



Introduction to *Open Praxis* Volume 14 Issue 3

EDITORIAL

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ABSTRACT

This *Open Praxis* issue includes five research papers, one innovative practice paper and one book review.

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This *Open Praxis* issue includes seven articles: five research papers, one innovative practice paper and one book review, authored by 12 researchers from 5 different countries: South Africa, Turkey, Iran, USA and Pakistan.

The first two articles explore students' affective support needs in online learning, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, when students felt specially isolated.

In the first paper, titled *(Re)considering Motivational Scaffolding: A Mixed-Method Study on Turkish Students' Perspectives on Online Learning Before and During the Pandemic*, Serpil Meri-Yılan builds upon pedagogy of care to analyze 26 Turkish university students' perceptions of online learning before the pandemic and student-teacher interaction and support during the pandemic, as their first online education experience. The valuable students' testimonies highlight the relevance of support to increase motivation, and the paper provides interesting insight about the inclusion of caring in online learning design and development.

In the second contribution *(The value of providing online students with dedicated affective support, particularly during times of crisis)*, Liesl Scheepers and Geesje Van den Berg also present an article about students' wellbeing during the pandemic. In the case study, based on the Community of Inquiry framework and the concept of social –and emotional– presence, they explore the value of the Programme Success Tutor, an affective support mechanism established at a South African ODL university. This qualitative research reports about the relevance of affective support in online learners' engagement and wellbeing.

The third paper *(Exploring English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers' Experience of Flow During Online Classes)*, by Yaser Khajavi and Parisa Abdolrezapour, presents an interview-based study about engagement in online learning –flow– that explores 24 Iranian EFL teachers' experiences during the pandemic. The authors identify and exemplify a series of drivers and barriers that will be of interest to other EFL teachers who are surely concerned about reaching flow in their online classes.

The next two papers are related to MOOCs and present studies developed in Turkey.

In the fourth paper *(Investigation of Tendency among Instructors to Conduct a Massive Open Online Course: Case of Turkey)*, Meva Bayrak Karsli and Selçuk Karaman present a survey-based study about a Turkish university faculty members' willingness, aims and proficiency perceptions for conducting MOOCs, as well as facilitators, barriers and expectations for doing so. With one third of the academics willing to conduct MOOCs, the paper identifies relevant aspects that influence this trend and provides a set of recommendations for institutions and for further studies on the topic.

In the fifth and last article in the research papers section *(Gaining an Insight into Learner Satisfaction in MOOCs: An Investigation through Blog Mining)*, Mehmet Ali Ustaoglu and Volkan Kukul focus on the learners' perspectives and explore the comments made by Turkish learners in 960 courses in the “Software Development” category on the Udeemy platform to analyze their satisfaction. The authors use text mining and visualization tools to present the clusters related to positive (a big majority), negative and neutral comments, thus helping to identify and interpret different aspects that MOOC learners value in this type of online education.

In the innovative practice paper in this issue *(Exploring Complex Concepts Through Storytelling: A Synchronous Online Health Policy Course Case Study and Recommendations for Implementing Across Disciplines)*, Corrie Whitmore and Kathryn Schild report about an innovative experience developed due to the pandemic, when the classes at the University of Alaska (USA) shifted to online. They used synchronous online storytelling, and the paper presents the steps followed and students' feedback as evidence of the effectiveness of this practice. The authors' final recommendations are of interest for other teachers willing to use this narrative approach.

The last paper, by Sajid Hussain, from Pakistan, presents a book review of *The Encyclopedia of Female Pioneers in Online Learning*, authored by Susan Bainbridge and Norine Wark, and published by Routledge in 2022. Among the 30 female academics interviewed in the book, we would like to specially mention Prof. Tian Belawati, a current member of the *Open Praxis* Editorial Board.

We hope that *Open Praxis* readers will find this new issue of interest, and we encourage all our readers to register in <https://openpraxis.org> to get informed about new issues and announcements and to contribute as authors and/or reviewers.

Special thanks from *Open Praxis* to the authors and reviewers who have contributed to this issue.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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