# OPEN CULTURE AND LIBRARIES IN THE PHILIPPINES: NEW ROLES OF LIBRARIES IN THE OPEN EDUCATION ERA

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## INTRODUCTION

First, let us define what an Open Culture is. "Open Culture" is a concept according to which knowledge should be spread freely and its growth should come from developing, altering or enriching already existing works on the basis of sharing and collaboration, without being restricted by rules linked to the legal protection of intellectual property. In a context of globalization, the consequence is that all citizens should have equal access to information.

Open culture vs. closed culture (Ichkvideo., 2017).

| Closed Culture | Open Culture |
|---|---|
| "People make cultural things, cultural artifacts such as movies, music, books, comics … they make them to make money, they don't make them to share them or for the love of them, fundamentally, it's an economic activity…"<br><br>"I will make this thing and sell it to you and you can enjoy it by yourself but you cannot sell it to other people, you can't give it away, you can't share it, you can't remix it. | "I make this thing and I'm gonna share it with you. There might be certain restrictions but you are free to do a lot of things … often, you are free to remix and change it to share it, to play it to other people, to take it apart, to see how it works,,, in some cases, you might be free to sell it and make money yourself…" |

CREATIVE COMMONS

In layman's term, Ichkvideo continues, "Creative Commons is an example of open culture. It's a set of rules, a license that tells you exactly what you can and can't do or something – so the owner of some works would say, I made this, I own it, I'm a copyright holder, but

I want to give you members of the public access to do somethings with them. I might say that you can remix it, you make money from it, or you can change it but share it to other people … OPEN CULTURE IS PARTICIPATORY CULTURE..." ( Ichkvideo, 2017).

"… openness is increasingly a characteristic of many sectors and technologies that we librarians encounter every day. We hear of open access, open library, open source, open standards, open platforms, and more. Another open trend that is growing quickly is the adoption of **open source textbooks**, more broadly named movement has come to be known as **open educational resources (OER) (**Hane, 2009).

The term Open Educational Resources (OER) was first used by UNESCO at its 'Forum on the Impact of Open Courseware for Higher Education in Developing Countries' in 2002. UNESCO defined Open Educational Resources as:

> "… 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 (UNESCO, 2019).

The content labelled as an OER often carries a license, that is known to us, librarians as Creative Commons license. Creative Commons licensing is a new intellectual property recognition and attribution system that gives users certain freedom of use. It permits reuse under certain conditions and normally at little or no cost (Sarvi, Dhanarajan & Pillay, 2015).

OERs can come from the academe like colleges and universities, libraries, archival organizations, government agencies, commercial organizations such as publishers, academics, or other individuals who develop educational resources and are willing to share them. They may be textbooks, course materials modules, videos, games, softwares, etc. (Sarvi, et al., 2015). They are a logical extension of what the library community supports in the Open Access Movement (Hane, 2009).

**Open Educational Resources in the Philippines**

In consonance with the theme of the Academic Conference, "New Library's Roles in the Open Education Era," I will be presenting OERs in the Philippines using a 2013 study conducted by Patricia B. Arinto and Roel Cantada. The study entitled *OER in Philippine Higher Education: Preliminary Study* will situate the librarians and what they should and can do in the open culture environment.

The study started with the demand for textbooks and reference books in the primary, secondary and tertiary education level but we will only deal with the tertiary level. The authors said that " the demand for textbooks and reference books in the tertiary level is something that is difficult to determine. The importation of books in 2007 was 47,780 books which was worth PHP 2,314,753… (NBDB, 2008 as quoted by Arinto and

Cantada, 2013) and it is difficult to say how many of these books were for educational purposes. But even if all of the imported books were for educational purposes, it was clear that they were hardly sufficient for the 2.8 million students enrolled in tertiary education in the 2009–2010 academic year." The situation suggests that OER can be an important resource for education in the Philippines, especially as Internet connectivity becomes increasingly available (Arinto and Cantada, 2013).

"In the higher education sector, there is anecdotal evidence that colleges and universities are exploring eLearning as a mode of delivery. The University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU), a dedicated distance education provider, delivers all of its courses in more than 20 degree programmes online using the open source learning management system Moodle. Several public and private HEIs have sought UPOU's assistance in building their capacity to offer online learning programmes (Arinto and Cantada, 2013).

## THE SURVEY

The survey was conducted online among 42 faculty of Philippine HEIs from November 2011 to April 2012. Most of the participants came from UPOU (seven respondents), Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSUIIT, six respondents), UP Los Baños (UPLB, six respondents), University of Santo Tomas (UST, two respondents) and UP Cebu College (two respondents).

Whether they have 5,000 students, or 10,000 plus students, whether they came from public institutions or private institutions, what was more important for me as a librarian and for the interest of this paper is how they appreciated the Open Educational Resources (OERs).

The following are some pertinent results of the study by (Arinto and Cantada, 2013):

### 1) On the Use of OER by the Respondents

a) Of the 42 respondents: 35 said they have access to digital resources; 20 respondents said they have used OER from other academics in their teaching, and 22 respondents said they intend to do so in the future.

b) Results also indicated that the most common use of digital resources is in lectures and class presentations (64 per cent, or 27 respondents); and as resources for student research projects or problem-based learning assignments (50 per cent, or 21 respondents).

c) Participants said they use digital resources in their teaching for the following reasons: To let students know the most up-to-date developments about a subject (81 per cent, or 34 respondents); to provide access to resources that are *not* available in their institution (81 per cent, or 34 respondents); and to improve their students' learning (81 per cent, or 34 respondents).

d) Often used types of digital resources are: images (76 per cent, or 32 respondents); digital readers (67 per cent, or 28 respondents); and online reference resources (64 per cent, or 27 respondents).

e) The least used are digital facsimiles of historical manuscripts (7 per cent, or 3 respondents).

**2) Sources of OER**

a) The most frequent sources of digital resources are: search engines (81 per cent, or 34 respondents); public online image databases (60 per cent, or 25 respondents); personal collections (57 per cent, or 24 respondents); and portals for particular topics (52 per cent, or 22 respondents).

b) Sources least used are commercial image databases (10 per cent, or 10 respondents).

c) Most (26 respondents) gather or maintain their own collections of digital resources, but 43 per cent rarely make their own digital resources available to others via the World Wide Web.

d) The most frequently used search method for locating OER materials is:

- through generic search engines such as Google and Yahoo! (45 per cent, or 19 respondents),
- followed by specific search engines such as Google Scholar (31 per cent, or 13 respondents).
- Generic (45 per cent, or 19 respondents) and
- specific (40 per cent, or 17 respondents) search engines are perceived as effective for locating relevant and quality OER for the participant's use.

e) The Internet searches may not be entirely random, as word of mouth was the most often cited source of digital resources (55 per cent, or 23 respondents).

f) In teaching their courses: (48 per cent, or 20 respondents) of individual respondents use more open educational content freely downloaded from the Internet; (31 per cent, or 13 respondents) use open educational content obtained from other sources such as OER produced by their institutions or by themselves; and (26 per cent, or 11 respondents) use open educational content obtained from other sources such as OER produced by themselves

g) The pattern is similar for the 12 respondents who commented on their institution's OER practice:

- all 12 (100%) said that within their courses or programmes they used open educational content freely downloaded from the Internet;
- eight (67%) used content produced within their own institution,
- seven (58%) used content downloaded from an OER repository, and
- six (50%) used content through established co-operative relationships with other educational institutions.

h) Sixty-seven per cent (28) of individual respondents agreed that their use of digital resources was very dependent on the resources being free.

i) Half (21) of individual respondents agreed that their use of a digital resource that was stored in an online repository was very dependent on whether registration or a password was required to gain access to the resource.

**3) Production and Publication of OER**

a) The production of OER among the individual respondents is very low: only 14 per cent said they are producing learning objects; 48 per cent reported using OER from other academics.

b) On the types of OER the participants said they are willing to produce:
- Presentation slides/PowerPoint slides (26%)
- Module handbooks (26%)
- Lecture notes (24%)
- Video (14%)
- Interactive learning objects (21%)

It was noted in the study that the types of resources identified by individual respondents might be said to indicate the current level of technical skill in, as well as the available resources for, OER production that individual academics have. The production of videos and interactive learning objects requires more resources — which may be available at the institutional level — than does the production of slide presentations and lecture notes (Arinto and Cantada, 2013).

## 4). Barriers to the Use and Publication of OER

Some of the barriers to the use and publication pf OER are:

a) lack of awareness (52 per cent, or 22 respondents) to be the most significant barriers to the use of open educational content in teaching by their colleagues.
b) Regarding primary barriers to their own use of OER,
   - the participants identified lack of awareness of the university OER repository and other OER repositories (29 per cent, or 12 respondents),
   - fear over copyright infringement (26 per cent, or 11 respondents) and
   - lack of time (26 per cent, or 11 respondents).

c) Of the 12 respondents who commented on the most significant barriers to the use of open educational content in their institution, nine (75 per cent of 12) said the most significant barriers were lack of: hardware; awareness of OER; skills in using and publishing OER; time to use and publish OER and support from management.

d) **Copyright issues** appear in the list of top barriers to OER production for both individual participants and respondents who commented on their institution's practice of OER.

e) Students do not have reliable access to computers (48 per cent, or 20 respondents).
f) Students do not have a high-speed connection (43 per cent, or 18 respondents).
g) It is difficult to get server space or access to a server to store/host digital resources for teaching (40 per cent, or 17 respondents).
h) They do not have access to physical resources in their classrooms, such as projectors and high-speed connections (40 per cent, or 17 respondents).
i) Individual participants considered lack of skills in using OER (55 per cent, or 23 respondents)

## 4) Copyright Issues

On copyright and knowledge of the Creative Commons some results are:

a) Participants perceived fear of copyright infringement as one of the major barriers to their use and publication of OER.

b) With regard to their perspectives on copyright:

- only 26 per cent (11) of the individual participants and six out of 12 respondents (50 per cent) who commented on their institution's OER practice said that the term **"copyright" meant something to them.**
- Twenty-four per cent (10) of individual participants **felt confident in the accuracy of their definition of copyright**, and amongst these participants only seven per cent (three respondents) felt **very confident** that they could define copyright accurately
- Of the 12 who commented on institutional practice of OER, four (17 per cent of 12) said they were **confident in the accuracy of their definition of copyright**, one (eight per cent) said he/she was **somewhat confident**, and another one (eight per cent) said he/she was **not confident** in the accuracy of his/her definition of copyright.

c) Seventeen per cent (7) of individual respondents said they had **not heard of Creative Commons licenses,** whereas only 14 per cent (6) had heard of them.

d) Four out of 12 respondents (33 per cent of 12) who commented on their institution's OER practice said they had not heard of Creative Commons licenses, whilst only two (17 per cent) had heard of them.

e) About a tenth of the individual respondents (four, or 9.5 per cent) said they **were not confident that they could describe Creative Commons licenses accurately**, and only four (9.5 per cent) were confident that they could.

f) Of the 12 who commented on their institution's OER practice, three (25 per cent) were **not confident** and one (eight per cent) was **somewhat confident** in the accuracy of his/her description of Creative Commons licenses.

g) Only one of the 12 (eight per cent) was confident in the accuracy of his/her description.

## 5) Institutional Policy and Support

a) Over half the individual participants (52 per cent, or 22 respondents) considered the following to be extremely important in using digital resources:

- **Support with obtaining or setting up technical infrastructure such as servers, computers and smart classrooms (76 per cent, or 32 respondents, said this was very or extremely important).**
- **Support in interpreting copyright laws and/or securing copyright permission (71 per cent, or 30 respondents, said this was very or extremely important).**

- **Support with finding digital resources (52 per cent, or 22 respondents, said this was extremely important, and another 12 per cent, or 5 respondents, said this was very important).**

b) Respondents also considered support for the following to be very important:

- **Assessing the credibility of digital resources (69 per cent, or 29 respondents).**
- **Evaluating the appropriateness of resources for their teaching goals (67 per cent, or 28 respondents**).

### 6) General Statements on the Study

The above results are only glimpses of OER situation in the Philippines. The survey results suggest that to improve this situation, higher education institutions and **LIBRARIES** should pay attention to the following:

- Improving knowledge and understanding of copyright to include legal protocols for promoting sharing and modification of original work (in particular Creative Commons licenses).
- Training and skills development in OER use and production.
- Formulation of specific institutional policies to promote OER.
- Provision of the necessary technical infrastructure to develop OER and use them for teaching and learning.
- Institutional collaboration in OER development and exchange.

## LIBRARIANS' ENGAGEMENT TO SUPPORT OER: NEW ROLES AND/OR WHERE CAN LIBRARIANS HELP?

### 1. Librarians as Advisors/Teachers

- Librarians should ensure that users in their institutions know how to find and access open educational resources. We should set up tools to allow them easier access to the materials.
- Librarians should do efforts to create an environment for open access and make their community of users aware of ways to maximize the usage of open access resources available either in Institutional repositories or otherwise. For example, have an information literacy program on open educational resources, create library guides, faculty toolkit on how use library resources as OERs.

- Librarians can collaborate with faculty members and integrate Open Educational Resources in course syllabi of faculty. In the study presented earlier, participants mentioned the need for **assessing the credibility of digital resources and evaluating the appropriateness of resources for their teaching goals.** Information professionals like us librarians can do excellent job in these areas.

- Librarians can teach users about copyright, Creative Commons, etc. If not teach, organize lectures and invite experts on the topics. With knowledge of open access, understanding of copyright and licensing, expertise in bibliometrics and applying quality indicators for research quality evaluation, and access to a range of resources and tools, librarians can perform a proactive role in supporting scholarly publishing literacy. Remember that in the study presented, participants demanded for "**Support in interpreting copyright laws and/or securing copyright permission."**

2. **Librarians as Advocates**

- Librarians can play a key role in developing, advocating, and managing OER. They can be champions! One study described how "a grassroots group of academic librarians in British Columbia, Canada joined together as a community of practice to learn and to share ideas, strategies, and tools to support the use of OER. They focused on the education and professional development of librarians to help facilitate the use and development of OERs and to create authoritative and sustainable resources to support librarians in OER-related interactions with faculty (Smith & Lee, 2016).

- Showing support for Open Access, librarians can influence the use of OERs by signing open access initiatives and petitions. They can also educate their faculty and administrators about the evolving scholarly communication environment by collecting, displaying and promoting OERs.

3. **Librarians as Creators**

- Librarians can partner with faculty and research managers to set up open access repositories and to help faculty and students to deposit their research outputs.

- Librarians have provided support in research data curation and sharing. They have helped scholarly publishers to publish open access journals and books, and they have worked with educators to produce open educational resources ensuring the quality of digital content, its reuse and sharing.

4. **Librarians as "aggregators"**

- Librarians should acquire, organize, preserve and disseminate the information available freely to provide greater access to the users at lower cost. In the study, participants felt the need for **support with finding digital resources. It is within the training and expertise of the librarians to do this.**

- They must always adopt new techniques to cope with the changes and must be ready to do adjustment with the rapidly evolving conditions. Again, to **support acquisition or setting up technical infrastructure such as servers, computers and smart classrooms.**

**Epilogue**

## "The never ending story" – librarians in new roles

**…very few librarians will be able to get by with just a good borrower-librarian dialogue…**

**In many libraries, the 'new' role of the librarian is not so very new anymore. More and more pages of the script are being studied and rehearsed, but just as the role is about to be mastered, a new act is added in the story of the future role of the librarian, so perhaps the play might well be called "The never ending story?"**

And lastly,

… "Neither can a librarian expect to be sitting in splendid isolation, undisturbed behind the computer – what she finds, has to be mediated, discussed, evaluated and used together with other people. Important disciplines for 'new' librarians are communication, feedback, supervision, mentor schemes etc. – and yet more knowledge-sharing and learning in networks.

**Times are indeed changing – and we must change with them.**

From: Wiese, Helle. (2013). "The never ending story" - librarians in new roles. *Scandinavian Library Quarterly,* 36 (1). Retrieved from http://slq.nu/?article=the-never-ending-story-librarians-in-new-roles

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