

Open Peer Review

Brunet, M. (2023, March). [Catalysts of Open Education in Colorado: A qualitative study of enabling forces in OE momentum, by M. Hey]. *Journal of Open Educational Resources in Higher Education*, 2(1), 128–131. doi:10.13001/joerhe.v2i1.7651

Reviewer: Mélanie Brunet

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?

Yes, this article fits within the scope of the journal and is squarely focused on open education. I think it is a valuable contribution to the OE literature by presenting the results of a qualitative/narrative analysis of interviews with key players in the Colorado OE movement. It differs from most articles on OE by going beyond identifying barriers to focus on enabling forces, which are just as important.

Organization

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

Yes, the article proceeds logically and adheres to the structure recommended by the journal. My only critical observation regarding the organization is the “Challenging the Narrative” section. While it obviously needs to be there to provide the “more nuanced understanding in a particular place” mentioned in the abstract and introduction, it is a bit jarring after reading the positive narrative of OE advocates in Colorado and feels somewhat out of place. I would suggest adding a sentence or two at end of the previous section to ease the transition. Also, it may be worth stating more clearly in the introduction that these challenges will also be discussed.

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 narrative analysis of interviews with OE advocates in Colorado appears sound and the author is careful to point out the limits of this approach and the sample. I particularly appreciated that the author specified that the forces that were mapped from this origin story can be actual or imagined, something that is not mentioned enough when relying on the recollections of interviewees. Based on this approach, the conclusions are supported.

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.

The application of APA was not consistent for in-text citations. Otherwise, I did not notice significant problems with expression or flow. Please see my comments in the article itself.

Application:

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

Keeping in mind the author's warning that "OE is not a formula to copy-paste elsewhere", I would argue that it is the method, i.e. the use of narrative analysis, that is the major contribution. In this case, it made it possible to get to the factors that contributed positively to OE in Colorado. The OE literature tends to focus more on quantitative approaches and barriers, so this article stands out in that regard.

What are the stronger points/qualities of the article?

The use of narrative analysis to find out what OE advocates in Colorado believe are the factors that contributed to OE taking hold in that state. It does not pretend to be a template for others to follow but goes a long way to show that even the presence of certain elements may not be enough. They need to align in a particular way.

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

As I pointed out under “Organization”, the challenges and barriers discussed by the interviewees appear a bit out of place. I think it is because the article was set up mostly to focus on forces. More clearly indicating in the introduction that these will also be discussed would help, as well as adding a sentence or two before that section to ease the transition.

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?

Highly 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?

Highly Sound

Overall Evaluation

3- Strong Accept
