

Brief report on *Open Praxis* figures and data (2017)

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In the first *Open Praxis* issue in 2018 we briefly report on some statistics and information about *Open Praxis* development, as we did in past years (Gil-Jaurena, 2015, 2016, 2017). The report covers the period January 2013 - December 2017, with a special focus in volume 9, published in 2017. Table 1 includes different journal statistics, such as number of submissions, number of published papers; acceptance rates; number of authors and number of reviewers.

76 authors (excluding the editor) contributed to *Open Praxis* volume 9 with their research papers, innovative practice papers or book reviews, a total of 34 published items. Considering the international scope of the journal, contributions are geographically and institutionally balanced, coming from 22 different countries. The 66 reviewers also reflect a gender, geographical and institutional balance, as shown in the list available in the *Open Praxis* website (<http://openpraxis.org/index.php/OpenPraxis/pages/view/reviewer>).

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
Issues published	4	4	4	4	4
Items published	38	35	33	34	38
Research papers	21	16	13	14	21
Innovative practice papers	2	6	3	2	4
Special papers*	9	9	11	8	7
Editorial	4	4	4	4	4
Software or book reviews	2	-	2	6	2
Total submissions	56	52	57	63	65
Rejected before peer-review	10	10	10	15 (+ 4 book reviews)	17 (+ 3 book reviews)
Peer reviewed	44	42	45	38	43
Accepted	32	31	27	24	32
Days to review	47	41	56	63	56
Days to publication	107	118	117	158	169
Acceptance rate	60,70%	59,61%	50,88%	45,28%	53,33%
Number of authors	65	81	71	65	80
Average authors per paper	1,71	2,31	2,15	1,91	2,11
Number of reviewers	45	53	61	59	66

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

Regarding visitors and readers, figure 1 shows their location. In 5 years (since publication of issue 5(1) in January 15th 2013 until January 15th 2018), the *Open Praxis* website has received visits from all over the world, being the top ten countries the following (in descending order): United States (15,81% of the visits), United Kingdom (7,30%), Spain (7,15%), India (5,49%), Canada (4,95%), South Africa (4,73%), Palestine (4,20%), Australia (3,58%), Indonesia (2,63%) and Pakistan (2,12%).

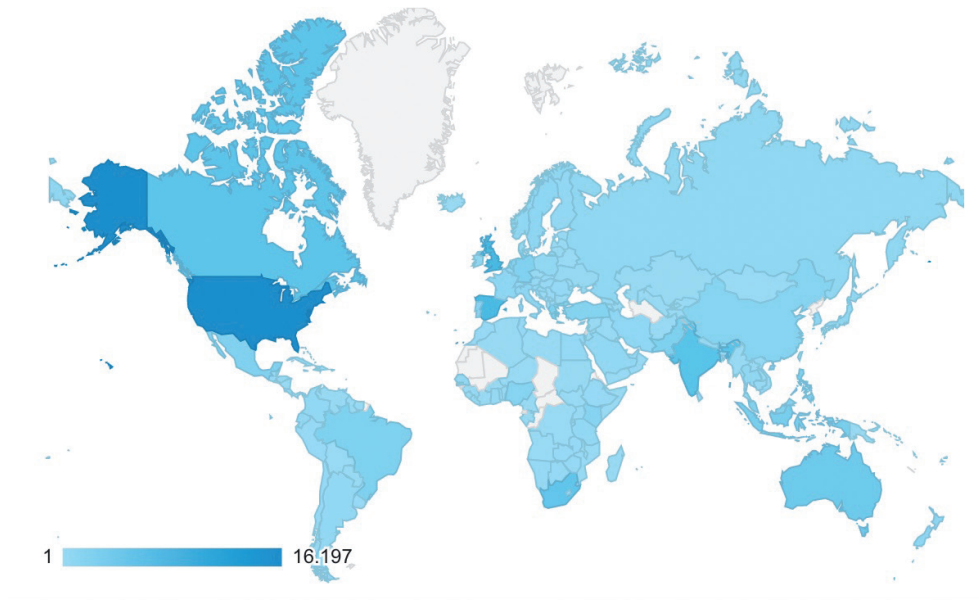


Figure 1: Location of visitors to *Open Praxis* website (January 2013-January 2018)

Source: Google Analytics

According to ClustrMaps.com (<https://clustrmaps.com/site/x7ne>), *Open Praxis* had an average of approx. 8000 page views per month in 2017.

About the academic impact, citations to *Open Praxis* in scientific publications (journals, conference proceedings, books and other specialized works) have progressively increased since the relaunching of the journal in 2013 (figure 2). *Open Praxis* h-index is 21 (source: Google Scholar, January 15th 2018).

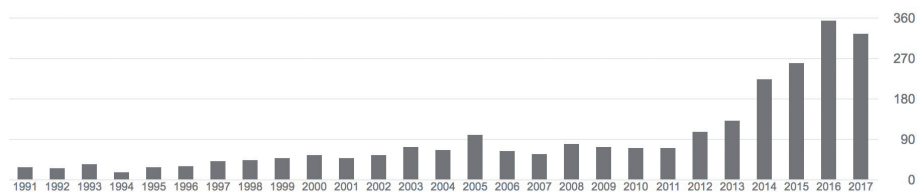


Figure 2: Citations to *Open Praxis* per year. 1991-2017

Source: Google Scholar

After this brief report, what follows is an introduction to the first *Open Praxis* issue in volume 10, which includes six articles in the research papers section and two innovative practice papers.

In the first article (*Using Future Research Methods in Analysing Policies Relating to Open Distance Education in Africa*), Mpine Makoe, from UNISA (South Africa), presents an analytical lens to various policy documents in Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia that state the vision and aspirations of these regions in their way towards becoming middle-income countries. She explores policy documents related to open and distance education and to the use of ICT in education. The use of interpretive forecasting techniques leads her to characterize the case in each country and to recognize the failures in the process of implementing the policies, particularly in widening access to higher education through open and distance learning.

In the second paper (*Space as a tool for analysis: Examining digital learning spaces*), Michelle Harrison, from Thompson Rivers University in Canada, explores the concept of spatiality from different perspectives, and reflects about what space means in a connected and networked world and which are the implications in digital education and learning. She proposes a spatial lens to analyze the transformation of digital spaces into learning spaces. This framework is meant to support researchers in asking relevant questions incorporating space as a key and under-considered concept.

The next three papers present survey-based studies covering different topics of interest in e-learning: assessment in the first case, and educational resources in the last two cases.

The first study (*Student Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Formative Assessment in an Online Learning Environment*), by Betty Obura Ogange, Kevin Odhiambo Okelo, John Agak and Peter Kiprotich from Kenya, documents a survey-based research undertaken in the Maseno University virtual campus to collect students' perceptions about a key issue in the teaching-learning process: formative assessment. Questioning about a variety of online assessment tools and feedback, the study shows students' preferences, which are a valuable input in the design of future assessment and feedback methods in online courses.

The second survey-based study (*Implementation Factors and Faculty Perceptions of Electronic Textbooks on the iPad*), presented by Michelle Dawn Rogers-Estable from the USA, was developed in 17 campuses in the United Arab Emirates where eTexts were introduced simultaneously using various digital platforms. The study considers the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and collects faculty perceptions about the experience and identifies barriers to the use of eTexts, including access, interactivity and other technical issues. As a result, only 30% report that using eTexts is an improvement comparing to paper texts. The findings are of interest for faculty and eText producers.

The last survey-based study (*Acceptance and Usability of OER in India: An Investigation Using UTAUT Model*), by Nayantara Padhi from IGNOU (India), also collects faculty perceptions and uses the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model. It is focused on open educational resources in 22 universities in India, and among the findings it is worth to mention that faculty are aware of OER but don't use them so much, despite there is a will to do so. The paper identifies a set of barriers to the use of OER, as well, which is of interest for establishing strategies to increase the use of OER.

In the last paper in this section (*MOOCs for Teacher Professional Development: Reflections and Suggested Actions*), Pradeep Kumar Misra from India compiles different views and inter-relations between two current issues: teacher professional development and MOOCs. He explores different initiatives and advocates for using MOOCs for teacher professional development, addressing actions at different levels: policies, technical and operational issues, MOOC initiatives, language and cost barriers, "MOOC culture", and research.

The innovative practice papers section opens with *Online educators' recommendations for teaching online: Crowdsourcing in action*, by Joanna C. Dunlap and Patrick R. Lowenthal from the USA. They relate an ample set of recommendations, collected among practitioners of online education in a participatory way. Organized into four themes that arose from the data –student support, content structure, presence and preparation-, the recommendations align with the Community of Inquiry (CoI) model. The use of crowdsourcing appears as an innovative research methodology to be considered.

Finally, an international team composed by Rajan Madhok, Erica Frank and Richard Frederick Heller from the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia respectively, present *Building public health capacity through online global learning*. Departing from a need to implement new models for training public health workforce, they suggest online and collaborative learning as an innovative approach. They illustrate it with two examples and reach a conceptual model for global learning, which can be useful for other educators willing to go beyond boundaries and making good use of digital tools.

We hope these contributions will invite to reflection and innovation in open, distance and flexible education.

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