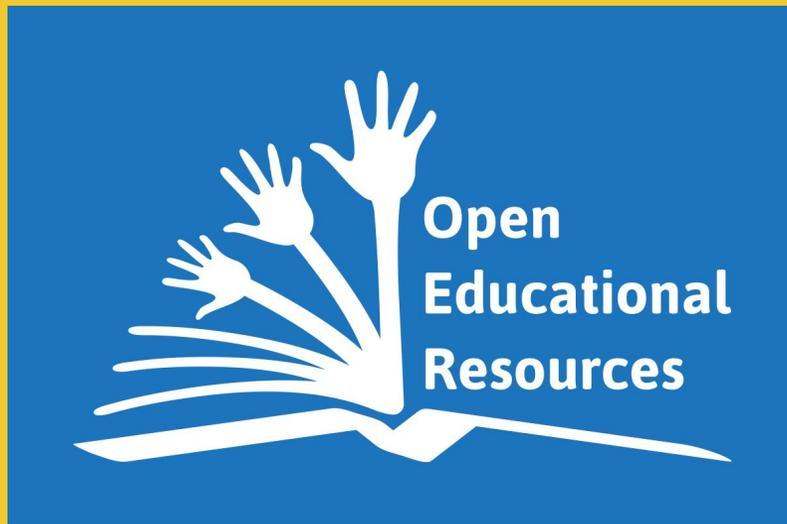


*OPEN EDUCATIONAL
RESOURCES: CONCEPT, NEED
& SCOPE*



Introduction

- The Internet and digital technologies provides vast potential to access and build information and knowledge networks.
- But we cannot reap maximum benefits because of the main issue of copyrights.
- Copyright law does not allow one to reproduce, edit, reuse or transmit copyright materials without the permission of the copyright owner.
- It is in this context that the concept of OER emerged so as to deal with the challenges being posed by the copyright issues.

Brief History of OER

- In 1994 Wayne Hodgins coined the term “learning object,” and this term quickly entered the vernacular of educators and instructional designers.
- One role of learning objects in the history of OER is its popularization of the idea that digital materials can be designed and produced in such a manner as to be reused easily in a variety of pedagogical situations.

- In 1998 David Wiley coined the term “open content,” and while targeted at the educational community (and learning object creators specifically), the term quickly entered the vernacular of internet users.
- One role of open content in the history of OER is its popularization of the idea that the principles of the open source / free software movements can be productively applied to content, and the creation of the first widely adopted open license for content (the Open Publication License).

- In 2001 Larry Lessig and others founded the Creative Commons and released a flexible set of licenses that were both a vast improvement on the Open Publication License's confusing license option structure and significantly stronger legal documents

- Also in 2001 the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) announced its OpenCourseWare initiative to publish nearly every university course for free public access for noncommercial use.
- MIT OpenCourseWare has played many roles in the history of OER, including being an example of commitment at an institutional level, working actively to encourage similar projects, and lending the MIT brand to the movement.

- Finally, in 2002 UNESCO held a Forum comprised of some of the many people who “wished to develop together a universal educational resource available for the whole of humanity.” They chose the term “open educational resource” to describe their efforts.
- Open Educational Resources are defined as “technology-enabled, open provision of educational resources for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purposes.”
- They are typically made freely available over the Web or the Internet. Their principal use is by teachers and educational institutions to support course development, but they can also be used directly by students.
- Open Educational Resources include learning objects such as lecture material, references and readings, simulations, experiments and demonstrations, as well as syllabi, curricula and teachers' guides.

- The Hewlett Foundation defines OER as ‘teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others.’
- Creative Commons provides the licensing tools for permitting this free use and re-purposing; Hewlett considers the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license to be the license of choice, allowing for maximal reuse and repurposing of copyrightable educational resources while still acknowledging the creative work of the developer.

CHARACTERISTICS OF OER

Open and Cost Free

- Accessible to everyone anytime anywhere
- Open to all
- Open also denotes that these materials should be freely available to everyone for their usage as per their needs and for that they don't have to pay royalties or license fees.
- Free of cost to the users
- If at all there is a cost associated with it then the cost will be taken care of by the universities or institutions that maintain the websites and however it will be a minimal one.

Relevant

- Genuine and connected in depth to the topics concerned.
- Provide insightful and meaningful learning to the users.
- Provide learners with the apt information on the topics concerned just as they would have got it from referring books or other offline resources.

Simple and easy to use

- Simple content and language and easily comprehensible for all types of learners.
- Developed in user friendly formats which can be easily accessed, downloaded and printed.

5 R's

David Wiley elaborated on the idea of the permissions granted to an educational resource by an open license (Bliss & Smith, 2017):

- The term “open content” describes any copyrightable work (traditionally excluding software, which is described by other terms like “open source”) that is licensed in a manner that provides users with free and perpetual permission to engage in the 5R activities.

Reuse

- Use the content in its unaltered form

Revise

- Adapt, adjust, modify, improve, or alter the content

Remix

- Combine the original or revised content with other OER to create something new

Redistribute

- Share copies of the original content, revisions or remixes with others

Retain

- Keep access to the materials after the learning event

- 1. Retain — the right to make, own, and control copies of the content (e.g., download, duplicate, store, and manage)
- 2. Reuse — the right to use the content in a wide range of ways (e.g., in a class, in a study group, on a website, in a video) ,useful for people all over the globe and not just for some people from a specific locale, university or institution. There should not be contents or symbols which are related to a specific region, university or institution which would make its adaptation difficult for users from other institutions or places.

- 3. Revise — the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself (e.g., translate the content into another language)
- 4. Remix — the right to combine the original or revised content with other open content to create something new (e.g., incorporate the content into a mashup)
- 5. Redistribute — the right to share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others (e.g., give a copy of the content to a friend)

Copyright Licensing

- This is the most important of all.
- OER are available as freeware or with varied degrees of freedom of use and distribution copyrighted under the Creative Commons public license.

CREATIVE COMMONS

- It is a non profit organization
- They provide copyright licenses and tools that help the institutions, universities, companies and individual creators to give copyright permissions for their work in a very simple and standardized way

Creative Commons: licenses



Need/Benefits of OER

- **Exercise academic freedom:** 5 Rs, Allows reuse, revision, remixing, redistribution and retaining of materials. One can modify the OER as per his needs and demands and can also share it with others without any legal issues.
- **Innovate teaching practices:** Adapting, adopting, or creating OERs gives faculty the opportunity to tailor course content in new ways, allowing them to maximize the use of content to provide innovative and/or optimized learning experiences and environments for students.

Enhancing quality of learning: Easy access to quality learning materials from reputed universities and institutions across the globe.

Is easily accessible to all. Anyone can access it from any place and this is a boon for people in rural and remote areas. They can access materials at their fingertips free of cost and without any copyright issues.

Is open to everyone and has no user restrictions imposed on it.

Is very affordable and can be distributed with very minimal or no cost. Helps learners save the cost of textbooks and other print materials.

Very feasible to use when compared to print materials and textbooks. Can be saved in the computer or mobile and thus becomes handy to use and access it.

Helps in self-directed learning. As the materials can be retained with learners, they can use it at their own convenience and learn at their own pace.

Reaches maximum number of people at the same time irrespective of their locations.

Easy access for people in remote or rural areas

Saves a lot of time

Scope

OER can make a significant contribution to these processes in the educational sector (UNESCO & COL, 2015):

- Development and improvement of curricula and learning materials;
- Designing continuous programmes and courses of good quality;
- Organization of interactive contact sessions with and among students;
- Development of quality teaching and learning materials;
- Addressing needs of diverse learners;
- Design of effective assessment tools for diverse environments; and
- Links with the world of work both locally and globally.



Access

Equity

Quality

However, OER do not automatically lead to quality, efficiency and cost-effectiveness; much depends on the procedures put in place (UNESCO & COL, 2015).

The transformative educational potential of OER depends on:

- 1. Improving the quality of learning materials through peer review processes;
- 2. Reaping the benefits of contextualization, personalization and localization;
- 3. Emphasizing openness and quality improvement;
- 4. Building capacity for the creation and use of OER as part of the professional development of academic staff;

- 5. Serving the needs of particular student populations such as those with special needs;
- 6. Enhancing the distribution of institutional staff and budgets;
- 7. Serving students in local languages;
- 8. Involving students in the selection and adaptation of OER in order to engage them more actively in the learning process; and
- 9. Using locally developed materials with due acknowledgement.

Challenges

- Quality Assurance
- Lack of public understanding on OER and its licenses
- Sustainability of OER/ funding
- Searching OER
- Government policy/framework on OER

“If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it.”

Margaret Fuller

Thank you!!!