Foreword from the Chief Editor

The Inaugural Issue of JPL

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Journal of Personalized Learning*: a peer-refereed academic journal of a new kind. With its broad scope bridging (yet not limited to) educational technology, learning design & innovation; educational policy & leadership; community education & wellness; system testing, evaluation & modeling; mobile applications, augmented reality & artificial intelligence; visual informatics & multimedia; cognitive science and neuroscience, the journal is dedicated to publish any research, concept paper, review or best practices to improve personalized educational experience from a wide-ranging standpoint.

There are currently a number of research programs around the world that explicitly or implicitly address the personalized education challenge. Learners in today's society vary widely in their abilities (cognitive, socio-economy and physical needs), learning style preferences, personality, interests, and motivations to learn. With the ultimate goal of helping all learners achieve their full learning potential, educators have often adopted methods to differentiate instruction, that is, to design varied types of instruction to meet individual student's needs and aspirations.

In the middle and late 20th century, approaches to differentiated learning and instruction became sanctioned with the instigation of what was called *individualized learning and instruction*. Technically the approach included any teaching and learning methods that met learners' needs, in practice, learners usually worked through repackaged materials and modules at their own pace. *Personalized learning in the 21st century* however, is envisaged as a learning experience with tailored pedagogy, curriculum, media and environment to meet learners' different learning needs and aspirations that incorporates technology and the

use of mobile devices to help all learners achieve the optimum levels of learning beyond what can be imagined just a few decades before.

The journal started with a small group of enthusiastic researchers who studied how technology can fit into different learning styles, personalities and multiple intelligences and expanded into other aspects of learning sciences including most recent applications of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) coined by the Center for Applied Science and Technology in Boston, Massachusetts about two decades ago. UDL has now becoming a set of principles that informs and guides our research in personalized education. It has become internationally recognized as an effective tool for designing and implementing personalized and inclusive learning environments.

The goal of education in the 21st century is not only to produce learners who can master the content knowledge but also to help them develop generic skills and values transferable to their daily life and to the work force; to help them grow into a well prepared person for a lifetime of learning. Universal Design for Learning helps educators meet this goal by providing a framework for understanding how to develop curricula in terms of the learning objectives and goals, pedagogy, learning media and assessments to reduce barriers, as well as optimize levels of challenge and support, to meet the needs of all learners from the start. They can also help educators identify the barriers found in existing curricula. The UDL Guidelines are organized according to the three main principles of UDL that address representation, expression, and engagement.

Although the personalized education research group mainly use problem-oriented project-based hybrid e-learning approach as the pedagogy to achieve what was designed using UDL to achieve meaningful learning, we certainly would love to share and disseminate knowledge from multiple discipline to address the same issue. We integrate only five of the many attributes to measure meaningful learning in our design and implementations by assuring learning occurs within the realm of active, authentic, constructive, collaborative and intentional learning. This journal would be a great avenue to share other methods of teaching and various attributes of meaningful learning to measure learning.

As Mark Zuckerberg on December 2, 2015 wrote to his newborn daughter, the world today is a world where our generation can advance human potential and promote equality -- by curing disease, *personalizing learning*, harnessing clean energy, connecting people, building strong communities, reducing poverty, providing equal rights and spreading understanding across nations. Yet, despite impressive successes and growing interest in personalizing education, wide gaps continue to separate different approaches from each other and from solutions found in technology and education. Disjointed communities may speak different languages and pursue independent goals. In this situation, the mission of the journal is to foster a wider understanding of the unifying challenge and to develop a roadmap to solving it. In doing this, JPL will provide sound solutions to key questions on the roadmap. E.g.: What cognitive, affective and psychomotor components are necessary to support personalized education to promote equality? What is the critical mass of a human-level learner and communities-of-practice that promotes learning? How to give

human-like emotional and cognitive intelligence and creativity to an artifact? Both mature and new cutting edge research are welcomed by the journal, provided they have a strong emphasis on concrete empirical or theoretical studies.

The inaugural issue includes several seminal vision papers, concepts and models of various factors that influences personalized learning. They determine the face of the journal and set the stage for subsequent issues that will publish mostly research papers: experimental, developmental, and theoretical. At the same time, research papers included here, exemplify the kinds of papers that the journal will favor (of course, the set of examples is very sparse). One thing I hope for JPL is to become an archive of referred content, published with a slow-burning passion rather than a sudden explosion of enthusiasm. Scholarly journal come and go but JPL is here to stay. Thus, to sustain as the yearly volumes accumulate, it would be preferable to nourish, and then harvest a small crop of excellence rather than collect a mediocre, if larger, yield. Hopefully the journal will mature to be a journal with longevity, quality and prestige in years to come.

Using the journal inauguration as an occasion, I would like to thank many people who created the opportunity for the journal to be born and who made it happen. The list includes all current Personalized Education researchers, International Advisory and Editorial Board, the management team, the IT team and many others. In particular, my greatest thanks are due to Suzita Awaludin, Analisa Hamdan, Siti Zuraida Abdul Manaf, Intan Farahana Kamsin, Norsyazwani Mat Salleh and Wana Helena. My greatest thanks go to these professors: (1) Professor Mohamad Sahari Nordin who had introduced me to the world of modelling, (2) Professor Bond and Associate Professor Dr. Noor Lide Abu Kassim for teaching me Rasch Analysis, (3) Professor Ramayah Thurasamy for all the new knowledge about PLS, second generation statistics and publishing, (4) Dr. Siti Fatimah Mohd Yassin, my first postgraduate studies muallimah and supervisor, (5) Associate Professor Dr. Mohamad Shanudin Zakaria my main PhD supervisor, (6) Prof Dr. Khairul Anwar Mastor second supervisor for my PhD and last but not least (7) Professor Kamaruzaman Jusoff, who had spent lots of his time and energy into this enterprise. To me, they are my great guru, muallim and mualimah in Academia and Journal publishing. May the Lord AlKhaliq bless and reward them with hidayah and Jannah.

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