

The Increasing Role of Technology in Teaching and Learning Activities in Higher Education

We are pleased to publish the second regular issue (Volume 13, Issue 2) of *Higher Learning Research Communications (HLRC)* for 2023. If there is a common theme that emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the increased role that technology did and will continue to play in teaching and learning activities in tertiary education. The range of articles reflects the interest in digital teaching and learning and includes the use of scaffolded simulations, the influence of immersive virtual reality in the classroom, and gamification. In addition, guidelines around instant messaging are proposed that should continue the conversation around the ethical use of technology in teaching and learning. As is typical in the HLRC, the authors reflect diverse countries, including Canada, India, Malaysia, Mexico, South Africa, and the United States. We look forward to 2024, when we expect to publish a special issue on English language influence in higher education teaching, learning, and research.

The focus of the HLRC is digital teaching and learning, higher education and the public good, and the preparation of students in key 21st-century employability skills, and the present issue reflects each of these focus areas. We continue to seek empirical studies (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods designs); research briefs that describe in a concise form results of pilot or other limited studies that potentially have broader value; critical literature reviews; book reviews; and editorials/essays.

Summaries of the articles contained in this issue are provided below.

Research Articles

- Álvaro Antón-Sancho, Diego Vergara, and Lorena Rodríguez-Calzada, in their article *Gamification and Player Profiles Among Faculty in Mexico*, analyzed the gaming player profiles (among Achiever, Socializer, Killer, and Explorer, in a commonly used profile taxonomy) of university professors in Mexico to compare those to which they identify and those they consider most effective didactically in gamified situations. They found that 42.4% of the participants identify as Explorers; however, only 15.6% consider their player profile not to be the most suitable for learning. Player profiles chosen by the Mexican professors diverge from the player profiles of the students described in previous studies. Significant differences by gender, area of knowledge, and previous training in gamification were also identified. Thus, training of professors in gamification should be adapted to the specificities of each area of knowledge. This will allow professors to develop pedagogical skills in gamification that will help them adapt gamified didactic situations to the needs of students.
- Bronwyn Swartz and Sweta Patnaik, in their article *Guidelines for Sustainable Use of Mobile Instant Messaging Apps in Higher Education: A South African Case Study*, propose guidelines to facilitate the sustainable and successful use of mobile instant messaging (MIM) apps for learning and teaching. Results of two focus groups conducted at a university of technology in South Africa to explore the perceptions of educators on using mobile instant messaging (MIM) apps for learning and teaching suggest that sustainable and successful use of MIM apps for learning and teaching requires guidelines in three areas: practical management, privacy and security, and sustainable use. The proposed guidelines promote the sustainable and successful use of MIM applications in learning and teaching

environments and offer practical solutions to ensure that the use of MIM apps is ethical, inclusive, and effective in supporting student learning.

- Attiya Baddar and Mahmood Ahmad Khan, in their article *Teachers' Intention to Use Digital Resources in Classroom Teaching: The Role of Teacher Competence, Peer Influence, and Perceived Image*, investigated factors that determine teacher intention to use digital resources in classroom teaching among university teachers from the Kashmir region of India. Intention to use digital resources in the classroom is significantly influenced by teachers' perceptions of their own competence, perceived usefulness and ease of use of technology and digital resources, and peer influence. Perceived competence exerted the strongest influence. Results support that digital resources must be perceived to offer potential benefits and ease of use to gain widespread acceptance among teachers. This required prioritization for developing useful and user-friendly technology resources and training programs that enhance teacher proficiency in utilizing digital resources for effective teaching.
- Lori Bobo, Stacy Mikel, Yolanda Chandler, and Hungwei Tseng, in their study *Scaffolded Simulation in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Education*, investigated the impacts of using scaffolded clinical simulations on nursing students' confidence in clinical reasoning, clinical judgment, and critical thinking skills using mixed-methods research with second-semester baccalaureate nursing students. Students who perceived the benefits of scaffolded simulation activities (i.e., peer observations, debriefings, and self-reflections) were more likely to engage in this deep learning process, which in turn led to their higher confidence in clinical reasoning, clinical judgment, and critical thinking skills. Thus, scaffolded simulations in psychiatric clinical settings are a valuable tool for preparing nursing students for the rigors of clinical practice, despite decreased in-person client experiences in nursing programs.
- Chris Craig and Robin Kay, in their critical review *A Systematic Overview of Reviews of the Use of Immersive Virtual Reality in Higher Education*, examined published systematic reviews regarding the benefits and challenges of IVR in higher education to inform best practices. Ten reviews that include 332 studies with over 9,878 participants were selected for thematic analysis. Benefits of IVR include improved student learning and behaviours, while challenges include technology issues, behaviours that inhibit learning, and learning how to use IVR. Higher education stakeholders can benefit from budgeting time and costs, aligning IVR use with real-world applications, maintaining an adaptive mindset, and developing scaffolded instructional design.

Essays

- Hengzhi Hu, in their essay *Emerging From Content and Language Integrated Learning and English-Medium Instruction, is CLIL-ised EMI the Next Trend of Education?*, compares content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and English-medium instruction (EMI) and then describes what is referred to as *CLIL-ised EMI*, a new educational phenomenon, regarding its feasibility in content-based bilingual programmes. Although CLIL and EMI differ in nature, CLIL-ised EMI supplements traditional EMI, which has a single objective of content learning, with special attention to students' needs, particularly their linguistic needs. *CLIL-ised EMI* shows considerable feasibility in bilingual education and can overcome the linguistic challenges students face in content-based programmes.

We would like to thank Azlina Abdullah, Deborah Byrne, Nicholas Charlton, Javier Cifuentes-Faura, Elvira Barrios Espinosa, Anne L. Fensie, Szabina Fodor, Judit García-Martín, Reginald Govender, Gareth Humphreys, Azahara Jiménez-Millán, Teresa Martins, Diego Vergara, and Marlon Xavier for their service to the HLRC as peer reviewers of manuscripts considered for this issue.

Gary J. Burkholder, PhD

Walden University, United States of America

Editor

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5084-8099>

Erwin Krauskopf, PhD

Universidad de Las Américas, Chile

Managing Editor

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4082-5758>

Contact: hrlceditor@mail.waldenu.edu

Submitted: December 30, 2023 | **Published:** December 30, 2023

Recommended Citation

Burkholder, G. J., & Krauskopf, E. (2023). The increasing role of technology in teaching and learning in tertiary education. *Higher Learning Research Communications*, 13(2), i–iii. <https://doi.org/10.18870/hlrc.v13i2.1506>

The *Higher Learning Research Communications (HLRC)* is a peer-reviewed, online, interdisciplinary journal indexed in Scopus, ERIC, JGATE and Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). It is an open access journal with an international focus published by Walden University, USA. Its aim is to disseminate both high quality research and teaching best practices in tertiary education across cultures and disciplines. *HLRC* connects the ways research and best practice contribute to the public good and impact the communities that educators serve. *HLRC* articles include peer-reviewed research reports, research briefs, comprehensive literature reviews, and book reviews.