Fashion Open Educational Resources Impact on Performance Outcome Measures

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Open Educational Resources (OER) help reduce education costs by making educational

resources accessible online, often without cost (Mishra, 2017). However, there has been a

setback since OER adoption is very slow due to mainstream adoption barriers (Mishra, 2017).

The literature supports that OER is under-utilized in the ever-changing field of fashion

education, with examples of studies exploring its integration into fashion curricula (Gunasekara,

2019; Robinson, Gramstadt, & Reeves, 2013). Thus, the use of LibGuides in fashion

undergraduate courses is limited yet quite necessary based on the nature of fashion.

Since the fashion industry is ever-changing, traditional textbooks have been insufficient to

showcase sudden shifts in fashion trends, especially amidst the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the fashion industry is becoming more aware of its need to showcase more diverse

ethnicities, body types and sizes, etc., which should also be translated into fashion course

materials. Traditional textbooks cannot be updated easily to feature the most current information.

Therefore, digital textbooks and LibGuides are viable solutions to the dilemmas posed by

traditional textbooks. This research aims to address the current literature gap by comparing data

collected from students enrolled in traditional textbook fashion courses to OER materials and

LibGuides used in fashion courses to determine the impact of OER on student performance

measures.

To do this, two undergraduate courses were selected to convert to an OER curriculum. One was a

Fashion Fundamentals gateway fashion course, and the other was an Appearance, Dress, and

Diversity fashion course. Each course was taught by a different professor who converted these

courses to include OER resources available and LibGuides. Before switching over to OER

curriculum, students in the traditional textbook courses were surveyed for their feedback. Then,

student feedback from integrating OER LibGuides into the curriculum was compared with

feedback from students in the traditional textbook course. The data was then analyzed using

basic quantitative content analysis and descriptive statistics.

The results of this research were that a total of 108 students participated. 100% of students had a

favorable opinion of the OER resources instead of having neutral or negative opinions. Students

had higher performance outcome measures (e.g., drop/fail/withdrawal rates, course retention and

completion rates, average GPA, student success in SLOS) using OER compared to previous

semesters. In particular, only 3.7% of students out of 123 total students dropped, failed, or

withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementing OER, which was a much lower

rate than in previous semesters using traditional textbooks.

The pre-survey for the Appearance, Dress, and Diversity course revealed that approximately

59% of students purchased the traditional textbook whereas 41% did not purchase the textbook.

Also, the highest percentage of students (34.09%) read their textbook only once a week.

Contrastingly for the post-survey of this same course that used the LibGuide instead, 100% of

the students accessed the LibGuide and approximately 62% of students used the LibGuide 2-4

times a week.

For the Fashion Fundamentals course pre-survey, 59% of the students purchased the textbook,

and 41% did not purchase the course text. The survey also revealed that 34% of students used the

course textbook once a week, whereas 27% of students never used the textbook. In comparison,

the Fashion Fundamentals course that used a LibGuide revealed that 73% of students used their

LibGuide 2-4 times a week, which was the highest amount. In contrast, the survey revealed that

11% of students used the LibGuide 5-9 times a week.

In conclusion, all students surveyed had positive opinions towards OER resources and

subsequently higher academic performance than students in traditional textbook-adoption

courses. Additionally, students generally used their LibGuides more than traditional textbooks,

which advocates for the effectiveness of LibGuides as an accessible resource for student learning

and success. A significant implication of this study is the compelling data that supports the use

of OER for other Fashion Merchandising and Apparel Design courses. As a result of these

research outcomes, the researchers plan to continue to create more OER resources and integrate

more OER student-led projects into their LibGuides.

References

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