KEY FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH ON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT (ROER4D) PROJECT

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Figure 1: Hodgkinson-Williams’ proposed “optimal” Open Education cycle

Figure 1: Disjunctures of the Open Education cycle in ROER4D studies

Table 1: Structural, cultural and agential factors influencing use of OER in the ROER4D studies (example showing two components of the Open Education cycle)

Conclusion

One of the most compelling value propositions of OER is that they can be regularly updated and localised, thus reducing the cost of producing educational content. ROER4D aimed to explore the adoption of OER by educators and students. A number of explanations for this are advanced, including the fact that most of the currently available OER are in English and a certain level of fluency in this language is required to understand and translate these materials.

A disjuncture in the ideal Open Education cycle is noted in the adaptation phase where educators and students seldom re-curate their adapted OER, thus limiting peer review, quality assurance and redistribution. This gap needs to be systematically addressed if materials from countries in the Global South are to become part of the global knowledge resource collection.

Full participation in the OER movement in the South requires that certain structural factors be put in place, including a minimum level of infrastructural support, permission to share materials and OER platforms to curate curriculum-aligned OER in local languages. While individual educators and some institutions are sharing OER, this willingness needs to be bolstered by a more profound cultural change where communities of educators and students are given governmental and institutional support to enable OER uptake – especially the creation and adaptation of OER produced in the Global South.

References

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