
Editorial

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Information and Communication Technology plays a significant role in academia to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the adoption of technology was expedited and necessary to ensure continuity of learning for students. This special issue of *International Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning*, titled 'Technology in the Classroom: Innovations in Teaching and Learning', contains four papers presented at the Fourth Emerging Research Paradigms in Business and Social Science (ERPSS) international conference in Dubai, UAE, in January 2018. Previous editions of the conference were held in 2011, 2013, and 2015.

The 2018 EPBSS conference was very successful. The conference hosted by Middlesex University Dubai was attended by over 170 delegates from across the world. The three-day conference saw over 100 oral presentations in 27 sessions across nine conference tracks. In addition to oral presentations, one workshop, one-panel session, and a visual paper session, including 13 poster presentations, were held.

The papers included in this special issue focus on innovative teaching and learning approaches and the student experience. Three of the papers focus on higher education, and one at the high school level in Dubai. It is noteworthy that this special issue was well received, however after several rounds of reviewing, only four short-listed papers were accepted for this special issue. The following paragraphs provide a short summary of each paper's contribution and significance.

In the first paper, 'Proposing new innovative technological features to support human e-learning interaction processes in academic organisations', the authors Razmak, Farhan, and El Refae present an Elearning User Interface (ELUI), an application designed and developed to enhance human interaction and learning styles of students. The application was thoroughly evaluated using qualitative and quantitative measures to gauge the students' and teachers' perceptions. One of the significant contributions of this research is that it can serve as a guideline for the effective design of future e-learning systems.

In the second paper, '3D-printing techno-network to help students overcome mathematical learning difficulties', Mavri focused on the application of 3D printing technologies in improving educational activities for students who are faced with Mathematics learning difficulties (MLD). This interesting research paper conceptualises a 3D printing techno-network and then evaluated it using a framework of 12 educational and technological indicators. However, the author recognises that teachers' lack of knowledge about 3D printing and added financial costs can be a challenge towards implementing such a system.

Authored by Bashir, Nanath, and Hussain, the third paper, 'Industry-academia outreach: a study of student perception', is an exploratory study of students' perceptions about the importance of industry outreach and collaboration with academia. This longitudinal study analysed data collected over five years at an international branch campus of a British university based in Dubai. The study's findings highlight the benefits and insights gained through industry-academia outreach in enhancing students' experience.

Finally, in the fourth paper, titled 'Recommendations of robotics platforms for secondary school education', Forsyth presents an innovative robotics platform for embedding mechatronics, robot programming, and robot construction in the secondary school curriculum. The paper provides a meta-analysis of the literature and a technical review of the range of equipment available in the market and demonstrates the pedagogical alignment. The findings serve as a starting point for people establishing and designing robotics curriculum at the secondary school level.

Collectively, the topics discussed in this special issue will be useful for administrators and academics in secondary and tertiary education to enhance students' experiences and align curriculum to make the best use of emerging technologies. Many people worked hard to help this issue become a reality. We would first like to sincerely thank all the reviewers for their timely and insightful comments. Of course, thanks are due to the authors, who provided excellent articles and timely extended revisions. Finally, we are grateful to the *International Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning (IJTEL)* editors for their efforts, patience, and guidance during the production of this special issue.