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Editorial

Welcome to Volume 13, Number 1, of the *Malaysian Journal of Distance Education (MJDE)*, the official journal of the School of Distance Education, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Penang. As with previous issues, it is with great pleasure that I invite you to endeavor into this platform for interdisciplinary thoughts amongst diverse professionals on the topic of distance education.

Each piece in this issue challenges the reader to think more broadly, thoroughly and analytically about online learning. We have pushed the boundaries of this incredibly complex concept, even going so far as to challenge the very paradigm itself, as author Norziani Dahalan@Omar and colleagues did in the first article. Their study on e-mentoring for online students shows that the social ability of students such as social presence, social navigation and social connectedness play a role which encourages online interaction and participation.

Following our interests in e-learning environment, John Clayton from Waikato Institute of Technology, New Zealand next presents the Online Learning Environment Survey (OLLES), designed to investigate the online learning experiences of learners in an efficient and economical way. He reports on the extensive investigations and data analysis undertaken in confirming the reliability and validation for the OLLES instrument.

Ensuring the principles of sustainability, Kirtana Hariharan and Jeremy Williams of the Asian International College, Singapore suggest the theoretical and practical perspectives in greening the business curriculum through collaborative learning spaces. The Green MBA curriculum offered by the college can in fact be a transformative experience for the educational institution.

Siti Sarah and Issham Ismail from the School of Distance Education, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), meanwhile, examine the pedagogically effectiveness of the e-Learning Portal of the distance education (DE) programme which has operated for more than four decades. The next

article from Issham and colleagues, of USM, addresses the internet access as a possible key factor towards increasing teachers' confidence in their professional uses of ICT. Puvaneswary and colleagues, also from the School of Distance Education, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), study the DE degrees offered by the school and agree that the degrees have contributed to career development and progress.

Finally, Dave Marcial of College of Computer Studies, Silliman University, Philippines reinforces the need for preserving the local knowledge and indigenous practices via e-learning tools. He argues that academe plays a vital role in this development and e-learning technologies can facilitate these knowledge.

With this overview, I would like to thank the Editorial Board Members for the dedication and passion with which they worked on selecting and editing pieces for this journal. This issue has indeed preserves and furthers the journal's mission to further discourse a balance of scholarly articles regarding distance education. Thank you also to authors for the time and effort in making this volume comes out successfully, and am looking forward to more contributions for the next edition of *MJDE*.

Thank you.

ZURAINI ZAKARIA
Chief Editor
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