






## Editorial – Advancing perspectives in ODDE

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## Welcome to the second issue of *JODDE*!

As we present the second issue of the *Journal of Open, Distance, and Digital Education (JODDE)*, we continue our mission of fostering scholarly discourse on the evolving landscape of open, distance, and digital education (ODDE). The rapid integration of new technologies, the dazzling emergence of potentially transformative pedagogical practices, and the increasing demand for inclusive, sustainable, and flexible learning opportunities highlight the relevance of our field. This issue brings together a diverse range of contributions, focusing on key challenges and opportunities.

*JODDE* is proudly enhancing its quality as well as providing space for scholarly publications in ODDE, either through the lens of critical reflections or rigorous empirical research. Although still a very young journal, *JODDE* has already attracted numerous submissions from renowned researchers in the field. We are looking forward to completing the required minimum publication period and initiating the indexing process for *JODDE* in the relevant databases, which will further enhance its international visibility.

At this time, we would like to thank our authors, reviewers, and editorial board members who support our new non-commercial open access journal with their time and effort. In this issue, it is our pleasure to present three critical reflections, three research articles, and an insightful interview as we endeavor to maintain your engagement in the scholarly conversation around these pertinent facets of ODDE.

### Critical reflections

The issue opens with Don Olcott's *Open Universities: Reinventing, repurposing and reimagining innovative futures* which examines the pressures on open universities to redefine their roles in an increasingly digital and competitive higher education landscape. Olcott argues that open universities must embrace agility, innovative leadership, and partnerships with the private sector to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world. Olcott's reflection urges institutions to move beyond traditional models and rethink their purpose in an era of digital transformation.

Stephen Murgatroyd's *Interregnum: Disruption and the in-between time for higher education* delves into the ongoing paradigm shifts affecting higher education institutions, particularly in the wake of global crises and technological advancements. Murgatroyd introduces the concept of an "interregnum"—a period of uncertainty and disruption where the old models no longer fit, yet the new ones are not fully realized. Murgatroyd challenges institutions to reconsider their governance models, faculty roles, and value propositions in an age where traditional higher education is increasingly questioned.

Jon Dron's *Learning: A technological perspective* presents a thought-provoking exploration of how technology and learning are inseparable. He questions the commonly held belief that technology is merely a tool for education, arguing instead that it fundamentally shapes the way we think, process information, and construct knowledge. Dron discusses the evolving role of artificial intelligence (AI) in learning environments, cautioning against deterministic views of technology while advocating for a nuanced understanding of its impact on cognition and pedagogy.

### Research articles

This issue also features empirical investigations into ODDE's expanding reach and its implications for educational institutions and their stakeholders.

*Innovation with Open Educational Resources: An integrative review of drivers, barriers, and enablers* by Farrow et al. provides a systematic review of recent studies on OER implementation and innovation. The article identifies key factors influencing the adoption of OER, including institutional policies, technological infrastructure, and pedagogical practices. The authors highlight the persistent barriers to OER uptake, such as faculty resistance, lack of institutional support, and issues related to sustainability. Their findings provide a roadmap for educators and policymakers seeking to expand the use of OER in diverse contexts.

In *Creating inclusive environments for students with declared dyslexia studying online in higher education*, Rhoden et al. examine the experiences of students with dyslexia in online learning environments. Through interviews with online tutors, the study explores how personal and professional experiences shape educators' approaches to supporting dyslexic learners. The authors emphasize the importance of personalized teaching strategies, accessible learning materials, and institutional awareness in fostering inclusivity in digital education. Their research highlights both the challenges and opportunities for designing online learning environments that accommodate neurodiverse students. Building on the findings, the authors propose a model that informs policies and practices to help institutions create more inclusive learning environments.

Finally, Öncü's *Transforming open and distance learning with generative AI* explores generative AI applications in ODDE, particularly in the creation of AI-assisted micro-credentials. The study details a structured validation process for AI-generated content, analyzing its accuracy, adaptability, and credibility in higher education settings. Öncü argues that while AI has the potential to enhance personalized learning experiences, it must be carefully leveraged with human expert oversight to ensure quality and reliability. The findings contribute to ongoing debates about the role of AI in shaping the future of ODDE.

## Interview: Insights from Asha Kanwar

This issue concludes with an insightful interview conducted by Kathryn R. Johnson and Berrin Cefa featuring Professor Asha Kanwar, former President of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). In this conversation, Kanwar reflects on the transformative role of ODDE in expanding educational access worldwide, particularly for marginalized communities. She discusses the importance of lifelong learning, the need for scalable and sustainable digital education models, and the role of international collaboration in addressing global educational challenges.

Going beyond access and inclusion, Kanwar also explores ODDE's potential in promoting environmental sustainability and responding to climate change. She discusses how digital and distance education can reduce the carbon footprint of traditional higher education models and contribute to sustainable development goals. Given the increasing focus on sustainability in higher education, her insights provide valuable perspectives on how institutions can integrate ecological responsibility into their digital learning strategies.

Additionally, Kanwar shares her experiences as a female leader in ODDE, reflecting on gender and leadership in the academic community. She highlights the persistent gender disparities in higher education leadership and advocates for more inclusive leadership models. Her reflections offer an important perspective on the challenges for women in academia, particularly in a field that is increasingly shaped by digital transformation.

## Looking Ahead

Together, these articles underscore key issues in ODDE. The themes explored in this issue—technological transformation, institutional adaptation, equity, sustainability, and the role of AI—contribute to the critical conversations shaping the field today. As we continue to advance research and practice in ODDE, we invite our readers to engage in these discussions, share their insights, and explore new pathways for the future.

An important ongoing debate within our community concerns the terminology of ODDE and the naming of our journal. This discussion was sparked by Mark Nichols' article *What's in a name? Wrestling with 'ODDE'* (Nichols, 2024) and our first editorial (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2024), prompting further reflection on how we define and position ODDE in an evolving educational landscape in the digital transformation and blurred boundaries between distance and conventional education. This conversation has now led to a [call for papers](#) for a special issue in JODDE titled "*Reclaiming 'Open' and 'Distance' Education in a 'Digital' World*," with Mark Nichols as Guest Editor.

We warmly invite our readers to contribute to this discussion by submitting papers to this special themed issue. Your insights and perspectives will progress the ongoing conversation that will shape the identity and future direction of ODDE.

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