Assessing OER Efficacy on Lifelong Learning Competencies: Summary of Progress June 2021

About this project

- This IMLS funded research project is seeking to create a research toolkit that measures the efficacy of Open Educational Resources (OER) on developing lifelong learning competencies.
- The toolkit will be available with an open license for anyone to measure the effect of OER on lifelong learning competencies of an adult population.

Research question

- What competencies of lifelong learning can be measured through self-report data?

Definition

- "Lifelong learning encompasses all learning activities undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences, within personal, civic, social or employment-related perspectives." (EU, n.d.)

Literature Review

- Searched the literature for articles that quantitatively or qualitatively measure lifelong learning competencies. Selected 50 articles from 3,035 results. Found 6 different scales that were used in the articles. Added 1 rubric based on suggestion from research advisor
- Searched for reports from supranational organizations referred to in the literature that define lifelong learning competencies for purposes of assessment and creating policy.
- Listed competencies identified in scales and a qualitative study (47) and governing body reports (19) and one rubric (5) for a total of 71 competencies.

Card Sorting

- Combined obvious duplicates to make 48 competences to meet the limitations of the card sorting software. Used KardSort, a free online card sorting software.
- The 4 person research team completed the card sorting twice with 46.8%-68.1% agreement for each participant's first and second round. The group had an average agreement of 61% when comparing each response one-on-one.

Results

- The card sorting resulted in 32 distinct competencies, grouped into 5 domains.
- The groupings were calculated by SynCaps 3. We selected the highest number of groupings in the SynCaps3 software that did not result in a single competency being by itself. This resulted in 5 domains, with 4 of the domains aligning with the seminal UNESCO lifelong learning document, commonly called the Delors Report (Delors, 1996).
- Since the 5 domains aligned with the Delors Report, we kept the terminology from this report to describe each domain: Learning to be, Learning to know, Learning to live together, Learning to do. The additional domain is Technical skills.

Next steps

- All items will be analyzed by experts using Lawshe's content validity ratio.
- Items will then be pilot-tested with a small group of students for readability.
- A larger pilot pre-test and post-test will provide data to conduct Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and test for test-retest reliability.
- These analyses will help the researchers determine the final items to be included in the research toolkit.