



The future of open content educational resources (OCER): challenges and opportunities

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Abstract:

Education has moved from offline setting to include online setting, from traditional educational providers to include community/not-for-profit organisations, and from local students to include global knowledge consumers. A major change in education movement is the globalised production/consumption of educational materials. The new trend in such movement is hosting/using open educational resources (OER). These open educational resources are either open access (OAER) or open content (OCER). There is a number of notfor-profit organisations provide OER to self-learners and students, as a solution to increasing costs of education and/or allowing shared learning practices. An increasing number of universities offer OER to self-learners, students, and teachers, not only as part of commitment to global education, but also as an innovative marketing strategy for their courses and/or allowing the opportunity to test and experience their new developed courses. Despite these many opportunities for learners, students, teachers, and lecturers, there are a number of challenges face those OER providers. These include issues relating to sustainability, issues relating to ever-growing user needs, and considerations to individual/cultural differences. Website content analysis is conducted on different OER websites in relation to frequently asked questions by OER users, language of OER, and the nature of OER. Results reveal, to large extent, that there are lack of awareness among OER providers to meet user needs and individual/cultural differences. Results also reveal that educational institutions are slower than not-for-profit organizations in meeting user needs. Implications are discussed especially in relation to consideration to individual and cultural differences, for the purpose of maximising opportunities of OER production/usage and to deal with challenges might hinder promising future of open educational resources and the global education.



the **Future of Open Content Educational Resources**
(OCER)
Challenges & Opportunities

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**The importance of
cultural sensitivity**

Do we *really* aware of
“Cultural Sensitivity”
when we design our
“Learning Activities”?

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nukYWWgoXYg>

What are Open Educational Resources?

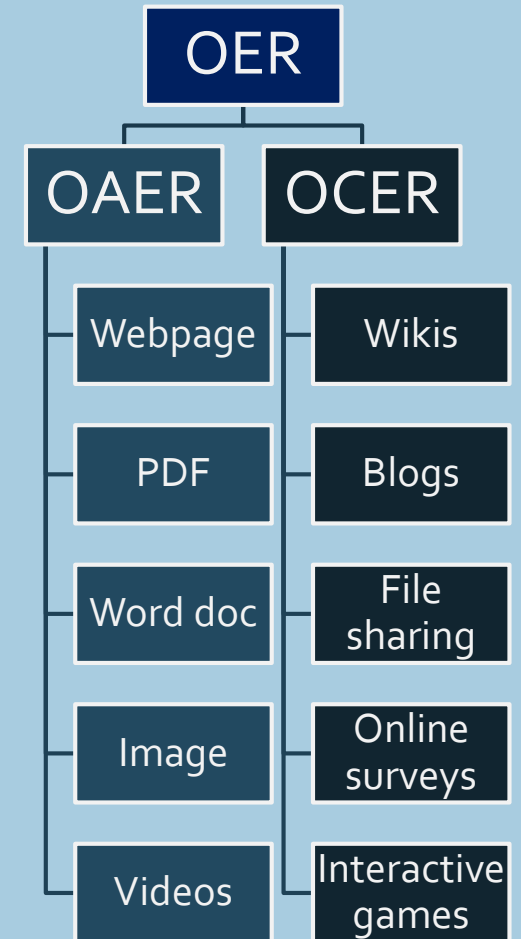
These resources are available for learners online, everytime and anywhere.

Who are OER providers?

- 1) Individual teachers/lecturers
- 2) Educational institutions
- 3) Not-for-profit organisations

Research Focus & Directions

- A) Longitudinal Study of OER (Past & Present)
- B) Challenges & Opportunities (Future)
- C) Lessons & Tips



OERs Content Analysis (Longitudinal Study)

Criteria	MIT OCW	Open Learn (OU)	Nottingham UNOW	USQ OCW
Growth				
April 2010	1900	580	N/A	10
October 2013	2100	650	230	10
Targeted users				
Students	x	✓	x	x
Self-learners	✓	✓	✓	✓
Instructors	x	✓	x	x
Objectives				
Enhance understanding	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop reputation	✓	✓	x	✓
Research & Course Dev.	x	?	✓	x
Languages				
English	✓	✓	✓	✓
Translations to other languages	✓	✓	x	x
Technology				
Web 1.0 (webpages, doc, pdf)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Web 2.0 (wikis, blogs, forums)	x	✓	x	x
Support				
Non-interactive (FAQ, help, demo)	FAQ	All	None	FAQ
Interactive (email, forum, phone)	Email	All	Email	Email
Degree	x	x	x	x

OER Future



More courses are to be offered in the future, with opportunities for formal recognition.

More universities will offer OCER, mainly for course development for reputation and gaining competitive advantages.

Students, self-learners, and teachers will work together in the same course.

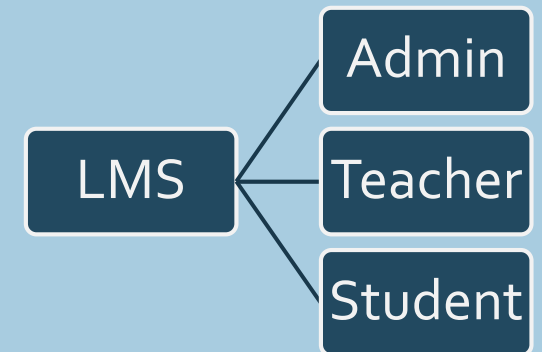
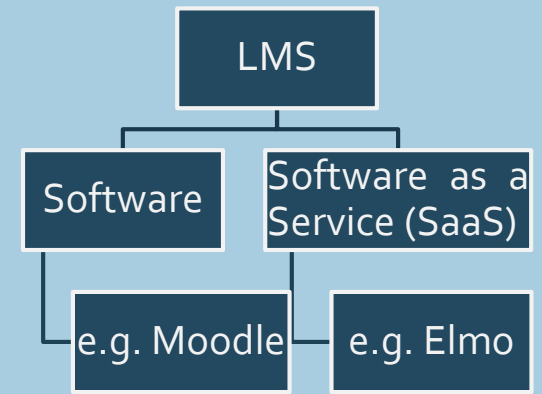
Video demonstrations and LiveChat will be used as means of support.

Learning Management Systems (LMS)

LMS is a software application or Web-based technology used to plan, implement, and assess a specific learning process. LMS provides an instructor with a way to create and deliver content & quizzes, monitor student participation, announce course calendar, assess student performance. LMS also provide students with the ability to use interactive features such as forum discussions, video conferencing, wikis, instant messaging, and blogs.

Open Content Learning Activities (OCLA)

There are a number of Learning Management Systems that allow students and teachers to engage together in learning resources; and with more student-centered activities.



Teacher Benefits

- Course creation
- Course import / export
- Course templates
- Course availability and completion criteria
- Course materials upload (files & links)
- **Design open content learning activities**
- Quizzes (pool, feedback, & stats)
- Gradebook (settings, reports, and submission)
- Course announcement and calendar
- Virtual whiteboard
- Student progress/activity report
- Homework/ assignment setup

Administration

- Multilingual interface
- Publishing mechanism
- Search engine
- Front page customization
- User groups
 - Global (LMS level)
 - Local (Course level)
- **Video conferences**
- **Visualisation**
- User roles (admin, trainer, and learner)
- Self-registration. Enrollement
- Registration approval
- Customisable user profile
- Reporting and statistics
- Document storage
- Behaviour tracking

Student Benefits

- Access to OER anytime anywhere
- Access to course calendar
- File storage and photo album
- Personal calendar
- **File sharing (for collaboration)**
- **Wikis**
- **Virtual whiteboard**
- **Communications** between students and students-teacher (contact-form, forum, instant messaging)
- Student profile
- Content rating and student feedback
- Assignment submission and extension.

OER as Educational Objects	OER as Cultural Objects
Considering individual differences	Considering cultural preferences: playfulness vs. co-usefulness
Focus on creative thinking/ problem solving	Solving personal problem vs. community problem
Successful communication	Written communication vs. oral communications
Means of support	Help & FAQs vs. video demos
Feedback	Comprehensive & delayed vs. short & prompt
Essay	Structured & short vs. unstructured & long
Report	Individual vs. collaborative
Reflection on identities and sense of belonging	Individual vs. collective identity Local vs. global reflections
Role play	Consider gendered roles
Article critical reading	Blogs vs. Forums

OERs are cultural objects as much as educational ones, in that they give users an insight into culture-specific methods and approaches to teaching and learning.

Challenges of Open Content Learning Activities (OCLA)

- Considering individual and cultural differences need extended time in preparation.
- Chaotic written activities demanding more surveillance time
- Considering visualization in activity (e.g. virtual whiteboard) and support (e.g. demonstration & share screen) need extended time and effort.
- The need of Facebook-like or Twitter-like environments requires to go beyond the common used LMS.
- The expectations that OCLA can be accessed through smartphones may limit teacher's choices of activities.
- The net generation expects that teachers listen and accommodate their feedback as quickly as possible – that requires an instant feedback after each lesson, and more time for feedback analysis and reshaping content/activity.
- Most of OCLA are written activities while learners do not prefer these activities with poor grammar & sentence structure – those are unready for job market. Drafting should be considered.
- Activities should consider social equity and inclusiveness (considering those in remote areas, slow connections, and those with disabilities).
- OCLA should consider the e-safety.
- OCLA should be creative and the value of participation clear.

OPPORTUNITIES

Preparation for Differences

Surveillance

Visualisation

Facebook-like environment

Smartphone OCLA

Feedback expectation

Drafting

Inclusiveness

e-Safety

Creativity

Students as Future Job Seekers & Future Teachers

Be confident & speak slowly (video presentations)

Be cohesive and write accurately (essays)

Work individually and collaboratively (wiki group report)

Be culturally-aware (multicultural teams)

Be a leader (assigning roles)



We need our future teachers to be multicultural and diversity trained – so that they can accommodate their diverse students and able to teach them the diversity tolerance.

YES, IT IS (Y)OUR RESPONSIBILITY



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(Y)our

Open
Content
Learning
Activities

should consider

Individual & Cultural
Differences