

Introduction to *Open Praxis* volume 11 issue 3

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This third *Open Praxis* issue in 2019, the last open issue this year –the next one will be a special issue with selected papers from the Open Education Consortium Global Conference 2019– includes five research papers, two innovative practice papers and one book review. The 8 contributions cover a variety of topics and have been submitted by a total of 25 authors from 11 different countries: Australia, Tanzania, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Turkey, Ghana, Kenya, United States of America, Cameroon, Canada and Netherlands.

In the research articles section, the first paper (*Do tutors make a difference in online learning? A comparative study in two Open Online Courses*) by Richard Frederick Heller, Edward Chilolo, Jonny Elliott, Brian Johnson, David Lipman, Victoria Ononeze and Justin Richards, presents the analysis of various dimensions (students' participation in the course forums, completion of quizzes, grades obtained, and certificates awarded) in two online courses offered by Peoples-uni, one of them tutor-led and the other one without facilitation. They only found differences in the first dimension. While cautious in interpreting the results, the authors reflect about the role of tutors and decided to focus on self-paced courses in their organization.

In the second paper (*Community of Inquiry in Web Conferencing: Relationships between Cognitive Presence and Academic Achievements*), Ünal Çakiroğlu uses the CoI framework and survey to explore the three presences in synchronous virtual meetings in a university course. The correlation study reveals the relation between cognitive presence and the final exam score. The role of the instructor in this case –differently to what was found in the previous paper– becomes more relevant.

Dealing with a different topic, the third research paper (*Correlation between familial roles and persistence of female students on distance education programmes in Ghana: Through the lens of an administrator*), by Beatrice Asante Somuah, Samson Ikinya Kariuki and Florence Muthoni Itegi, presents a correlation study that highlights the resilience of female learners that had family responsibilities, which happened to persist more in their distance education studies. The authors raise the issue to administrators, so institutions can be aware of the situation and take action towards providing student support.

The next two contributions relate to open education and open educational resources (OER).

In the first case (*Student Perceptions of Open Pedagogy: An Exploratory Study*), John Hilton III, David Wiley, Reta Chaffee, Jennifer Darrow, JoAnn Guilmett, Sarah Harper and Bryson Hilton report on a survey-based study undertaken in the USA with regards to students' perceptions of the educational value of open pedagogies, and on the impact of these methodologies in their outcomes in the courses. They also explored the changes in the perception about the instructors, the preferences for open pedagogies in the future, and the use of open licenses. The results advocate, overall, for open pedagogies; the authors encourage further research on the impact and efficacy of open pedagogies.

The last research paper (*OER Mainstreaming in Cameroon: Perceptions and Barriers*), by Michael N. Nkwenti and Ishan Sudeera Abeywardena, presents a survey-based study that considers the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) applied to OER. The authors report on the perceived usefulness

of OER and on the perceived ease of use of OER, along with attitudes and behavioural intention towards OER and perceived barriers to the adoption of OER by 393 pedagogic supervisors from Cameroon. The descriptive results show that the country is in an early stage in the adoption of OER and the authors make some recommendations at the policy level.

The innovative practice papers section presents two different contributions:

In the first one (*Innovative Arts-Based Learning Approaches adapted for Mobile Learning*), Beth Perry and Margaret Edwards present a work-in-progress where they have adapted to mobile learning four art-based instructional strategies they had previously used and tested in computer-based online learning –poetweet, photo pairing, reflective mosaic, and the six-word story–. They describe and exemplify these methodologies, and advance that they are in the process of implementing and evaluating their use in mobile learning.

The second innovative practice paper (*Developing Open Practices in Teacher Education: An Example of Integrating OER and Developing Renewable Assignments*), by Jennifer Van Allen and Stacy Katz, reports on a collaboration between librarians and faculty in the redesign of a course to include open approaches and learners' co-creation. They explain the stages of the redesign project and focus on the development of renewable assignments, which promote agency.

Finally, the issue includes a book review by Naomi Wahls, who has reviewed the eBook *Responsive Open Learning Environments: Outcomes of Research from the ROLE Project*, edited by Kroop, Mikroyannidis and Wolpers and published by Springer Open in 2015.

Special thanks from *Open Praxis* to the authors and reviewers who have contributed to this issue; we expect the papers will be of interest to our readers.