges and risks. Ethical, legal, social, pedagogical, and technical issues need consideration (Chen et al., 2022; Ouyang & Jiao, 2021). For example, maintaining quality, validity, reliability, and fairness of AI applications remains crucial.

Protecting learners' and instructors' privacy, security, and autonomy in AI-mediated learning contexts is also vital (Holmes et al., 2023). Additionally, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and human values in AI-enhanced learning experiences is crucial. Lastly, addressing the digital divide and potential marginalization of learners and instructors without access to or skills in AI technologies is paramount (Holmes et al., 2023). Overall, AI has immense potential in education, but its responsible and informed implementation is necessary to ensure its benefits are maximized while mitigating potential risks.

Given the above points, the aim of this special issue is to explore the opportunities and challenges of AI in open and distributed learning including distance education, hybrid learning, and blended learning from multiple perspectives. We invite original research articles that address the following topics but not limited to:

❖ Theoretical and conceptual frameworks for understanding and evaluating AI in open and distributed learning.

❖ Empirical studies on the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of AI applications like ChatGPT in open and distributed learning.

❖ Best practices and case studies on the integration of AI into open and distributed learning curricula, pedagogies, and policies.

❖ Critical analyses and reflections on the ethical, legal, social, pedagogical, technical implications of AI in open and distributed learning.

❖ Future trends for AI in open and distributed learning.

II. Information on Submissions:

Submissions should be well-written and well-documented research articles in English. Analysis and data can be quantitative or qualitative (or both). Manuscripts are reviewed and evaluated anonymously by the special issue review team members of IRRODL. In line with guidelines of the journal, papers are evaluated for the degree of scholarly research, relevance, and originality of conclusions.

Manuscript submission guidelines of IRRODL must be carefully considered. If submissions do not include the appropriate formatting, declarations, ethical approvals, and related materials they will not be permitted to proceed to review. **Manuscripts must be submitted through the Journal Submission Portal and clearly marked as a "Special Issue" submission; those submitted**

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through any other means may not be considered for inclusion in this special issue. If manuscripts are not up to par with the standards set by the IRRODL regarding English language, content, or relevance then they will be rejected immediately.

References

Chen, X., Xie, H., Zou, D., & Hwang, G.-J. (2020). Application and theory gaps during the rise of artificial intelligence in education. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, *1*, 100002. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2020.100002

Holmes, Wayne; Bialik, Maya; Fadel, Charles; (2023) Artificial intelligence in education. In: *Data ethics: building trust: how digital technologies can serve humanity.* (pp. 621-653). Globethics Publications.

Ouyang, F., & Jiao, P. (2021). Artificial intelligence in education: The three paradigms. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, *2*, 100020. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2021.100020

III. Timeline for the SI

Deadline for submissions: January 31st, 2024