Editorial

Expanding the Map of Online Education

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The pandemic Covid-19 has transformed the map of online education globally. The global society has started to normalize Covid-19 and learned to live with it. Online education, however, is here to stay. The various sectors of education have tasted the fruit of online learning, and the convenience it brought was felt by many. In higher education, for example, Mukhtar et al. (2020)—based on faculty's perception—suggested that online learning has successfully ensured learning to take place in lockdown. More importantly, tertiary students reported to have readiness and positive attitude towards online learning (Abu Bakar et al., 2021). A similar trend of findings has been traced in primary and secondary schools.

To respond to this trend, in this issue, SHARE addresses the concepts, practices, and challenges that surround online learning within the various levels of education. We have published articles about online teaching and learning in our earlier publications; however, SHARE has yet to dedicate a whole issue in which all articles feature a dimension of online education. We believe that this publication will add to strengthen the understanding about online education.

Defining Online Learning

Online learning, in the context of this issue, is defined as a form of distance education in which learning took place by utilizing the electronic devices whereby teachers and learners are connected via the Internet. However, we acknowledge that online learning could take place both synchronously and asynchronously. In a systematic review of literature published in 1988 to 2018, Singh and Thurman (2019) collected 49 definitions of online learning led them to identify core elements of online learning definitions. The core elements include online environment, synchronous, and asynchronous. All three elements are included in our definition above.

Expanding the map of online learning literature

In this issue, we publish six articles that address a rich concept, diverse practices, and numerous challenges of online education. The first article by Scott and Jackson discusses the evolution of education in the virtual world, overtime. The second article by Mohamad revisits the pre-service teachers' readiness to teach online English classes. The third, fourth, and fifth articles—by Yusof, by Othman, and by Wong, respectively—concentrate on the issues experience in online learning contexts. The last two articles—by Abd Ajis and by Lutfi, respectively—focus on the effects of online learning contexts.

The articles listed above present and highlights new perspectives and findings concerning online education. However, they are not short of limitations, and thus, we call for future research to dive deeper into the vast ocean of online learning. We hope you will enjoy and be enlightened by the articles in this issue. We especially crafted this issue to be of more focus with the intention to bringing you a more pleasant and directed reading. Finally, we thank the authors who contributed

to these issues, the reviewers have provided feedback and comments, and SHARE management team who have work tirelessly to ensure the publication of this issue.

References

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