

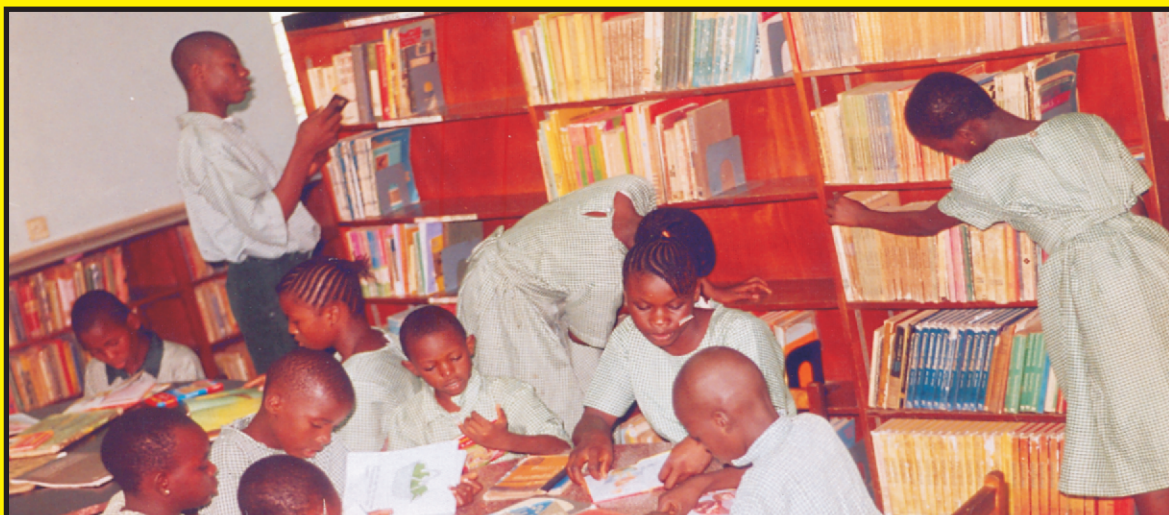
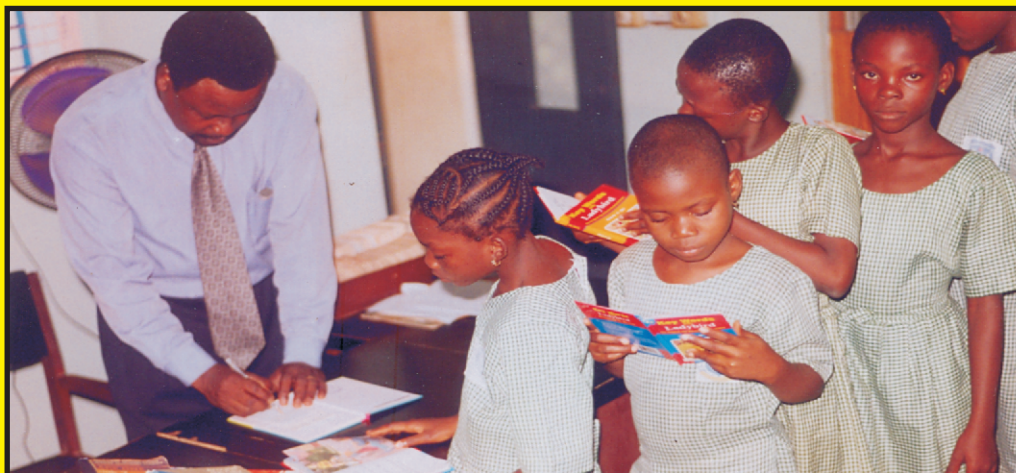
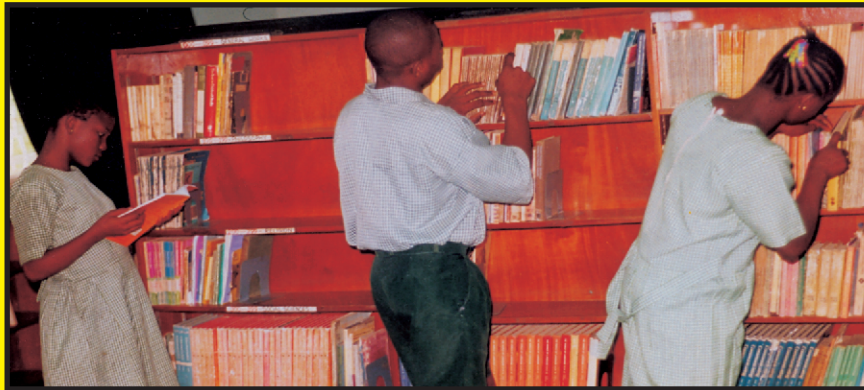


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Editorial

The online version of volume 20, March, 2021 of the Nigerian School Library Journal (NSLJ) is out to make a useful addition to the existing literature in the field of school librarianship and related fields. The volume features articles on trends of aliteracy in schools, roles of school libraries and educational achievement of students, use of bibliotherapy in improving mental health of students, environmental factors and use of school library and the place of school library in facilitating virtual access to open educational resources. There are also articles on timely provision of quality library services delivery, self-management competencies for lifelong learning of librarians, the changing landscape of higher education research in the new normal era and documentation of indigenous fishing knowledge. This edition also features sections on report of school library activities as well as book review which are new introductions to the Journal.

The volume will obviously enrich your knowledge on contemporary school librarianship as well as other library and information studies related issues, therefore, I commend it for your selection as new addition to your stock.

It is also worthy of note that the frequency of publication of the Journal has been increased to twice a year viz: March and September. We seek your support in submitting publishable articles on time. The Journal continues to be indexed by AJOL which reflects its visibility and that of the authors.

Your sustained interest in NSLJ is highly appreciated.



Prof. David F. Elaturoti
Editor-in-Chief

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The Place of School Libraries in Facilitating Virtual Access to Open Educational Resources for Teaching and Learning in Schools

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Abstract

The advent of technological revolution and the fourth industrial revolution era coupled with the disruptions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic had led to a paradigm shift in the process of education and related services delivery in schools globally. There has been a shift in the teaching and learning process as well as other complimentary and supplementary services to support qualitative delivery of teaching and learning process including service delivery. Consequently, teaching and learning moved out of the four walls of classroom to online and virtual spaces supported by open educational resources (OERs). With the OERs and virtual learning, it is imperative that libraries too must develop strategies to ensure virtual access to open educational resources. Virtual access to OERs by school libraries could come handy to fill the gaps brought about by disruptions resulting from technological revolution, the fourth industrial revolution era and COVID-19 pandemic. This write-up, therefore, focused on identifying and highlighting the place of school libraries in facilitating virtual access to open educational resources for teaching and learning process in Nigerian schools with specific focus means of accessing and strategies of accessing the OERs.

Keywords: *School libraries, Virtual access, Open educational resources, Teaching and learning*

Introduction

The technologies revolution and the advent of Fourth Industrial Revolution as well as COVID-19 pandemic disruptions have brought a paradigm shift which have made the world to become a global village in information dissemination most especially in schools. Without mincing words, digital environment in contemporary word offers many chances for a creative and collaborative engagement of learners with digital content, tools and services in the learning process (“e- learning 2.0” instead of “click & learn”). One such opportunity is the collaborative creation, evaluation and sharing of open content and learning experiences. The pervasive nature of ICT facilitates publishing, distribution, access and use of information resources. Information which was only available in print format is now available in digital format as well. Besides, ICT development has made it possible to develop affordable and accessible Open Educational Resources (OER) which are key to equitable and inclusive learning. Educational system is taking the advantage of technology to assess learning resources. The developing world and Nigeria in particular is taking a great advantage of technology to access learning materials.

Open educational resources (OER) could be described as the availability of learning resources to students, self - learners and educators, online. OER could further be explained as free access to learning materials without any hindrance, at no cost and with opportunities to compare and contrast educational programmes and course contents. OER are teaching and learning materials that are freely available online for everyone to use, whether an instructor,

student or self-learner. Examples of OER include: full courses, course modules, syllabi, lectures, home-work, assignments, quizzes, lab and classroom activities, pedagogical materials, games, simulations, and others (JISC OER n.d). The momentum for developing more OER has never been greater. It is believed that the use and access alone are insufficient, because there is the need to focus on quality and the costs of producing more OER that are of good quality. Education is taking a great turn as far as accessibility to learning resources is concerned. Open courseware (OCW) websites could be accessed online, which has provided adequate opportunities to access learning materials, compare educational programmes and course contents. OER has tremendously enhanced the sharing of knowledge.

The idea of Open Education Resources (OER) was first introduced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) at a meeting on ‘the impact of open courseware for higher education in developing countries’ held in July, 2002. The term OER refers to education resources and other materials that have been designed for use in teaching, learning and research, that are openly available for use by educators, students and researchers respectively, without the accompanying need to pay royalties or license fees (Kanwar and Uvalic- Trumbic, 2011). According to OpenStax, the principal producer of OER textbooks, acceptance of OER textbooks has saved students an estimated \$616 million dollars since 2012 (Ruth, 2018). Moreover according to a recent survey by Seaman (2017), the survey data suggest that OER textbooks now compete with commercial textbooks in terms of overall market share. Out of the 153 universities in Nigeria, 50 have enrolled for the Open Educational Resources (OER) since 2017 when Nigeria adopted it, this is almost one-third of the total universities, which is a good beginning (NUC, 2017). While many authors have testified to the fact that OER movement has been successful in reducing the cost of educational materials, many have wondered how best to ascertain the quality of OER repositories in Nigerian Academic Libraries, the level of awareness of the existence of these OER repositories by librarians, how best librarians can help to achieve educational goals of teaching, learning and research through the use of OER repositories and possible ways academic librarians can adopt to promote OER repositories in Nigeria. These therefore are the import upon which this study was undertaken.

It is certain that technology has changed education greatly. It has morphed how teachers/lecturers teach and how students learn. Classroom is also not left out; it has been equipped with technological tools, gadgets and devices to enhance the teaching and learning environment. The use of information and communication technology in teaching and learning process has brought another kind of learning environment in which walls no longer exist (Virtual Classroom). These changes however do not change the fundamental learning styles or approaches, but have changed the way people do things and how they view them. The traditional perception of the learning process has been shifted to a new perception, made manifest through educational technology which embeds hardware and software as tools for teaching and learning processes (Demircioglu and Geban, 2015).

Open Educational Resources (OER) have been lauded for their ability to reduce student fee and improve equity in higher education. The textbook most especially, has for a very long time been a significant element of the education system at all stages. In addition to being the requisite mechanism of curriculum delivery, textbooks have traditionally been the primary

learning resource for students. According to Perry (2016), for a multiplicity of market-based reasons, the price of educational resources has risen considerably over the last two decades, outpacing the price increases of all goods and services by roughly four times within higher education, these price increases, ultimately descend on the students, who are responsible for acquiring their own course materials. In reaction to these price trends, many educators have turned to open educational resources (OER) (Baraniuk, 2008; Smith, 2009).

Observations have shown that despite the level of understanding of usage of OER in developed nations the developing countries are still not putting into expected use, these online learning resources. It seems students are still not aware of the availability of OER, the level of accessing OER is minimal, and that there are series of challenges facing the usage of OER.

Open educational resources - The Concept

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that are available without access fees and with licensing that affords innovation through OER-enabled pedagogy. William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, (2019) opined that Open educational resources (OER) is the teaching, learning and research materials in any medium –digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions.

The OER movement was officially born from the Forum on the Impact of Open Courseware (OCW) for Higher Education in Developing Countries convened by UNESCO in 2002 which discussed how MIT's approach could be scaled up into an international network of open content redistribution that would be inspired by, but not restricted to, OCW and has since been making the case for educational materials to be available 'to all', and assisting educators to locate content which they can freely adapt without 'reinventing the wheel' (Caswell, Henson, Jensen, and Wiley, 2008; OECD, 2007; Smith and Casserly, 2006).

OER therefore does not only serves as the response to the substantial rise in the price of educational materials for postsecondary students but it promote the flexibility by given instructors the opportunity to share, adapt, or remix restrictive commercial materials by reducing the high cost and increasing the flexibility of material due to licensing. William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, (2019) corroborate this submission that OER are educational materials, such as textbooks, videos, graphics, and syllabi, "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". OER therefore does not require paying fees in order to access them (Butcher, 2015) and their licensing allows for the editing and remixing of materials (see Green, 2017).

Access to open educational resources

OER repositories according to (McGreal, 2011) is digital databases that accommodate learning content or materials, applications and tools such as papers, texts, audio recordings, videos, multimedia applications and social networking tools. These repositories make OER accessible to learners and instructors on the World Wide Web. Atenas and Havemann (2013) opined that the creation of OER repositories can be said to comprise four key themes, which

are Search, Share, Reuse, and Collaborate. The content of OER is domiciled in repositories, in order for existing open content to be discovered and made use of, it is imperative that such materials must be easy to search for and retrieve as such, supporting tools for search and retrieval is therefore fundamental.

The cross-searching system that would benefit the institutional academic initiatives and repositories, this would actually be a combined web initiative. Libraries would come forth as member organizations, and produce and present materials to be placed into the initiative. As a universal system, there would be categories for public libraries, academic libraries, archives, special libraries, law libraries, medical libraries, etc. Within these categories, there would also be categories for instructional and educational materials, library-specific materials, pre-published papers, and materials regarding special events or occurrences in libraries. With this more general categorization system, a user would be able to search for a subject like "online searching guides" and it would produce the results for all sorts of online searching guides in all sorts of libraries.

A number of search engines exist to search Open Educational Resources. These include:

1. DiscoverEd - "Discover the Universe of Open Educational Resources"
2. Jorum - "free learning and teaching resources, created and contributed by teaching staff from UK Further and Higher Education Institutions"
3. OCWFinder - "search, recommend, collaborate, remix"
4. OER Commons - "Find Free-to-Use Teaching and Learning Content from around the World. Organize K-12 Lessons, College Courses, and more."
5. Temoa - "a knowledge hub that eases a public and multilingual catalog of Open Educational Resources (OER) which aims to support the education community to find those resources and materials that meet their needs for teaching and learning through a specialized and collaborative search system and social tools."
6. University Learning = OCW+OER = Free custom search engine - a meta-search engine incorporating many different OER repositories (uses Google Custom Search)
7. XPERT - "a JISC funded rapid innovation project (summer 2009) to explore the potential of delivering and supporting a distributed repository of e-learning resources created and seamlessly published through the open source e-learning development tool called Xerte Online Toolkits. The aim of XPERT is to progress the vision of a distributed architecture of e-learning resources for sharing and re-use."
8. OER Dynamic Search Engine - a wiki page of OER sites with accompanied search engine (powered by Google Custom Search)
9. JISC Digital Media maintain guidance on finding video, audio and images online, including those licensed as Creative Commons. (<https://openeducationalresources.pbworks.com/w/page/27045418/Finding%20OERs>)

At these OER initiatives, the more commonly involved professionals are lecturers, researchers, and learning technologists. These are followed by academic support staff, librarians or other information science specialists and IT services staff. The combination of OER content in the library services and collections is not yet widespread. There is no doubt that most of the initiatives are simply linked from the library home web page or the e-

resources collection and in some cases their OER are included as recommended resources in the subject reading lists.

1. The library has a link to the repository/blog/web in its home web page.
2. The library included relevant OER metadata records in the library catalogue.
3. The OER search interface is integrated in the library web page.
4. The library included the OER in the e-resources collection, so they can be searched through key words
5. The library included relevant OER in the subject reading lists.
6. The library included a link to the initiative home page as part of the e-resources collection.

School Libraries and access to open educational resources

The role of the librarian is continually evolving, but one constant is championing initiatives in support of library users. One such initiative, the open educational resources (OER) movement, falls somewhat uniquely into the library's mission to their campuses by serving the needs of both students and faculty.

School librarians provide vital services to their school. These services include selecting print and digital resources, organizing material, and instructing both students and teachers on appropriate technology tools to help augment curriculum units. School librarians have extensive experience in teaching both students and teachers how to identify credible and authoritative online sources and sorting through free and premium information, such as databases, informational text, reference materials, and multimedia. Therefore, school librarians are transformational leaders in supporting OER initiatives in schools and selecting OERs appropriate for the curriculum (Kompar 2016).

Apparently, for OER to be accessed and used effectively the libraries and librarians must play crucial roles which include developing, advocating and managing OER (Smith and Lee, 2017). This is due to the fact that over the years librarians through their trainings have gained a lot of experience in handling information and affording access to patrons. With a history of collecting high quality materials for both teaching and research, Librarians are well positioned to work with faculties seeking to incorporate OER in their courses (Davis et al., 2016). Actually, librarians should be viewed as important players in the promotion, integration, use and management of OER. Smith and Lee (2017) assert that many academic librarians have spearheaded programs to support the adoption and production of OER at their institutions.

Woodward (2017) argued that in order to promote establishment and usage of OER, Libraries and librarians are positioned to champion the OER adoption movement given their pervasive scope and specialized skills. Kleymeer et al. (2010) opined that librarian have relevant skills which can benefit OER programmes. Their philosophical support for access to information, their existing relationship with both faculties and students and their outreach and instructional support experience make librarians the natural partners in OER initiatives and voice for more affordable learning resources (Okamoto 2013; Mitchell and Chu, 2014). In Tanzania, the interest on OER in schools has started to gain ground because of their importance in education establishments. Many studies on OER have started to emerge but they focus mainly on general issues on OER and not on the role played by libraries and librarians in OER initiatives

(Nihuka et al., 2014, Samzugi and Mwinyimbegu, 2013; Mtebe & Raisamo, 2014; Mwamlangala, 2015; Muganda et al. (2016).

Libraries are responding to the high costs of textbooks by becoming actively involved in the OER movement. As strong advocates for providing patrons with free or low-cost access to information, libraries are quickly seizing the OER opportunity. As Mitchell and Chu (2014) point out, librarians are well positioned to take on the role of mediating between faculty, as the creators of OER and course material, and students, as the users of course material. Libraries, too, benefit from and provide expertise on OER, in particular through the libraries' institutional repositories (Martin, 2010; Mitchell and Chu, 2014; Okamoto, 2013). Since librarians are already skilled at managing and promoting access to collections, encouraging faculty to submit their publications in the institutional repository is yet another way libraries can help students reduce costs by making supplemental materials freely available while also promoting their faculty's work (Mitchell and Chu, 2014). School libraries, with their experience in intellectual property, preservation, teaching, and technology, are particularly well-positioned to fill a central role in the OER movement (Kazakoff- Lane, 2014). Librarians should continue to explore pivotal ways in which to implement OER in schools and, in turn, provide cost saving and educational benefits for students.

Ibadan School Library Digital Resource System for Virtual Access to Teaching and Learning

Advances in technology over the last few years have clearly impacted the way teachers teaches students in the contemporary world. With this advancement in technology, it is possible for teachers to teachers not only to teach students of all ages remotely and but to provide students with relevant and useful material for purposeful and meaningful educational opportunities, without setting foot on campus. This is the reason why Babalola (2021) submitted that virtual library access is among the changes and transformation witnessed by the traditional library. It is being regarded as an alternative to school library because it is one of the innovations which grants users access to the use of library resources electronically on a computer network.

The term electronic library resources has been defined as the information processed and digitally driven using hardware and software that offer information that can be accessed by digital electronic users through remote information provider networks or mounted locally by digital library (DL) managers. Ibadan school library digital resources system (ISLDRS) is a 3-in-1, high-capacity electronic library system designed schools at the Department of school library and media technology which provides complete digital library facilities with virtual access and on-premises hosting to several educational web portals, sites, and resources for nursery, primary and secondary schools with little running cost (Aramide and Ogunjobi, 2022). This system was designed.

The ISLDRS becomes imperative because of lack of functional, effective and efficient library service in nursery, primary and secondary school where the school library media centre would provide information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today's information and knowledge-based society (Elaturoti, 2000; Babalola 2020). In the same vein, despite the efforts of school library professionals to provide effective school library system,

most of the library software that has been adopted in the past have always failed because of geographical differences among others (Aramide and Ogunjobi, 2022). The birth of Ibadan School Library Digital Resources System (ISLDRS) which started in 2015 with the open discussion with a technical partner called Polawa e-resources with the following objectives:

1. To promote digital library and web electronic learning in elementary and secondary schools with or without internet connectivity;
2. To provide students and teachers with digital resources that will encourage more interactive digital learning in schools;
3. To provide a platform for educational electronic contents creators to directly deploy their content materials to schools without online web hosting;
4. To encourage students' interest in the educational aspect of the internet in contrast to the social aspect;
5. To provide internet electronic library services in schools at no or optional periodic running costs.
6. The system provides fast and free access to several educational web portals with hundreds of thousands of interactive audio-visual resources and millions of learning materials, including interactive digital textbooks and Storybooks. The system provides a fully functional and user-friendly e-Learning Management portal that can help teachers/tutors in administering e-teaching to students.
7. The interactive and audio-visual resources provided with the system will help schools to have more academically engaged students and have their academic performances improved.
8. The fear of pupils or students being exposed to inappropriate online content will be removed.
9. The server machine can serve as internet service provision for educational purposes in schools at no periodic subscription cost.

Summary and conclusion

The use and utilization of OER has been of great advantage to educational development in this age of technology. The usage of OER has highly enhanced the quality of education in Nigeria. The maximal use of OER has not been attained in this part of the world, because despite the level of understanding of usage of OER in developed nations, the undergraduate still have moderate level of awareness and usage of OER in Nigeria. The developed nations are continuing to gather further momentum in developing more OER and further more to raise the quality of the OER, Nigeria should not only be a country desire to consume the resources of technology but to aspire to contribute to the development of OER, and also participate in enhancing the quality of OER. With the advent of Ibadan school library digital resources system (ISLDRS), teachers and students can access school library with the use of computers, tablets, or smart mobile devices which is designed with an easy- to-use platform in order for teachers and students to easily search and retrieve content. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Nigeria is facing a lot of challenges in accessing internet to get relevant educational materials, without mincing words, the school library system will have positive impact on the quality of education in Nigeria.

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