

## **Editorial: Achievements and challenges for ICT in education and development**

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Welcome to Volume 2, Issue 2 of the International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology (IJEDICT) - an e-journal that provides free and open access to all of its content. This issue deals with achievements and challenges for ICT in education and development, and brings articles from and/or about India, Australia, USA, Greece, Jordan, Turkey and Malaysia.

“Community radio and emerging information networks” by Ruchika Negi takes a closer look at the workings of five community radio groups operating in the northwestern hills of Uttaranchal in India. The author introduces and analyses the processes and the experiences of the local volunteers in doing radio amidst their own community members. The author suggests that such initiatives, small and scattered as they may be, help in the creation of knowledge networks that help to form newer, hitherto unexplored spaces of dialogue and discourse. The article “An information technology enabled Poultry Expert System: Perceptions of veterinarians and veterinary students” by Thammi Raju and Sudhakar Rao, also comes from India. This article describes a Poultry Expert System (PES) that was developed using Visual Basic 6.0 and MS Access on selected dimensions of poultry farming. Its efficacy was tested among the veterinarians and veterinary students. The study concludes that PES is an IT enabled tool for faster dissemination of expert advice in multiple locations at the same time.

The Australian government funded various ICT programs throughout regional Australia through its Networking the Nation (NTN) program. In their article “The CTC@NSW Program: Achievements and ongoing challenges” Lynne De Weaver and Allan Ellis describe one such program. Although the business planning process was an integral part of what communities had to do when they applied for a CTC@NSW grant, community inputs and outcomes regarding this process were not fully evaluated in the CTC@NSW program’s Final Report. An independent online survey was subsequently designed and conducted by the first author and revealed that the business plan that was a major component of the application was a key determinant as to the success or failure of the CTCs that responded to this survey. Also from Australia, in their article “Releasing the pedagogical power of information and communication technology for learners: A case study”, Cecily Knight, Bruce Allen Knight and Daniel Teghe explore two issues, firstly, what are the barriers to educators embracing the new technologies, and secondly, what role do teacher education programs play in breaking down the barriers. In discussing these issues, initiatives being undertaken in Queensland are highlighted.

Early pioneers in agribusinesses and colleges of agriculture are now utilizing elearning methods as a major part of both their education and strategic management programs. In “Trends and challenges of eLearning in national and international agricultural development”, John Leary and Zane L. Berge explain the major trends in elearning in agriculture and the challenges of elearning in agriculture. Their article describes the major developments and uses of elearning in the field of agriculture and investigates the international opportunities with elearning in agriculture.

“Long distance training for rural women craft producers” by Margaret Perivoliotis-Chryssovergis describes a Hellenic distance learning/e-learning pilot study, focusing on women in remote or rural areas who are professionally or occasionally occupied with the production of artefacts, mainly textiles, without having any education in design, informatics, marketing or management, due to their residential location and life-style constraints. A special educational module was developed using ICT to teach fundamental design education, computer training, and basics on management and marketing to rural women.

Ruba Fahmi Bataineh describes a study that investigated 210 Jordanian EFL perceptions of their computer literacy in the article “Jordanian EFL students’ perceptions of their computer literacy”. The findings revealed that the majority of the students reported being fairly proficient to proficient in computer skills such as deleting files, copying files, formatting a floppy disk, and installing a program on a hard disk, while most reported being not or a little proficient in computer skills such as using images from a camcorder or digital camera in computers, using PowerPoint, and creating databases. The results further revealed no significant effect for gender but a significant effect for year of study on students’ perceptions of their computer literacy.

In “Exploring Turkish science education faculties’ understanding of educational technology and use”, Hakan Turkmen reports the results of a survey that determined science education faculty members’ attitude toward computer use. Two educational perspective themes concerning the knowledge of science education teachers converge in this study: science education faculty members’ current knowledge and desired knowledge of understanding of educational technologies and use. The findings of this study showed that Turkish science education faculty members relatively unfamiliar with the advantages of educational technology and do not maximize its use, but they want to know the advantages of educational technology.

The article “The utilization and integration of ICT tools in promoting English language teaching and learning: Reflections from English option teachers in Kuala Langat District, Malaysia” by Robinson Joseph Samuel and Zaitun Abu Bakar, examines the present scenario of English language teachers as regards ICT integration and tries to determine if the ICT skills of the teachers are adequate to promote English language teaching and learning. The authors also look at some of the obstacles faced by English language teachers in ICT integration and finally in the concluding part the researchers suggest the use of interactive lessons to speed up the teaching and learning of English.

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Chief Editors, IJEDICT

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