

A Brief Overview of Open Education

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Open education encompasses many ideas, but this presentation gives a brief overview of some key foundational points. This presentation aims to simply explain (1) what qualifies open educational resources (OER), (2) what impact OER can have in various settings, (3) the state of research in open education, and (4) steps needed to move open education forward.

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Video Script

In this video I'll be introducing a little bit about open education.

So to start off, what is open education? As this quote says, "Open education encompasses resources, tools and practices that are free of legal, financial and technical barriers and can be fully used, shared and adapted in the digital

environment.” In other words, open education materials allow people to use the content however they want without any cost.

In order for something to qualify as open in the fullest sense, it must comply with what are called the 5 R’s. The first R, retain, ensures that others who use the content may continually have access. Revise allows users to change and edit the content. Remix allows users to add their own material to the original, and reuse and redistribute permit to share the content publicly and with others.

When the 5 R’s are used in education, it allow us to SHARE what we have. In our digital world, we can share content without giving it away. 2 people across the world can be reading the same book online at the same time. And in education...don't we want to share? Education is what makes the world thrive? It can be given without giving it away.

So what can happen when we follow the 5 R’s and share what we have? Mostly, it creates a stage for possibilities. Just having a book open as opposed to privately licensed does not magically change the quality or effectiveness of the book. However, it DOES create a space for education to be made personable, more meaningful, and updated.

Open pedagogy is one of the most powerful possibilities with open education. Rather than using an outdated textbook with its outdated practice questions, open pedagogy enables instructors to customize the material to meet the needs of the students. It motivates instructors to create assignments that are non-disposable and more relevant & impactful.

What are some other benefits of open education? A major benefit is the cost savings for students. Rather than spending hundreds of dollars on textbooks every year, students are able to use the materials without cost. Quality is another benefit of OER. Open materials are also able to stay up to date since they can be easily edited. There is also the possibility for a wider range of connection in open education than other materials.

To better understand open education, research has been rapidly growing. The major questions research tries to answer in open education are: what is the cost savings? What are the outcomes of oer adoption? How is it being used? What are the perceptions of oer?

While research in this field is still young, there have been several studies conducted. The evidence from these studies suggest that students save significant money when oer is used, but this does not mean that oer is free to create. We also find that student performance with OER is equal to or better than traditional textbooks.

Moving forward with open education, here are 7 ideas from professionals in the field: Have research progress outside of the US context, focus on pedagogical benefits expand research categories, have faculty take practical steps, emphasize quality and pedagogy, promote equity, and ground everything in student learning.

In summary, open education brings with it so many possibilities for enhancing education, but there are still a lot of steps to take If it is to reach its potential. Research should continue finding answers, and users should take advantage of all that open education offers. I hope this helped you learn a bit more about open education, and I hope you’ll keep learning about it! Thanks for joining me!





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