

Editorial

The current issue of the IJEE has two sections. The first is a special issue on Maker Spaces in Engineering Education, guest-edited by Prof. Pao-Nan Chou, Northern Illinois University, USA & National University of Tainan, Taiwan. I wish to express my gratitude to him for all the hard work he did.

The second section has contributions by numerous authors on varied topics related to engineering education, including: Transport Engineering, Global Learning, Institutional Data, Transnational Education, Academic Success, PBL, Inverted Classroom, Socialization Process, Software Testing, and STEAM. The authors are from various institutions in Spain, USA, UK, Qatar, Denmark, Turkey, and Croatia.

COVID-19 has impacted the world. It was thought that the Internet could make the world look like a village; this pandemic verified that it is so. It impacted lives globally and revealed collective and individual weaknesses and strengths, the best and worst in human behavior.

The situation brought science, technology, and engineering to the forefront; role models for future generations other than those typically glorified by the popular media are being publicly recognized and admired.

It is too early to grasp the full impact on engineering education but it certainly revealed efficiencies, deficiencies, and opportunities on which one may reflect. It revealed aspects such as the readiness or lack of to adapt on the part of engineering students and educators, role of technology and its limitations, advantages and disadvantages of distance education. It also emphasized the importance of cooperation and safety.

Based on the situation created by the pandemic some think that online education, including engineering education, is the future; others are reaching a different conclusion. One might think of the battery-operated emergency light that is essential particularly in public buildings or the spare tire of a car that is crucial for driving, yet neither is meant to be a permanent replacement. It was reported in the news, for example, that groups of students are demanding at least a partial refund from their colleges and will take them to court if necessary. They realized that they are receiving an inferior education experience. Even those who see education as a business can appreciate, for example, that the price for a printed novel, the e-version, its theatrical presentation, the adaptation as a movie in the cinema, and the availability of internet streaming, have different prices for the audience although all are useful. Administrators and the decision makers need to reflect on this reality as well.

It would be useful if engineering educators reflect on their experiences through this challenging time and share them with the engineering education community at large through scholarly presentations.

I wish everyone happy and useful reading in a healthy and safe environment.

Ahmad Ibrahim