Assessment of Lecturers' Years of Teaching Experience in Nigerian Universities on the Awareness, Readiness, and Use of Open Educational Resources

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Abstract

The study examined lecturers' duration of lecturing practices on awareness, and readiness as well as challenges facing the utilisation of Open Educational Resources (OERs) in Nigerian universities. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Two universities (federal and state-owned) offering Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programmes in each of the federation's six (6) geographical zones, resulting in one thousand four hundred and eighty-five lecturers being selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. The 0.05 significance level was used to test three hypotheses. The Lecturer's Usage of OERs Questionnaire (LUOER; r=0.78) was the main instrument utilised to collect data. Using descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, and ANOVA inferential statistics, the collected data were examined. The findings demonstrated that lecturers were mindful of the correct use of OERs for instructional purposes and were prepared to implement OERs in teaching. The findings further demonstrated that there were statistically significant differences in the lecturers' years of teaching experience in the extent of lecturers' awareness of OERs ($F_{(2,1484)} = 101.16$), willingness towards usage of OERs ($F_{(2,1484)} = 12.83$) and perceived challenges ($F_{(2,1484)} = 37.03$) towards the usage of OERs for teaching. It was suggested that universities support periodic workshops and seminars to provide practitioners with the necessary information and/or skills for OERs.

Key words: Lecturer, teaching experience, OERs, awareness, readiness, utilisation

Introduction

Open educational resources are digital assets that are freely available on the Internet for use by instructors and students in the educational process as well as for advanced scientific study, according to Kabugo (2020). Resources for teaching, learning, and research are referred to as open educational resources (OER) if they are made freely available in the public domain or made available under a license protecting their intellectual property. This makes it possible for these materials to be shared, modified, and reused by others (Cummings, 2020). Open educational resources are instructional materials that are made available in digital format for free or very low cost.

As a result of this background, a growing number of educational establishments begin to express interest in implementing and creating Open Educational Materials. According to Nyamweya (2018), these resources may also be in the public domain or have the Creative Commons (CC) licenses required for reuse, review, distribution, retention, and redistribution. Many higher education institutions recognize the importance of open educational resources as a source of digital resources because of their advantages, including teachers' ease of access, sharing through a variety of communication channels, and shorter preparation times for learning materials. According to Al-Mubarak (2019), "Open educational resources are a free and adaptable resource for many students and educators and can be a logical alternative for addressing the issue of textbook access". OER Africa (2014) reports that some lecturers have continued to adapt and use the MIT website's instructional techniques in their teaching and virtual.

Several studies have revealed that lecturers were aware, ready, and use OERs for education with a range of perceived challenges (Ojo, Salawu & Adedapo, 2022; Ojo, Salawu & Adedapo, 2023), lecturers used various online sites where they could access e-books, journals, and videos (OER Africa, 2014). Similarly, in the words of Humphrey and Kolawole (2021), “there are several challenges to the learning process, including a lack of information literacy skills, a poor electricity supply, a poor internet connection, a lack of library awareness, and a lack of support for lecturers in using open educational resources”. Meaningful improvements in the quality of education that students receive seem to determine by the quality of lecturers. Many argued that the experience improves teaching skills while learners learn better when handled by teachers who have taught them continuously over time (Ijaiya, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

Notwithstanding these results, it is important to remember that few studies have focused on the awareness, readiness, and use of open educational resources in teaching and that little has been done on lecturers' teaching experience. The study is notable because it is the first of its kind in Nigeria and involves numerous universities (both public and private). This study's conclusions might be more broadly applicable. This is significant given the growing demand for readily available digital educational resources as a result of Covid 19 (Huang, Tlili, Chang, Zhang, Nascimbeni, & Burgos, 2020), which the WHO has classified as a pandemic. To improve our understanding of the elements affecting awareness, readiness, and utilization of open educational resources, it is important to carefully investigate aspects of the lecturer's year of

experience that have not been adequately covered in the literature yet. It is necessary to investigate whether the sampled lecturers' years of teaching experience influence their awareness of, readiness to use, and perceptions of challenges associated with open educational resources in teaching. The websites used by lecturers allowed them to access e-books, journals, and films. This is just a small step on the right path. So, the study looked at the lecturers' classroom experiences using open educational resources in Nigerian institutions and how they prepared for and used them.

Objectives of the Study

The main goals of this study are to determine the degree of lecturers' readiness, awareness, and perceptions of challenges in using OERs for instruction at Nigerian universities. The study's precise aims include determining:

i. if there are differences in the level of awareness of lecturers' use of open educational resources for teaching based on years of lecturing experience.
ii. whether there are discrepancies in the level of lecturers' readiness to use OERs in teaching based on their years of lecturing experience.
iii. whether differences in challenges faced by lecturers while using OERs for teaching can be found based on the number of years of lecturing experience.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at a significance threshold of 0.05:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the amount of lecturers' awareness of OERs based on their years of experience.
Ho2: There is no significant difference in the level of lecturers' readiness to use OERs for teaching based on years of experience.
Ho3: There is no significant difference in how difficult lecturers view it to use OERs for instruction based on their years of experience.

Methods and Procedures

The study used a descriptive survey research design. The study's universities included all lecturers at federal and state universities in Nigeria. The size of the sample was determined using the total population. Participants in this study included 1,485 lecturers recruited through multi-stage sampling techniques of random and purposive sampling, with only institutions operating in single and dual modes in each of Nigeria's six geopolitical zones included. A set of questionnaire tagged Lecturer's Usage of OERs Questionnaire (LUOER; r=0.78) was used to gather data from the participants. The LUOER contained items that requested the participants to respond to statements that depicted issues of interest to achieve the terms of the objectives of the study. The survey used a modified Likert scale with four options, from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). Through the use of an appropriate standardisation technique, the questionnaire's validity and reliability were confirmed.

The LUOER was distributed to the academic staff of the selected Nigerian universities during the time the National Open University of Nigeria's Conference Marking Exercise was happening at the designated making zones across all six (6) regions of the federation.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as the mean and standard deviation, as well as inferential statistical tools such as t-test and ANOVA.

Results

This section gives insight into the results of data analysis and discussion. The study investigated the properties of Open Education Resources as perceived by teachers on teaching and learning in selected Nigerian universities. The three hypotheses raised were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The results of the findings were summarized based on the hypotheses tested.

Table 1: Lecturers' Distribution by Years of Lecturing Experience

		Freq.	%
Years of Lecturing Experience	1-8 Years	552	37.20
	9-15 Years	653	44.00
	16 Years and Above	280	18.90
	Total	**1485**	**100.00**

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic attributes of the lecturers that participated in the study. 552 (37.20%) of the respondents were within 1-8 years of lecturing experience; 653 (44.00%) were within 9-15 years of lecturing experience while the remaining 280 (18.90%) were above 15 years of lecturing experience. 966 (65.10%) of the respondents.

Hypotheses Testing

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the amount of lecturers' awareness of OERs based on their years of experience.

Table 2

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Lecturers' Awareness of OER for Teaching	1-8 Years	552	29.9620	5.01001	.21324
	9-15 Years	653	30.2496	3.80916	.14906
	16 Years and Above	280	34.2000	4.07141	.24331
	Total	1485	30.8875	4.62373	.11999
Lecturers' readiness towards utilization of OER for Teaching	1-8 Years	552	13.4837	2.71844	.11570
	9-15 Years	653	13.1531	3.27021	.12797
	16 Years and Above	280	14.2786	3.43724	.20541
	Total	1485	13.4882	3.13543	.08136
Lecturers' Challenges Towards Utilization of OER for Teaching	1-8 Years	552	12.8062	2.41150	.10264
	9-15 Years	653	13.2787	2.82280	.11046
	16 Years and Above	280	14.5321	3.14620	.18802
	Total	1485	13.3394	2.81014	.07292

Table 3: ANOVA of Lecturers' Awareness, Readiness towards Utilization and Challenges towards Utilization of OER for Teaching based on year of Lecturing Experience.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Lecturers' Awareness of OER for Teaching	Between Groups	3810.906	2	1905.453	101.159	.000
	Within Groups	27915.313	1482	18.836		
	Total	31726.220	1484			
Lecturers' readiness towards utilization of OER for Teaching	Between Groups	248.233	2	124.117	12.826	.000
	Within Groups	14340.811	1482	9.677		
	Total	14589.044	1484			
Lecturers' Challenges Towards Utilization of OER for Teaching	Between Groups	557.702	2	278.851	37.026	.000
	Within Groups	11161.244	1482	7.531		
	Total	11718.945	1484			

The results in Tables 2 and 3 revealed that there were statistically significant years of lecturing experience differences in the extent of lecturers' awareness of open educational resources for teaching ($F_{(2,1484)} = 101.16$); level of lecturers' readiness towards the use of OERs for teaching ($F_{(2,1484)} = 12.83$); and lecturers' perceived challenges towards the use of OERs for teaching ($F_{(2,1484)} = 37.03$). The mean and standard deviation values also revealed statistically significant differences in the extent of lecturers' awareness of open educational resources for teaching, the level of lecturers' readiness to use OERs for teaching, and the perceived challenges to using OERs for teaching based on years of lecturing experience.

As a result, we reject the null hypotheses that there is no significant year of experience difference in lecturers' awareness, readiness, and perceived challenges to using open educational resources for teaching. The results of Scheffe's post hoc test were used to identify the directions of the significant differences seen in Table 3 and are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Scheffe's Post Hoc pairwise Comparison of Lecturers' Awareness, Readiness towards Utilisation, and Challenges towards Utilization of OER for Teaching based on Years of Lecturing Experience.

Dependent Variable	(I) Years of Lecturing Experience	(J) Years of Lecturing Experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Lecturers' Awareness of OER for Teaching	1-8 Years	9-15 Years	-.28766	.25094	.519
		16 Years and Above	-4.23804*	.31843	.000
	9-15 Years	1-8 Years	.28766	.25094	.519
		16 Years and Above	-3.95038*	.31003	.000
	16 Years and Above	1-8 Years	4.23804*	.31843	.000
		9-15 Years	3.95038*	.31003	.000
Lecturers' readiness towards utilization of OER for Teaching	1-8 Years	9-15 Years	.33056	.17986	.185
		16 Years and Above	-.79488*	.22823	.002
	9-15 Years	1-8 Years	-.33056	.17986	.185
		16 Years and Above	-1.12543*	.22221	.000
	16 Years and Above	1-8 Years	.79488*	.22823	.002
		9-15 Years	1.12543*	.22221	.000
Lecturers' Challenges Towards Utilization of OER for Teaching	1-8 Years	9-15 Years	-.47255*	.15867	.012
		16 Years and Above	-1.72598*	.20135	.000
	9-15 Years	1-8 Years	.47255*	.15867	.012
		16 Years and Above	-1.25343*	.19604	.000
	16 Years and Above	1-8 Years	1.72598*	.20135	.000
		9-15 Years	1.25343*	.19604	.000

Discussion

The findings on lecturers' awareness of OERs revealed that lecturers were aware of how OERs should be used for teaching. They recognized the existence of OERs in their institutions as digital and analog resources that might be used to promote student engagement in lectures, interactions with lecturers, and academic performance. The results of the study on lecturers' readiness to use open educational resources in instruction showed that lecturers were willing to do so and did so. This was clear among lecturers as shown by comments that suggested they were ready to employ OERs learning platforms like Netex to develop personalised students' learning materials and include interactive components like audio, video, and self-assessment in the learning material.

The research on perceived barriers to using open educational resources for teaching found that lecturers thought their universities contributed to OER repositories in support of using OER for teaching. Yet, the lecturers argued that their academic institutions supported academic staff travel to national and international OER conferences, workshops, and professional development training and that both staff and students were encouraged to use OERs. This implied that lecturers were commendably equipped to deal with issues associated with using OERs for instruction.

Besides, the findings show that there were statistically significant years of lecturing experience differences in the extent of lecturers' awareness of open educational resources for teaching; level of lecturers' readiness towards the utilisation of OERs for teaching, and lecturers' perceived challenges towards the utilisation of OERs for teaching.

These outcomes contradicted COL's prior findings (2017b), which identified a lack of institutional policy as a barrier to the mainstreaming of open educational resources. According to Humphrey and Kolawole (2021), in a similar study, the process of learning faces several challenges, including a lack of knowledge and literacy abilities, poor electricity, a poor internet connection, a lack of library awareness, and a lack of support for teachers using open educational resources. In addition, Ojo, Salawu, and Adedapo (2023) revealed that lecturers were aware of and prepared to use open educational resources despite a variety of highlighted barriers. The studies of Afolabi, Adedapo & Adeyanju (2005), and Afolabi, Adeyanju, and Adedapo (2010) revealed that irregular energy flow and a lack of free access to necessary facilities and resources are the primary reasons why teachers do not use ICT in their classes.

The findings were corroborated by Kassab and Altawalbeh's (2023) findings, which showed a relationship between the number of years of teaching experience and lecturers' awareness of using open educational resources in Jordanian universities, with the more years of experience, the greater the awareness of using OER in universities. When stating that the mean of the entire instrument is (2.59 out of 5) with a high level in the following aspects—public education teachers using open educational resources (Shams Platform) in their educational practices with a mean of (2.65 out of 4), Al-Hwaiti (2020) noted the facts and barriers to the utilisation of open educational resources by lecturers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This result implies that professors with extensive teaching backgrounds would have accumulated

more experiences that enable them to develop a solid foundation of knowledge and information regarding open educational resources.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has aimed to contribute to our understanding of how years of experience influence the lecturers' perception of the awareness, readiness, and perceived challenges towards the utilization of OERs for teaching in Nigerian universities. The findings of this study indicate that much awareness has been created on the proper use of open educational resources for teaching and the results are attributed to the fact that years of teaching experience can determine the best methods and tools used in education. The findings showed that there were significant years of lecturing experience differences in the extent of lecturers' awareness of OERs for teaching and readiness towards the utilization of OERs for teaching. It further revealed that there was a statistically significant year of lecturing experience difference in the lecturers' perceived challenges towards the utilization of OERs for teaching. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made as follows:

Since the findings indicated that there were significant differences in the lecturers' years of teaching experience in the extent of awareness, readiness, and perceived challenges towards the utilization of OERs for teaching, this implies that the universities should look for measures to improve on adequate knowledge and/or skills required for OERs. Such measures may include organising regular workshops, and seminars as information literacy training for lecturers to enable them to effectively make use of the available OERs. Another measure is the accessibility problem and one way of overcoming it is to involve the government of Nigeria, particularly the National Communication Commission (NCC) to assist in improving internet accessibility.

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