

Brief report on *Open Praxis* figures and progress

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This editorial in the first *Open Praxis* issue in 2020 presents a brief report on the *Open Praxis* development since its relaunching in 2013, with a special focus on volume 11, published in 2019, similar to the brief reports published in past years (Gil-Jaurena, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). Table 1 includes different journal statistics, such as number of submissions, number of published papers; acceptance rates; number of authors and number of reviewers.

A record of 101 authors (excluding the editor) contributed to *Open Praxis* volume 11 with their research, innovative practice, special papers or book reviews, compiling a total of 33 published items. The average author per paper has increased to almost 3 (table 1). Considering the international scope of the journal, contributions are geographically and institutionally balanced, coming from 22 different countries: 2 North American countries (USA and Canada), one South American (Uruguay), 8 European countries (Ireland, United Kingdom, Portugal, Spain, France, Netherlands, Italy and Slovenia), 5 African (Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa), 4 Asian countries (Turkey, Pakistan, Thailand and Korea) and 2 in Oceania (Australia and New Zealand). The 59 reviewers also reflect a gender, geographical and institutional balance, as shown in the list available in the *Open Praxis* website (<https://openpraxis.org/index.php/OpenPraxis/about/displayMembership/10>).

Table 1: Journal statistics per year

	2013, volume 5 issues 1-4	2014, volume 6 issues 1-4	2015, volume 7 issues 1-4	2016, volume 8 issues 1-4	2017, volume 9 issues 1-4	2018, volume 10 issues 1-4	2019, volume 11 issues 1-4
Issues published	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Items published	38	35	33	34	38	36	37
Research papers	21	16	13	14	21	20	20
Innovative practice papers	2	6	3	2	4	3	2
Special papers*	9	9	11	8	7	7	10
Editorial	4	4	4	4	4	5	4
Software or book reviews	2	-	2	6	2	1	1
Total submissions	56	52	57	63	65	54	61
Rejected before peer-review	10	10	10	15 (+ 4 book reviews)	17 (+ 3 book reviews)	10 (+ 3 book reviews)	16 (+ 2 book reviews)

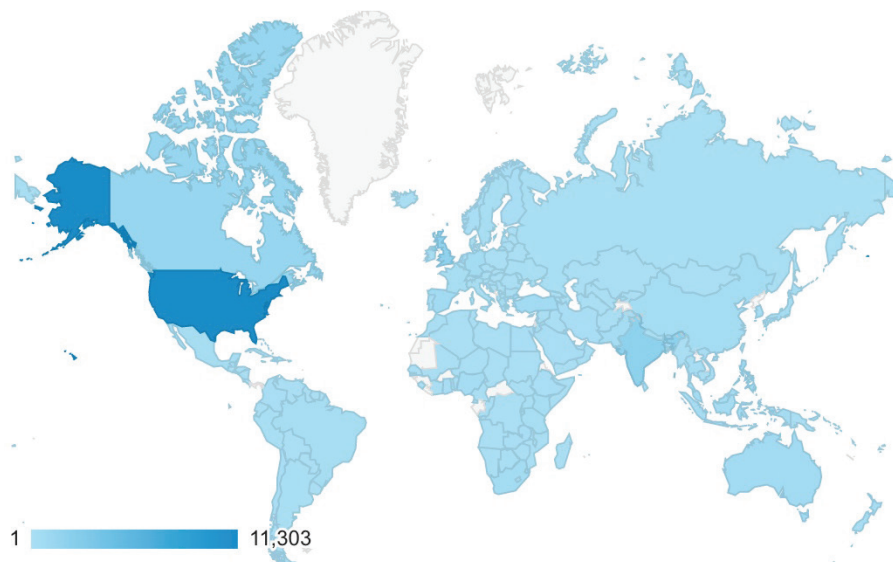
(Continued)

Table 1: (Continued) Journal statistics per year

	2013, volume 5 issues 1-4	2014, volume 6 issues 1-4	2015, volume 7 issues 1-4	2016, volume 8 issues 1-4	2017, volume 9 issues 1-4	2018, volume 10 issues 1-4	2019, volume 11 issues 1-4
Peer reviewed	44	42	45	38	43	40	42
Accepted	32	31	27	24	32	27	32
Days to review	47	41	56	63	56	61	57
Days to publication	107	118	117	158	169	163	167
Acceptance rate	60,70%	59,61%	50,88%	45,28%	53,33%	54%	54%
Number of authors	65	81	71	65	80	70	105
Average authors per paper	1,71	2,31	2,15	1,91	2,11	1,94	2,84
Number of reviewers	45	53	61	59	66	58	59

* Special papers: ICDE prizes 2013 and 2015, *Open Education Consortium Global Conference* selected papers 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)

The *Open Praxis* website has received visits from all over the world (figure 1), being the following the top ten countries (in descending order) in 2019: United States (41,88% of the users), India (6,98%), United Kingdom (6,14%), Canada (4,57%), Philippines (2,43%), Australia (2,15%), Turkey (2,07%), Spain (1,95%), Germany (1,65%) and South Africa (1,53%). The United States of America is showing an increasing number of visits to the *Open Praxis* website in recent years: from almost 16% in the first 5 years, until January 2018 (Gil-Jaurena, 2018) to almost 42% in 2019 (fig. 1).

**Figure 1: Location of visitors to *Open Praxis* website (January-December 2019)**

Source: Google Analytics

Regarding scientific impact, citations to *Open Praxis* in academic publications (journals, conference proceedings, books, etc.) have progressively increased since the relaunching of the journal in 2013 (figure 2). The current *Open Praxis* h-index is 30 (source: Google Scholar, March 2020).

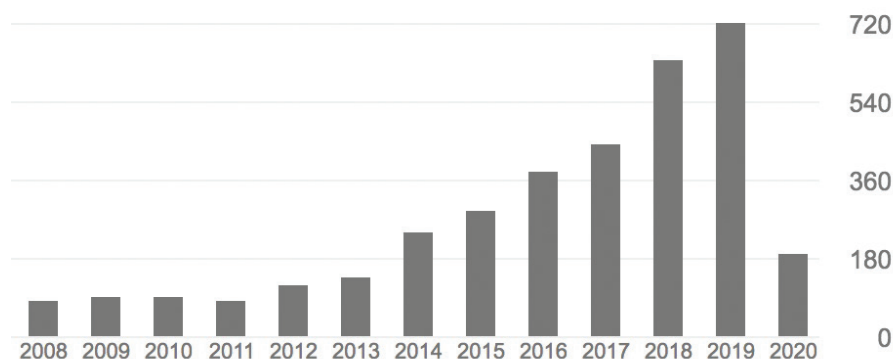


Figure 2: Citations to *Open Praxis* per year. 2008-2020

Source: Google Scholar

After this brief report on the *Open Praxis* figures and progress, what follows is an introduction to the first *Open Praxis* issue in volume 12, which includes nine research papers, one innovative practice paper and one book review.

In the first article (*Open Education Faculty and Distance Education Students' Dropout Reasons: the Case of a Turkish State University*), Münevver Gündüz and Selçuk Karaman, from Turkey, deal with a relevant topic in distance education: dropout. They develop an interview-based study and identify School and Programme-related factors, Social Environment-related factors, and Personal Trait-related factors that influence students' dropout in the distance education program at Ataturk University.

In the second paper (*Opening Futures for Nigerian Education – Integrating Educational Technologies with Indigenous Knowledge and Practices*) Biliamin Adekunle Adeyeye and Jon Mason, from Nigeria and Australia, introduce the African Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the critical reflection about openness and technologies in education. Their historical, cultural and values-based approach explores the opportunity to merge indigenous knowledge and technology in pursuit of sustainable development.

Sidra Noreen and Muhammad Abid Malik, from Pakistan (*Digital Technologies for Learning at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU): Investigating Needs and Challenges*), present a survey-based study focused on the students' needs of digital technologies, which shows a positive attitude towards them. They have also interviewed some staff in charge of these technologies, in order to identify the challenges, including aspects such as ICT costs or faculty attitudes. The paper provides an overview of the case at AIOU and some hints for action.

An international team conformed by Liat Biberman-Shalev, Gemma Tur and Ilona Buchem from Israel, Spain and Germany (*Culture, Identity and Learning: A Mediation Model in the Context of Blogging in Teacher Education*) presents a comparative study that, using both a psychological and a socio-anthropological perspective, explores identity ownership in a group of students. The context has been a virtual learning environment –the use of blogging– and identity has been the mediation

variable, being learning the dependent variable and culture the independent one. The authors highlight the educational implications of the results.

Antonia Makina, from South Africa (*Developing a framework for managing the quality use of podcasts in open distance and e-learning environments*), building upon research about the use of podcasts in higher education and concerned with doing a quality use of this resource, has designed a framework aligned Bloom's Digital Taxonomy. The paper reports on the process of developing the framework, and offers it as a practical educational tool.

The last four research papers, all from the USA, report on different studies about the use of open educational resources (OER) in higher education.

Juliana Magro and Sara V. Tabaei (*Results from a Psychology OER pilot program: faculty and student perceptions, cost savings, and academic outcomes*), present the results of a survey and focus-group based study focused on different dimensions about the use of open textbooks in a collaborative pilot program that involved the library and a Psychology Department.

Feng-Ru Sheu and Judy Grissett (*Quality and Cost Matter: Students' Perceptions of Open versus Non-Open Texts through a Single-Blind Review*), also in the field of Psychology, focus on students' perceptions about textbooks and present a mixed methods experimental research that puts the students in the situation of evaluating course texts.

Lucinda Rush Wittkower and Leo S Lo (*Undergraduate Student Perspectives on Textbook Costs and Implications for Academic Success*) present a survey-based study focused, as well, on students' views about textbooks, particularly in the relevance of their cost in students' performance. The survey is included as an appendix.

On the other hand, Troy Martin and Royce Kimmons (*Faculty Members' Lived Experiences with Choosing Open Educational Resources*) focus on faculty and analyse their perspectives through a phenomenological interview-based study interests in four topics in relation to OER: knowledge and motivations, content selection, technical issues, and sustainability.

This set of four papers contributes to the literature about OER and open textbooks in higher education.

The innovative practice paper, by Pedro Antonio Tamayo, Ana Herrero, Javier Martín, Carolina Navarro and José Manuel Tránchez, from Spain (*Design of a chatbot as a distance learning assistant*) present their experience with a virtual assistant they have used in an Economy distance education course. They report on the motivations for using a chatbot, the process they followed in the design and implementation of the conversational robot, and the assessment of the experience.

Finally, a book review by Mark Nichols, from New Zealand, analyses and recommends the book *Transactional Distance and Adaptive Learning: Planning for the Future of Higher Education*, written by Farhad Saba and Rick L. Shearer in 2017.

We hope these articles will invite to discussion, reflection and innovation in open and distance education.

Special thanks from *Open Praxis* to the authors and reviewers who have contributed to this issue.

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