

Harnessing The Power of Open Educational Resources for Lifelong Learning

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Abstract

Globalization, technology, innovation and ever-changing customer needs have created an explosion of information for learners at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Developing student skills in STEM is critical for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Post-pandemic there has been an increase in the use of mobile technologies at most Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). HEIs in developing countries such as South Africa still face many challenges today arising from factors such as the digital divide, budget constraints and escalating power. The advancements in online learning have pointed to new learning practices of using Open Educational Resources (OER). Information and communications technology (ICT) can provide great potential for effective and inclusive access to OER which can be used anytime and the potential and efficiency of Cloud-Based Open educational resources in HEIs have been recognized by UNESCO Cloud-Based Open educational resources not only enable remote learning but also enable lecturer and learner collaboration, and engagement. As these technologies continue to develop, we can expect to see even more innovative and effective ways to use them for learning. In this qualitative study, we attempt to explore the affordances of OER Cloud Computing technologies that enable inclusivity, promote access and influence students' usage of OER tools and technologies in the classroom. The results of the outcome could increase awareness of the potential and capabilities of OER cloud technologies to support teaching and learning activities and lead to the design of virtual learning labs that fulfil academic needs. Using innovative OER tools can enhance and assist educators with integrating technology into our curriculums. However, currently, not many HEIs in South Africa are embracing or using OER cloud computing tools effectively.

Keywords: Innovation, OER, cloud technology, STEM education