# Open Research Online

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# SAT: Using And Creating OERs In Mauritius: A Reality or A Myth? (Louis Jinot BELLE)

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**Belle Louis Jinot**
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**CONFERENCE ABSTRACT**

*Using and creating OERs in Mauritius: A reality or a myth?*

Open education is viewed as an emancipatory force (Lane, 2016), which enables students to map and remap on the acquired knowledge in an attempt to increase their understanding of concepts through networks. This is based on the cartography and decalcomania principles of Deleuze and Guattari (Cormier, 2012). Open educational resources (OERs) is one of the features of open education. In open learning, there should be both knowledge acquisition and knowledge participation (Sfard, 1998) which promotes knowledge construction and sharing. However, learners' participation may be found along a continuum in the Jeong et al (2017) framework for inclusion, namely from being lurkers to using artefacts such as online platforms to mediate interactions and their support for co-construction of knowledge (Krasny et al, 2018). From this theoretical background, this research paper aims at examining the extent to which open education at the Open University of Mauritius (OUM) is emancipatory. Its dual objectives are to determine the perceptions of the learners of using and creating OERS and investigate into their experiences in doing so. We aim to understand these when there is inclusion of learners by allowing them to use existing OERs available online and create their own content in the online platforms such as Facebook and the E-learn platform (LMS). This is because at the OUM, there is knowledge imposition, rather than knowledge sharing (UNESCO, 2002). On registration, learners are provided with a prescribed reading material together with the study planner and assignments. In this project, data about the perceptions and experiences of the learners are collected and analysed by using the qualitative approach, from an interpretivist perspective. Fifteen OUM B Ed (Hons) Early Childhood Education and care Education learners are observed and interviewed as a group. The researcher is a non-participant observer. Since there are only 15 learners in the programme, the sample is the population. However, other learners in other education programmes at the OUM may participate by giving their feedback on the user-generated content. This will contribute to the information gathered about the perceptions and experiences of using and creating OERS by the sampled participants. The content analysis approach is also used to analyse the transcribed gathered information, based on the Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010) data processing method. Due to the small sample, the aim of the study is not to generalise the findings but to have insights into the first-

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hand experiences of the learners so that such a study may sensitise other OUM learners and lecturers to use and create OERs as well as to motivate university leaders to promote their use and creation for more effective online learning. Based on the findings, it is recommended that all the learners use and create their own knowledge by constituting a community of inquiry with three presences in open education, namely cognitive, social and teaching, that encourages the participation of each and every learner in knowledge construction.

Key words: inclusion, OERs, knowledge, creation.

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**Catherine Penny James**
7:27pm 10 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Belle

This sounds like an interesting project. I am also interested in how a specific group of users (in my case diabled users) experience OERs. Had any of the users been using OERs already before your project?

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**Munir Moosa Sadruddin**
9:08am 12 February 2019 Permalink

Hello

Great work! My work is also somehow linked to OER. I just want to learn which sampling

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method you have used to scoop out sample? Also, what is the generalizability of your research?

**Belle Louis Jinot**
9:35am 12 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Catherine,

No, learners have never used OERs before my project within the scope of the Open University of Mauritius. My research is very limited and experimental. Th efindongs cannot be generalised at all. It is just about the first experience of the learners in using and creating OERs. Unfortunately by the time of the Conference, I would not have covered the data analysis. I am still doing data collection and I still have to engage the learners in creating their own content using OERs.

Louis

**Dr Simon Ball**
5:56pm 18 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Louis

Well done on a great presentation! Here is a summary of the comments and questions you received following your presentation (including those you may have addressed verbally). Please respond in whatever way you choose - I suspect you may wish to deal with the first few in one response!

Best wishes

Simon

- My recent experience is that most LMS or VLE are used as information repositories and are often not designed for student collaboration
- Agree the need for change but will tutors buy into thiss? Will they be paid for more than 10 hours teaching for example? !
- What training do the tutors have? Is there a reason for this style of teaching?
- How many students in your study? What evidence are you gathering?
- have you adapted or created questionnaire? did youcheck validity and reliability
- How will you distribute your questionnaire? Will it be paperbased or online?
- Can you work with other OUs worldwide on results?
- You will have to convince the OUM leaders of the benefits of online.

**Belle Louis Jinot**
5:11pm 2 March 2019 Permalink

1. The OUM uses the Moodle platform. It can be used also for interactions and forum discussion. if the university invested in a more advanced version of the LMS. However, the management of OUM is not ready to have the latest version with various interactive

possibilities tha that enhance effective teaching and learning.

2. I have sent a mail to all the 45 contingent tutors that work under my responsibility as Programme manager. However, only ten showed their interest by giving their positive views about using OERs at OUM. This implies that most of them do not buy in the change in teaching and learning methods and media. Will they be paid for more than 10 hours teaching online? Online has never been the key words in the instruction; it is more about posting of reading and learning materials and 5 F2F class tutorials per semester. For the decision about paying them, first we must decide about the monitoring mechanism for the online tutorials by the PT tutor by the university.

3. The tuturs have no official training in using LMS or any other interactive platform form OUM. As a tudent of ODE and ODL practitioner, I can see the importance of such a teaching style, but the management does not prioritise it as the learners are demanding for this type of learning but the for the traditional spoonfeeding approach to teaching and learning  that ensures high passing rate.

4. 15 students only; it is experimental only.

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