Open Peer Review

Reviewer: Stephen G. Krueger

Recommendation: Accept Submission

Scope, Objectives, Content

Is the article in scope for Journal of Open Educational Resources in Higher Education? Does the topic discuss an element related to open education, open data, open access, or other open topics? Is the topic an important one, or is it trivial or of low priority?

This article fits the journal scope perfectly by studying usage of OER in higher education. The topic is important because it takes an in-depth look at actual usage of OER by students and instructors, adding nuance and complexity to discussions that often focus solely on textbook costs.

Organization

Does the article proceed logically? As applicable, does the article adhere to a recommended structure and the section guideline?

The article proceeds in a coherent and logical way that is consistent with the convention of scholarly publications.

Methodology, Approach, Conclusions

The methodology for data gathering and analysis should be appropriate for the problem addressed. Inferences from data should be sound--the author should not reach unsupported conclusions. Not all papers will use a scientific research methodology, but all should employ sound reasoning and an adequate balance between description and critical analysis. Consider: Is the article factually accurate? Is it clear the

author knows, or has investigated, previous work on the subject of the article? Has the author failed to reference recent or seminal work on the subject?

The methodology is sound and clearly described, including survey instruments and response numbers as well as analysis. The conclusions are tied to clearly explained data. Current, relevant sources are covered in the literature review and cited throughout the article.

Writing Style, References

Please indicate whether there are problems with expression or flow, but do not comment about grammar or basic edits. Do NOT take the time to do copy editing - that will be handled later in the process. However, general comments pointing out problems with style or format are useful.

No concerns with the writing style or references.

Application:

Does the article contribute knowledge or practical examples that will inform/improve others' practice or education?

The article contributes valuable practical knowledge to the field. It adds an important angle that those working on OER need to be aware of, situating itself explicitly as an introductory study. The combination of OER research with textbook usage research is extremely valuable. The author includes the survey instrument and descriptions of its use in the article, which will make it possible for others to build on the research as well as learning from this example.

What are the stronger points/qualities of the article?

This article combines existing areas of study, on OER adoption and textbook usage, to add an important angle and level of nuance to research on OER. While it may be difficult for OER advocates to realize that these resources do not automatically solve all the issues that they are sometimes hoped to, the findings of this article are extremely important to learn from and build on. More fully understanding the practices of students and faculty will help realistically acknowledge and address barriers to education. It is especially interesting to consider how the history of exorbitant textbook costs has had long-term impacts on how students and instructors use all materials, regardless of cost or lack thereof.

What are the weaker points/qualities of the article? How could they be strengthened?

This is less of a weakness than a potential audience limitation. Many library workers and other OER advocates may not be accustomed to reading the kind of detailed data analysis built into this article. I do not think this should be removed, but including more quotes from the open-ended questions could help keep readers engaged and add a demonstrative element to the data.

The ideas for future research get a little buried in the broader Conclusions section; breaking those into a subsection would guide more focus to them.

Peer Review Ranking: Scope

Does the topic discuss an element related to open education, open data, open access, or other open topics?

Highly Relevant

Peer Review Ranking: Clarity

Clarity of expression and flow? Does the article proceed logically?

Clear

Peer Review Ranking: Contribution

Contribution to Higher Education research and/or practice

Highly Contributes

Peer Review Ranking: Research Assessment

If this is a research paper, is the methodology appropriate?

Appropriate

Peer Review Ranking: Research Assessment

If this is a research paper, is the methodology appropriate? Does the article contribute knowledge or practical examples that will inform/improve others' practice or education?

Sound

Overall Evaluation

3- Strong Accept