ASIAN ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITIES

37th AAOU Conference 2024

Expanding Horizons: Innovations in Open and Distance Learning

15-17 October 2024, Islamabad, Pakistan

ABSTRACT BOOK

37th Asian Association of Open Universities 2024 Conference

Abstracts Book

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37th Asian Association of Open Universities

Conference

Islamabad, Pakistan

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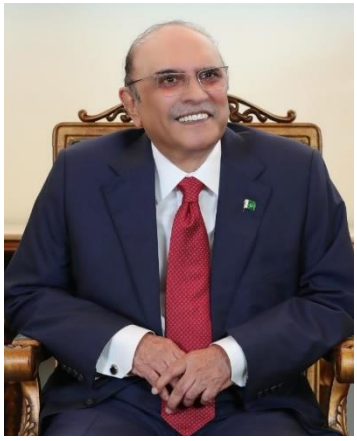
Message from Chancellor



It is a great honor for Pakistan to host the 37th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities. I extend a warm welcome to all the distinguished speakers and international delegations attending this prestigious event. The theme, "Expanding Horizons; Innovation in Open and Distance Learning," reflects our collective commitment to advancing education and fostering innovative approaches in the open and distance learning sphere. In an interconnected world where boundaries are increasingly blurred by digital transformation, education must be as accessible and inclusive as possible. This conference offers a unique platform for all of us to engage in meaningful dialogue, share experiences, and explore new approaches that will not only enhance the quality of education but also expand its reach. The innovations discussed here will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of open and distance learning, particularly in addressing the educational challenges faced by developing nations. I am confident that the collaborative spirit embodied in this gathering will help us forge stronger partnerships and bring us closer to our common goal of ensuring that quality education is available to all. The mutual exchange of ideas, strategies, and experiences will not only enhance our academic discourse but also strengthen the bonds between our countries, as we collectively work toward a more educated and enlightened future. Pakistan, a land of peace and hospitality, has always believed in the power of education to transform societies. Through the mutual exchange of ideas and expertise at this conference, we aim to advance the cause of accessible, inclusive, and high-quality education across Asia and beyond. I wish you all a productive and enriching experience in our beautiful and peaceful country.

H.E. Asif Ali Zardari
The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Chancellor, AIOU

Message from Pro-Chancellor

It is an honor to welcome the esteemed speakers, delegates, and scholars to the 37th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities. This gathering brings together some of the finest minds in open and distance learning, and I am confident that the discussions will contribute to shaping the future of education in our region and beyond. In today's world, where artificial intelligence and technological advancements are revolutionizing industries and reshaping economies, education is at the forefront of these transformations. Open and distance learning has become a vital tool in ensuring that no learner is left behind, especially in a world where knowledge is the key driver of progress. In Pakistan, we recognize the importance of equipping our citizens with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in this AI-driven technological landscape

Our government is taking significant steps to improve the quality of education, with a focus on increasing access to learning opportunities through innovative platforms and distance learning models. We are integrating AI and digital technologies into our educational frameworks to make learning more personalized, adaptive, and inclusive. These efforts are aimed at creating a more equitable system where education is available to all, regardless of location, background, or socioeconomic status. We are proud to host this conference in one of the most beautiful capitals of the world, Islamabad. It is our sincere hope that your time here will be both academically fruitful and personally enjoyable. May the discussions and collaborations at this conference help forge new pathways for delivering education in this era of unprecedented change. I wish you all a successful conference and a memorable stay in Pakistan.

Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui
Federal Minister
Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.

Message from AAOU President

It is with my greatest pleasure that I welcome you all to the 37th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU). This year the theme we raise in our conference is "Expanding Horizons: Innovations in Open and Distance Learning". The theme per se aims to ignite the power inside us, the education stakeholders and enthusiasts, to achieve our collective mission in providing broad access and quality education through innovative practices. We are now living in an era where the advancement of technology could contribute huge impacts on every aspect of our lives, including education. As the stakeholders who particularly run around the world of Open and Distance Learning (ODL), the existence of this conference would be able to remind us of transformative power of ODL in bridging gaps and reaching learners across diverse landscapes. ODL has a powerful role to help keeping the beat of education dynamic along with the rapid changes that occurs around. It also opens a pave for learners from all walks of life to 'taste' education at its best in a way that they favour the most.

We are aware that in this era of post-Covid19, we are demanded to be a creative learner and teacher who can utilise digital tools to enhance the learning experience. The pattern of digital utilisation to enhance teaching and learning process in every part of the world must be different in terms of quality, quantity, methods, schemes, etc. ODL institutions are a unique platform as it is able to reach underserved populations, including those in remote areas or individuals who face barriers to traditional education. By exploring innovative strategies, we will be able to reach what is called education for all. This commitment to inclusivity is at the heart of our mission and must remain our guiding principle as we navigate the future of education. Through our gathering and togetherness in the 37th AAOU Annual Conference, I have high expectations and hopes that we all can learn from one another, expanding the horizons of our network to obtain a stronger bond that could lead to further partnerships and learning exchange.

I heartily congratulate our colleagues and all the involved parties at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) for successfully hosting and organising this 37th Annual Conference of AAOU 2024. The commitment and dedication of AIOU in promoting open and distance learning is truly commendable, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work with their institution. This book of proceedings and abstracts is an important 'tool' to catalogue the diverse works of the 37th AAOU Annual Conference's presenters who come from different background. Every research case has its own identity and characters that would splash a fresh insight for those who read it. I thank and commend our plenary speakers and paper presenters for imbibing the culture of openness and generously sharing their expertise, research results, and insights to the other members of the community.

I wish everyone a fruitful and enjoyable conference.

Prof. Ojat Darojat, M.Bus., Ph.D.
President, The Asian Association of Open Universities/ Rector, Universitas Terbuka Indonesia

Message from Vice Chancellor

It is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to the esteemed participants of the 37th Asian Association of Open Universities Annual Conference, hosted by Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, from 15-17 October 2024. As Vice Chancellor of this esteemed institution, it is an honor to greet educators, researchers, and practitioners from around the world.

The theme of this year's conference, 'Expanding Horizons: Innovations in Open and Distance Learning,' reflects our university's proud legacy of advancing educational access and excellence. This event marks a significant milestone as we gather for the third time—following our successful hosting in 1989 and 2013—to continue pushing the boundaries of innovation in open and distance learning.

This conference provides a platform to explore new and transformative strategies that overcome geographical, socioeconomic, and educational barriers. Discussions will focus on cutting-edge technologies like virtual reality and artificial intelligence, along with inclusive pedagogical practices that have the potential to reshape education for future generations.

To all participants, I offer my heartfelt encouragement. Your commitment to enhancing educational accessibility is truly inspiring. As you engage in dialogue and exchange knowledge, remember that your contributions have the power to make a lasting impact, empowering learners worldwide.

I wish you all a successful and enriching experience at the conference.

Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood
Conference Chair
Vice Chancellor, AIOU

Conference Theme

Expanding Horizons: Innovations in Open and Distance Learning

Conference Sub-themes

- Technological Advancements in Distance Learning
- Pedagogical Innovations in Remote Education
- Inclusive Education in Open Learning Environments
- Quality Assurance and Accreditation
- Global Collaboration and Partnerships in Distance Education
- Assessment and Accreditation in Online Learning
- Lifelong Learning and Professional Development:
- Student Engagement and Success in Virtual Learning Environments
- Policy and Regulatory Frameworks for Open Education
- Future Trends and Emerging Technologies in Education
- Community and Social Aspects of Online Learning:
- Institutional advancement and innovations
- Research and innovative ODL practices.
- ODL and Human Capacity Building
- Technologies and Strategies for providing Education through ODL
- Re-considering the roles of open universities.
- Innovative delivery modes
- Learner support systems
- Increasing access and quality in ODL
- Micro-credentials and short learning programs

Keynote Speakers

Professor Peter Scott

Professor Peter Scott is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). His career reflects a deep commitment to open and distance learning, characterised by innovative leadership in various academic and administrative roles. He commenced his career in academia as a researcher and lecturer at the University of Sheffield, UK. His expertise in open learning innovation was further honed during a 20-year tenure at The Open University, UK, where he directed The Knowledge Media Institute, specialising in Artificial Intelligence and Education. In 2015, Professor Scott joined the University of Technology Sydney in Australia as Pro Vice-Chancellor, after which he became the President of Athabasca University, Canada in 2022.

Across all his roles, he has been a pioneering force in educational change, focusing on new modes of learning and teaching, particularly in the digital realm. His work has significantly contributed to the global transformation of education through technology.

Professor Hamish Coates

Hamish Coates is the Executive Dean of Holmes Institute, Australia's largest independent higher education institution. He was a Tenured Professor at Tsinghua Institute of Education, and Director of the Higher Education Research Division. He was Professor of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne, Founding Director of Higher Education Research at the Australian Council for Educational Research, and Program Director at the LH Martin Institute for Tertiary Leadership and Management. He concentrates on improving higher education quality and productivity.

Professor Zia-ul-Qayyum

Zia Ul-Qayyum, Executive Director, Higher Education Commission, Govt of Pakistan is a man of exceptional caliber with eminent intellectual standing, proved track record of excellence and a source of inspiration for youth. An alumnus of many prestigious seats of higher learning, including the University of Leeds, the UK, Professor Zia brings along teaching, research, and management experience of almost three decades. An educationist of national and international acclaim, Professor Zia has to his credit conceiving, planning, establishing, and developing Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and R&D organizations. Apart from his administrative and management role in nascent institutions in their formative years, he has been an active academician and a proactive researcher. His area of interest in computing research has been artificial intelligence with a special focus on machine learning and information retrieval. Institutional development and managing administrative-cum-academic responsibilities especially at embryonic institutions of higher learning has been a hallmark of his professional skills and abilities. During the last decade or so, he has been working as Vice Chancellors including Allama Iqbal Open University and head of institutions/campuses and managing a large number of faculty members to achieve organizational objectives. Professor Zia is tremendously contributing to his society by passing on the latest developments in the fields of artificial intelligence, data mining, machine learning, computational linguistics and localization through his research work published in reputed research journals and international conferences. Professor Zia also elected as the first president of COMSTECH Inter-Islamic Network on Virtual Universities (CINVU). He is a creationist, technologist and strong believer of quality education with technological integration and an accessible medium for all. He would like to transform education system of Pakistan through innovation and technology.

Professor Ojat Darojat

Prof. Ojat Darojat, M.Bus., Ph.D., has been serving as the Rector of Universitas Terbuka (UT) since July 26, 2017, and was reelected for a second term from 2021 to 2025. He has significantly contributed to expanding access to higher education in Indonesia, earning numerous accolades for his efforts, including the Best University Leader in the Obsession Awards 2023 and recognition as the best education leader in Asia for 2022 by CEO Insight Asia magazine. He also holds the position of President of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) for the second consecutive term 2023-2025 and ICDE Focal Point of Quality Network for Asia region. In addition to his administrative roles, he has a strong academic background with various publications focusing on quality assurance in distance education, entrepreneurship, curriculum of blended learning, and the implementation of technological infrastructure in distance higher education institutions. He has also served as a reviewer for international journals and participated in various educational organizations globally.

Professor Paul Prinsloo

Paul Prinsloo is currently a Research Professor in Open and Distance eLearning (ODeL) in the Department of Business Management, College of Economic and Management Sciences, University of South Africa (Unisa). He is a visiting professor at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), a Research Associate for Contact North/Contact Nord (Canada) and the University of Bergen (Norway), a member of the Center for Open Education Research at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg (Germany), an elected member of the Fellows' Council and a Senior Fellow of the European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN), and serves on several editorial boards. Paul has published numerous articles in the fields of teaching and learning, student success in distributed learning contexts, the ethical collection, analysis, and use of student data in learning analytics, and digital identities.

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1-Effect of Online Resources on English Language Learning Among Distance Learners at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU)

Islamabad, Pakistan

Dr. Samiullah (AIOU)

Abstract

Progress in this world can be made by raising quality of education. Academic activities are shifted to online resources which are the only tools for students to continue their educational process. AIOU has taken an initiative to raise the standards of education by introducing the use of technology in the teaching learning process. The objective of this study was to find the effect of online English resources on English language skills at university level. A quasi-experimental design was used. The design of study was pre-test, post-test, non-equivalent control group in which two groups were selected, one was control group and other was experimental group. Experimental group was given a treatment of six weeks by using technology which included online resources in English language. Convenience sampling technique was used for the selection of sample. A sample of 60 students of B. Ed was selected. Each class of experimental group and controlled group comprised of 30 students. English was selected as a subject of study. Instrument used for collection of data was pre-test and post-test. Same test was used for pre-test and post-test. The test was validated by the experts of Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Pakistan. The reliability of test was determined by Kuder Richardson's (KR-21) formula. The research tool was pilot tested on random population other than sample of study. Reliability Coefficient's value was calculated by using SPSS and it was 0.748. The results of experiment showed that the mean scores of students in post-test which were taught by using Online Resources were significantly higher than those taught by using traditional method. Adequate access to online resources should be provided to teachers and students. It was recommended that for educational purposes online technology should be used at university level in all other programs offered by AIOU in an effective way.

2-Global Horizons: Transformative Experiences of Mastering Academia Through International Conferences

Widya Rizky Pratiwi (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This research aims to explore the experiences of three Universitas Terbuka master's students participating in an international scientific conference through a qualitative case study approach. The primary focus was comparing previous and current affairs and the impact of cognitive contributions on students' academic and professional development. Data was collected by distributing questionnaires and conducting in-depth interviews by analysing conference activity reports and recording their feelings and views. Data analysis used a qualitative approach with thematic coding to extract critical patterns and themes. The findings showed that all participants had no previous experience in international conferences. Although initially faced with challenges and uncertainty, their participation resulted in an extraordinary experience. Participants tried to do their best, and they motivated themselves to be brave and confident. Participants experienced improvements in speaking and listening skills, writing and reading skills in scientific articles, and expanded academic networks and collaboration. With a variety of s, students explored a variety of topics, each with their own unique contribution. Their general impression reflected excitement and deep satisfaction. This international conference significantly increased academic sense, broadened scientific encounter experience, and provided valuable contributions to their thesis writing. This current research contributed to valuable insight into the potential of international conferences as a means of academic development for graduate students. The results help educational institutions further consider the importance of supporting student participation in international forums, improving the quality of their research, and expanding the impact of higher education in Indonesia.

4-Unveiling the Dynamics: Structural Empowerment as a Moderator in the Nexus of Servant Leadership and Academic Staff Retention within Higher Education Settings

Aneela Sheikh (University Sains Malaysia)
Muhammad Farhan Tabassum (University of Lahore)
Saadia Mehmood ul Hassan (University of Lahore)

Abstract

In the rapidly evolving environment of developing countries such as Pakistan, it is essential to prioritize the retention of academic staff in higher education institutions, even though this aspect is sometimes disregarded. This study explores the complex connection between servant leadership, faculty retention, and the under researched variable "structural empowerment" in Pakistan's educational sector. This research reveals key insights by conducting a thorough survey of 321 faculty members from 10 private higher education institutions in Lahore, Pakistan. While acknowledging the significant influence of servant leadership on academic staff retention, it also highlights the intricate relationship with structural empowerment. These findings not only enhance the academic discussion but also provide practical advice for institutions seeking to strengthen their methods for retaining academic staff in the constantly evolving educational environment of developing countries. Structural empowerment should also be tested in virtual higher education institutions, as it equips the academic staff with information and resources.

5-Transformative Peace Education in Elementary English Textbooks in Punjab, Pakistan

Sidra Rizwan (AIOU)

Abstract

In the context of Pakistan's multifaceted societal challenges, including terrorism, corruption, and violence, the necessity for transformative educational approaches is evident. Peace education emerges as a pivotal strategy for conflict resolution and prevention, aiming to alter the perspectives and behaviors of the youth. This study examines the integration of UNESCO's peace education themes within the English textbooks used at the elementary level in Punjab's public schools, assessing their potential to reshape student attitudes and behaviors towards peace and conflict. The primary aim of this study was to analyze how peace education themes are incorporated within 6th to 8th grade English textbooks and to evaluate the extent to which these themes facilitate the transformation of students into peace-promoting individuals. This qualitative study adopted a framework content analysis approach to examine the extent of peace education themes within selected textbooks. The research also involved thematic analysis of interviews with educators to triangulate the findings, providing a comprehensive view of thematic representation in the curriculum. The analysis highlighted a significant emphasis on the theme 'Think Positive', which was predominantly represented across the textbooks. However, there were notable disparities in the frequency and depth of coverage of other peace education themes. Particularly, 'Be Your True Self' and 'Care for the Planet' were minimally addressed. These findings suggest that while the textbooks aim to embed peace education, the coverage is uneven, leading to a potential gap in achieving comprehensive peace education outcomes. Recommendations for curriculum developers include enhancing the visibility and applicability of underrepresented themes and ensuring that peace education permeates all aspects of the educational experience, thereby equipping students with the necessary skills and attitudes for peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

9-Mentoring as a Hybrid Source of Creating Learning Communities at Primary School Level

Uzma Mazhar (NUML)
Salman Khalil (AIOU)

Abstract

Mentoring is offered as a source of professional development mechanism at primary school level in the province of Punjab. Mentoring is performing the implicit task of connecting teachers and also sharing of knowledge, experiences, and skills through face to face and digital platforms for enhancement of pedagogy, learning activities and assessment along with providing guidance about teaching methods, assessment and classroom behaviors. The objectives of this paper were to explore the perceptions of teachers and their mentors about learning communities through mentoring and also the effectiveness of mentoring as source of learning community for professional development of teachers at primary level in Punjab. The study was qualitative in nature. Phenomenological design was applied to explore and describe the effectiveness of mentoring as a hybrid source of learning communities. The population of the study were 1469 Primary school teachers teaching in both girls' and boys' Primary schools of Rawalpindi Tehsil and 30 AEOs working as mentors. Purposive sampling technique was used. Data was collected from 30 teachers and 10 mentors. Data was collected through interviews from teachers and mentors. It was found that both teachers and mentors agree that mentoring is implicitly connecting teachers and engaging them in professional development through creating learning communities through physical meetings and digital platforms as WhatsApp groups and through SIS App . The majority of young teachers were found satisfied and considered it positive source of professional development as member of learning community while some teachers felt it challenging to connect with other counterparts specially through digital media platforms. It was suggested that teachers may be grouped on the basis of their age, gender, and experience to make it more acceptable and get more advantages.

10-An Investigation into Relationship Between Metacognitive Awareness and Academic Achievement of Prospective Teachers at Teacher Education Programmes in Pakistan

Abdul Basit Rana (UVAS)

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the association between prospective teachers' metacognitive awareness and their academic progress while enrolled in teacher education programs in Pakistan. The research was primarily descriptive. Furthermore, it was a correlational investigation. Those enrolled in teacher education programs at the bachelor's and master's degree levels provided the information for this research. A simple random selection technique was used to choose a sample of 150 potential instructors from two public sector universities. The sample included 80 B.Ed. Level prospective teachers and 70 M.Ed. Level prospective teachers. Sindhu P.G. developed and standardized a tool called the metacognitive awareness inventory, employed in this study (2011). It comprises thirty items that are rated on a 5-point scale. The cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of prospective teachers was used to assess their academic achievement. Pilot testing and expert opinion were used to guarantee that the instrument's validity and reliability were not compromised. Smart PLS 3.2.2 was used to analyze the data. The t-test in SPSS (26.0) was used for group comparison, and PLS-SEM (Partial least squares structural equation modeling) was used to measure associations. Using statistical research, it was discovered that prospective teachers are participating in B.Ed. And M.Ed. Level teacher education programs have significantly different levels of metacognitive awareness. The metacognitive awareness of prospective teachers at the M.Ed. was shown to be higher than that of prospective teachers at the B.Ed. Level. It was also shown a significant beneficial association between prospective teachers' metacognitive awareness and their academic achievement. The practical ramifications of the findings and ideas for further research are discussed in this study.

11-Including All Students in Education: Students with Cerebral Palsy

Abdul Basit Rana (UVAS)

Abstract

Countries around the globe are working to meet Sustainability Development Goals 2030. Goal 4 reaffirms all students' right to a quality inclusive education and underpins the other 16 goals' attainment. Yet achieving quality, inclusive education continues to challenge the education providers without reference to economic riches or location on the globe (UNESCO, 2020).

Countries are working with great endeavours to ensure all students can access and participate in a quality inclusive education program. Yet significant proportions of students with disabilities continue to be excluded from an education alongside their peers without a disability across all but a few countries, or they receive an education that is quantitatively and qualitatively inferior to their peers without disability. While the teacher's attitudes towards inclusive education are positive, they are less positive about their professional knowledge and skills to support students with a disability (Monico et al., 2020; Sloviita, 2020). Yet, not to do so excludes students with a disability from their peers' privileges (e.g., developing independence to benefit from and contribute to their community).

This paper seeks to address the economic and moral imperative of developing a teaching profession that can handle all students' learning needs in the local school. It will focus on students diagnosed with cerebral palsy and illustrate how through developing a positive, problem-solving community, teachers can support students, enhance their professional standing, and bring communities along with them to build a more inclusive society.

17-Transformation and Reflection on Teaching Methods of Distance Art Education in the Context of Digitization

Han Yonggang (Inner Mongolia Open University, China)

Abstract

The rapid development of digitalization has had a profound impact on education, leading to a major shift in teaching methods in distance art education. This paper explores this transformation process, noting the rise of online teaching based on traditional art education. Teachers are using various online platforms and tools to innovate teaching methods, such as virtual demonstrations and interactive discussions. This shift brings opportunities, such as expanding educational resources and breaking through the limitations of time and space, but it also faces challenges, such as technical problems and difficulties in assessing teaching effectiveness. We need to think deeply about how to guarantee the quality of art education in the new environment, fully utilize the advantages of technology, and cultivate students' creativity and aesthetic ability. Through reflection and practice, we can promote the continuous development of distance art education to meet the new needs of the new era.

24-Enhancing Communication Skills Among Open and Distance Learners through Community Service Learning

Nazirah Md Yusof (Wawasan Open University)
Jasmine Emmanuel (Wawasan Open University)

Abstract

Enhancing effective communication skills among ODL students is vital for their personal and professional growth. Employers highly value strong communication abilities, which are essential for career advancement. This paper investigates the communication skills of ODL learners in a community service-learning course. It explores methods to improve them through various assessments, including self-reflection essays, tutor observations, and feedback. This study adopted a qualitative approach. After completing their community service group project, students wrote self-reflection essays on their learning experiences, personal growth, and ability to self-reflect. Additionally, qualitative interviews were conducted with tutors and selected ODL students to assess their communication skills further and identify potential improvement strategies. Findings indicated that ODL students display diverse communication skills, influenced by cultural and linguistic diversity from their community service-learning group projects. Tutor observations corroborated these findings, showing that while some students articulate ideas clearly, others struggle with engagement and expression. However, self-reflection essays proved effective in fostering improvement. This study highlights the importance of addressing communication skills in open-distance education and demonstrates the efficacy of diverse assessment methods. By utilizing self-reflection essays, tutor observations, and student feedback, instructors can create enriching learning environments that cater to the varied needs of ODL students. Improving communication skills enhances academic performance and equips students with essential competencies for success in their current and future careers. Future research should explore innovative approaches to enhancing communication skills through assessment and intervention in online learning contexts, ultimately contributing to the development of ODL students' communication skills

26-Inclusive Education Through Multiple Intelligences Universal Design of Learning (MIUDL)

Ayesha Perveen (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

This paper develops a theoretical framework for aligning Gardener's Multiple Intelligence (MI) theory with Universal Design of Learning (UDL) to facilitate multiple learning variations of students. The study first analyzes the generic framework of UDL based on the three multiple means: Representation, Expression and Engagement; and then aligns MI with UDL. The blend of the two is named as Multiple Intelligences Universal Design of Learning (MIUDL). MIUDL presents a theoretical model that can facilitate MI deficiencies through face-to-face, online and blended learning (BL) instructional design/s. This is done through listing the nature of activities for each intelligence aligned with multiple means of representation, expression and engagement. The study suggests that BL can best facilitate MIUDL through the maximum utilization of technology as well as real time human-interaction. Therefore, how MIUDL based blended learning instruction design can be developed has also been explained. Experimenting MIUDL would provide a deep understanding of students' learning abilities, help improve instructional designs and create new technological possibilities for monitoring students' cognitive learning paths. An adaptive instructional design based on MIUDL would help endorse multiliteracies for a more inclusive educational system around the world.

27-Research on Innovation of Elderly Education Models from the Perspective of Active Aging

Qiong Zhang (Jiangsu Open University)

Abstract

With the increasing ageing situation in China, the state pays more and more attention to the education and development of the elderly and has elevated the active response to population ageing to a national strategy. Elderly education is an important part of the national strategy. Taking China as a case study, based on the analysis of policy texts, current problems, and needs of the elderly, this study constructs an innovative model of elderly education.

Through LDA theme analysis and text relationship mining on five key elderly policy texts in China in recent years, it is found that the subject, object, venue, channels, and resources have become high-frequency focus points in the field of elderly education. The "society-community-institution" shows close connectivity and interaction, reflecting multi-party collaboration in elderly education. China's elderly education meets the problems such as insufficient learning opportunities, single learning paths, homogenization of learning resources, and digital divide. A study on the learning needs of 856 elderly learners in China in terms of teaching content, media, environment, and evaluation initially formed a portrait of the learning characteristics of the elderly.

Guided by Blended Learning Theory and Constructivism Learning Theory, this study endeavors to construct a "4-3-4" model of elderly education based on OMO(Online Merge Offline), i.e., four fields of "Online, Offline, School and Community"; three learning modes of "Online independent Learning - Offline Interactive Communication-Progressive Transfer Internalization"; a closed-loop ecosystem with "rich teaching content, diversified teaching methods, aging friendly teaching environment, participatory teaching evaluation". The comprehensive innovation in ideas, technology, and process can promote the transformation of Open Universities for the Elderly towards high-level empowerment and move closer to the central stage of lifelong learning.

29-The Study on the Relationship Between Open Education Learning Behavior and Academic Record——Taking a certain Engineering Course at Beijing Open University as an Example

Qian Shan (Beijing Open University)

Abstract

With the continuous development of Internet technology, online education resources have changed the form and content of traditional education. Online education has become the main teaching form in open education, showing its advantages. It can break the restrictions of time and space to learn at any time and anywhere, but there are also certain problems. This paper firstly divides online learning behavior into five aspects: forum learning behavior, login frequency, assignments completion behavior, learning time preference, and quizzes completion behavior. Then through correlation analysis and difference analysis respectively, it is found that learning behavior, such as good assignments completion, more posts, and higher learning efficiency in the morning, has a positive impact on academic record. Conversely, some online learning behaviors have a negative impact. Finally, it provide strategies to change learning behavior and improve grades.

30-The Impact of Digital Divide on the Educational Outcomes of Deprived Children in Low-Cost Private Sector Schools of Pakistan; Post COVID-19 Era

Mehak Shahzad (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated existing inequalities in access to education, particularly for deprived children in Pakistan. Children drop-out rate from schools inflated, learning level of students decreased and more than 10,000 low-cost private-sector schools were permanently closed in Pakistan due to pandemic emergency. These problems questioned the sustainability of schools in Pakistan and put the future of millions of students on stake. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of the digital divide on the educational outcomes and psycho-social challenges for children in the post-COVID-19 period. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research examines how limited access to digital resources has affected academic performance, and created psycho-social challenges for the children. Furthermore, this study identifies specific challenges faced in accessing online education, and explores potential strategies to mitigate these issues. The study focuses on middle school children (grade 6-8) studying in low-cost private sector schools in Lahore, Pakistan. Five low-cost private sector schools from different areas of Lahore have been used to gather the data. Children from deprived backgrounds have experienced substantial setbacks in their educational progress due to inadequate access to technology and internet connectivity. Major challenges include lack of digital devices, insufficient internet access, socioeconomic problems and inadequate digital literacy among students and educators. The study highlights the need for targeted interventions, such as providing affordable digital devices, expanding internet infrastructure, and implementing digital literacy programs. By addressing these challenges, policymakers and educational stakeholders can help bridge the digital divide and improve educational outcomes and psycho-social conditions of deprived children in Pakistan in the post-pandemic era.

32-Examining the Impact of Student Evaluation of Teachers on Anxiety Levels in English Language Speaking and Writing

Shahzad Khan (Lincoln University College)

Abstract

This research examines the correlation between student evaluation of teachers (SET) and anxiety levels in English language speaking and writing abilities among BS English students in Peshawar, Pakistan. The aims of this study are to investigate the link between speaking English proficiency and anxiety, as well as to analyze the association between writing English proficiency and anxiety. The study postulates that there are statistically significant correlations between SET (speaking effectiveness and writing effectiveness) and anxiety in both oral communication and written expression. Using a quantitative study methodology, a total of 154 undergraduate students were randomly chosen from BS English language courses in KPK, Pakistan. The data were gathered using a well-crafted questionnaire that included established measures of emotional intelligence, socioeconomic status, and anxiety related to English speaking and writing. A small and inverse relationship was found between SET and anxiety levels in both English Speaking (ELCAS) and writing (EWAS). It indicated that less positive evaluation of teachers is related to more anxiety. Although these connections are interesting, they are not statistically significant. This shows how many factors affect student tests and how minor language anxiety is. Anxiety does have an effect on how good a teacher is seen, but other factors like teaching methods, ties between teachers, and course material may have a bigger effect. Plus more to find out what the cause-and-effect link is between anxiety and teacher ratings, more research needs to be done. The results also need to be interpreted with culture and educational differences in mind. This study helps us understand the complicated relationship between student ratings and worry in language learning settings. It also stresses the importance of using individualized teaching methods to improve student well-being and academic success.

33-Development of Virtual Learning Contents and Learning Information Sharing Platform with Learning Analytics and Learning Competency Management

Kwang Sik Chung (Korea National Open University)
Chung Hun Lee (Korea National Open University)
Seong Hwan Bae (Korea National Open University)
Jae Jun Yoo (Korea National Open University)
Yeon Sin Kim (Korea National Open University)
Seong Il Cho (Korea National Open University)
Su Bong Ahn (Korea National Open University)

Abstract

Especially, In the field of higher education, needs for strengthening the learning capabilities of all students and citizens with EdTech is expected to continue to increase. The demand for learning analytics from researchers and institutions in the field of higher education is increasing. But attempts to nationally share the learning analytics data essential for learning analytics are insufficient or there are no cases of sharing. Therefore, it is necessary to design and build a platform for sharing virtual learning content and higher education learning analytics data.

In learning information sharing platform that consists learning competency management system, learning analytics system and virtual learning contents management system, a learning cloud environment as a way to share non-verbal virtual learning contents is proposed and virtual learning contents platform that can be shared regardless of language problems and cultural barriers, so the non-verbal virtual learning contents are the most suitable learning contents for making learning interactions between a learner and learning contents, stimulating learner's learning motivation and accumulating learning analytics data. The learning analytics big-data sharing system built in the learning cloud operates and manages only learning activity data that can be used to analyze a learner learning activity. Learning competency management system manages standard measures and common, required, and optional learning history data for learning life-cycle from the perspective of learning welfare such as learner retraining, reemployment, and liberal arts education. Learning competency management system manages learning competency, including diagnosing and supplementing learners' learning results, providing guidance for realizing goals, and presenting similar cases.

34-Adaptive Learning Technologies in Android-Based Quranic Studies Applications

Lubna Iftikhar (Government College Women University, Sialkot)

Abstract

Android smartphones are used by millions of Muslims globally for everyday functions, including education. In the context of Quranic studies, these technologies have the potential to revolutionize traditional learning by providing interactive, engaging, and efficient learning tools accessible via Android-based Android users now have access to an abundance of Quranic studies applications that provide an easy and accessible means of learning the Quran. Adaptive learning strategies are being more often used in Quranic study programs for Android devices in order to accommodate a range of learning paces and styles. These applications give students a personalized learning experience so that every person may interact with the content in a way that best meets their needs. In Quranic studies, it is very important to grasp the complexity of language, pronunciation, and interpretation. By offering students individualized and captivating learning experiences, adaptive learning technologies have the potential to completely transform the study of the Quran. These questions will be covered in this article. 1. How might individualized learning in Quranic studies be improved by adaptive learning technologies? 2. What challenges and limitations does the user encounter? The method applied is to synthesize data from the literature review, user experience analysis, and technical evaluation to present a comprehensive overview of the topic. The incorporation of adaptive learning technologies in Quranic studies applications for Android is examined in this research. It looks at the possible advantages, difficulties, and implications of this strategy, emphasizing how modern technologies might change conventional approaches to Quranic instruction. This has the potential to enable people to strengthen their relationship with the Quran, better their comprehension of its teachings, raise student engagement levels, and improve educational results.

37-Smart Education Empowers Integrated Foreign Language Teaching Model in China: Construction, Effectiveness and Strategies

Chunrong Zhao (Beijing Open University)

Abstract

Smart Education advocates deep integration between modern technology and educational practice, representing a forward-looking and leading educational philosophy in China. With the rapid development of artificial intelligent technologies and top-down government policy support, Smart Education has been flourishing in China in the past ten years. Smart Education represents a critical path towards educational digital transformation in China. In the AIGC (AI-Generated Content) era, large language models can simulate foreign language application scenarios, demonstrate standard pronunciation, generate instant feedback and evaluations and provide personalized learning instruction based on big data analysis. Grounded in the creation of a language intelligence-empowered smart teaching environment, driven by an "output-oriented" smart evaluation system and framed within an integrated smart foreign language teaching paradigm, the Integrated Smart Foreign Language Teaching Model tailored for personalized learning is a practical application of smart teaching in subject-specific education, facilitating high-quality development in foreign language instruction in China. The preliminary results of a one-year empirical study proved that the multi-modal foreign language teaching mode empowered by smart teaching can improve the learning outcomes of college English courses, and learners have a high degree of satisfaction with this teaching mode. Confronted with the challenges of deepening Smart Education, this study proposes application strategies from five dimensions: smart foreign language teaching ecology, smart teaching evaluation system, feedback and interaction mechanisms, smart transformation of teaching paradigms, and teachers' digital literacy, offering valuable practical insights for the implementation of Smart Education in the Open University students contexts in China.

38-Embracing the Digital Shift: A Comprehensive Analysis of Open and Distance Learning Practices in the Modern Educational Landscape

Sarengaole Bayinjirigala (Inner Mongolia Open University)

Abstract

The landscape of education has undergone a significant transformation with the advent of Open and Distance Learning practices. Traditional face-to-face classroom interactions have given way to online platforms and tools, marking a new norm in educational delivery. This shift has accelerated the adoption of educational technology and exposed deficiencies in existing infrastructure, necessitating a reconfiguration of curricula and enhanced professional development for educators in online instruction. Innovations in learning management systems and online instructional tools have become critical for creating interactive and seamless virtual classrooms, thereby improving learner engagement and outcomes. Educators have had to innovate their pedagogical strategies, integrating multimedia resources and interactive tools to enhance student participation and learning. Assessment methods have evolved towards more holistic and flexible approaches, emphasizing ongoing learning and feedback. The importance of robust student support services has been underscored, with institutions expanding their virtual support infrastructure to cater to the diverse needs of remote learners. Accessibility in online education has become a central focus, ensuring that course materials and platforms are inclusive for students with disabilities. Global collaboration in education has been fostered, enriching the educational experience through the sharing of best practices and resources. The accessibility and flexibility of open and distance learning have significantly impacted lifelong learning, providing valuable resources for professionals and individuals looking to upskill or reskill. The potential for cost reduction through online platforms has also been realized, benefiting both institutions and students.

50-Mimicking Virtual Classroom – A Framework and a Case Study of a Visual Interactive Textbook (VIBook) in Business Statistics

Arshad Taseen (Bishop's University)

Abstract

Post Covid-19 period has seen an exponential growth in distance learning education. They offer clear advantage in reduced tuition fees and offering flexibility to students who must work for support while studying or taking courses from a remote institution. Even in-person universities are increasingly accommodating such students by offering synchronous (virtual classrooms) and asynchronous courses.

Synchronous courses have an advantage, in that students have additional resource -- watching a live lecture being animated with timely visual aids and emphasis with voice and body language. Students can also interact with the professor and fellow students to get timely answers to questions raised. Synchronous method, however demands that students follow a strict time schedule that many students are unable to do.

In order to mitigate this, 60- to 90-minute video lectures, recorded using PowerPoint or a conferencing platform are posted but they suffer from student engagement. Established research suggests that students make it less than halfway through videos longer than 9 minutes. This paper presents an alternate solution in the form of a visual interactive text book (VIBook) -- a subject-specific research-recommended course-design that captures and mimics live classroom with all the activities inherent in it. This encapsulated VIBook plays a better role compared to any traditional static book for distance learning. It brings asynchronous course in par with its synchronous counterpart and may be superior in many ways.

This paper presents a framework with a case study demonstrating a VIBook for undergraduate Business Statistics. The paper describes the elements of the book having audio, video and textual content; gamified knowledge testing; interactive apps for “what-if” analysis; and a format for assignments to strengthen learning. Student feedback and challenges in preparation of the VI Book is shared

52-A Framework of AI Integration in Higher Education

Muhammad Zaheer (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

By the end of the year 2022, we heard about ChatGPT, which was the first Artificial Intelligence Text Generator (AITG). Initially, academics did not pay much attention. But AITGs bombarded us in 2023, and hype persists. AI is currently a buzzword. Academicians and institutions are equally imperiled by these AI tools' capabilities and services. There are currently thousands of AI applications and websites available. The question is, how should academia respond?

This conceptual paper proposes a framework of AI integration in higher education in the context of Open and Distance Learning (ODL). It is emphasized that teachers should be given training and resources to academia to exploit the opportunities offered by AI tools, instead of fearing Ai we need to embrace the change.

53-Study on Transformation of Medical Education through New Technologies

Hadiqa Qaisar (HBS Medical College, Islamabad)
Laib Akram (Hbs Medical and Dental College, Islamabad)

Abstract

Medical education is undergoing a period of great transformation due to technological advancements. Medical students now have access to a wide range of resources and tools that improve their study skills. Technology has completely changed the way medical education is taught. Students can now participate in interactive learning experiences, collaborate with peers from around the world, and access the latest medical information with just a few clicks.

Many studies have discussed the future of medical education, including the pros and cons of this digitalization. Many medical schools offer courses using modern teaching methods, such as classroom teaching and presentations. These programs are usually supervised by experienced faculty members to provide quality undergraduate medical education, but some medical school faculty members are unable to provide virtual education to students and are unable to guide and keep students in line with advanced technologies to prepare for the future. Given the rapid pace of the medical field and the continuous integration of new technologies, medical education must adapt to equip future physicians with the skills and knowledge they need to deal with evolving practice patterns, advances in disease diagnosis and treatment, and groundbreaking advances in medicine. This integration of technology has made medical education more dynamic, efficient, and accessible to aspiring medical professionals.

7-Comparative Study of the Perception of the Existence of Glass Between Males and Females in Higher Educational Institutions

Saima Afzal (Consultant Educational Master Trainer)
Ahmed Qureshi (Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology Islamabad)

Abstract

This study was conducted in the federal chartered universities of Pakistan. The main objective of the study was to find out the existence of glass ceiling for females and males and to find out which type of glass ceiling is faced by both the genders. Data was collected from the faculty members to find out the perception of the existence of glass ceiling in males and females. The study remains confined about the perception of males and females faculty members about gender biases, harassment, social structure and provincialism. For males, the highest reason of glass ceiling was provincialism and the lowest was the gender biases. For females the highest reason was the gender biases and the lowest was provincialism. To find the difference between the perception of the existence of glass ceiling t-test was applied and to find out the difference of perception for between males and females for gender biases, harassment, social structure and provincialism descriptive analysis (Mean) was applied. The study was carried out about the perception of glass ceiling with respect to the experience of faculty members. The findings brought forward showed that gender biases ranked the topmost reason of the glass ceiling followed by provincialism. The data was collected through questionnaire and four hundred and eighty-four usable questionnaires were analyzed statistically. The qualitative aspect of the study was covered through focused group discussion and open-ended question which revealed that women are not provided with the special facilities they needed to carry on with the job without any stress. The major recommendations were the change in the policy of hiring and protection of women through law for harassment. It was also recommended that women be provided with the special facilities required to them for stress free environment.

60-Exploring the Impact of Academic Burnout on the Mental Health of Distance Learners

Nurul Hidayah Binti

Mohamad Farok

Abstract

With the educational system shifting towards greater flexibility and accessibility through distance learning, some students found it challenging to cope with the academic demands and pressures, which posed a threat to their mental well-being. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of academic burnout on the mental health system among distance learners in an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institution. A total of 223 distance learners aged 18 and above were recruited through the convenience sampling method. The study recruited participants from one of the ODL institutes in Malaysia. Participants completed a self-report survey through a Google Form with the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey to measure burnout and the DASS-21 to measure the mental health system among the student population. The data from Google Form were imported into SPSS v29 for descriptive analysis and were further analysed using SMART-PLS Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the influence of academic burnout on the stress, anxiety, and depression dimensions of the DASS-21. The outcome of the study showed that academic burnout was indeed a significant predictor of higher levels of depression, stress, and anxiety among distance learners. Thus, this study suggested that academic burnout was a significant predictive factor of the poor mental health system of distance learners. Since academic burnout was confirmed as a risk factor for students compromised mental health, ODL institutions and relevant bodies need to take notice and explore ways to help improve students' mental well-being. These efforts might have involved offering counselling, online resources, and support programs to better support the success and well-being of their distance learners.

61-The growth of teachers under the mode of distance education in the digital age：ideas and practices

Meixiu Zhou (Zhejiang Open University)

Abstract

Distance education has experienced the developmental changes from correspondence, one-way radio and television transmission to the digital media era. The new educational environment opened up in the digital era has given distance education a new impetus and a new digital modality, prompting distance education to face the new needs of objectives, modes, contents, paths and evaluation. By establishing the educational concepts of diversified value integration, dynamic generation of content knowledge, and continuous interactive development, distance education teachers have turned to focus on digital construction of professional-based curriculum knowledge, intensive integration of interaction-based teaching resources, and application-based data integration and empowerment, in order to promote the professional growth of distance education teachers through open integration and mutual enhancement of teaching.

62-Dilemmas and Solutions of Learned Helplessness in English Learning among Open and Distant Learners after Covid-19 Period

Weijian Tang (Jiangsu Open University)

Abstract

In online English courses in open education, due to the impact of COVID-19, the general objectives and teaching methods have changed. As a result, some open and distant learners feel learned helplessness in the process of English learning and of course, the changes directly affect their learning effectiveness. This essay analyzes the current situation of open learners studying English online, as well as a series of learned helplessness manifestations such as passive emotions, negative cognition, and improper behavior, discusses the multiple causes of learned helplessness, and proposes interventions to address learners' feelings of learned helplessness in the process of learning English based on the uniqueness of English learning in open education.

After the COVID-19 period, open and distant learners show signs of learned helplessness in their studies, such as low self-efficacy, low achievement motivation, and frequent negative emotions. These phenomena have various causes, such as changes in the English teaching mode since the 2010s, the relatively rigid teaching methods of open and distant education. What is more, open education learners are always the learners that have limited successful learning experiences in their past English learning process. Also, open education learners have difficulties attributing their learning failures correctly. To some extent, the one-sided learning evaluation modes also influence the learners in a negative way. Although Covid-19 period is over, people still suffer from its aftermaths from time to time. In response to these challenges, teachers and teaching organizers in open education should firstly establish a scientific evaluation mechanism, while also creating a positive learning environment. In addition, teachers and teaching organizers must pay more attention to open education learners, especially to their emotions and psychological states. Open and distant learners need more guide and instruction.

63-Empowering Lifelong Learning and Professional Growth: Integrating Professional Certifications in Flexible ODL Programs Amidst Evolving Workforce Demands

Raziana Che Aziz (Open University Malaysia)
Mohd MD Ninggal (Open University Malaysia)
Ahmad Izanee Awang

Abstract

In today's rapidly evolving job market, Open and Distance learning (ODL) institutions must innovate to prepare students effectively for professional success. This paper examines the strategic adaptation of an ODL university in integrating flexible learning models with industry-recognized professional certifications to promote lifelong learning and professional development. Grounded in Constructivist Learning Theory and Self-Determination Theory, the study explores how these integrations enhance student engagement, academic performance, and career prospects. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through surveys, interviews, and academic performance records from students enrolled in three selected programs. The results indicate that the integration of professional certifications significantly boosts student motivation, engagement, and academic achievement. Additionally, these certifications are highly valued by employers, providing graduates with a competitive edge in the job market. The study highlights the flexibility of ODL programs in accommodating diverse learning preferences and life commitments, supporting continuous professional growth. It offers insights into best practices for ODL institutions aiming to align educational offerings with industry demands. This research underscores the potential of professional certifications to transform ODL into a powerful platform for lifelong learning and career advancement, meeting the dynamic needs of the global workforce.

66-Assessing the Assessments: A Deep Dive into the Role of Exams in Promoting Higher-Order Thinking Skills

Dr Tahira Bibi (AIOU)
Mudassar Qureshi (Directorate of Curriculum Research & Development, AJ&K)

Abstract

Assessment forms the backbone of any educational system, driving not only student learning but also instructional strategies and curriculum development. This study explores into the alignment of secondary school science exams with Bloom's Taxonomy, scrutinizing examination papers in physics, chemistry, and biology. Employing a robust four-step qualitative research methodology curriculum analysis, data collection from question papers, validation by assessment specialists, and thematic analysis through focus group discussions the research aims to reveal the cognitive levels emphasized in these assessments. Central to this investigation is the examination of how well current assessment practices facilitate higher-order thinking skills, which are critical for understanding complex scientific concepts. The study involved topic specialists and assessment coordinators, who provided valuable insights through focus group discussions. Data were meticulously gathered from question papers and the guidelines provided to test administrators, offering a comprehensive view of the examination process. The study reveals a predominant focus on lower-order cognitive levels, mainly "Remember" and "Understand," emphasizing rote learning. This trend highlights the urgent need for educational reforms to foster higher-order thinking skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. By realigning the assessment methods with Bloom's Taxonomy, this study advocates for a transformation in secondary school examinations, aiming to foster critical, analytical, and creative thinking among students. Key recommendations include using alignment checklists, promoting collaboration among stakeholders, and implementing policy reforms to ensure assessments promote critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and online assessment. These changes aim to transform the educational system, preparing students for the complexities of the modern world and enhancing overall educational quality.

67-EFL Teachers' Perception and Attitude Toward Online Formative Assessment at Higher Education Level.

Milawati (Universitas Terbuka)
Suparti (Universitas Terbuka)
Dewi Wardah Mazidatur Rohmah (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

The problem of formative assessment in language instruction has grown rapidly. Higher education levels still face significant problems in implementing effective online formative assessment procedures within the setting of English as a foreign language. A qualitative study looked into higher education teachers' perceptions on online formative assessment. Both interview and online questionnaire were done. To gather information on their favorable sentiments regarding online formative assessment, five EFL teachers were chosen. All participants had utilized online formative assessment. Data analysis resulted out of those findings; online formative assessment might help students identify their areas of strength in the classroom. In addition, teachers can assess students' learning at the end of a lesson, let them identify any learning challenges they may have in the classroom, offer advice on how to improve their learning strategies, and assess how well a lesson achieves the intended learning outcome. To create the perfect picture of online formative assessment, more thorough research is still required to determine how parents may be informed about their children's performance through this assessment.

68-Evaluating the Effectiveness of Learning Using Virtual Field Trips (VFTs) and University Students Behavior in Open Distance Education (ODE) for Tourism Studies

Anisa Zahwa Akbara (Universitas Terbuka)
Andy Mulyana (Universitas Terbuka)
Yulita Suryantari (Universitas Terbuka)
Hubertina Karolina Ngarbingan (Universitas Terbuka)
Nihan Anindyaputra Lanisy (Universitas Terbuka)
Ni Wayan Marsha Satyarini (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

As the global education landscape increasingly adopts online learning modalities, understanding the impact of innovative instructional methods like VFTs is crucial. By leveraging digital technology, VFTs offer immersive learning experiences that transcend geographical boundaries, making education more accessible and engaging. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of Virtual Field Trips (VFTs) as a learning tool in tourism studies and evaluate university students' recommendations for integrating VFTs into Open Distance Education (ODE). Using a self-administered questionnaire, a total of 127 respondents undergraduate students enrolled in Tourism Department of Universitas Terbuka comprised the sample of this study. The results of using SmartPLS-SEM indicate that VFTs significantly enhance engagement and understanding of course material, with most students finding VFTs more engaging than traditional classroom settings. Students reported that VFTs provided a diverse range of tourism experiences and improved their interest in the subject matter. Technical accessibility and ease of use are a must. They highlighted the importance of continuous improvement in the quality and diversity of VFTs to maintain engagement and effectiveness. The study also reveals strong student support for incorporating VFTs into ODE. Most respondents believe that VFTs should be an integral part of tourism education and would recommend programs that include VFTs to their peers. These findings suggest that VFTs are an effective educational tool for tourism studies in ODE. They enhance learning outcomes and have a high potential for broader implementation. Future research should explore long-term impacts on learning and address technical challenges to optimize the VFT experience.

70-AI-Crafted Assessment: Redefining Evaluation in Open and Distance Learning

Moiz Uddin Ahmed Siddiqui (AIOU)
Waiza Sattar (AIOU)

Abstract

The phenomenon of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is evolving in every field of life including education. It promises to support educational gains by enhancing academic standards through increased productivity of teachers and students. Distance Education (DE) is an exception where AI can effectively be used to improve the quality of educational programs through smart learning and assessment strategies. These strategies require continuous research and development to address challenges like fairness and mitigation. This paper addresses one of the emerging challenges of assessing the conceptual understanding of distant learners through Natural Language Processing (NLP). The proposed model has four components i.e. learner model, curriculum model, AI model and NLP Engine. The model was implemented on a basic course of computer science offered at bachelor level of an open university. The dataset was prepared by formulating questions on selected topics that were presented to distant learners and one thousand 1000 responses were gathered on account of their answers. The BERT-BASE model, the core of the NLP engine, evaluated the correctness of short answers based on their semantic meaning using the regression technique. The evaluation made by NLP engine was compared with the evaluation made by human expert (course teacher) and results showed close resemblance of the marking standard. The research demonstrated the power of NLP and AI to access the knowledge level of distant learners and opens up a new dimension of anywhere and anytime assessment.

74-The Psychological Puzzle: Connecting Personality, Stress, and Lifelong Learning among ODL Students

Mohd Md Ninggal (Open University Malaysia)
Rohaizak Omar (Open University Malaysia)
Azleen Ismail (Open University Malaysia)
Raziana Che Aziz (Open University Malaysia)

Abstract

This study explores the intricate relationships between personality traits, stress levels, and lifelong learning skills among learners in the context of Open Distance Learning (ODL). The primary aim is to understand how these factors interrelate and impact learner engagement and retention, which are common challenges in ODL environments. The quantitative study seeks to address challenges in ODL learning such as low engagement and retention rates. Specifically, the research seeks to identify the correlations between learners' personality traits, stress levels, and lifelong learning skills, and to examine these variables across demographics such as gender, race, study level, and faculty affiliation. A pilot study was conducted with 633 learners from various academic programs across four faculties. Data was collected using the PsyQIQ Plus online instrument, which includes the Learner Personality Profile, Learner Stress Profile, and Learner Lifelong Learning Skills assessment. Key findings revealed several trends: Motivation and Resilience: Both postgraduate (PG) and undergraduate (UG) learners showed high motivation levels, with PG learners exhibiting slightly higher motivation. High resilience was also noted, contributing positively to stress management. Emotional Stability: Male learners demonstrated higher emotional stability compared to female learners, a trend consistent across both PG and UG cohorts. Financial Stress: Financial stress was a significant concern, with the highest levels reported by learners from the Faculty of Business and Management and the lowest from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. Based on these findings, it is recommended to develop personalized support programs tailored to individual learners' profiles, focusing on their unique stressors and personality traits to enhance their lifelong learning skills and overall educational experience.

77-Impact of AI in Open and Distance Learning: A Comparative Study of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Malaysian University Students

Syeda Madeeha Bokhari (International Open University)

Abstract

When many people in today's world are wondering where the higher education sector is headed with the relatively new and rather strong grasp of Artificial Intelligence (AI) day by day making its footsteps firmer, it becomes indispensable to explore deeper for suitable answers to understand the present as well as evaluate to some extent what the future might hold in this regard. This paper aims to examine the impact of AI becoming widely available for the masses through ChatGPT and other similar platforms, especially for the students and faculty members of universities in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Malaysia. Some of the important questions asked in this study include whether the teaching and learning is being compromised where the faculty members are utilizing AI to prepare the examination questions and assignment questions, are the students exploiting AI to prepare the answers or assignments and is AI being used to grade the papers. If human involvement is indeed greatly reduced and students opting for plagiarism and academic dishonesty where possible, then the whole system of education will be jeopardized. This study will explore the reality of this issue, and what pathways exist to utilize AI without compromising real learning. The research methodology used in this study is primarily quantitative in nature. Based on the outcome of the research, this paper will attempt to make some recommendations regarding how to effectively utilize AI so it is a boon and not a bane for higher education institutions. The students should be able to learn from their faculty members such that authentic teaching and learning take place in the institutions, not that the students should engage in deceitful activities through AI to such an extent that the entire idea of enrolling into universities become an ambitious endeavor to accumulate grades and passes, secure a qualification and a job later on.

82-Concepts, Innovations and Significant Contribution of Distance Learning in the World of Education

Muhammad Yousaf (Education)

Abstract

The current study targets to explore distance learning (DL)within the framework of contemporary definitions,skills,prospects,obstacles,technology,perceptions,andlatest pedagogical approaches, as it increasingly becomes a crucial component of educational frameworks worldwide, spanning both developed and developing nations. With the advent of recent technological advancements, use of internet DL system, the constraints of time and space no longer restrict the pedagogies and methods of teaching, learning and knowledge acquisition. The adoption of the latest technologies in the field of education made it very easy for tutors in the dissemination and absorption of knowledge, presenting flexible learning opportunities for people from all spheres of life irrespective of age group, ethnicity, race and color and area or a country. DL provides equal opportunities to people individually or in groups. It emerges as a swiftly advancing element in the field of education system, poised to significantly influence various teaching pedagogical methods and strategies of information dissemination to the learners, especially with the advent of the internet, information technologies(IT),and the World Wide Web(WWW).The importance of DL was felt by the world during the COVID19 pandemic when the whole world was jammed and blocked. Education system was more affected as all educational institutions were closed due toCOVID19pandemic because the tutors were not trained on utilization of latest technology and there was no concept of DL in the formal education(FE) system. To adequately address the demands of the fast-growing world, in future DL needs to introduce flexible schedule and design of study, stretch its parameters and exceed physical and territorial boundaries, offer reasonable cost effectiveness, and student-centered learning approach. Due to lack of research, acceptance of DL and emergency education(EE),this study is designed to impart conceptual, innovative and significant contribution of DL to all educational institutions(EIs),setups and their teaching faculty.

83-Critical thinking skills: Are they content dependent?

Sumbal Asghar (Virtual University of Pakistan)
Nasir Mahmood (Allama Iqbal Open University)

Abstract

Critical thinking skills allow students to reflect on their understanding by giving a considerable argument supported with proof for complex problems not only in class but also in real-life situations. These skills can be taught by embedding it within the content of any subject. However, there is no guarantee that the critical thinking skills once learned within the framework of one subject can be universally applied when the subject or the content changes (Alsaleh, 2020; Dumitru, 2013). Therefore, the main aim of this study is to know that whether and to what extent critical thinking skills learned in one context can be transferred to another context. An intact class of grade 7 science student were taught three units from science textbook. A pre-test, post-test was used to record changes in critical thinking skills at the end of each unit. After the intervention, post-test scores at the end of each unit were compared with the pre-test scores of the next unit to assess the transferability of critical thinking skills. There is insufficient evidence of transferability of critical thinking skill when content to be taught changes. Retention of critical skills learned once learned apparently fade out when exposed to new situation, but recollection improves with every exposure.

85-Active Ageing via Lifelong Learning for Older Adults in the Context of Higher Education

Wen Tang (Jiangsu Open University)

Abstract

As the population of older adults continues to grow in China, understanding their learning needs and motivations becomes essential. Older adults' learning motivations may stem from a variety of factors, including maintaining mental acuity, pursuing lifelong interests, or adapting to technological advancements. Recognizing and accommodating these various needs and motivations is crucial in designing effective learning programs for older adults. The outcomes of their learning efforts can vary, from acquiring new knowledge and skills to enhancing self-confidence and social integration. The relationship between older adult learning and active ageing is significant. Engaging in learning activities can contribute to active ageing by promoting physical and mental well-being, enhancing social connections, and fostering a sense of purpose and fulfilment. Learning opportunities enable older adults to remain active participants in society, challenging age-related stereotypes and promoting a positive view of ageing. With an online questionnaire, this study thus explores the intricacies of older adult learning, focusing on their specific learning needs, motivation to learn, the subjects they choose to learn, the outcomes of their learning, and how they evaluate these outcomes concerning the programmes offered by Jiangsu Open University. Furthermore, it delves into the relationship between older adult learning and the concept of active ageing in the digital era. In conclusion, understanding the unique needs and motivations of older adult learners, along with the impact of their learning on active ageing, is crucial in creating inclusive and empowering learning environments for this demographic through open and distance learning. By supporting and valuing lifelong learning among older adults, the Open University can promote their overall well-being and contribute to a more age-friendly society.

88-Improving Student Persistence in Distance Education: An Investigation of Demotivational Factors

T. Lakshini D. Fernando (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Nimali Vineeshiya (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Prof. Rohan Fernando (OUSL)
Kokila Ranasinghe (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

Student retention is evidently lower in Open and Distance Education (ODE) than in conventional education. The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) is the only university in the country offering ODE programs including the Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree. This study first analyzed student retention patterns for individual BSc courses over the past three academic years using data from the Open University Management Information System (OMIS). Secondly, a quantitative approach (a questionnaire survey) is employed to identify the demotivational factors encountered by the persistent BSc students.

OMIS data revealed the lowest student retention in first-year courses (65-75 % of total registrants) with significant gradual improvement in higher-level courses (92-95 % in the final year). The online survey showed that 35% of persistent students felt demotivated at some point. Using a Likert scale, students rated 44 potential demotivational factors across five categories, namely, Academic, University and administrative, Student skills and characteristics, Personal preferences, and External, based on the degree of the influence on their demotivation. The top three demotivational factors were: 1) packed semesters, 2) low flexibility in the program, and 3) social and political disappointment. Over 50% of affected respondents rated these factors as strongly or very strongly influential to their demotivation. Further, several other statistically significant relationships were identified: 1) Female students (70 % of the sample) are significantly affected by the low flexibility of the program compared to their male counterparts 2) The married (27 %) and employed (60 %) students were significantly demotivated by the external factors related to job and family commitments and personal crises compared to the single and unmarried students, respectively 3) 70 % of the students who selected Tamil (mother tongue) as the study... Maximum number of characters allowed is exceeded.

91-Explaining the Effectiveness of Different Learning Styles in A Single Classroom/Lesson: A Paradigm Shift to Inculcate Multiple Intelligences

Gul Fatima (Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University Sukkur)
Kainat Panhwar (Begum Nusrat Bhutto woman university Sukkur)
Makhdooma Junejo (Begum Nusrat Bhutto women university Sukkur)

Abstract

Students in the same classroom exhibit differences and all of these differences in a learning environment are indicators of their different learning styles. The dominance of single teaching methods in a classroom result in a significant number of students being left behind and it may cause limited understanding and disengagement for students and lead them to academic struggles. The purpose of the study was to investigate how different learning styles such as visual, audio, reading and kinesthetic (VARK) styles the understanding of biological concepts and topics. This research used quantitative approach utilizing survey questionnaires to collect the data. A purposive sampling was made of 30 students from the public sector university of Sukkur, Sindh. Gardner theory of multiple intelligences was used as a theoretical framework for study. The findings revealed that each and every student prefers different learning styles for learning biological concepts and topics and no single learning style is preferred by all and incorporating different learning styles in a single classroom makes learning more effective and efficient. As for teaching practices, teachers are recommended to differentiate the instructions to meet individual needs and encourage them to choose their own learning strategies. Implications of these styles to cater to the diverse needs; students should be provided with different learning resources and activities such as visual aids, auditory tools, reading material and kinesthetic experiences.

92-Pathways of Improving the Quality of Open Online Courses towards Deep Learning-Taking OUSL as an Example

SUN Chuanyuan (Shanghai Open University)
Dr. Chulani Herath (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

Since the rise of MOOCs in 2012, almost all countries in the world are trying to build high-quality MOOCs to serve more learners. What exactly have MOOC learners learned? Can high-quality MOOCs meet the requirements of people's mastering 21st century skills? A research into more than 200 students' questionnaires and 10 teachers' interviews and at the Open University of Sri Lanka, which combines the 21st-century skills, deep learning and high-quality MOOCs, found that in the process of designing and applying open online courses towards deep learning, the "Learning perspective" and the "Teaching perspective" do not exactly converge; in terms of perceived capacity-building toward future work and life situations, it is urgent for learners to receive more professional guidance and teaching support; and it is urgent to build a new type of learning community with interaction between teachers and students, online and offline, in order to cope with the changes of information technology and the reform of the complex and changeable educational system. In view of the above problems, this research puts forward some suggestions for teachers to design curriculum and teaching as well as students' learning.

93-Embracing Technology in Medical Education to Overcome the Challenges

Sun Chuanyuan (Shanghai Open University)
Dr. Chulani Herath (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

Medical education is indeed undergoing significant transformations due to various factors. The evolving healthcare landscape, the shifting responsibilities of physicians, changing societal demands, advancements in medical research, and the variety of teaching methods all play a crucial role in reshaping how future healthcare professionals are trained. These changes aim to produce well-rounded and adaptable professionals equipped to meet the dynamic needs of modern healthcare systems. A crucial aspect of the transformation in medical education is the shift in focus within undergraduate and postgraduate training. It's moving away from just memorizing facts to emphasizing the importance of showing skills and abilities in the learner. In this era many technologies are being used in medical field such as, Computer assisted learning, mobile devices (personal digital assistant), Digital games, Simulation. Technology in medical education should be seen as a tool to enhance learning, not as a substitute for traditional face-to-face teaching. Dealing with medical education can be tough because things keep changing, like how healthcare works, what people expect from doctors, making sure patients are safe, following ethical guidelines, adjusting the focus of what's taught, understanding the new generation of learners, and keeping up with all the new technologies. Educators should continue to prioritize effective teaching methods and not get caught up in the specific technologies. The goal for medical educators is to harness these new tools to make learning more synergetic, customised and authorised for students.

94-AI Tools in Higher Education: Exploring Students' Familiarity, Engagement, Potential Opportunities and Significant Risks

Abid Ali (Institute of Education, University of Sargodha)
Iram Parveen (Institute of Education, University of Sargodha)
Uzair-ul-Hassan Muhammad (Institute of Education, University of Sargodha)

Abstract

Our study investigates how students in higher education perceive and experience generative AI tools, with a particular emphasis on their familiarity, engagement, potential opportunities and significant risks. To what extent are students familiar with and how do they engage with AI tools? What potential opportunities exist to foster their research and learning and how AI tools affect students' research and learning in universities? To get insight of the questions, the study used a parallel convergent methodology research design. The graduate programs' students from public universities were selected via random sampling (n=350) for quantitative data analysis while purposive sampling was used to select students (n=20) for interview analysis. The results revealed that AI has huge potential for 1) research and analysis, 2) saving time, 3) bringing originality, and 4) providing learning preferences for students. The significant risks our study identified are 1) knowledge gaps, 2) data usage issues, 3) accountability as well as 4) academic Integrity. It is illustrated that knowledge of AI has a significant impact on minimizing risks of AI that may temper learning and research skills. Lastly, our study delivers some useful and practical recommendations for universities faculty and students to use potential benefits of AI tools and minimize significant risks imbibed in AI tools to sharpen their analytical skills and foster their learning.

97-BYOD policy: An Interactive policy in Open University – Al-Quds Open University as Model- Palestine

Ibrahim R Ramadan (QOU)

Abstract

The Palestinian territories have been experiencing instability due to deliberate Israeli occupation policies, especially in the cities of the West Bank in recent years, particularly in the city of Jenin. This city hosts one of the branches of Al-Quds Open University (QOU) in Palestine. Due to these challenging conditions and recurring invasions, the number of students attending the university branch in Jenin and participating in face-to-face lectures in courses that have practical Exam offered by Al-Quds Open University has decreased significantly compared to previous semesters. Factors such as power outages, especially during official hours, limited transportation, and Israeli incursions into the city of Jenin have affected lectures and consequently impacted students' academic achievements. Based on these combined factors, the idea arose for students, with the initiative of faculty members, especially in the fields of computer information systems and information and communication technology, to bring their personal devices (BYOD) to the lab to overcome power outage issues and software discrepancies between university lab computers and students' personal devices, as well as to enhance students' familiarity with their own devices. This policy was implemented during the second semester of the current academic year 2023/2024. Additionally, this policy was applied to five courses offered during this semester. The study revealed that the attendance rate in these courses increased by 16% compared to previous semesters. Furthermore, the academic achievement of students who applied for this policy increased by 27% compared to the previous semester's grades.

106-Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis of Sustainable Distance Learning in Indonesia: A Bibliometric Study (2020-2024)

Abdillah AM Munawir (Universitas Terbuka)
Edi Rusdiyanto (Universitas Terbuka)
Siti Umamah Naili Muna (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

The increase in distance learning has had a significant impact in recent years, driven primarily by advancements in information and communication technology and the post-COVID-19 pandemic situation, which has necessitated drastic changes in the global education system, particularly in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing the effectiveness of distance learning, the challenges faced by educators and students, and potential solutions to enhance the quality of distance learning. The research methodology employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches, utilizing bibliometric analysis with a focus on high-quality international Scopus data, using VOSviewer software for reviewing reputable Scopus articles, and WordStat 8 for statistical analysis. The results indicate that access to technology, the quality of learning materials, the interaction between educators and students, as well as emotional support and motivation, are key factors in the success of distance learning. The main challenges identified include limited infrastructure, digital divide, and the lack of digital competence among educators and students. To address these challenges, the study recommends increased investment in technological infrastructure, intensive training for educators, the development of adaptive curricula, and psychosocial support for students. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective and inclusive distance learning strategies in the future.

108-Comparison of Blended Learning and Traditional Teaching Approach for Time Management Skill of Children with Intellectual Disabilities

Misbah Waqar (Army special Education Academy)
Hina Noor (AIOU)

Abstract

The three areas of mathematical skills that can indicate a person's mathematical knowledge are conceptual knowledge, practical knowledge, and routine flexibility One of the major purposes of education is to equip people with disabilities with all the skills required to live as independently as possible in their community. Time management skill is one of the important skills of independent living skill. The objective of the study was to enhance the time management skills of children with intellectual disabilities through blended learning versus traditional teaching. All children with intellectual disabilities studying in intellectually delayed schools in Rawalpindi were the population of the study. 26 students were selected as sample through randomly sampling for the study. In the experimental group, 13 students received intervention using a blended learning, while the control group received conventional teaching Pre-test was administered to both groups and after a two-week intervention, post-test was conducted. Independent t-tests and paired sample t-tests were used to analyze the results. The findings revealed that blended learning instructional design was effective in teaching time management skill development. It also indicated that children who received instruction in time management through blended learning performed significantly better than those who received conventional teaching. It was recommended that to teach functional mathematical skills, station rotation model should be used.

110-A Case Study: Blended Learning Approach Enhance Student Performance in Academics

Misbah Waqar (Army special Education Academy)
Hina Noor (AIOU)

Abstract

Through the use of online or computer-based resources, blended learning makes it possible to improve in-person interactions between instructors and students. This paper presents a case study that demonstrates how to involve students in technology-enhanced learning to boost academic achievement and student satisfaction. A child, an 8-year-old male having intellectual disability. His birth order was third and having 3 siblings. His father had private job and mother was housewife. Despite his intellectual disability, he demonstrated good understanding, concentration, numeracy skills, and practical use of time and money. Child learned time concept by engaging in face-to face component, online activities and offline/individual task. Result revealed 90% attendance, preference for practical work, whiteboard activities, worksheets, online link-related problems, watching videos, and group activities. The person was a visual learner who gets pleasure from visual tasks like watching videos and taking online tests. He enjoyed being in groups and was keen to learn new things. However, he avoided interacting with classmates and is now paying attention to their learning preferences. The researcher observed a shy individual with a low voice tone and limited practical knowledge, but his family was cooperative and helped complete a home task. No health concerns or internet connectivity issues were observed, and they presented accommodating conduct during the group activity. The researcher observed the child's enthusiastic learning of time skills while using the blended learning approach, teacher reported the same observation that his interest developed in learning time concept independently now, and parents stated during parent teacher meeting, that due to a blended learning, the child was able to perform tasks independently, while also learning practical time management skill.

113-Beyond Passive Learning: Exploring the Challenges of Engaging Gen Z and Alpha as Co-creators in a Virtual Learning Environment

Noreen Zahra (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

The higher education institutions (HEIs) have embraced virtual platforms to automate student and teacher interactions. Learning management systems, video conferencing, authoring tools, and screen-casting are adopted by HEIs to create a virtual learning environment (VLE). To date, generations Z (born between 1997 and 2012) and Alpha (born after 2012) have been using these educational technologies with their inherent tech-savviness and digital fluency. HEIs initially positioned students as partners in VLE, but the escalating integration of digital tools has posed significant challenges. Gen Z and Alpha cohorts are assuming their roles not as partners but as co-creators without fully understanding responsibilities and requisite competencies. The myopic research focus on the adoption of VLE overlooks students' readiness for newfound roles as co-creators and associated challenges and this paper is aimed at filling this research gap. This study aims to explore the challenges of engaging Gen Z and Alpha as co-creators in VLE at HEIs. This qualitative study is conducted in the context of HEIs while exploring the co-perspectives of students and teachers. Data have been collected from fifteen students using a focus group, and from eight faculty members using semi-structured interviews. Purposive sampling was adopted with inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the selection of participants. It was inferred from the data that capacity building, balancing in agency among actors, incentives, transparency, workload management, data privacy, and multifaceted collaboration styles are leading challenges for HEIs while engaging digital natives in VLE as co-creators. By recognizing these challenges, HEIs can develop customized strategies and training programs for faculty and Gen Z and Alpha learners to produce more educational value in VLE. It can also unleash the potential of Gen Z and Alpha learners, enabling them to actively engage in customizing their educational experiences.

116-Effects of Virtual Learning Environments on Student Engagement and Academic Success

Saba Sadiq (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

Virtual learning environment is increasingly established in the current era of education field. It provides a lot of benefits in this field to both students and teachers in terms of accessibility and feasibility. The use of virtual learning environments become important tool to enhance the remote learning. It transforms the traditional way of learning into the modern means by keeping in view the requirements of students feasibility. This study aims to explore the effects of virtual learning environments on students' engagement and success to determine the latest trends in the knowledge. It focuses on the latest trends of educational requirements so it can be adopted to meet the standards of international education. This is review-based research focusing on systematic approach to analyze the exiting relevant research articles on the effects of virtual learning environments on students' engagement and success. In this regard, a strategy for searching is to examine electronic databases of references lists. Findings are showing positive impacts of virtual learning environments on students' engagement and success as they have many opportunities to learn and excel in the field due to flexibility and accessibility in this mode of education. The analysis represents that due to advancement in technology, the students 'motivation and interests are also increased in learning. The different features and tools of learning are employed in virtual environment so students are more involved in it and get instant help from different internet sources regarding their study programs. They have setup to correspond with their teachers on time and are more inclined towards learning of digital platforms. This study highlights the significance of virtual learning environments that means the student's engagement and success can be enhanced so it has practical and social implications.

121-Perceived Effectiveness of Online Learning Among Students of Higher Education Institutes During Covid-19: A Study of Usage of Cellular Social Media in Public Sector Universities In Lahore, Pakistan

Nadia Saleem (Virtual University of Pakistan, Lahore, Pakistan)
Saba Sadiq (Virtual University of Pakistan, Lahore, Pakistan)

Abstract

During Covid-19, almost all universities offered courses and study programs in distance education mode through online platforms to facilitate the students for their educational needs. Training is a structural figure of socialization via which standards are transmitted from one technology to other. Education can similarly be achieved in higher education level in universities by using different online social media platforms. When social media is utilized in mixture with cellular devices, it's far referred to as cellular social media. A positive usage of cellular social media is expected from university students to take benefit of these technologies to fulfil their educational needs. The study investigates the distance learners' perception about the use of social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube in different aspects of student support services being offered by their respective universities. The objectives of this study were to explore the perception of university students regarding the use of social media in admission campaigns, mailing, tutorial support, examinations, results and other helpline services. The present study was qualitative research, in which data was collected from 24 students of undergraduate programs of 4 different public sector universities through interview. The study has been designed to measure the impact of social media on educational performance of undergraduate students. The collected data was transcribed, and common words and phrases were identified. In next step, the similarities between the responses were extracted to derive themes; then, themes were summarized; and narratives were used to support the concepts. The results show that positive usage of social media can improve the student's efficacy and productivity. The free and fast flow of information on social media platforms facilitates the students for sharing of ideas and makes the communication easier.

124-The Use of Indigenous Language Translation of Learning Materials in Open Distance Learning: Enhancing Learner Support Systems

Olivia Khomotjo Ramokolo (University of South Africa)
Dolly Motjatji Mathabatha (University of South Africa)
Zimele Melusi Mnikathi (University of South Africa)

Abstract

The unique context of South Africa, where the impact of colonization has led to English becoming the dominant language of instruction, often at the expense of Indigenous South African languages, is the backdrop for this study. This marginalization has resulted in Indigenous students being excluded from higher education, as English proficiency is often a prerequisite for admission, further perpetuating feelings of language and cultural alienation. This paper aims to investigate how translating learning materials into Indigenous languages can foster access and inclusivity in open-distance learning. The study will utilize qualitative research to examine the barriers to translating learning materials into South African Indigenous languages within learner support systems, using a South African open-distance learning institution as a case study. This research is significant, as it addresses the intersection of language, education, and social justice. Furthermore, the research will demonstrate that the inclusion of Indigenous languages in learning material can contribute to revitalizing and recognizing Indigenous languages and positively impact learners' sense of identity and belonging in institutions of higher learning.

125-Online Teaching and Learning: Perceptions, Awareness and Use of Open Education Resources (OER)

Sehar Rashid (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

In the current era of digitalize learning, Open Education Resources (OERs) are offering an opportunity to enhance the information resources and quality education worldwide. It has gain a global reach evidently as a source to facilitate open and free access to educational material. Academic institutions are getting benefit of technology revolution to transform teaching learning by open access to digital resources. In developed countries, teaching and learning is changing meaningfully and, most of the academic institutions and faculty members have removed financial, technological and legal hurdles by accessing digital resources through internet. For developing countries like Pakistan, there is a need to meet the global challenge of accessing OERs and eliminate the financial resources. The study aims to explore perceptions, awareness and utilization of open education resources by faculty members to enhance teaching and learning at higher education level. The study is descriptive in nature using survey method to collect data from representative sample from the population. The population is comprised of all the faculty members of online university in Pakistan. Data is collected from representative sample for the study by using a close ended questionnaire. Questionnaire is comprised of multiple-choice questions, rating scale and Likert scale designed to explore the perceptions, awareness and use of open education resources in online distance education at higher education level. The questionnaire was developed by extensive literature review relevant to OERs. Data will be analyzed and presented in the form of tables, graphs and figures. Findings of the study will help to enhance the influence of OERs in teaching and learning at higher education level in online learning environment followed by recommendations that may be applied to enhance the utilization of OERs in teaching, learning and research at academic institutions.

130-Artificial Intelligence Enabled Open Education Lifelong Learning System for People with Disabilities

Zhao Xiaoyan (Inner Mongolia Open University)

Abstract

With the continuous development of artificial intelligence technology, its application in the field of education has become increasingly widespread. Artificial intelligence empowers the construction of lifelong learning system, providing individuals with more personalised and flexible learning paths and support. This paper analyses the role, opportunities and challenges of AI in the construction of lifelong learning system, and discusses how to optimize the lifelong learning system by using AI technology to improve the learning effect and user experience, and to promote the continuous improvement of individual learning ability.

131-Artificial Intelligence Enabled Open Education Lifelong Learning System for People with Disabilities

Zhao Xiaoyan **(**Inner Mongolia Open University)

Abstract

This paper explores the role of artificial intelligence in the field of open education in empowering the lifelong learning system for people with disabilities. It first introduces the importance and current situation of lifelong learning for people with disabilities, and then analyses the application of AI technology in open education, including personalized learning, intelligent assistive tools and other aspects. Then it discusses the application scenarios and challenges of AI in the lifelong learning system for people with disabilities, and finally puts forward suggestions and prospects for future development.

133-Research on Classifying Learning Situation of Distance Learners: Analysis of Learning Behavior Based on OL-RFT Model

Lirong Du (Jiangsu Open University)
Han Li (Jiangsu Open University)

Abstract

The rise of learning has provided people with more learning planning opportunities, and promoted educational equity from formal equity to substantive equity. However, the phenomenon of high enrollment and high overdue in distance learning coexists. Most of the existing distance learning courses are mainly based on video resources. Compared with face-to-face teaching, distance learning provides weaker learning support services for learners, which requires learners Have strong self-learning ability. In distance learning, how to identify the type of learning situation of distance learners, how to classify learners, and then provide learners with accurate and personalized learning support services are one of the issues that need to be discussed in the academic community. On the basis of the e-commerce RFM model, according to the characteristics of distance learners, an OL-RFT model that can measure the type of learners' learning situation is proposed. According to the classification of indicators, learners are divided into eight types, and based on the OL-RFT model Carry out classification research on a certain distance course, and propose a corresponding personalized learning service strategy for each type.

135-The course materials of the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course offered at the Open University in Sri Lanka – A Critical Appraisal

Chamali Gamage (University of Ruhuna)
Ridmi Dasanayaka (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Parami Ranasinghe (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Anoma Satharasinghe (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Judy Pullenayegem (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

The significance of curriculum in higher education is unparalleled, with English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course materials playing a pivotal role in fostering language proficiency among students. This study investigates the relevance, appropriateness, and usefulness of newly developed EAP course materials designed for elementary-level learners in an open and distance learning (ODL) context at the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). Utilizing Tomlinson's (2003) theoretical framework for content development, this research explores teachers' and students' perceptions of the course materials, focusing on content, language proficiency, skills, and activities. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study collects quantitative data through questionnaires and qualitative insights from focus group discussions, classroom observations, and interviews. The findings highlighted the importance of culturally relevant content, achieving a balance between linguistic challenges and accessibility, and ensuring the practical application of language skills. Further, both student and teacher feedback indicated several challenges, including time constraints, difficulties in communication and inadequate audio facilities to practice listening activities. Students also suggested the inclusion of more practical, real-life activities, oral practice sessions, and a placement test to identify learner levels before starting the course. Nonetheless, the study recognizes limitations such as sample bias, the influence of individual teaching styles, and external factors. By addressing these dimensions within an ODL context, the research aims to enhance the effectiveness of EAP materials, thereby supporting academic success in multilingual and multicultural environments. The insights derived are expected to guide curriculum developers, educators, and policymakers in refining EAP courses to better serve the diverse needs of learners engaged in distance education.

137-Readiness to use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in Higher Education: a Perspective of ODL Faculty

Aisha Ismail (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education has becoming a prominent area for researchers to explore. Perceived benefits of generative AI in higher education includes adaptive learning, personalized pathways, quality content, student engagement, customized and prompt feedback, and intelligent tutoring systems. These benefits can be achieved if educators apply generative AI in their teaching in a right way; therefore, it is critical to explore the readiness of faculty to use generative AI in higher education. Although open and distance learning(ODL) faculty is using technology in their teaching but the use of generative AI can revolutionize whole learning system. Generative AI allows designing personalized curriculum, and adaptive learning for students as per their needs but the key factor is the extent to which faculty is ready to embrace generative AI in education. Faculty needs to be creativity, necessary skills, and awareness about AI tools to effectively use AI in the learning process. This study aims to explore the factors affecting readiness of ODL faculty to use generative AI in their teaching. Using a quantitative research method, the study will collect data from ODL institution in Pakistan. It will also identify the behavioral intentions of ODL faculty towards use of generative AI in teaching. The findings will help to know the factors contributing towards readiness of ODL faculty to integrate generative AI in higher education, so that policies to adopt generative AI in education can be formulated. The findings will also help apex bodies in higher education to identify the areas to be focused for an effective use of generative AI in education. The study will also have implications for other stakeholders in educational ecosystem particularly ODL.

140-Formative Assessments and Perceived learning effectiveness in online higher education: Exploring the mediating role of Student Engagement.

Saliha Anwar (Virtual University of Pakistan)
Aqeel Feroze (PMIU-PESRP)

Abstract

Active learning behavior is crucial for effective learning, more knowledge absorption and creation. This research explored the mediating role of student engagement between formative assessment effectiveness and perceived learning effectiveness in online higher education. Engagement is found to be a crucial antecedent for learning outcomes in the literature of education. Very few studies discussed formative assessments as an antecedent of student engagement. There is a scarcity of studies that empirically tested the mediating role of student engagement between formative assessments and learning effectiveness. This was a cross-sectional study and a quantitative approach has been used. A 5-point Likert scale was used in a survey questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. Student engagement was measured through behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement. Perceived learning outcomes were measured through declarative knowledge, skill development, and learner satisfaction. Formative assessment was measured based on principles of good formative assessments, level of difficulty, and immediacy of feedback. Cronbach alpha value was calculated to measure the reliability of the questionnaire and for all dimensions it was above .7. Data was collected from 250 students enrolled in an online degree program in higher education. Hypothesis were tested through Hayees Macro process in SPSS to find out the mediating effect of student engagement on dependent and independent variables relationship. The findings indicated that student engagement partially mediates the relationship between the perceived effectiveness of formative assessments and perceived learning effectiveness. Furthermore, there exists a positive relationship between the dimensions of student engagement with learning effectiveness. This study strongly recommends that academia increase the effectiveness of formative assessments in online higher education as it leads toward enhanced learning effectiveness.

143-Exploring the dark side AI-powered educational tools in higher education: The faculty perspectives

Talha Subhan (Virtual University of Pakistan)
Noreen Zahra (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

In higher education landscape, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools are reshaping learning patterns. It includes writing assistants, text-to-speech, concept mapping, summarization, and rephrasing. While AI tools enhance the students and educators' engagement, efficacious acquisition of knowledge, and personalized learning, it also necessitates a critical examination on the ethical considerations and its potential pitfalls. While AI tools have potential for fostering learning experiences, the overdependence on such tools necessitates a nuanced approach. Universities have a core responsibility to instill critical and entrepreneurial thinking, analytical skills, and effective communication among graduates. However, overreliance on such tools inadvertently hinder the genuine intellect and holds significant drawbacks. There is a danger that students might rely heavily on AI-generated content and paraphrasing without using the essential skills necessary to develop strong analytical and academic skills. Similarly, the presence of AI co-authoring tools has aroused questions for the academicians to rethink on academic integrity and plagiarism to ascertain whether the students truly understand what they are presenting. The existing literature offers singular focus on AI tools and overlooks its potential drawbacks, this study aimed at filling this research gap. This qualitative study explores the complexities of AI-powered tools in higher education. With semi-structured interviews, the university teacher's perspective is explored while following grounded theory coding protocols for data analysis. It is inferred that intellectual integrity, learning assessment, unstable learning curve, myopic focus on technical proficiency and disengagement with learning are difficulties accompanied with AI-powered tools among university students. While acknowledging these inherent glitches, the educators may strategically leverage AI more meaningful learning experience.

144-Open And Distance Learning as a Strategy for Crisis Management: A Study in the Context of Teacher Education in Pakistan

Muznah Faheem (Government College of Education)

Abstract

Pakistan is continuously passing through the crisis. Flood, earthquakes and covid'19 are the best examples of these situations. During these crisis coping with educational challenge become not only difficult but impossible for the people of these particular areas. This is against the United Nations mandate which state education as the birth right of every citizen. By providing quality teacher training we can handle the issue to great extent. Our teachers should be trained to stand in shoulder to shoulder with doctors, army and other rescue teams at this time of crisis management. This is the time to reflect and make grand changes in our system of teacher education. Teacher should be treated through multiple techniques like face to face teaching, hybrid teaching and open and distance learning program. So that our teachers may develop enough capability and skills to play their role in crisis management. The purpose of this research study is to explore the teacher capabilities and skills specifically in the time of crisis management.

It's a case study of teacher education institutions. Heads of six teacher education institutions based in Karachi were the research participants. The participants were three males and three females. All were highly educated and serving the institution since last five years. Almost five interviews of fifty minutes each was conducted. Further clarity of the data was made through telephonic talk. Interview protocol was followed thoroughly by observing consent form in which day, date, time and venue was decided by mutual understanding.

The intensive thematic data analyses strategy was followed. It revealed that some specific attributes are required for open and distance learning teaching. These are specific time management skills, minute to minute planning skills and digital and technological skills for utilization of digital resources. Some feasible and applicable recommendations are proposed to improve the situation.

146-Assessing the Role of Knowledge Acquisition through Open Education Resources in the Capacity Building of Users

Saba Munir (Virtual University of Pakistan)
Muhammad Zaheer (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

Open education resources have enhanced access to knowledge, and ICT has paved the way for easy knowledge acquisition. The contemporary world is considered a knowledge economy, where sources of competitive advantage rest with knowledge creation and acquisition. It is, therefore, essential to know the role of Open Education Resources (OER) in the capacity building of the users. Does the provision of OER play any role in upgrading the users?

The purpose of this study is to assess the perceived effectiveness of knowledge acquisition through open education resources in the capacity building of the users while studying the moderating roles of usefulness and perceived self-efficacy. The community of higher education institutions' teachers and students is this study's target population. A quantitative research approach will be adopted for this study by following the positivist research paradigm. Data will be collected from the users of open knowledge resources using a standard online questionnaire. A purposive sampling technique will be used to collect data from 300 teachers and students of higher education institutions in Pakistan. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression will be used to analyse the data. This research's findings will help identify the perceived effectiveness of open education resources.

151-Instructor and Student Perspective on Generative AI on Assessments in Pakistani HEIs

Muhammad Ahsin Imtiaz (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

The advent of AI has revolutionized almost every domain of life. Generative AI which has the capability of generating texts, images, video files, codes and other forms of data has raised various debates over the sustainability of traditional assessment methods. The study will focus of assessing the perspectives of instructors and students on this issue. Along six dimensions of an already developed framework a survey will be conducted and responses will be taken from 300 students and 30 instructors across at least 3 universities of Pakistan. Purposive sampling will be used to collect data from the participants. Descriptive statistics and regression will be used. The findings will be of immense utility for the academicians.

153-Enhancing Online Learning: Leveraging Interactive Gamification for Engaged, Independent, and Fun Learning

Sendi Ramdhani (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This research discusses engaging learners online: using interactive gamification. To prevent learning loss in online education, it is necessary to design learning experiences that actively involve learners in online learning, while considering quality, independence, and enjoyable learning. One approach that can be developed is interactive gamified learning. This study focuses on developing interactive and enjoyable gamification in online education to enhance students' self-directed learning. The research applies a Research and Development (R&D) approach, with content specifically focused on the Education course, which is mandatory for education program students. The development process includes analysis, design (gamification design), development, implementation, and evaluation. The outcomes of this development can be used to address issues related to learning loss in online education. This research produced 5 games for 5 online courses: Student Development, Multimedia Learning, Pedagogy for Educational Games, Learning Media, and Curriculum Development. These games challenge students to find specific objects that contain material summaries, and at the end of the game, they are challenged to find a specific location that will trigger test questions. The games have been validated by content experts, media experts, and tested with a small group.

156-Case Based Learning (CBL) Auditing Online Course: Opportunities and Challenges on Student Perspective

Yudhi Prasetiyo (Universitas Terbuka)
Sila Ninin Wisnantiasri (Universitas Terbuka)
Julia Safitri (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

The importance of utilizing technology and innovating new methods in designing distance learning is very necessary. Auditing is a branch of accounting science that provides special knowledge in the fields of auditing and accounting. Accounting graduates are not only good at calculating, but must also have professional skills in the financial sector and be able to communicate this to information users. In distance education, interaction with each other is very limited, therefore improving students' abilities must be enhanced with appropriate learning methods. This research was conducted to determine the responses and opinions of accounting students regarding audit courses in distance education using the Case Based Learning (CBL) method. There are seven work steps (syntax) in the case-based learning model, including 1. Determine a particular case or learning objective, 2. Analyze the case, 3. Search for information, supporting data and literature, 4. Determine the case resolution, 5. Determine the conclusion, 6. Submission of analysis results, and 7. Evaluation and improvement. The sample in this research was 15 accounting students, Terbuka University. The type of research used is a qualitative exploratory approach using interview and observation methods for accounting students at Terbuka University. The observation results obtained by the majority of students gave positive responses to this case-based learning method. 15 students who tried questions in CBL form gave good responses where the average results obtained were very satisfactory. Based on semi structured interviews, almost all students gave positive responses that this case-based learning method provides increased analytical and critical thinking, increases students' knowledge and activeness in learning, thereby increasing self-confidence and better communication. Conclusions based on research results, the CBL model is an innovative and effective method in achieving learning outcomes and can be improve skill

158-Impact of artificial intelligence on Students' Creativity in ODL: The mediating role of Happiness

Nazia Rafiq (Virtual University of Pakistan)
Mariam Ahmad (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) aims to provide students an adequate intelligence through computers to better think and create in their academic field. Now-a-days, AI applications are rapidly growing in the education sector. The objective of this study is to measure the role of artificial intelligence in students' creativity in online and distance learning education. This research also investigates the mediating role of happiness between artificial intelligence and students' creativity.

The study used a mixed method approach to measure the students' perceptions based on both quantitative and qualitative methods through questionnaire and interviews. Data was gathered from the students currently enrolled in an online learning program. The analysis was done in process macro and through content analysis.

The outcome of this research beneficial for educationists, student body and all stake holders of distance learning education. Also helpful in the development of application for the industries.

159-Assessment of Technology Access Gaps and Solutions in Distance Education in Higher Education

Julia Safitri (Universitas Terbuka)
Sila Ninin Wisnantiasri (Universitas Terbuka)
Yudhi Prasetiyo (Universitas Terbuka)
Hidayah S.Pd., M.Pd. (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

Virtual education and distance learning have become important components of the global education system, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of these learning methods. This article examines current issues faced in virtual education and distance learning, including technical, pedagogical, and social challenges. This research uses a qualitative approach through literature study, interviews with educators, students, and parents, as well as analysis of survey data. Research findings show that the main issues in virtual education and distance learning include gaps in technology access, limited social interaction, and decreased student motivation to learn. The digital divide remains a significant challenge, especially for students from low-income families and remote areas who have limited access to devices and quality internet. Additionally, the lack of face-to-face interaction leads to social isolation and negatively impacts students' mental health. Pedagogical approaches are also a challenge, with many teachers not yet fully trained in effectively utilizing technology for teaching. Distance learning often cannot replicate the in-person learning experience, which can reduce student engagement and understanding. Strategies to address these issues include increased investment in technological infrastructure, ongoing training for educators, and the development of more interactive and participatory teaching methods. This article provides recommendations for policy makers and educational practitioners to create more inclusive and effective learning environments in the digital era. It is hoped that by addressing current issues, virtual education and distance learning can provide maximum benefits for all students.

161-The Role of Virtual Meetups in Fostering the Sense of Community Among Online Students

Asifa ilyas (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

Social isolation is common among online students and it poses a significant challenge to the learning outcomes of online students. It can lead to decreased motivation and engagement, impaired academic performance, negative impacts on mental health, limited access to support and resources, challenges in skill development, a reduced sense of belonging, and difficulties in learning retention. Social isolation among online students stems from a lack of face-to-face interaction, limited social engagement, and individual challenges like balancing responsibilities or remote living. Poorly designed courses, technology barriers, and minimal instructor engagement exacerbate this issue. Additionally, peer dynamics and psychological factors like mental health issues and low confidence contribute to isolation. To address these factors, improving course design, fostering community, and providing support systems are essential. Regular virtual meetups, discussion forums, peer activities, and accessible mental health support can help mitigate isolation and enhance the online learning experience. One critical way to mitigate the negative effects of social isolation is building a sense of community among online students. This study is determined to examine the impact of virtual meet-ups on fostering a sense of community among online students. By investigating how regular, interactive online gatherings influence feelings of belonging and connection, we aim to understand their role in enhancing the overall online learning experience. Our research will explore whether these meet-ups can mitigate the effects of social isolation and contribute to a more engaged and supportive online learning environment.

164-Role of School Climate in Students' Social Development at Secondary Level.

Sidra Munir (National University of Modern Languages)
Dr. Qurat-ul-Ain Hina (National University of Modern Languages)
Mahek Arshad (Controller of examinations Bilquis Postgraduate College PAF, Rawalpindi)

Abstract

This study was conducted with the objectives to examine the elements of school climate at secondary level, to assess the level of social development in students at secondary level and to investigate the role of school climate in students' social development at secondary level. The conceptual framework of this study was based on school climate model presented by National school center (2012) and social skills development and behavior model presented by Janols, Korkman, Mickelsson, Strand, Trillingaard, Bredesen... Gillberg (2017). The model of School climate was based on five dimensions i.e. School safety, Teaching and learning, Interpersonal relationships, Institutional environment and Staff only while social skills development and behavior model was based on seven traits i.e. Empathy, Teamwork, Emotions, Communication, Physical appearance, Relationships and Confidence. Researcher used quantitative research approach, descriptive research design and survey method for the purpose of data collection. For the current study population was male (439) and female (480) teachers at Punjab Government Schools N=919 (session 2020-2021). Stratified random sampling technique was used in this research. Researcher selected 20% sample from each stratum. The sample size of this study was n=184, male (88) and female (96). For data collection , researcher adapted two types of tools School climate inventory and social skills development and behavior checklist. This study was delimited to Punjab Government Secondary Schools. Findings revealed the most practicing element of school climate was interpersonal relationships (70.94). It was found that social development of majority students was on highest level. Furthermore, it also revealed that school climate had significant role in students' social development. On the basis of findings, it was recommended that in order to maintain physical safety in class, teachers may make discipline in-charge from every section.

165-Alternatives and Solutions to Increase the Effectiveness of Distance Learning in Practical Course

Sodikin Sodikin (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

Technological advances make it easier for us to obtain various learning resources, learning facilities and can easily access information from various sources that help us improve the quality of learning. One learning model in this era of technological progress is distance learning. Distance learning is learning using a medium that allows interaction between educators and students. Distance learning must of course accommodate practical learning materials. This research aims to look for alternatives and provide an overview of solutions for distance learning, especially for material that requires practice in the learning process.

The model analysis in this research was carried out by following four steps in literature review, namely selecting a topic, searching for and sorting literature according to the topic, analyzing and synthesizing the literature, and organizing the writing. The results of the literature review show that of the many types of learning models, one type that can be applied in the implementation of Distance learning is the Think Pair Share (TPS) cooperative learning model. This type of learning can also be applied to courses whose learning process requires practice. . Because Think Pair Share learning is cooperative learning designed in the form of discussions to improve communication skills, thinking abilities and encourage active participation of students. The media used in distance learning, especially in practice courses, is effective and easy media, namely videos of practice stages uploaded to YouTube or e-learning media. The teacher/lecturer first makes a video explaining the implementation of the stages in the practicum, then the video is put on e-learning media or YouTube, its implementation students can work together to complete the stages of the activity. practice carried out.

169-Prospects of Mentoring for Assistant Education Officers (AEOs) While Adopting New Role As A Mentor

Arshad Iqbal (International Islamic University Islamabad)
Tariq Mehmood Mehmood (international Islamic University)

Abstract

The role of Assistant Education Officers has been changed from monitoring to mentoring in Punjab. The study has been conducted to find out the prospects of change of the role of Assistant Education Officers from monitoring to mentoring. AEOs have been performing the main role of monitoring and inspection. Now mentoring role has also been assigned to all AEOs. The mentoring role of AEOs has some prospects. The objective of the study is to find out the perception of AEOs about the prospects of mentoring. The study was quantitative in design and a questionnaire was used as an instrument for collection of data. All one hundred and two (102) Assistant Education Officers working in district Rawalpindi constitute the population of the study. Universal sampling has been taken and it is comprised of all the one hundred and two AEOs. Self-developed questionnaire was designed with the help of Classroom Observation Tool (COT) provided by Govt. of the Punjab. Five points Likert scale was used to collect data from all the respondents. Validity of the questionnaire determined through pilot testing and experts opinions. The experts suggested that the items were sufficient, the tool is appropriate, and it had the potential to collect the required data. For pilot testing, twenty (20) AEOs from district Attock were selected. Their responses were analyzed and based on the feedback from the pilot study; some changes were brought in some words and sentence structuring of the questionnaire. Reliability of the questionnaire measured through Cronbach Alpha and its value was 0.83 which displays that the questionnaire was reliable. The collected data was analyzed by calculating percentages. The major findings of the study were that; the major perceptions about the prospects of mentoring were that majority of AEOs have been observing improvement in pre classroom observation, during classroom observation, and post classroom observation.

175-Assignment Feedback: How Does it Work for Improving Student Learning

Ojat Darojat (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This paper focusses on how assignment feedback for distance learners has been implemented to support students' success. The general idea of this study is aimed to disclose the value of the existing general quality policies in the area of teaching learning process. This study employed qualitative research methods. Semi-structured interview was conducted involving students, tutors, and policy contributors as important key informants who provide rich information to support the purpose of the research. This study recognized that the assignment feedback had been implemented in deferent ways by different tutors in different learning centers. This research identified, however, there were two major models e.g. assignment feedback was done individually and in general way without any necessary individual feedback in the written form. Besides, feedback has also been regarded as a very important undertaking for supporting student learning progress. Different challenges and weaknesses, however, were disclose regarding the quality of the feedback, timing, and tutors' competencies and commitments. This study concludes that assignment feedback is strategically valuable for students and management to continuously monitor student learning, maintain student retention, and support their success.

181-Impact of Adaptive Learning on Students Engagement and Retention Rates

Mah Noor (AIOU)

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of adaptive learning technologies on student engagement and retention rates in higher education. Adaptive learning systems tailor educational experiences to individual student needs, potentially enhancing learning outcomes by adjusting content and pace based on real-time analytics. This research employs a qualitative approach, through insights from interviews. Findings indicate that adaptive learning significantly improves student engagement by providing personalized learning paths and immediate feedback, fostering a more interactive and motivating educational environment. Additionally, the data reveals a positive correlation between the use of adaptive learning systems and higher retention rates, suggesting that these technologies can play a crucial role in reducing dropout rates. The paper concludes by discussing the implications of adaptive learning for educational policy and practice, and recommending strategies for effective implementation to maximize its benefits for student success.

187-An effective video summarization based on AI for the UT Radio mobile application

Kusnindyah Hapsari (Universitas Terbuka)
Jamaludin Jamaludin (Universitas Terbuka)
Candra Wibawa (Universitas Terbuka)
Bachriah Dhini (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

Quickly understanding lengthy lecture videos is essential for learners with limited time and interest in various topics to improve their learning efficiency. UT Radio developed the AI-based UT Radio Mobile Smart Assistant so that it can meet student needs regarding learning content. The Smart Assistant that will be applied to UT Radio Mobile are Voice Search, Video Summarization, Multilingual Support, Calendar or Event Management, and comment or rate. UT Radio continues to innovate and be used as a learning service tool. UT Radio program is Q&A talk show between the announcer and the speaker, which will last one hour and be divided into three segments. Each segment has a duration of approximately 15 minutes and is interspersed with advertisements between segments with a duration of 5-10 minutes, and this becomes a challenge to fulfill the need to summarize videos effectively and informatively, which aims to facilitate understanding of the video content. Video summarization is the process of extracting the most relevant and informative from a video and creating a shorter version that preserves the main content and context. This paper aims to develop Video Summarization which one of Smart Assistant features. This article examines and compares several video summarization AI models or tools and their applications, so the results are expected to find out which AI tools are the most effective, appropriate, and suitable for summarizing UT Radio program videos. The research data used covers various topics ranging from general information to learning. General information videos consist of 6 categories of programs about UT and learning videos comprised of 5 categories of Radio Tutorial programs. The method used is to compare three summarization tools: noteGPT, Sumtube, and Open AI, and create an architecture for the video data processing stages to produce video summarization. The comparison was also validated with the results of manual summarization by humans.

189-Scope of Human Resources Management in Educational Leadership and Management in Institutions in Pakistan: Challenges and Remedial Measures

Shah Nawaz Sahito (School Education and Literacy Department)
Tariq Mehmood (International Islamic University)

Abstract

This study investigated the scope of human resource management (HRM) within the realm of educational leadership and management in Pakistani institutions, focusing on the challenges faced and the remedial measures adopted. Grounded in a mixed-methods research design, the study began with a comprehensive literature review, followed by a sequential exploratory strategy. The qualitative phase employed the Delphi method to gather in-depth insights from experts through multiple rounds of semi-structured questionnaires. This phase informed the subsequent quantitative survey, which extended the findings across a broader sample to validate and generalise the results. The study's objectives were to evaluate leadership effectiveness in HRM, identify key HRM challenges and the success of remedial strategies, and investigate the alignment of HRM with institutional strategic goals. Delphi rounds with educational leaders, HR managers, school principals, and department heads illuminated the nuances of HRM strategies, leading to the identification of specific themes: internal challenges (cooperation, capacity, orientation/willingness) and external challenges (political interference, social interference, financial constraints, student's capacity-related challenges, and general public-related challenges). A structured survey was then developed and administered to quantify the prevalence and perceived efficacy of these themes. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, underpinned the methodology. Findings significantly contributed to understanding HRM's role in educational leadership in Pakistan, offering a foundation for strategic enhancements and policy development in this critical sector.

190-The Learner Support Programs: How Does it Work for Increasing Students' Retention?

Hidayah S.Pd., M.Pd. (Universitas Terbuka)
Siti Hadianti (Universitas Terbuka)
Devi Ayuni (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

Universitas Terbuka in Indonesia is a pioneer in distance learning that offers a comprehensive learning support programs to improve students' retention. Assignment workshops and exam clinics provide valuable guidance and support for students to help them overcome academic challenges and achieve their educational goals. Moving forward, continued investment in such support services is essential for promoting students' retention and fostering a positive learning environment. This paper discusses how do learner support programs implemented by Universitas Terbuka (UT) enhance student retention. The programs include distance learning skill workshops, assignment workshops, and exam clinics. The programs are aimed to provide academic assistance and guidance for supporting students' independent study. The study employes a qualitative research method involving questionnaires and in-depth interviews. To support the research, 10 students taking Bachelor of English Education Study Program were involved as key participants. The results indicate that learner support programs have a positive impact on student academic success and student retention; students more confidence during their study, increasing their technology literacy skills, and enhancing their independence. From this study, it can be drawn that learner support programs employed by UT are strategically important to maintain student satisfaction, support student success, and their retention.

195-The Strategies of Tutor Assistance in Psychosocial Support for Handling Student Loneliness at Open University in Various Countries

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Nurhasnah Nurhasanah (Universitas Terbuka)
Rahmawaty Rahmawaty (Universitas Sumatera Utara)
Cicik Suriani (Universitas Negeri Meda)

Abstract

Students enrolled in distance education encounter a variety of unique circumstances and obstacles in their educational setting. Because there aren't meetings at the same time and location, it can be challenging to establish relationships with study partners. This can lead to a tendency toward cultural failure, which makes it difficult for students to adjust socially in a distant learning setting. One prevalent issue that requires attention and management measures is the sense of isolation that many students who use the distant learning system experience. There are several unsettling issues that loneliness can lead to. When students lack interpersonal contacts during lectures, they may experience feelings of loneliness that negatively impact their performance in both academic and non-academic domains. This study employed a narrative review approach for its literature review. The data collection strategy involved formulating research questions, reference sources and journals database with conducting interviews a sample of students from various open universities across multiple nations. the result this study explains how student circumstances might lead to cultural failure, poorer learning outcomes, and attitudes toward cooperation and contact during remote learning. The function and tactic of academic officers' and tutors' psychological support in offering integrated learning services is one of the tactics discovered in this study. The findings demonstrate the significant impact of social psychological support as a kind of treatment on feelings of loneliness. Students who are vulnerable to cultural and academic failure during the distance learning process have a negative link between social support and loneliness from institution this situation will be able to solving better through adjust to the culture of distance learning and increase their degree of academic success at the end of the study term.

197-Revolutionizing Learning: AI-powered H5P in ODL Setting in Malaysia

Shawira Abu Bakar (Open University Malaysia)
Nooni Ezdiani Yasin (Open University Malaysia)
Nazrai Ahmad Zabidi (Open University Malaysia)
Ahmadzulkarnain Ramli (Open University Malaysia)
Ahmad Izanee Awang Open University Malaysia)
Santhi Raghavan (Open University Malaysia)

Abstract

Open University Malaysia (OUM) plays a central role in providing the workforce and those remote from conventional campus setting, with flexible educational opportunities through Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Despite integrating digital platforms and learning management systems to support the programs online, ensuring students' engagement and satisfaction to sustain their learning remains a significant challenge. This research paper examines the integration of HyperText Markup Language (HTML) 5 package (H5P) learning materials with Artificial Intelligence (AI). The study aims to assess H5P's effectiveness in fostering engagement, improving learning outcomes, and overcoming the limitations of traditional teaching methods. The key research questions addressed are: (1) How does H5P impact student engagement and learning outcomes? (2) What are the benefits and challenges of integrating H5P with other educational technologies such as AI? (3) How can H5P be optimized to its potential in interactive ODL learning environments? To address a significant shortcoming in the current educational framework—where traditional methods fail to adequately engage students and cater to their diverse learning needs—this study uses a mixed-methods approach. This approach integrates quantitative data with qualitative feedback from students, subject matter experts, and developers, using surveys and interviews to provide a comprehensive analysis. According to students' feedback from 492 respondents, 93% agreed that the learning outcomes, content, and activities were well-aligned to improve understanding, while 94.3% felt that the graphics and illustrations were interactive and contributed to a better learning experience. Findings from the study indicated that students using H5P exhibited higher engagement levels and better understanding.

199-Effect of Social Practice Approach on Academic Achievement of Adult Learners in Basic Literacy

Sidra Noreen (AIOU)
Zafar Iqbal (AIOU)

Abstract

The challenge of low academic achievement among adult learners has been continuously reported in adult basic literacy. Therefore, the present study was conducted to empirically determine the effect of the social practice approach on learners' academic achievement through a quasi-experimental group design. There were 70 learners, with 35 assigned to each experimental and control group. A worksheet (pre-test/post-test) was employed for data collection. Data were analyzed by using an independent sample t-test. The findings revealed that the experimental group, exposed to the social practice approach in their literacy activities, showed improved academic achievement in knowledge, comprehension, and application as compared to the control group. The study put forth recommendations; conducting learners' need assessment before literacy content development to align with identified social needs, offering context-based literacy training for teachers, especially in lesson planning, and implementing virtual and physical feedback mechanisms to gather input from learners to enhance adult basic literacy consistently.

203-Learning 4.0: Instructors' Role and Learners' Expectations

Abdul Rehman Abbasi (KINPOE-College of PIEAS)

Abstract

In recent times, especially in the post-COVID scenario, learning process in all domains (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitude) is rapidly changing as well as becoming a challenge both for instructors and learners. Learning is a two-way process; role of instructor and expectations from learner(s). On one side, the role of instructor is becoming challenging, especially in the context of Learning 4.0 framework, where factors such as job requirements, skill matrix, developing global citizen and workforce for the future are required. On the other hand, learners' expectations are to get him/her aligned with emerging 4th industrial revolution, whose focus is smart technology, AI and robotics, which is impacting every life now. In this paper, we review the requirements of Learning 4.0 framework and compare them with the current national priorities. The demanding nature of Learning 4.0 requires focus on developing global citizenship skills, innovation and creativity, technology skills, interpersonal skills, personalized and self-paced learning, accessible and inclusive learning, problem-based and collaborative learning, and lifelong and student-centered learning. On the other side, our national priorities are jacking up enrollment numbers, school meals/food programs, transport (pink buses), and education voucher programs. Though, these priorities nevertheless are essential to achieve but not at the cost of ignoring the much-debated requirements mentioned above in Learning 4.0 framework, especially through World Economic Forum-2023 report. The results of comparison of priorities is very interesting to understand the underlying issues within our own learning system at all levels including primary, secondary, higher secondary and tertiary levels.

206-The ‘domino effect’ of delayed assessment feedback on students’ learning experiences at an Open Distance and e-Learning institution in Africa

Lekau Rachidi (UNISA)

Abstract

In the evolving landscape of distance higher education, student success and retention remain a huge challenge. There are multitudes of studies trying to understand reasons for student dropout in varied contexts, yet there are scant studies on institutional processes as a contributing factor. This study focused on the domino effect of institutions’ delay in providing assessment feedback to students and how these delays affect students’ academic performance. Academic performance, like in any educational setting, is tested through assessments and how students perform in an assessment informs both the lecturer and the student where the learning gaps are. Assessment feedback is therefore important, especially before the next assessment is due to facilitate the learning process. Every academic institution has a guideline in terms of the turnaround time for assessments feedback provision to students. Technology affordances enable online submission and auto-marking in assessment types such as quizzes. Other types of assessments such as essays require traditional approaches to marking. Delays in the provision of formative feedback may negatively affect teaching and learning and potentially lead to students being unable to track their learning progress as well as their readiness for future summative assessments. The aim of this study is to explore the effect of delayed assessment feedback on students’ learning experiences. This study adopted an interpretive phenomenology which is grounded in qualitative inquiry. A purposive sample method was used to identify registered students for Higher Certificates, whose first year was in 2023 and have not yet completed their qualification. The findings indicate that the affected students were underprepared for examinations and performed poorly, with some having to re-register for the same modules. The study recommends alternative approaches to improve the turnaround time of assessment feedback provision.

207-Students' transitions: the phenomenon of students' attrition in open and distance learning

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Sugilar Sugilar (Universitas Terbuka)
Hidayah S.Pd., M.Pd. (Universitas Terbuka)
Fauzy Rahman (Universitas Terbuka)
Aminudin Zuhairi (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This paper is research in progress on students' transitions and attrition in open and distance learning (ODL). As many studies have indicated, ODL institutions tend to have a higher attrition rate compared to the face-to-face institutions. At Universitas Terbuka (UT), an ODL institution offering higher education programs in Indonesia, the average student attrition rate from the first semester to the subsequent three semesters reaches 43.53%. For specific study programs, it reaches up to 51.23%. The transition phase is believed to influence the attrition rate in ODL, where factors such as mental readiness, learning preparedness, and digital literacy can play a significant role. This research aims to analyse: (1) the challenges and acceptance faced by university students during the transition period; (2) the actions taken by students during the transition; (3) the characteristics of both re-enrolling and not re-enrolling students in navigating the transition period; and (4) the environment and ODL institution services needed by students during the transition. The research design employs a survey method with data collection techniques using questionnaires, structured interviews, and supporting documents. The gathered data are analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The anticipated outcome of this research is to develop a program designed to improve students' wellbeing during their study to ensure learning success. This study is expected to be accomplished at the end of the year and the final result of this research is expected to be submitted for publication to the AAOU Journal early next year.

209-Enhancing Student Satisfaction in Higher Education: Exploring the Influence of Service Quality Dimensions on Open and Distance Learning in Sri Lanka

Mahinda B Sakalasooriya (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

In higher education, student satisfaction is crucial due to rising competition. Distance learning centers are vital for rural students, aiding retention and enrollments. Service quality significantly impacts satisfaction in Open University systems, yet literature on key satisfaction aspects in ODL universities is limited. This paper explores student satisfaction in ODL centers, focusing on service quality dimensions and their effects, addressing this research gap.

A quantitative study used a cross-sectional survey based on the SERVQUAL model to measure the gap between customer expectations and service offerings. The survey involved 124 students from new ODL centers in Sri Lanka (2022-2024), covering diverse age groups, study programs, and fields. It examined five service quality dimensions—tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Exploratory factor analysis and regression analysis were used to analyze these dimensions' influence on student satisfaction. The study identifies 19 factors influencing satisfaction, confirming the SERVQUAL model through exploratory factor analysis and PCA with Varimax rotation. Stepwise linear regression shows empathy (β=.301), responsiveness (β=.254), reliability (β=.202), and assurance (β=.186) as significant positive predictors of student satisfaction, while tangibles are not statistically significant. Interpersonal effectiveness is more valued than physical infrastructure. ODL institutions must prioritize academic excellence and service quality to stay competitive and retain students. Empathy, responsiveness, reliability, and assurance are crucial for student satisfaction, while physical infrastructure is less important. These findings contribute to enhancing student satisfaction and retention. This study fills a research gap by applying the SERVQUAL model to Sri Lanka university.

216-Architecture Model of Automated Assessment System to Assess Exam Answers Written in Universitas Terbuka Exam Answer Book

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Unggul Utan Sufandi (Universitas Terbuka)
Bachriah Dhini (Universitas Terbuka)
Agung Wicaksono (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

COVID-19 forced Universitas Terbuka to make adjustments to the implementation of the Semester Final Exam, which is usually held face-to-face, to Take Home Exam, which is available online. In Take Home Exam scheme, students do not need to come to the exam venue, but they can download exam questions from anywhere and write their answers on the exam answer book given by Universitas Terbuka, and then upload this answer book through the application provided. Students are given 6 to 12 hours to do the exam. Take Home Exam is case-based essay questions with a minimum cognitive level of application (C3). Due to the huge number of students, Universitas Terbuka involves 9,500 practitioners and lecturers from other universities to correct approximately 1,600,000 Take Home Exam answer books from more than 100 courses. It requires significant costs, effort, and time. The purpose of this study is to develop an automated assessment architecture for Take Home Exam answer book, so that it can increase efficiency in all things, including manpower, costs and time. The method used consists of three main stages, namely file extraction, text cleaning, and automated essay assessment. PDF file extraction using PDFMiner and PDFPlumber, and automated essay assessment using BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) and OpenAI based on GPT (Generative Pre-training Transformer). This study utilizes data from 2213 Take Home Exam answers books from fifteen courses. This study has successfully explored and effectively implemented file extraction, text cleaning, and automated essay scoring methods. The average time required to extract text from a pdf file with a size of about 0.5 megabytes is 0.1752 seconds. The average time required to clean the text is 0.3096 seconds. While the raw scoring process for 783 data takes about 1 second (1277 milliseconds). In conclusion, the developed system can be applied to improve the process of essay exam assessment in Universitas Terbuka.

219-Determinants of Decision to Choose University Viewed from Perceived Value and Intention to Study Outlooks Mediated by Career Development

Maximus G Sembiring (Universitas Terbuka)
Sjaiful Munir (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This study discusses the factors that motivate students to choose a university after graduating from high school. This research is crucial for universities seeking to secure a market niche. While there are plenty of high school graduates, the number of universities, especially in Indonesia, is also substantial. A sufficient number of students is necessary to sustain operations. Universitas Terbuka faces challenges similar to those faced by a public university operating a distance education system. This study aims to reveal the determinants influencing prospective students in choosing a university to support their careers. The research adopts a quantitative approach. Eligible respondents were students enrolled at Universitas Terbuka Serang. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 322 qualified respondents. Data processing employed Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Four variables were involved: (1) Perceived value and (2) Study intention (independent variables), (3) Career development (moderating variable), and (4) University choice decision (dependent variable). Simultaneously, six hypotheses were proposed and statistically validated afterward. The results indicated: (1) Perceived value and (2) Study intention have a direct positive influence on university choice decision, (3) Perceived value has a direct positive influence on study intention, (4) Perceived value has a direct positive influence on university choice decision, and (5) Perceived value has an indirect positive influence on university choice decision mediated by career development, statistically validated by the analysis. However, (6) Study intention directly influencing university choice decisions moderated by career development was not validated by the analysis. These findings confirm that study intention alone cannot determine the university choice decision.

220-Ensuring Fairness and Quality in Large-Scale Assessments: A Case Study of the Virtual University of Pakistan

Israr Ullah (Virtual University of Pakistan)
Muhammad Naeem
Muhammad Ibrar Khan

Abstract

Ensuring fairness and quality in large-scale assessments is crucial for evaluating learners' understanding and critical thinking. In large-scale educational settings, different question papers are generated from a "question bank," which can lead to imbalances in difficulty levels, compromising fairness and quality. We propose an "assessment of assessments" approach, involving three key steps: first, assessing the accuracy of Bloom's taxonomy levels assigned by instructors versus those suggested by a machine learning model; second, validating Bloom's levels through students' scores; and third, quantifying the difficulty of assessment papers to ensure fairness and quality. This research aims to improve assessment practices using data from selected courses at the Virtual University of Pakistan. ChatGPT is used as a machine learning model, with potential for developing a custom model trained on a labeled dataset of questions and their corresponding Bloom's taxonomy levels. By accurately classifying questions into Bloom's levels and employing our method for computing the Paper Difficulty Index (PDI), this study seeks to enhance assessment fairness and quality. The PDI calculation method can become a valuable resource for educators and institutions, helping to identify papers that deviate from the standard—being too easy or too challenging. This tool provides insights into the balance and rigor of assessment materials, ultimately fostering better educational outcomes.

221-Designing a Smart Learning Model to Know Students' Ability to Achieve Course Competencies in Online Tutorials using Text Mining Methods

Rahmah Suryani (Universitas Terbuka)
Dian Nursantika (Universitas Terbuka)
DIMAS PRASETYO (Universitas Terbuka)
Dwi Astuti Aprijani (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

Universitas Terbuka or known by the acronym (UT) is a campus that implements distance learning, which has learning services, one of which is through the elearning page. The service is required to always be developed and adjusted to the needs of students and the demands of the times. So it is necessary to design a model to improve the performance of the page, especially on the feedback provided by tutors and AI-based tutors both on GPT 3.5 and GPT 4, to find out the performance of the three types of feedback it is necessary to compare with the scoring guidelines made by the course instructor. With this comparison, a model will be obtained to improve students' ability to achieve course competencies. The data used in this study are Tutor Feedback, AI GPT 3.5 Feedback, AI GPT 4 Feedback, scoring guidelines in the form of answers to each discussion session, the data taken comes from all courses that apply AI to the tuton. The purpose of this research is to design a model to assess the similarity of feedback given by Tutor, AI GPT 3.5, and AI GPT 4 which will be compared with the answers on the scoring guidelines in each discussion session and assignment session. The stages of this research are: 1) Perform text mining stage on tutor feedback data, AI GPT 3.5, AI GPT 4, Scoring Guidelines; 2) Finding words or sentences as the key of the Scoring Guidelines as the target of correct answers; 3) Training the word/sentence answer data from the scoring guidelines; 4) Testing with tutor feedback data, AI GPT 3.5, AI GPT 4, scoring guidelines. 5) Creating the architecture of the machine model. Through this research, a model has been designed to support the achievement of course competencies in AI-based online tutorial courses using the text mining method.

224-Student Outreach and Engagement Through Innovation Communication Strategy: Universitas Terbuka Banjarmasin Initiative

Maximus G Sembiring (Universitas Terbuka)
Mochamad Priono (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

Universitas Terbuka (UT), Indonesia's premier distance education institution, aims to expand its reach to accommodate the growing demand for higher education across the nation's 38 provinces. Serving 550,000 students in the first semester of 2024, UT plans to extend its services to 750,000 students by the end of 2024 and 1 million by the end of 2025. One notable regional office, UT Banjarmasin, in South Kalimantan Province, serves 8,680 students across 13 districts/cities. The office aims to increase its student base to 12,500 by the end of 2024, representing a 30.56% growth. This paper explores the potential and strategies for achieving this target by leveraging the region's population, educational qualifications, and existing partnerships. Conceptually, the initiative refers to (1) Diffusion of Innovations Theory: Strategies for promoting the adoption of distance education, focusing on how innovations are communicated through specific channels over time among members of a social system, (2) Behavioral Economics: To understand the decision-making processes of potential students and designing incentives to encourage enrollment, and (3) Community of Inquiry Framework: To ensure the educational experience is effective and engaging by fostering a strong presence of teaching, cognitive, and social interactions. Methodically, this initiative uses a qualitative approach: Systematic Literature Review. The discussion includes: (1) Background: Purpose of the program, (2) The strategy of communication planning and stages of implementation, (3) Programs and activities, (4) Theoretical foundations building and implementing programs and activities, (5) The practical strategy and efforts should be anticipated and prioritized. The analysis highlights the significant challenges and opportunities in reaching the set goals and provides actionable insights to ensure the success of expansion efforts. This effort is focused on the Innovation Communication Strategy.

225-Student Engagement in Autonomous Universities: Strategies for Success in a Digital Era

Maximus G Sembiring (Universitas Terbuka)
Mailani Hamdani (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This inquiry explores the potential strategic implications of increased autonomy on student engagement, student support services, and student body expansion at Universitas Terbuka (UT). After transitioning to "Perguruan Tinggi Negeri Badan Hukum" (PTNBH, Legal Entity State University), UT gained broader autonomy, enabling more agile decision-making and innovative educational strategies. This inquiry then aims to: (1) Analyze the impact of increased autonomy on student support systems, (2) Propose flexible and responsive student services, (3) Develop strategies for fostering student engagement to enhance the student body, and (4) Conduct comparative analysis with other autonomous universities to identify best practices. This inquiry utilizes a qualitative approach, i.e., a comprehensive literature review, case study, and data analysis. Conceptually, this inquiry consults resource dependence, institutional, and principal-agent theories related to university autonomy and student engagement. Correspondingly, it includes (1) Self-determination Theory, (2) Community of Inquiry Framework, (3) Technology Acceptance Model, (4) Connectivism, and (5) Engagement Theory. Operationally, these foundations aspire to present strategic recommendations to support a diverse and geographically dispersed student body effectively. The findings provide actionable insights for stakeholders to optimize student services and engagement in progressing the student body. They are (1) Enhancing student support, (2) Leveraging autonomy for flexible services, and (3) Strategies for fostering student persistence. The impact of autonomy extends beyond administrative changes. It represents a commitment to student-centric education and excellence in digital learning settings. By embracing autonomy effectively, UT stands poised to meet and exceed the potential prospects by fostering student engagement and supporting academic performance.

227-The Critical Role of Virtual Teachers: Enhancing Student Engagement in the Digital Age

Maximus Sembiring (Universitas Terbuka)
Benny Nugraha (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

The rapid advancement of digital technologies, accelerated by COVID-19, has transformed the education landscape. It makes the role of virtual teachers more critical. This paper explores the evolving role of virtual teachers in the digital age. It focuses on an online learning environment, which provides flexible and accessible education. The need for innovative teaching approaches is urgent as traditional educational models are reevaluated. The objective is to analyze virtual teachers' key characteristics, skills, and impacts on student engagement and outcomes. This inquiry utilizes a qualitative approach, i.e., a Systematic Literature Review. Initially, the paper defines virtual teachers, highlights their significance, and provides an overview of online learning following virtual teaching settings today. It then examines educational theories and technological advancements that support virtual teaching. The study outlines characteristics and skills for virtual teachers, i.e., Communication, Technological Proficiency, Adaptability, and Student-centered Approach. It further analyzes how educators influence student performance and enhance engagement. Additionally, the paper reviews virtual teaching tools/platforms and evaluates their effectiveness in simplifying online education. It identifies technical and infrastructural challenges virtual teachers face and explores opportunities for personalized learning. The study predicts the future of virtual teaching based on the integration of online pedagogy and emerging technologies. Finally, it addresses considerations for futuristic teachers by harmonizing pedagogy and technology with human interaction. This is to ensure continuous professional development, promoting inclusivity, bridging the digital divide, and adhering to ethical considerations. This study then provides an understanding of how virtual teachers can enhance educational experiences, ensuring education remains flexible, accessible, and effective for learners.

228-Time, Labour, Infrastructure and Service Efficiency in AI-Based Online Tutorials

Dimas Agung Prasetyo (Universitas Terbuka)
Dimar Prakoso (Universitas Terbuka)
Nanda Purba (Open University of Indonesia)

Abstract

The Open University (UT) has been implementing distance learning through online media since 20 years ago, so we have gone through various online class services both computerised and artificial intelligence (AI) based. This study assesses the efficiency of using online classes without AI and online classes with AI, by looking at the expenditure of funds when using AI-based tutorials, especially on the use of external services. The data we use are service rental, software purchase and maintenance, number of student users, number of tutor users, and funds for Tutor honorarium. The steps we take are: looking at data on software rentals and other infrastructure to support AI technology, doing calculations per day to per year to see the progress trend of funds spent in using AI technology, seeing expenses from various services and purchases and seeing the number of classes that can be accessed simultaneously by both students, tutors, and the online class manager. Then see the tutor honorarium data issued in one semester, this is done because the number of tutors at UT can reach 1000 tutors. Next is to see the number of classes that can be accessed by tutors and students, and maintenance carried out on servers and others. The results show that there has been a decrease in the use of funds due to the use of AI technology in online tutorials, it can reduce operational costs and efficiency of expenditure funds. Although the use of AI technology can increase efficiency, there is a need for further studies related to software and hardware maintenance to support efficiency in terms of time, energy, infrastructure, and services in the online tutorial. It is hoped that this research can be a reference for various parties who will develop AI-based online learning.

230-Artificial Intelligence and the Learning of Accounting, A Tutorial Subject: Introduction of Accounting

Iis Solihat (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

In this article I discuss Accounting studies made from the point of view Artificial Intelligence (AI). There is a spectrum of work in this field that ranges from studies whose aim to understand Accounting learning better to studies whose aim is to perform Accounting tasks without human involvement or consideration. Such a spectrum reflects the goals of AI researchers themselves: from those who use AI as an approach to study cognition and understand it better to those who use AI to build systems to perform tasks Introduction to Accounting without making claims that the way the program works indicates anything. about how humans perform tasks. The main contribution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Accounting education is to provide concepts, methods and tools for the design of flexible and relevant computer-based systems for teaching and learning purposes. Such systems convey great promise such as: direct manipulation of abstract objects, customized explanations, intelligent microworlds enabling learning through discovery. Many questions relate to these expectations, such as questions about knowing what can be learned and what is learned through interactions with such AI systems. Another important question must be asked regarding the consequences of the reification of knowledge implicit in AI modeling and design. Friendly online tutorial or how the system can work together with teachers in Akuntasni classes synchronous or asynchronous. The learning media used in synchronous learning include video calls, virtual meetings, chat, and others. This allows students and presenters to interact at the same time. Synchronous e-learning is a forum for bringing together students and presenters in one discussion room. Usually, classes are held in certain sessions and tend to be binding because they are scheduled. Basically, synchronous and asynchronous are part of the learning method for transferring knowledge or information. Both are online learning.

232-Current and Futuristic Critical Issues in the Global Educational Research Paradigm: Viewed from Open Flexible Distance Learning Outlooks

Maximus G Sembiring (Universitas Terbuka)
Andriyansah Andriyansah (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

COVID-19 has dramatically reshaped the global educational landscape, necessitating a reconsideration of research paradigms to address challenges. This study explores issues in the global educational research paradigm, focusing on the implications of open, flexible distance learning (OFDL). This study is designed to: (1) Review current literature on global educational research issues, (2) Discuss gaps and challenges in educational research, and (3) Propose research themes and topics that may guide future studies within the OFDL context. This study applies a qualitative approach by conducting a comprehensive literature review. The study identifies current challenges, i.e., digital divide, equitable access, and quality assurance. It also investigates futuristic challenges, i.e., technological advancements and Artificial Intelligence integration. Conceptually, this study reviews challenges from the global research paradigm. Operationally, potential issues involve: (1) Overview of recent findings on global educational research, (2) Key issues identified in the literature, and (3) Impact of the pandemic. Current and futuristic challenges involve: (1) Examination of current challenges, (2) Anticipation of future trends and challenges, and (3) The role of distance education in addressing those challenges. The study highlights significant research gaps and proposes themes and topics relatable to advanced educational practices and policies in the post-pandemic era. The findings underscore the transformative potential of OFDL in fostering innovation, inclusivity, and resilience in education. It is recovered that futuristic research gaps are acquired by: (1) Identifying areas lacking sufficient research, (2) Discussing emerging areas needing exploration, and (3) Proposing the potential impact of addressing those gaps in global settings. OFDL plays an imperative role in shaping the future of education. It is an essential component of the global educational research paradigm.

233-Online Teaching Quality and Students' Experiences in Pakistani Higher Education

Fouzia Ajmal (International Islamic University Islamabad)
Sana Maqsood (international Islamic university Islamabad)
Nabi Bux Jumani (IIUI)

Abstract

Quality assurance in online teaching is the most important problem for the students in higher educational institutions especially in developing countries like Pakistan in the current situation. The main purpose of this research study was to evaluate the current quality assurance mechanisms and practices in place for online teaching in higher education in Pakistan. The study was conducted on students of higher education level private and public universities that have offered online education during COVID-19. A multi-stage sampling method was used, selecting 10% of private and public universities in ICT and provinces (Punjab, KPK, Sindh, Baluchistan) taken as sample. The quantitative research design was used. The self-develop Close ended Questionnaire consisted of demographic information, seventy statements under the nine major variables (Courses Overview, Assessment of Pupil Learning, student interaction and Community, Instructional Materials and Resources, Facilitation and Instruction, Accessibility and Universal Design, Mobile Design Readiness, Technology for Teaching and Learning, Course Summary and Wrap-up) was used. The validity and reliability of the Questionnaire were checked. For data analysis, descriptive data analysis techniques were used. The findings of the study highlighted that the instructor provides a detailed overview of the course as well as an introduction to the students. Teachers provide opportunities to engage with the material, their peers and their teacher in the online course environment as active learners. Teachers use technology to deliver course material, involve students in learning activities and provide opportunities for students to express themselves or illustrate learning. Students are allowed to summarize the semester, create a connection between this course and other courses, and prepare to begin the next step of their program or progress.

234-The Quest for Meaning: Unveiling the Depths of the Human Psyche through the Lens of Spirituality

Parivash Fatima (World Food Programme)

Abstract

This paper delves into the intricacies of human existence, exploring the interplay between our carnal desires, rational mind, and the yearning for spiritual fulfillment. We commence by examining Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which dissects the psyche into the id, ego, and superego, highlighting the unconscious forces that shape our behavior. Further, we embark on a journey to comprehend the concept of mysticism, a state of divine connection transcending the limitations of the physical world. This state, achievable through self-exploration and religious devotion, offers a profound sense of purpose and transcends the fleeting desires of the material world. The paper then investigates the character of Salar Sikandar from the novel Peer-e-Kamil, a man of exceptional intellect plagued by an existential crisis. His suicidal tendencies stem from a desire to confront the inevitability of death, a stark contrast to his privileged life. However, a transformative encounter sets him on a path of spiritual awakening, demonstrating the transformative power of self-discovery.

236-Values, Perceptions, and Personalities Regarding Online Learning and The Decision to Become a University Student

Nenah Sunarsih (Universitas Terbuka)
Joko Rizkie Widokarti (Universitas Terbuka)
Donni Juni Priansa (Universitas Telkom)

Abstract

Online learning has become a global trend in the digital age. This study analyses the values, perceptions, and personalities regarding online learning and the decision to become a Master of Management student at Universitas Terbuka. The population in this study were MM Study Program students, with a sample of first-year MM students (semesters 1 and 2). The sampling technique used in this study was nonprobability sampling. The data analysis technique used in this research is the structural equation model (SEM) with the partial least squares (PLS) approach. The results showed that the dimension with the highest contribution to building the value construct is price, while the dimension with the lowest is emotional value. The dimension with the highest contribution to building the construct of perceived service is physical evidence, while the dimension with the lowest is reliability. The dimension with the highest contribution to building the personality construct is positive personality, while the lowest is sceptical personality. The dimension with the highest contribution in building the construct of the decision to become a student is the choice of dealer, while the dimension with the lowest contribution is the amount. The results showed that values were in a high category, perceptions were in a high category, personality was in a high category, and the decision to become a student was in a moderate category. The results showed that value, perception, and personality regarding online learning had a positive and significant effect on the decision to become a student of the MM Study Program, both partially and simultaneously. The more optimal the MM Study Program in utilizing values, perceptions, and personality, the further increase the decision to become a student at the Universitas Terbuka MM Study Program. This research shows that students' values, perceptions, and personalities regarding online learning have an important role in their decision to become students.

238-Information System: E-Signature System to Support Distance Education in Universitas Terbuka

Firmansyah Firman Firmansyah (Universitas Terbuka)
Devi Ayuni (Universitas Terbuka)
Rahmad Purnama (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This research examines the implementation of an electronic signature system to support distance education in Universitas Terbuka, particularly in such as diplomas, transcripts, and legalization of diplomas. The main objective of the research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the system and the level of user satisfaction with this service. The research method used was quantitative, with data collection through an online survey of 500 Open University students and alumni. The questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale, covering aspects of security, speed, ease of use, and system reliability. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression tests. The results showed a high level of user satisfaction, with an average score of 4.2 out of 5. The security aspect obtained the highest score, followed by speed, ease of use, and system reliability. Regression analysis revealed that security and speed were the most significant factors affecting user satisfaction ($p < 0.001$). Specifically, 92% of respondents stated that the e-signature system improved efficiency in obtaining academic documents. The average time to obtain legalized diplomas and transcripts is 2 days. In addition, 88% of respondents felt more confident in the authenticity of documents using electronic signatures. The discussion of the research results shows that the implementation of the electronic signature system has successfully improved the quality of academic services in Universitas Terbuka. High security and speed of processing are important factors in user satisfaction. In conclusion, the e-signature system proved effective in supporting distance education in Universitas Terbuka, especially in the issuance of academic documents. This research provides a foundation for future development and improvement of the system, and can serve as a reference for other higher education institutions that wish to implement similar technology.

240-From Pencil to Pixel: AI`s Opinion on Educational Assessment

Neelam Yaqoob (Canvass Analysis)
Malik Mansoor (Canvass Analysis)
Dr Tahira Bibi (AIOU)

Abstract

The use of AI has become a truth in this era. The birth of Generative Pre-Trained Transformers with ChatGPT in November 2022 spurred nearly every domain of life. The use of AI in education is increasing daily. With AIs running with billions of perimeters, it has become challenging for the assessors to justify whether the use of AI is acceptable or not. But this is still a debatable topic. To address this issue, the researcher adopted a robust approach by asking a single question to the five most powerful AIs to date and asked them for their opinion about assessment i.e. whether assessment should be traditionally handwritten or digital. The paper presents the opinion of five AIs (namely ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Meta, and Copilot) highlighting the challenges and opportunities presented in modern education. The traditional handwritten practices are a proven method for cognitive benefits, bringing fine motor skills, better retention of memory, and creative expression. However, with the advent of AI, there is a need to have a balanced or hybrid approach in the field of education to be used by instructors for better assessment. The responses provided to the same question by five AIs were analyzed using the thematic content analysis technique. The key themes that emerged from the responses included integration and acceptance of AI as a learning tool and handwritten tests for assessment, preservation of pedagogical values while using the latest AI tools, and effectiveness as well as the efficacy of using handwritten assessments. The current research advocates that there is a great need for the adoption of the latest technological advancements like AI for learning purposes, however, the assessment using handwritten assignments and tests should be respected. This perspective contributes to shaping future educational strategies that prioritize effectiveness, inclusivity, and student-centered learning in the AI era.

241-7Cs: Elements of Effective Prompt in AI Research

Malik Omer Mansoor (Canvass Analysis)
Neelam Yaqoob (Canvass Analysis)
Dr Tahira Bibi (AIOU)

Abstract

In this era of the AI revolution, mastering the art of prompt to get the desired results from any AI system is the key. This ensures that effective communication is made between the human using a machine and the servers working with Large Language Models or Natural Language Processing. The current study focused on the sequential exploration and application of the "7Cs" framework to enhance prompts' effectiveness in AI research. The "7Cs" are comprised in an orderly manner of cloning, characterization, contribution, constraints, creation, clarity, and criteria. The current research aimed to systematically investigate how each element from the 7Cs framework changes the desired outcomes from any AI and how the power of AI can be harnessed for use in the field of research. Through a structured analysis and practical use of prompts, the current study defined and operationalized each of the Cs elements in the context of AI research prompts. The research examined and explored how these elements address ambiguity, maintain precision, and support the formulation of well-defined research inquiries. The study evaluated the perceptions of researchers regarding the applicability and benefits of integrating the 7Cs framework into their research practices. It identifies the challenges associated with the implementation of these principles and proposes guidelines to facilitate the adoption and effective use of the framework in AI research design. enhancement of communication and ensuring effectiveness in the use of AI for research purposes. The current research provided great insight into how 7Cs can be used for effective communication between the user and the machine learning servers using Large Language Models or Natural Language Processing to bring efficacy in the use of AI for research.

242-Development of Smart Warehouse Management System (SWMS) for Distributed Learning Material Univesitas Terbuka

Agus Mujab (Universitas Terbuka Indonesia)
Teguh Santoso (Universitas Terbuka)
Adrian Sutawijaya (Universitas Terbuka)
Hanson Geraldi Pardede (Universitas Terbuka)
Lestariningsih Lestariningsih (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

In the era of Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0, Universitas Terbuka, as a public university with an open system, is committed to implementing a distance learning system which utilitize the power of technology. To support this commitment, Universitas Terbuka has declared itself as one of the leading cyber universities in the country, adopting a Digital Learning Ecosystem (DLE) that integrates all academic and non-academic activities. However, the management of teaching material distribution services at the Universitas Terbuka teaching material service enter (PUSLABA) still relies on semi-systematic and manual processes, resulting is inefficiencies and inaccuracies. To overcome this challenge, this research aims to develop a Smart Warehouse Management System (SWMS) that utilizes advanced technologies to streamline the teaching material distribution process. The proposed SWMS will enable real-time monitoring, automated packaging, and precise tracking of teaching materials, ensuring timely delivery and minimizing shortages. By developing this system, the Universitas Terbuka can optimize its resources, enhance the quality of its distance learning services, and solidify its position as a leading cyber university in the country.

244-Assessing the impact of Extempore Teaching Skills in Learning Outcomes in Distance, Non-Formal and Continuing Education

Malik Omer Mansoor (Canvass Analysis)
Shamsa Malik (AIOU)
Neelam Yaqoob (Canvass Analysis)

Abstract

The current study examined how the extempore teaching skill influences the learning outcomes in distance, non-formal, and continuing education. The setting for the current research was a program of "teaching skills" to students of masters in distance, non-formal, and continuing education comprising 20 hours of theoretical and practical teaching with submission of 40 written lesson plans and 2 practical mock lesson deliveries on the topic from any elementary-level subjects. The attendance of students undergoing the "teaching skills" course in the semester of Autumn was 32 which included both male and female and also both teaching and non-teaching individuals. The primary goal of the research was to assess how extempore teaching, characterized by verbal lesson delivery, body language, and eye contact, impacts the effectiveness of lesson delivery. Eight volunteers were selected from the participating individuals. Volunteers were divided into two groups of four i.e. one individual from each group gave an extempore topic to one individual from the other group on which he/she had to deliver an extempore lesson to the remaining class of five minutes. All the remaining individuals in the class ranked the performance of the individual delivering the lesson based on three identified elements by the researcher. A scale of 1 to 10 was used for marking each element where 1 being the highest and 10 being the lowest score. Data collected from this activity was analyzed statistically using JAMOVI software where descriptive statistics were used for summarizing the results and variations in performance. The findings of the study highlighted the potential extempore way of lesson delivery has in confidence building among individuals along with the development of better communication skills in individuals. Extempore way of lesson delivery also helps in bringing enhancement to dynamic and more interactive classroom settings for the promotion of active learning and critical thinking.

247-Evaluation of LMS Feature Usage on Student Engagement

Jalil Jalil (Universitas Terbuka)
Hasanuddin Hasanuddin (Universitas Terbuka)
Kusmaladewi Kusmaladewi (Universitas Terbuka)
Makkatenni Makkatenni (Universitas Terbuka)
M Arifin Tahir (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This study explores the relationship between the use of Learning Management System (LMS) features and student engagement in virtual learning environments. The primary objective was to identify which LMS features are most frequently used and how these correlates with levels of student engagement. We conducted a comprehensive analysis to evaluate the impact of specific LMS functionalities on student interaction and learning outcomes by utilizing data from course logs, which document user activities such as accessing course materials, viewing reports, and participating in online discussions. Methodology involved quantitative analysis of log data from the MMPI5101 course at an open university. The data included timestamps, types of LMS interactions (e.g., content viewing, forum participation), and the frequency of these interactions. We employed statistical methods to correlate the use of these features with indicators of student engagement, such as session length and frequency of logins. Results indicated that certain features, such as interactive quizzes and real-time feedback mechanisms, were significantly correlated with higher levels of engagement, as measured by time spent in the LMS and interaction rates. Features that facilitated easy access to content and seamless interaction with peers and instructors were also associated with increased student activity levels. Conclusion: The study confirms that the strategic use of specific LMS features can enhance student engagement in online learning settings. Features that support interactivity and provide immediate feedback contribute positively to engagement, suggesting that LMS platforms should prioritize these aspects to foster an enriching learning experience. These insights can assist educators and developers in designing more effective digital learning environments that cater to the needs of diverse student populations.

248-Exploring University Choice Factors Among School Leavers in Selected Sri Lankan Districts: A Second-Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Mahinda B Sakalasooriya (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

Purpose: By investigating various economic choice models and employing Chapman's Model of Student College Choice, the research seeks to uncover the key driving constructs that underpin these decisions, providing a comprehensive understanding of the variables impacting students' selection of higher education institutions. Design/Methodology/Approach: This quantitative study involved a cross-sectional survey of 239 students who completed secondary education across four economically disadvantaged districts in Sri Lanka. A structured questionnaire, based on Chapman's Model and demographic profiles, was used to collect data on students' choices. Findings: The results reveal that approximately 83% of students in the sample chose to study at public national universities, as opposed to private and foreign university options, with a preference for technological, management, and professional fields, despite over 50% of them pursuing humanities and social sciences in secondary school education. The exploratory factor analysis identified 18 variables influencing student choices, grouped into five latent constructs: student characteristics, fixed university characteristics, significant persons, university communication efforts, and university image. The confirmatory factor analysis with SEM showed that student characteristics, including interest in university education, job expectations, and career prospects, are the most significant factors influencing university choice. Practical Implications: These insights highlight the need for national universities to adjust their strategies to improve coordination with students, particularly in rural areas, to enhance student intake and improve Sri Lanka's GER in higher education. Originality/Value: This study aims to fill this void by examining how universities can enhance access to higher education at the rural level, providing valuable insights for both academic institutions and policymakers.

249-Conceptualization of centralized laboratory practice model for distance learning to increase education quality and efficiency in Universitas Terbuka

Mohamad Rajih Radiansyah (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

Laboratory practice (LP) is an essential part of learning for students in the life science area. In Universitas Terbuka (UT), LP was done by coordination with various parties, mainly the study program/department, partner institution and branch office of UT. However, the increasing number of students paired with the widespread nature of their location poses a challenge to implement an accomodating but quality education for all. This article discussed the concept and implementation of centralized LP to increase accessibility and quality of education of students, mainly for food technology (FT) and biology (BIO) study programs. Identification of challenges in organizing LP for both programs was done as a base to develop the concept of centralized LP model. The research was done using an online survey of 229 FT and BIO students and interviews with selected partner institution, UT branch office and students in 5 cities in Indonesia. It was found that distance is a primary concern for students when carrying doing LP. 49% of students had to travel for more than 40 km to reach the LP location of their area which is a problem considering the public transportation infrastructure in Indonesia. moreover, it was found that information for the activity that was received by the students, such as scheduling and LP preparation, was less then optimal. However, 78% of the students interviewed was satisfied by the management, with some improvement needed in communication and information delivery. From the interviews, three main criteria are needed for a successful centralized LP, namely operational, infrastructure and human resource requirement. Due to the nature of centralized LP is to increase the students access and improve their quality, several activities can also be developed to accommodate various student conditions such as online practicums, using kits and development of virtual learning experience such as using augmented reality.

250-Effect of e- assessment as a teaching tool in blended learning at higher education

Ijaz Mahmood (IUB)

Abstract

E-assessment is a systematic method of gathering information about a teacher and teaching learning processes to draw inferences about the person's dispositions using information and communication technology. The purpose of this study is to find the effect of e assessment. E assessment is a significant factor of education system. E assessment can bring a path towards updating our education systems. This can affect teaching-learning process in current digital society and growing economy. In Pakistan there is need to invest in education for economic development. The study provides empirical evidence on e-assessment, looking at its effectiveness and how it occurs in practice. There are many e-assessment techniques but in this study only online peer and self-assessment were used. The purpose of the study was to find out the effectiveness of e-assessment as a tool for teaching higher level. Pre-test post-test Equivalent Group design was used for the study. For the pre-test and post-test a two equivalent tests were constructed. Data collected through tests was analyse by using SPSS and t-test was applied. There was significance difference between the mean scores of pre-test and post-test of experimental group. So the Students who were assessed through e assessment tool showed improvement in their achievement.

251-Application of Blended Learning Approach in Rural Areas of Sindh; An Analysis of Issues and Challenges.

Afshan Noor (The Begum Nusrat Bhutto Woman University Sukkur)

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to comprehend how teachers and students view the use of blended learning strategies to teaching and learning processes also to determine challenges and issues of blended learning approach in rural areas of Sindh. Blended learning, often referred to as hybrid learning, is a type of teaching that blends traditional place-based classroom techniques with online educational resources and chances for online participation. It has recently been used to describe the blending of traditional face-to-face instruction with contemporary web-based learning techniques. By almost all measures, blended learning serves as a bridge between the old and the new by having an impact on practically all levels of strategic and policy activities in higher education. The study was conducted by using quantitative research method. The survey was conducted from teachers (N= 34) and experts (N=12) from 04 different rural areas of Sindh. It was focused on what are their perspective about blended learning and identifying the challenges and issues faced in the implementation of blended learning and the solutions and strategies that can be used to overcome these challenges. The main findings of study: 93% teachers were aware of technology but 64% of them were untrained for the use of technology in classroom, and 36% of them were trained but still they were facing problems to use technology. They highlighted some issues including: broadband access, limited access to hardware and software resources for teachers and students, funding, overcrowded classrooms.

253-Investigating The Effectiveness of Online Group Assessment Conducted Through Video Conferencing in Learning Quantitative Techniques Using Community of Inquiry Framework

Jayani Hapugoda (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Ishara Lakmali (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Geetha Kulasekara (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

The 'Quantitative Techniques' (QT) is one of the courses offered in the Commonwealth Executive MBA programme of the Open University of Sri Lanka. Formative assessment component of this QT course was a paper based individual assignment, to quantitatively analyse a dataset and prepare a report. Continuing this assessment approach for several cycles, it became apparent that some learners face challenges in handling specific analytical skills when given different kinds of datasets for analysis. This situation provoked teachers to consider a different formative assessment approach that will create a supportive and corporative learner-centred learning environment. Hence, it was decided to use an online group assessment conducted via video conferencing using ZOOM, for the learners to interact, discuss the assignment, analyse the dataset and formulate a summary report of the discussion as the initial step of the assessment task. This study examines the effectiveness of this assessment approach based on the community of inquiry framework. A mixed approach was used to collect data. Qualitative data were gathered through teacher reflections and reflective writings of the learners. Quantitative data were gathered through a survey questionnaire. Teaching presence was identified while setting the assignment, supporting and evaluating learning during group discussions and providing feedback. Cognitive presence was observed in learners' while exploring information on QT, drafting objectives, negotiating with each other, and applying theoretical knowledge in analysing the dataset. Social presence was visible while leaners purposefully engaging in discussions through questioning, agreeing and disagreeing on selecting variables to analyse, and interpreting the data. The reflections of teachers and learners together with survey data collectively highlight the effectiveness of integrating online group assessments in enhancing the overall learning experience in distance learning.

254-Development of Media and Information Literacy Scale (MILS) For University Students

Tooba Saleem (AIOU)
Nasir Mahmood (AIOU)

Abstract

With the explosion of digital technologies, the awareness about media is acquiring vital importance. Media and information literacy are the prevailing concepts that focus on a critical approach towards media messages. Media consumption is changing through user generated communication and the availability of digital products. A push from traditional learning environment to technologically embedded learning environment in open and distance learning institutions arouse the need to learn the use of ICTs in appropriate way. This study aimed at assessing the appropriateness of self-developed scale for establishing the evidence of media and information literacy among the postgraduate level students. Survey method was employed to conduct the research. A total of 209 MPhil students were taken as sample of the study. Content validity and the reliability (α=.803) of the scale were found satisfactory. Preliminary analysis ensured the appropriateness of psychometric properties of scale. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Oblimin Rotation method yielded into three subscales and established the construct validity of the scale. Inter-factor correlation matrix confirmed the independence of factors and strong correlation values of subscales with scale. The findings of the study implicate the appropriateness of MILS to examine the students' ability to search, collect and process electronic information, data and concepts and to use them systematically ethical in a way in online learning environment.

255-Effect of Formative Feedback as A Teaching Tool in Blended Learning At Higher Education

Ijaz Mahmood (IUB)

Abstract

Formative feedback is an ongoing assessment and supervision provided to students during the teaching learning process. The purpose of the formative feedback is to support student's progression and development. It helps students in the process of recognize gaps in their knowledge, skills and strategies for enhance their teaching-learning experience. Formative feedback is provided during all duration of courses being taught. It provide help to students for better understanding. The purpose of this study is to find the effect of formative feedback. Formative feedback may be a significant factor for education system. It may bring a path towards apprising our education systems. This can affect teaching-learning process in current digital society and growing economy. In Pakistan there is need to invest in education for developmental regime. The study provides empirical evidence on use of formative feedback, looking at its effectiveness and how it occurs in practice. There are many formative assessment techniques but in this study only Synchronous In-Person Feedback, answering questions and providing written feedback on smaller assignments were used. The purpose of the study was to find out the effectiveness of formative feedback as tool for teaching higher level. Pre-test post-test Equivalent Group design was used for the study. For the pre-test and post-test a two equivalent tests were constructed. Data collected through tests was analyse by using SPSS and t-test was applied. There was significance difference between the mean scores of pre-test and post-test of experimental group. So the Students who were given the treatment showed improvement in their achievements.

257-Identifying the Future: Exploring Lived Experiences of Non-Formal Education Teachers in Islamabad, Pakistan Using 21st Century Skills

Shamsa Kanwal Malik (AIOU)
Malik Mansoor (Canvass Analysis)
Dr Tahira Bibi (AIOU)

Abstract

This study explores the experiences of non-formal education teachers in Islamabad, Pakistan, focusing on the use and impact of 21st-century skills. The research aims to Identify the most common 21st-century skills among these teachers, investigate how these skills influence teaching methodologies and student learning outcomes. Determine the specific training needs of non-formal educators to enhance their 21st-century skills. It employs qualitative methods approach to achieve a comprehensive understanding. A purposive sampling strategy will be used to recruit a diverse group of non-formal educators from various regions within Islamabad and representing different program types (Basic, secondary and vocational skills). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants to explore their lived experiences, perceptions of their 21st-century skills, and how they integrate these skills into their teaching methodologies. Thematic analysis was conducted on the interview transcripts to identify recurring themes and patterns related to teachers' 21st-century skills, their application in the classroom, and perceived challenges. By analysis of the data from interviews, the research identified the most common 21st-century skills among non-formal educators in Islamabad are communication and digital skills but lacking in life skills. Most of the teachers aware about teaching methodologies and learning outcomes but wants to learn updated skills to teach more effectively. Furthermore, this study highlighted age and experience-based variations and program-specific considerations related to these skills. The findings shows there is a need to focuses on the development of targeted training programs tailored to the identified needs of non-formal educators, ultimately enhancing their ability to equip students with the critical skills they need to grow well in the 21st century.

260-Investigating Students' Views Regarding Innovations in Teaching Learning Process in ODL System In Pakistan

Dr. Hamid Ali Nadeem (AIOU)
Dr. Arshad Qamar (AIOU)
Usman Saqib (University of Wah)

Abstract

COVID-19 caused a revolutionary change in education system in Pakistan especially at higher education level. The aim of study was to investigate students' option and satisfaction about different changes introduced at higher education level in Pakistan. Allama Iqbal Open University also introduced various initiatives including virtual classrooms, learning management systems (LMS), blended learning models, online examinations, upgraded it infrastructure: significant investments in it infrastructure to support online learning, including better internet connectivity and upgraded software systems, online students support system, online community building. The data was collected from 400 students graduated from AIOU. The study was delimited Rawalpindi district. The questionnaire on Likert scale, consisting of 42 items was developed by the researchers and validated through expert opinion. After pilot testing its reliability was calculated as 0.78. Overall 364 students participated in the research. The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics. As the study is at final stage, its results are being compiled the results and conclusion will be shared later at the time of paper submission.

261-Analyzing the Learning Needs of Students in Open Distance and Online Learning System

Mubeshera Tufail (AIOU)

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to assess the learning needs of students during their studies in the distance and online learning programs. Quantitative research design with descriptive survey research method was utilized for this study. Sample of the study consisted of 518 students selected through stratified random sampling technique. Learning Needs Questionnaire (LNQ) (Ho & Lim, 2021) was used to collect data from the students of different degree programs. It was found that there was a statistically significant and moderate correlation among students' perspective on all four factors of LNQ. There was a gender, semester and program wise difference among students on the factors of LNQ. Male students reported better time management skills for learning activities than female students. The students of masters' degree program showed a higher mean score on effective use of technology, perceived academic competency and time management as compared to other degree programs. The students of 4th semester reported higher score on 'time management' and 'effective use of technology' for academic activities than students from other semesters. It was suggested to offer informal and formal guidance and information sessions to the distance and online learners by the departments and the tutors to cope up with the problems they are facing in their learning process.

265-Learner Perceived Impact of Extracurricular Activities on the Academic Progression and Social Isolation in an Open and Distance Learning Environment

Chanika Jayasinghe (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Kalpani Bandaranayaka (The Open University of Sri Lanka)
Sandun Bandara (The Open University)
Asela Dikkumbura (The Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

Involvement in academic and extracurricular activities (ECA) that take place both inside and outside of the classroom facilitates the students to learn and grow personally during their college years. The present study for the first time investigated the engagement of distance learners in extracurricular activities and their perceived impact on academic performance and social isolation. This cross-sectional study was employed for a cohort of 435 BSc undergraduates of the Open University of Sri Lanka as an online self-administrated Google form via email. A structured questionnaire with 4 parts with both open and closed-ended questions incorporating a 5-point Likert scale. The responses were analyzed via SPSS version 20 and Both Kruskal Wallis and Independent t-tests. According to the results, 72.94% of respondents were female, belonging to the age category of 29–39 (41.18%). Most respondents were not employed (63%). 65% of students engage in university clubs as their ECAs. This study indicates that younger students tend to think that participating in extracurricular activities leads to a neglected personal life ($p = 0.01$). In general, the male students tend to think that participating in extracurricular activities has helped them to reduce social isolation ($p=0.01$), improve their future career prospects ($p < 0.00$), improve their intellectual capacity ($p=0.01$) and allowed them to explore and nurture talents overall ($p=0.03$). No statistical significance was observed between the level of study and the time they spent on extracurricular activities on their academic performances ($P>0.05$). However, students who studied for more hours tended to think that participating in extracurricular activities reduced their time for academic and career activities ($p = 0.01$). The present study highlights the importance of student engagement in ECAs for their personal development and retention in the ODL setting.

266-Global Collaborations and Partnership: Studying the Technological Challenges and Solutions for Seamless Integration of Video Course Sharing Platforms in Educational Institutions

Umer Mehmood Ahmed (AIOU)

Abstract

The rapid expansion and significance of online education highlights the crucial need for video course sharing platforms to provide equal access to high-quality learning resources. The creation of a central platform for demonstrating and sharing different skill sets is critical in this digital era. These platforms not only democratise high-quality learning materials but also serve as a centralised hubs for showcasing diverse skill sets. However, the seamless integration and successful implementation of these platforms presents significant technological challenges, such as optimising data centre infrastructure, addressing connectivity issues for smooth user experience, integration of diverse skill sets for effective collaboration, and enhancing video production capabilities to maintain high quality content delivery. In response to these challenges, the objective of this qualitative research seeks to investigate innovative solutions for overcoming these challenges, with an emphasis on improving interoperability, scalability, and user experience. Through in-depth interviews, the research explores how global collaborations among Asian open universities can play a pivotal role in overcoming these barriers, fostering a more connected and accessible online learning environment. It highlights the importance of proactive adaptation, where institutions can pool their expertise and resources to tackle the complex technical challenges, leading to more efficient and effective video course sharing platforms. Furthermore, the current research not only presents empirical findings and practical solutions to enhance the functionality and accessibility of online education, but also advocates for the creation of a more interconnected and knowledgeable global learning community. This research aims to contribute significantly to the ongoing evolution and enhancement of education on a global scale, ensuring equitable access to knowledge and learning opportunities worldwide.

270-User Accessibility of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) Universitas Terbuka

Heriani - (Universitas Terbuka)
Trini Prastati (Universitas Terbuka)
Rahmad Purnama (Universitas Terbuka)
Amiruddin Romadhoni (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This study evaluates the accessibility of Universitas Terbuka's (UT) Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach with an online survey through the MOOCs Learning Management System, the research was conducted in late 2023. The sample comprised participants from October-December 2023 who completed a questionnaire measuring ease of access from registration to discussion participation. Results indicate high accessibility, with 85% of respondents reporting easy platform access. Demographic analysis shows most participants were male (68%), aged 25-40 (57%). User satisfaction with accessibility reached 78%, with registration ease scoring highest (92%). Key factors contributing to high accessibility include intuitive user interface (76%), responsive technical support (70%), and cross-device compatibility (82%). Challenges identified include unstable internet connectivity in some areas (23%) and the need for more offline-accessible content (35%). The study concludes that UT's MOOCs program has successfully provided wide and easy access to education for Indonesians, particularly men. Recommendations include developing comprehensive offline features, optimizing for slow internet connections, and diversifying content to attract more female participants. These findings offer valuable insights for future development of UT's MOOCs program, supporting their mission of providing widely accessible, quality education.

276-Evaluation research on microteaching course at a distance for the development of in-service teacher competencies

Faizal Masbukhin (Universitas Terbuka)
Aminudin Zuhairi (Universitas Terbuka)
Zakirman Zakirman (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

This paper presents research in progress aiming at evaluating the effectiveness of microteaching at a distance to develop in-service teacher competencies at Universitas Terbuka (UT) in Indonesia. The microteaching for in-service teachers provides hands-on classroom teaching experience in a small scale to develop competencies related to understanding of students in the classroom, conduct of the learning process, and professional development of teachers. UT trains teachers from various demographic profiles, geographic regions, and cultural backgrounds. This study addresses questions related to the conduct of microteaching at a distance, investigating its advantages in responding to the challenges of flexibility, use of new media and technology, improving technological literacy, and expanding accessibility. It attempts to reveal existing conditions and offers ways of overcoming potential obstacles related to improvement of teacher competencies in use of media and technology, cost-saving effort, developing teachers' literacy skills, and school readiness to utilize media and technology. Evaluation of microteaching is carried out covering aspects of curriculum, availability of infrastructure, availability of trained human resources, readiness and suitability of the program, learning process, evaluation of results, and program and learning outcomes. Meta-analysis and meta-evaluation were carried out regarding the implementation of microteaching through distance education. The research involves collaborating with experts on micro teaching from two face-to-face universities, i.e., Universitas Negeri Padang and Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. A comparative analysis on the conduct of micro teaching in the distance learning mode and the face-to-face mode will be made. This development research uses ADDIE model (analysis, design, development, implementation, evaluation. Data collection methods employ observation, questionnaires, and interviews.

277-Building Students' Social and Ethical Competencies through Online and Distance Learning Programs: An Exploratory Study

Muhammad Safdar (The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (PhD Scholar))
Gulzar Ahmad (The IUB Bahawalnagar Campus)

Abstract

The rise of online and distance learning (ODL) programs has changed educational patterns globally, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research paper attempts to investigate the potential of ODL programs to develop students' social and ethical competencies. The primary objective is to understand how these virtual learning environments can foster essential skills such as empathy, ethical reasoning, cooperation, and social responsibility, which are traditionally nurtured in physical classrooms. Thus, the study attempts to address the following question: How effective are online and distance learning programs in building students' social and ethical competencies? To answer this, the research explores the strategies and practices used by institutions and educators in ODL environments to develop these capabilities, examining the challenges and opportunities in virtual learning environments, and evaluate the outcomes on students' social and ethical development. Thus, the study used mixed research methods, using quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews and examination of available secondary sources in a descriptive context. The findings from the study are likely to offer valued understandings into the effectiveness of ODL programs in promoting the holistic development of students, particularly in the realm of social and ethical competence. Therefore, by identifying best practices and potential outcomes, this research aims to contribute to the design and implementation of more effective and comprehensive online learning environments that will not only impart academic knowledge but also nurture essential social and ethical skills of the participants.

278-Online and Distance Learning: A Perfect Model of Lifelong Learning and Professional Development

Muhammad Safdar (The Islamia University of Bahawalpur)

Abstract

Online and distance learning (ODL) has emerged as the most important model in the context of rapid technological advancement and global changes in the hypotheses of educational preferences and trends. The aim of this paper is to assess the multifaceted benefits and challenges associated with ODL and to study its overall impact on the lifelong learning process. Therefore, we have tried to find an answer to the question: Is there adequate scope for lifelong learning and professional development in the prevailing models of online and distance learning? In view of the above, an attempt has been made to analyse the available primary and secondary sources through a descriptive theoretical approach using both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. So, the literature has revealed that online learning offers flexibility and accessibility, enabling learners to further their education and professional development regardless of geographic or temporal constraints. This study also highlights that interactive technologies, such as multimedia resources and virtual collaboration tools, significantly enhance learners' engagement and outcomes. To fully benefit from ODL, ongoing attention and mediation are required on challenges such as the digital divide and quality assurance. To close the digital gap, governments and educational institutions should invest in expanding internet access and making technology more affordable to marginalised communities. Strengthening quality assurance frameworks is critical for ensuring high academic standards and consistency across online programs. Despite these challenges, the research suggests that, with the right support and rules, ODL may be a strong instrument for education and career progression, establishing a culture of continuous learning and professional development. However, given the range of learners' demands, it is recommended that ongoing research and policymaking be pursued to satisfy the increasing needs in this regard.

279-Towards an Anthropological Approach in Strengthening Inclusive Education

Pathmanesan Sanmugeswaran (Open University of Sri Lanka)

Abstract

The contemporary higher education landscape involves notions of inclusion and diversity as policy and practice. This is challenging as contemporary human society is complex and heterogeneous. The focus of this paper is to show how anthropology as well as related tools aid in creating a more inclusive educational environment. Among them are ethnographic interviewing (close listening skills), participant observation, and study of historical context to ensure that learning environments are inclusive in all ways - by gender, sexual identity, language, economic status, class/caste, religious identity, etc. By choosing examples that do not further marginalize anyone we are able to understand complexity and intersectionality. We are able to see students learning to appreciate perspectives that are different as well as similar to their own experiences. Anthropologists urge teachers to pay serious attention to inclusivity and diversity because of inequalities found in higher learning and education with students representing marginalized backgrounds, being under-represented, harassed, excluded, and discriminated. As a result, the current anthropological teaching awakens students to gain a sense of inclusivity and diversity. In the United States, knowledge of inclusivity and diversity is essential for students and faculties to maintain cultural pluralism within a democratic environment in teaching and learning. Therefore, many universities in the United States have put their greatest effort in improving inclusion and diversity among the teachers and students. Finally, this paper draws attention to the significance of inclusion in educational institutions as it gives less importance to South Asia, existing secondary materials, and autoethnographic information gathered through long-term teaching in Sri Lankan and American universities in Sri Laka and the United States of America.

280-Transforming Distance Education: A Revolution of ChatGPT in Academia

Rabia Aslam (University of Gwadar)

Abstract

In light of recent technical advancements, this study focuses on how ChatGPT—one of the most remarkable examples of generative AI—can influence distance learning. The study set intended to demonstrate particular examples of how it may be utilized in distant education, whose value is better appreciated with the pandemic process. This approach was motivated by the thought that, given recent advancements in artificial intelligence, it will soon be at the center of our lives. The specific case prompts and outputs were thoroughly explained, and the instructional value and constraints of the final items were assessed. To increase the caliber and engagement of distance education, the results highlight the necessity of utilizing technology, fostering a feeling of community, and motivating educators to pursue ongoing professional development. Furthermore, in order to establish a strong framework that promotes the expansion of distant education in a responsible and sustainable manner, the study emphasizes the importance of continuing research, assessment, policy creation, and implementation. Although ChatGPT is said to have certain limitations at the moment, the study's results were shockingly resourceful and it was determined that ChatGPT may be highly helpful for educators and students in distant learning. With its practical recommendations for educators, researchers, and policymakers alike, this study offers insightful information about distance education.

281-Evaluating Together: Examining the Potential of ChatGPT 4.0 to Collaborate with Teachers in Evaluating Academic Papers

Qiuju Zhong (Jiangsu Open University)

Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence (GAI) has sparked debates on educational practices in global higher education. ChatGPT 4.0, a leading GAI chatbot, has shown exceptional performance in understanding human language, knowledge querying, and creative output. However, there has been little research on its application in evaluating academic papers. For this reason, this study initially compares ChatGPT 4.0 with teachers in evaluating academic papers. Thirty undergraduate academic papers were used as the research sample. Six teachers evaluated the papers independently (including grading and writing comments), and then the same papers were evaluated using ChatGPT 4.0, following the same criteria. The findings indicated that the grading by ChatGPT 4.0 corresponds to a fair level of consistency with teachers, suggesting that the grading assigned by ChatGPT 4.0 requires further review by teachers. In contrast, ChatGPT 4.0 provided significantly more comments than teachers, which was attributed to its provision of more informative and evaluative comments. Additionally, the study explored the distinct roles of ChatGPT 4.0 and teachers when evaluating academic papers and proposed a collaborative framework for evaluating these papers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in focus groups with the six teachers who were reflecting on their use of ChatGPT 4.0 to evaluate academic papers. Through thematic analysis of the interview data, the roles of ChatGPT 4.0 in paper evaluation were identified as preliminary manuscript evaluator, knowledge repository and provider, textual quality evaluator, and report accelerator. The roles of teachers included AI leader, scholarly mentor, evaluation manager, and personalized evaluator. Based on the findings, an "Integrated teacher-GAI academic review framework" was developed. When teachers possess strong AI leadership, scholarly expertise, and evaluation management skills, they can maximize the potential of GAI.

287-Fostering Connections: Exploring the Community and Social Dimensions of Online Learning for the Learners of KKHSOU

Smritishikha Choudhury (Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University)

Abstract

The rapid expansion of online learning platforms has significantly transformed the educational landscape. This shift has underscored the importance of understanding the community and social aspects of online learning environments. As online education continues to evolve, it is essential to explore how these platforms can foster connections among learners and support a sense of community. This study aims to investigate the social dynamics, interactions, and community-building practices in online learning settings. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating a literature review and surveys. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms to a sample of 150 undergraduate and postgraduate learners of KKHSOU engaged in online learning. The findings reveal that learners use multiple digital devices for online learning, with 76% using laptops and 95% using smartphones. Social interactions are primarily in forums and social media groups, such as discipline specific WhatsApp groups, Facebook account of KKHSOU and Telegram, where discussions are often centred around course administration and evaluation. While e-learning materials (e-SLM and YouTube video lectures) are utilized. Despite challenges like low bandwidth and high data costs, students demonstrate high engagement and positive communication. Learning Management Systems (LMS) in facilitating more structured and academically focused interactions compared to informal social media groups. This study provides valuable insights into the community and social dimensions of online learning, emphasizing the need for robust, technology-mediated platforms to support meaningful learner interactions. The findings suggest that while online learning offers significant opportunities for connectivity, there are still barriers to achieving full engagement and community building.

289-Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Way Forward

Ghulam Mustafa (International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan)
Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal Chaudhary (International Islamic University Islamabad)
Saeed Ullah (University of Education)

Abstract

This paper examines the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions, discussing the opportunities and challenges it presents, as well as strategies for effective implementation in the future. AI has the potential to offer personalized learning experiences, increase engagement, and streamline administrative processes in education. However, it also brings concerns related to data privacy, bias, and the need for substantial infrastructure investments. The paper is based on open-ended interviews with AI experts and educators working in various institutions. The purposive sampling technique selected 5 faculty members from different universities. A semi-structured interview guide was developed to get data from the participants. Data was analyzed thematically by facilitation of NVivo 14. It aims to provide a comprehensive overview of AI's current state in ODL, explore the implications of its adoption, and suggest actionable steps for institutions to address these challenges.

292-E-Learning Readiness in Vietnamese Higher Education Institutions: a Delphi Technique

Cam-Tu Tran (Nguyen Tat Thanh University)
Nhat-Phuong Vu (Nguyen Tat Thanh University)

Abstract

In recent years, Vietnamese higher education institutions have increasingly embraced e-learning to enhance educational opportunities. However, the successful implementation of e-learning depends on the organization's readiness. A study was conducted to develop a comprehensive scale for assessing e-learning readiness in Vietnamese higher education institutions. The researchers identified seven critical factors: finance, culture, technology, human resources, training, content, and policies. They utilized a two-round Delphi method involving 17 experts to establish and refine these criteria. The resulting framework enables institutions to evaluate their e-learning readiness, identify strengths and weaknesses, and plan strategically. This research contributes to the literature on e-learning readiness in developing countries with a focus on Vietnam's unique context. It emphasizes a holistic approach by considering technological, cultural, financial, and human factors. The study highlights the interconnectedness of these factors and their collective impact on e-learning success. By providing this assessment tool, the authors aim to support Vietnam's educational community in transitioning to technology-enhanced learning environments. Finally, this research serves as a foundation for future studies on e-learning readiness and implementation strategies in similar contexts, offering valuable insights for institutions navigating the complex landscape of digital education.

294-The Effect of Academic Procrastination, Self-Efficacy and Learning Interest on the Motivation for Completion of Degree (A Study at Universitas Terbuka of Makassar)

Muh Alwi (Universitas Terbuka)

Abstract

The present study aims to probe 1) the effect of academic procrastination on the motivation for completing a degree, 2) the effect of self-efficacy on the motivation for completing a degree, 3) the effect of learning interest on the motivation for completing a degree, and 4) the simultaneous effect of academic procrastination, self-efficacy, and learning interest on the motivation for completing a degree. Saturation was adopted to assess the adequacy of sampling that reached 104 respondents. A questionnaire was used to gather data containing statements relevant to the variable of academic procrastination, self-efficacy, learning interest, and motivation for completing a degree.. Results showed that 1) academic procrastination had a positive and significant effect on motivation for completing a degree at 35,9%; 2) self-efficacy had a positive and significant effect on motivation for completing a degree at 6,7%; 3) learning interest had a positive and significant effect on motivation for completing a degree at 32,4%; and 4) academic procrastination, self-efficacy, and learning interest had a significant simultaneous effect on motivation for completing a degree at 44,2%. These findings demonstrate both of the partial and simultaneous effect of the academic procrastination, self-efficacy, and learning interest on the motivation for completing a degree among the students in Pokjar Tana Toraja and North Toraja. The study also found that the academic procrastination accounted for the highest effect while self-efficacy for the least effect on the motivation for completing a degree, which peaked at 6,7%. The implication of the study leads to the importance of identifying the internal aspects of students that deal with their academic procrastination, self-efficacy, and learning interest.

295-Online Teacher Training Programs and Government Teachers' Professional Engagement in the Classroom

Shahinshah Khan (Punjab School Education Department)
Muhammad Arif (Punjab School Education Department)

Abstract

This research aims to explore the impact of online learning on government teachers' professional development, with a specific focus on how it influences their teaching methodologies in the classroom. This study investigates the extent to which online learning environments affect government teachers' engagement with their professional responsibilities, their adaptation of teaching methods. The objectives of this study are to (i) Assess the level of professional engagement among government teachers earned online degree of teacher training program and (ii) Identify the challenges and benefits experienced by government teachers while pursuing online degree of teacher training program. The sample for the study will be the government teachers who have earned online degree of teacher training program. To achieve the objectives, a mixed-methods research design will be employed. Quantitative data will be collected through a structured survey administered to a sample of government teachers, focusing on their experiences and perceptions of online teacher training program. Qualitative data will be gathered through semi-structured interviews of Assistant Education Officers who apply the Classroom Observation Tool (COT) to gain deeper insights into the experiences of teachers in adapting their methodologies. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) will be run to investigate the potential factors caused for challenges and benefits for teachers. The qualitative data will be analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and themes.

296-Perceptions of Teachers about Online Professional Development Courses and Classroom Practices in Remote Areas Schools of the Punjab

Shahinshah Khan (Punjab School Education Department)
Muhammad Azhar (Punjab School Education Department)

Abstract

This research explores the impact of online professional development (PD) courses on classroom practices in remote schools. With the increasing accessibility of digital learning platforms, online PD courses have become a vital tool for teachers in remote areas, offering opportunities for continuous professional growth without the constraints of geographic isolation. This study aims to evaluate how participation in online PD courses influences teaching methodologies and overall classroom effectiveness in remote schools. By examining the perceptions and experiences of remote area teachers, this research seeks to identify the benefits and challenges of online PD courses and their role in enhancing educational outcomes. The objectives of the study are (i) To know the perceptions of the teachers about the effectiveness of online PD courses in enhancing instructional strategies in remote classroom settings and (ii) To identify the challenges faced by remote area teachers in accessing and implementing online PD courses. The study will involve a sample of 100 teachers from remote schools of District Attock and District Chakwal. The participants will be selected based on their enrollment and completion of online professional development courses over the past year. A stratified sampling method will be used to ensure representation from different remote areas schools. Interviews will be conducted, and thematic analysis will be done to identify the key themes and patterns related to the perceptions and benefits and challenges of online PD courses.

303-Enhancing Online Language Teaching: Exploring Gamification's Impact on Learner Engagement

Dona Octanary (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC)

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of online learning, but educators face challenges in maintaining learner engagement in virtual environments. This study evaluates the effectiveness of gamification in a HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills)-oriented Language Teaching Methodology Training developed collaboratively by the Regional Center for Quality Improvement of Teachers and Education Personnel in Languages (SEAQIL) and the SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Center (SEAMOLEC). Participant feedback, collected using a 4-point Likert scale, revealed high satisfaction overall, particularly regarding training objectives, content, and interactive elements. Areas for improvement identified include gamification mechanics, platform functionality, and user experience. This research contributes to the field of online education by exploring the potential of gamification to enhance learner engagement and participation in language teaching methodology training. Findings can inform the design of more effective online language programs and guide future research on gamification in online learning contexts.

309-Exploring the interactive effects of Course Design and Support Services on Students' experiences in ODE

Shahida Niazi (Virtual University of Pakistan)

Abstract

Distance education is an integral part of the education system nowadays. It is still growing at a rapid pace. It is considered as a solution to provide education not only to the low-income group but to learners of any class. Distance education or online learning does not require any physical presence at a specific place to receive the required knowledge. In the earlier stages of distance education, methods used to deliver course depended on the use of papers extensively including letters, newspapers, etc. This medium was further dependent on postal services to reach its intended audience. Technological advancements have made these methods almost obsolete. Now much of the process is dependent on internet-based applications including virtual classrooms, web conferencing etc. Today research proves that distance education is as effective as conventional education but this effectiveness is conditional on course design, support services' quality and experience of the instructor delivering course online. Online educational institutions are required to provide a student support system to assist the students with varying levels of learning skills to comprehend the course content and in achieving set learning outcomes. In the current study data has been received from 452 respondents who are enrolled in online distance education University of Pakistan. Descriptive analysis, correlation, regression and process procedure by Hayes have been used for moderation analysis. The findings have revealed that course design predicts student satisfaction that may leads to students' engagement in ODE in presence in quality support services provided by the University. Moreover, this study has explored that technology and student interactions in this system moderate the relationship significantly between course content and student experience (satisfaction & achievement) with online learning. In this study, course/course content/course design terms have been used interchangeably.

311- An Efficient Security Framework for Cloud Computing

Farhan Nisar (Qurtaba University)

Abstract

Due to rapid development of clouds in the business environment many organizations have been established. Today our scenario related to cloud attacks on computer networks has increased because of security vernal ability and breaches in establishments. There are many attacks which penetrated our edge network device; some of the most prone attacks are ICMP attack, CDP attack and port security attack leading to denial of service. In this paper we analyze different mechanisms to provide the network secure by using different policies and rules on edge network devices to protect the network devices. We can be tested in Lab in Lab by using GNS3 simulator. By implementing these mechanisms to protect internal and external network secured from the attacks like ICMP, CDP and Port Security attacks

312-Analysis of Cloud Services Attacks and its Solution

Farhan Nisar Qurtaba University)
Touseef Irshad (Qurtaba University)
Tariq Usman (UET Peshawar)
Bilal Ahmad (PIEAS University)

Abstract

With the development of Cloud computing applications in recent years, Cloud Computing plays a very important role in all environments for data storage, roles and services in the Cloud Computing Architectures. This is the main advantage of Cloud Computing that data can be stored in remote servers and can be accessed by Cloud Users distantly. But the advantage completely contains drawbacks of data security in Clouds because of security issues and this paper provides the proper solution. In this paper presents a detail study of cloud security attacks in Cloud Services in IaaS, PaaS and SaaS components and its security issues and how it prevents from attacks.

313-Grid Computing and Cloud Computing Security Issues

Farhan Nisar Qurtaba University)
Touseef Irshad (Qurtaba University)
Tariq Usman (UET Peshawar)
Bilal Ahmad (PIEAS University)

Abstract

With the development of Cloud computing applications in the recent years, Cloud Computing and Grid Computing play and offer resources throughout the internet. These data are easily available in cloud which are centralized and facilitates its users by giving the resources but the security are constant issue for open system and due to lack of security issue the cloud computing and Grid computing really suffered. It creates a lot of challenges for both customers of Cloud and Grid Computing. In this paper we can study about the security vulnerability associates with Grid and Cloud and providing the defence mechanism for both services and proposed different tools.

315-The Impact of AI on Educational Paradigms: Mediating and Moderating Roles in Pakistan's Open and Distance Learning Institutions

Shoaib Raza (University)

Abstract

Amid rapid technological advancements, this mix method study examines the pivotal role of In Pakistan's open and distance learning (ODL) sector, this mixed-methods study investigates the impact of disruptive artificial intelligence (AI) technologies on institutional performance, emphasizing the mediating role of digital literacy (DL) and the moderating effects of technological adaptability (TA) and organizational resilience. Quantitatively, data from 300 participants across various ODL institutions were collected through stratified random sampling and analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) with AMOS 26.0. Qualitatively, insights from in-depth interviews with 20 educators enriched the understanding of AI's practical applications and challenges within educational frameworks. The quantitative results reveal that AI innovations significantly boost institutional performance and enhance digital literacy. Digital literacy effectively mediates the relationship between AI innovations and institutional performance, confirming its crucial role in leveraging AI benefits. Furthermore, technological adaptability not only directly enhances institutional performance but also strengthens the impact of AI innovations by moderating their effects. Qualitative findings highlights the importance of robust support and continuous training in maximizing AI's educational benefits. Educators pointed out that organizational resilience, particularly in adapting to technological disruptions, plays a critical moderating role, enhancing the institution's ability to leverage AI effectively under varied conditions. The study highlights the integral roles of digital literacy and technological adaptability in the effective utilization of AI in education. It suggests that enhancing these factors, along with fostering organizational resilience, can significantly optimize the benefits of AI in the ODL sector.

317-Use of ICT in teaching learning process in Biology in Islamabad

Naeem Akhtar

Abstract

Information and communications technology (ICT) has steadily grown in importance for colleges and universities over the last few decades. Many studies have been conducted to investigate and examine the usage of ICT in the modern college education process in Islamabad. This study looks at the use of ICT in the classroom in Islamabad model colleges from the viewpoints of the educators, students, and decision-makers. This study set out to investigate the efficacy of an integrated teaching and learning process utilizing information and communication technology (ICT) at a model college catering to both male and female students. The integration of ICT for secondary education in model colleges was also examined in this study. The study used a phenomenological method and had a qualitative design. A questionnaire was used to gather study data. According to the study, scientific students were taught and learned in science classrooms using Smart LED, TVs, and Tablet PCs equipped with interactive e-learning applications and story-based animation content of scientific, Biology, and Chemistry. The study's conclusions demonstrated that ICT integration raised students' enthusiasm in learning, enhanced their academic performance, and increased enrollment and attendance. The study's conclusions also showed that the incorporation of ICT changed instructors' instructional strategies from being teacher-centered to being student-centered, which boosted their enthusiasm in the classroom and made teaching simpler for them. The study's conclusions might be beneficial to many parties trying to raise educational standards.

318-Exploring Instructional Strategies Executed by Instructors in Online Learning Environment in Distance Education

Muhammad Rasool (Teacher)
Zafar Iqbal (AIOU)

Abstract

This study aimed to explore the instructional strategies used by instructors in an online learning environment. After covid-19 pandemic most of the higher educational institutes shifted towards online education. The instructors used different instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners. However, there is a substantial need to identify the instructional strategies that are most helpful for learners and instructors to use frequently and help learners in the online learning environment. A mixed method approach was employed; initially, instructors were interviewed, and later on, the outcome was validated through a structured questionnaire. The study was conducted in Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, engaging 40 instructors with more than three years of online learning experience. The qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis followed by descriptive analysis. The results indicate that instructional strategies like large-scale lectures to smaller modules, provision of recorded and self-learning materials, regular and continuous evaluation, and combination of online chat and video conference are most commonly used by instructors, along with these strategies instructors also use different resources (text, audio, graphical images, photos, videos, simulations, animations), learning objects (courses, lessons, context), learning modes (synchronous learning, asynchronous learning, blended learning) and tools (zoom, Microsoft teams, Google meet) successfully.

319-Students Interest and Attitude Towards Agricultural Education in Rural Areas at Elementary Level

Arsalan Ali (AIOU)

Abstract

Agricultural has a major impact on the environment, the economy and our health. Agricultural education can help the students to learn about several basic survival skills. It is the systematic and organized teaching and the training. It is the part of the curriculum of primary and secondary schools along with vocational schools and colleges. Agricultural education in Pakistan is being taught at universities, colleges and schools levels too. There is dire need of Agricultural education in Pakistan. The Research Study objective is to explore the interest and attitude of the students at elementary level and to recommend students to develop their concentration towards agricultural education population of this study consist of all the students of the elementary level in District Jhelum. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Researcher made self-rated questionnaire that was developed on 5 Point Likert scale. Research questionnaire was validated by expert opinion and pilot testing. Frequency and percent were used for analysis and interpretation of data. The major findings of the study revealed that majority of students really enjoy going through Agricultural science subjects. and mostly students show their willingness to adopt agriculture as a profession. It is also found that students show much interest in Agricultural practices that are being done at the farm lands, and also wants to learn the different modern techniques of Agriculture. Based on findings recommended that Interest should be created in Agricultural Education by organizing different interesting activities like KisanMela, ,Agri. Expo, and form activities. Students should be motivated to take the support of their teachers to select Agricultural education as their optional or major subject. The present study established a clear distinction between the necessity and need of the Agricultural education at School level for the betterment of the Economy, health, and the environment.

320-Transformational Leadership and Teacher Empowerment: A Collaborative Model for Equity and Inclusion

Zahid Majeed (AIOU)
Zia Ul-Qayyum (HEC)
Nasir Mahmood (AIOU)

Abstract

Literature very strongly supported that head of the schools or institutions are the change agent for the implementation of SDG4 or Education for All. In Pakistan the role of transformational leadership in education is critical in addressing the growing need for equity and inclusion in diverse classrooms. AIOU as partner institution of GPE-KIX project title "School Leaders as Agents of Change towards Equity and Inclusion" developed and implemented the Govt policy on inclusion and inclusive education. The aim of the three-year project was to examine how professional learning communities for school leaders, specifically Networked Learning Communities (NICs) that utilize continuous improvement tools through an open learning platform, can be leveraged as a scalable, system-wide approach for enhancing schools across various South Asian contexts. This paper explores the connection between transformational leadership and teacher empowerment, highlighting how a collaborative approach can drive inclusive practices that promote equity for all learners. Transformational leaders in schools inspire and motivate their staff by fostering a shared vision, creating a positive school culture, and encouraging professional development. Through collaboration, these leaders empower teachers to adopt and implement inclusive teaching strategies that address the diverse needs of students, including those from marginalized backgrounds, students with disabilities, and culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The project focused on equipping school leaders with the skills to implement lasting changes that address disparities in student access and learning within their institutions.

324-The Emerging Role of Multimedia in Exploring English Language Skills at Primary Level

Shazia Sajid (University of Sargodha)

Abstract

The multimedia adaptation in teaching and learning leads increase the outcomes of learning. Multimedia pertain to any computer based software or interactive exercise in a single mode. Because of the conventional teaching methods, the English learners have low motivation and low efficiency in English learning. Facing the challenges and demand of new century, the use of multimedia seems to mandatory .However, the effectiveness of multimedia depends upon the content presented in the presentation and how primary school teachers demonstrate in the prevalent place. A qualitative research design based on interviews was used in this research to investigate the opinion of primary school teachers about the use of computer based instruments at primary level. Through purposive sampling technique, primary school teachers from the school in Sargodha city (20 from government schools and 15 from private schools) were randomly selected. Finding of the study revealed that multimedia use and application, are more interactive and goals achieving of international standards as compare to old methods of teaching and learning. Further more, thematic analysis of teachers' prospect indicated their perceptiveness of government's effort for fruitful education. Multimedia learning systems is an important tool for improving student learning and understanding about language. The multimedia use in teaching is more informative, time saving as well as stimulate students' imagination and creativity. To ensure that students' better understanding the multimedia-PC classroom setting is of prime importance. However, multimedia should not be used blindly, its role be assisting English teaching. The government school teachers' competencies to use this media is yet another challenge that needs to be addressed seriously. It is a future thrust that well-planned teachers' training program and series of refresher courses should be initiated to enhance the teacher's skills.

330-Do University Students Accept E-Supervision of Research Projects? The Moderating Role of Gender

Sulaimon Adewale (University of Johannesburg)

Abstract

The continuous adoption of technology for teaching and learning activities, especially online learning, has made research to test factors influencing its adoption. This study contributes to the growing body of research, especially with the moderating role of gender in the factors influencing the acceptance of e-supervision of students' research in higher institutions. This study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional research approach to elicit information from university students across levels. SPSS version 29 and Pls-SEM version 4.9.0.2 were used for data analysis. The results of structural modelling confirmed the role of gender in the interaction between performance expectancy facilitating conditions and the acceptance of e-supervision of research projects by university students. Moreover, gender did not moderate the relationship between effort expectancy and university students' acceptance of e-supervision of research projects. In light of the continuous adoption of e-learning platforms globally, more studies are needed to understand the attitudinal disposition of male and female users. This study provides a recent contribution to understanding the role of gender in the acceptance of e-supervision in one of the largest sub-Saharan African countries.

334-School Teachers' Perceived Experience on Emergency Remote Teaching Learning (ERTL): Indian Experience

Mrinal Mukherjee (Baba Saheb Ambedkar Education University)
Chanchal Maity (Bankura University)
Somdutta Chatterjee (Bankura University)

Abstract

Emergencies, either man-made or natural, are becoming regular, thereby it is time to assess the policy of "Emergency Education" in the altered societal context. In addition to semi-scale war and climate change-caused disasters, epidemics and pandemics have forced the education system to embrace Emergency Remote Teaching Learning (ERTL). This unique occurrence should be considered from an educational policy perspective of distance teaching-learning as emergencies are anticipated to increase. A web-based cross-sectional online survey was employed to explore school teachers' perceived experiences with relevant factors of ERTL including teaching quality, student engagement, student management, and appropriate assessment. The data was collected shortly after the schools reopened. Respondent-driven convenience sampling was used. 445 teachers from public and private schools participated in the survey. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (ρ) revealed a significant correlation between quality teaching-learning, student engagement, student management, and appropriate assessment in the ERTL process. The nature of public and private institutions and self- or management-initiated ERTL is greatly associated with teaching-learning quality. The nature of management of the institutions and teaching experience influenced student management in a virtual climate, while the sex and teaching experience impacted the factor of appropriateness of assessment. No demographic character was correlated to student engagement in ERTL. Furthermore, the KW post hoc analysis with Bonferroni correction suggested that less experienced younger teachers have a greater capacity for student management and adapting appropriate assessment strategies than those of higher experience. Therefore, the findings may be instrumental in developing a policy framework for the Teacher Capacity Development Programme to address future education disruption in possible emergencies.

335-Innovative Research on the Elderly Education Model from the Perspective of Active Aging

Qiong Zhang (Jiangsu Open University)
Fengxia Li (Jiangsu Open University)

Abstract

With the continuous increase in the aging population in China, the state has attached increasing importance to the education and comprehensive development of the elderly. Taking China as a case study, this research builds an innovative model of elderly education based on the analysis of relevant policy texts, current situation, and demand analysis of elderly education, aiming at promote the innovative development of elderly education. On this basis, under the guidance of blended learning and constructivist learning theory, a "434" model based on the connection of online and offline is proposed, relying on open universities for the elderly. This model includes "online-offline" and "formal and informal" four venues, and "online self-directed learning - offline interactive communication - migration internalization practice" three learning modes, forming an elderly education closed-loop ecosystem of "richness of teaching content - diversity of teaching methods - suitability of teaching environment for the elderly - participatory teaching evaluation". Through comprehensive changes in thought, technology, and process, the research promotes the transformation of elderly education to a higher-level empowerment type, helping to build an elderly education system compatible with active aging.

336-Improving Interactivity in Online Learning by Developing Spatial Learning Environment

Jam Muhammad Ahmed Lar (Allama Iqbal Open University)

Abstract

This research aims to address the critical issue of limited interactivity in online and distance learning, thereby improving the quality and inclusivity of online education and contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG-4). This study investigates the development of a spatial learning environment using immersive technologies to increase participation and engagement in online courses. The effectiveness of an ICT course, which acted as a testbed for the spatial learning environment, was examined using a quantitative research methodology. The outcomes show how spatial software can help create an online learning environment that is more engaging and dynamic. This study offers an innovative solution to bridge the interactivity gap in online education, broadening the scope of open and distance learning.

337-Evaluation of Virtual Reality as A Redeemer for Enhanced Learning in Environmental Design and Climate Change Challenges: Building the Case for Cultural Heritage Sites in Pakistan

Omer Bhatti (UMT Lahore)

Abstract

Culture lies at the heart of any society towards their identification, unification, uniqueness and helps them retain their evolution through the test of time. Built environment is one of the major key role players in the transition of knowledge and identity from one generation to another. Buildings become an integral part of the social envelope that encapsulates the communities towards their enlightenment through time. With such a long and versatile history of civilizations across timeline of humanity, Pakistan is an exception. However with recent challenges of climate change, terrorism, lack of prioritization, non development of skillset & its deployment and allied issues, Pakistan faced multifold challenges towards retaining and conserving our cultural and built form history. One of the key factors to help towards promoting cultural identity as well as exploration & accessibility is using the Virtual Reality based technology to document, model and simulate the built form enabling any viewer in any place of the world to have a feeling of it through a virtual tour. Yet such explorations have not been set forth in the local context. The research aimed to explore the same context with reference to built form professionals and historians. A model based approach was used to propose the ideas along with its virtual form using online platform and online questionnaire to collect data. Sample size consisted of 68 respondents who responded out of 83 (81%) which were contacted. The results showed higher rate of acceptance from respondents towards utilizing the proposed model in future projects integrating technology to conserve, retain and simulate the physical context virtually and enable better promotion of the cultural artifacts through technical integration. Major concerns shown were technology integration viability, accessibility and hybrid form ease of access at multiple platforms for better acceptance.

338-Is Reasonably Practicable Reasonable?

Rakwena Monareng (UNISA: Language Service Directorate)

Abstract

I present a critical rendition of the conflictual narrative voices, ideological nuances and practical expression veiled behind the lofty maxim, reasonably practicable, as a reasonably justifiable ploy to micro-manage the capability of indigenous South African official languages to equally serve as media of facilitating students' academic success at a South Africa university. Set on a qualitative research mode, my argument is mapped as follows: I plot this line of thought within a South African university and its language policy; critically examine both its implementation plan and the concomitant activities thereof; extrapolate and discuss the underlying narrative voices, ideological nuances and the practical expression that typify a context that implicitly yet solidly forbids the languages referred a credible space to equally, as colonial languages do, take a central role in the sense making and knowledge making process of the students' academic activities for their academic success and development of critical responsible citizenry; and finally I present an emerging multilingual language policy implementation strategy that places high premium on granting credible space for the indigenous South African languages to thrive as vehicle that enables student academic success. I draw key learning sets and offer insight on future research.

339-Current issues in the online learning management in Vietnam

Tam Doan Ho Dan (Ho Chi Minh City Open University, Vietnam)

Abstract

This presentation provides an overview of the critical issues and experiences related to ODL in Vietnam. The objective is to share with the AAOU community the insights of the practices of ODL in the specific context of Vietnam. This paper is desk research on existing literature in this area, mainly from the papers at the recent national conferences. Six main themes are identified and discussed in detail: (1) Learning and teaching methods, (2) Learning and teaching resources, (3) Evaluation and quality control, (4) Supporting systems, (5) Personal aspects such as the relationship between teacher-learner, learner-learner, and work-life balance of online and distance learners (6) The impact of new technology such as AI, Big data.

340- University lecturers' teaching practices to promote learners' engagement in synchronous and asynchronous online learning

Nga Nguyen Thuy (Ho Chi Minh City Open University, Vietnam)

Abstract

Engagement is emergingly a challenging issue to be investigated in an online learning environment where students have less direct contact and interactions with their lecturers and peers. This study aimed to explore lecturers' teaching practices to promote learners' engagement in synchronous and asynchronous online learning. Semi-structured interviews and a survey were used as research instruments to collect the data from 6 university lecturers and 95 students of an online learning programme. The results showed that lecturers employed various teaching methods, tasks and techniques which help engage learners synchronously and asynchronously in the learning program. This study suggests that future research can delve into the teaching nature and students' reflections on their interactive engagements, positively contributing to their learning outcomes.

341-Optimizing Leadership Performance in Open Online Flexible Distance Learning Higher Education Institutions Amidst the Digital Transformation

Zahir Osman **(**Open University Malaysia)

Abstract

The importance of leadership performance in open online distance learning cannot be overstated, as effective leadership is crucial for driving institutional success, fostering a positive learning environment, and ensuring the delivery of high-quality education to students in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. This study assesses the direct and indirect relationships between a leader's engagement, leadership style, and adaptability with a leader's performance and self-efficacy as a mediator in open online distance learning higher education institutions. Methodologically, the study comprehensively evaluates the impact of leaders' engagement, leadership style, adaptability, and leaders' performance, with leaders' self-efficacy as a mediator, through primary data collection via surveys. The survey questionnaires were distributed via email using purposive sampling, yielding a satisfactory response rate. Out of 472 surveys distributed, 361 were collected, and 342 clean data were used in the analysis. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed for data analysis, utilizing Smartpls4 software. The results revealed that all the hypotheses are supported except for the direct relationship between a leader's engagement and a leader's performance, which is not supported. The findings contribute theoretically by aligning with Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), emphasizing the importance of self-efficacy beliefs and observational learning in shaping leadership behaviors and outcomes. Practically, the study suggests investment in leadership development programs, promotion of collaborative leadership practices, and support for adaptive leadership approaches to enhance leader effectiveness.

342-Exploring Future Prospects of Artificial Intelligence Based ChatGPT for Higher Education Context

Phumza Makgato-Khunou (UNISA)
Loyd Tlale (UNISA)

Abstract

Higher education is undergoing significant changes in terms of accessibility, affordability, and efficiency. Rapid developments in information and communication technologies (ICT) around the world have a significant impact on this transformation. Artificial intelligence (AI)-powered chatbots have received a lot of attention in academia due to their potential to change the education sector. The integration of artificial intelligence into education is an unavoidable phenomena. Intelligent tools provide personalised training, automated assessment, and, most of all, teaching with virtual assistants or chatbots. Chatbots and other virtual assistants have been on the market for years, serving as teaching tools on various platforms and applications. Chatbots are artificial intelligence-powered systems that can communicate and reply to user inquiries or commands. People can interact with chatbots via websites, applications, social media platforms, and even speech interfaces. From an educational standpoint, chatbots can answer students' queries and provide them with assistance and general information soon after the receipt of the inquiry. Education and training for lecturers and higher education students is critical in responding to the impact of ChatGPT on the educational environment. In this paper, we look at the possibilities of ChatGPT in the educational process. We examine the influence it can have on students in tertiary institutions, highlighting both the benefits and challenges. We then considered the opportunities for students and university lecturers. The study's findings also suggest a number of research directions that should be explored to ensure the safe and responsible usage of chatbots, particularly ChatGPT, in higher education. Finally, conclusions are developed and recommendations are offered regarding the features that lecturers and students must follow in order to effectively incorporate ChatGPT in their daily education.

348-The Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Open Distance Education

Jie Yuan (Beijing Open University)

Abstract

This paper delves into the application of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in open distance education and its profound effects on educational methodologies, quality, and resources. As technology advances rapidly, GAI has emerged as a vital force driving educational innovation. Initially, this paper outlines the current state of open distance education. It then exhaustively analyzes how GAI enhances educational quality, expands resources, significantly improves the learning experience for students, and promotes educational equity through personalized learning resource recommendations, automated question-answering systems, virtual teachers and teaching assistants, and intelligent assessment and feedback mechanisms. Additionally, this paper acknowledges the challenges of GAI implementation, such as technical maturity, data security, and privacy protection, and proposes corresponding strategies. This research aims to provide valuable insights for educators and researchers to jointly explore new avenues for open distance education in the era of artificial intelligence.

354-Artificial Intelligence in Open Distance Learning: Innovations, Benefits, and Challenges

Shabir Wani (Indira Gandhi National Open University)
Khalid Waquar Abid (Indira Gandhi National Open University)

Abstract

Change is a constant factor that has shaped every segment of human life, including education and society, from ancient times to the modern world. The education system, in particular, has undergone radical transformations, evolving from traditional methods like pencils and paper to smart classrooms and digital technologies. Among these advancements, artificial intelligence (AI) stands out as a significant achievement with the potential to revolutionize traditional learning paradigms. AI offers personalized, engaging, and efficient educational experiences by leveraging technologies like machine learning and natural language processing. These innovations allow educators to tailor instruction to individual learners, improving outcomes and enhancing overall learning experiences. Tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, chatbots, and automated grading also reduce the administrative burden on teachers, enabling them to focus more on teaching and student interaction. Initially, teachers were hesitant to adopt AI, fearing job displacement. However, they have come to recognize AI as a valuable supplement that enhances the teaching-learning process by providing new orientations and support. Beyond traditional education, AI holds great promise for Open and Distance Learning (ODL), where it can play a significant role in improving administrative efficiency, instruction, and student support services. While AI brings numerous benefits, it also poses challenges such as privacy concerns, security risks, high costs, potential biases in accessibility, and ethical issues. This review-based study finds that AI has profoundly impacted education, particularly in the ODL system. However, strategic implementation is essential to maximize the benefits of AI and promote equitable education in ODL environments.

356- AI for Learning: An OU case study Evidence-based approach to AI learning support, for both scaled student participation and efficacy for learning outcomes

Zahid Majeed (Allama Iqbal Open University)
Michael Larsen (Studiosity, Australia)
Nasir Mahmood (Allama Iqbal Open University)
Mahmood Ahmad (Allama Iqbal Open University)
Arshad Manzoor (Allama Iqbal Open University)
Shamsa Kanwal (Allama Iqbal Open University)
Muhammad Tufail (Allama Iqbal Open University)

Abstract

357-Exploring Mental Health Issues, Needs, and the Role of Counselling Services for Students and Staffs at UT (Universitas Terbuka)

Vita Elysia

Abstract

The rising demand for open and distance education underscores the critical need for a robust approach to student well-being, especially concerning mental health. Universitas Terbuka (UT), or Indonesia Open University, serves a diverse student population across various geographical locations, facing unique challenges associated with remote learning. These challenges contribute to elevated stress levels and mental health concerns among students and staff. Despite the acknowledged importance of mental health, UT lacks structured counselling services, creating a significant gap in support. This research provides a comprehensive analysis of UT's mental health landscape and the need for specialized counselling services. The study focuses on assessing mental health needs, analyzing contributing factors, and formulating policy recommendations to enhance support systems at UT. Through qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, the research gathers detailed data on mental health issues within the UT community. Thematic analysis identifies recurring themes and patterns, offering insights for targeted interventions. Findings reveal widespread anxiety, depression, stress, and burnout among students and staff, exacerbated by the distance learning environment. The absence of face-to-face interaction, academic pressures, and personal challenges significantly impact mental health. Participants highlight the urgent need for tailored counselling services to address these issues, improve academic performance, and foster a supportive community. Addressing these needs is essential for developing a more inclusive and resilient academic environment at UT, with potential benefits for similar institutions in the ASEAN region and beyond.

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