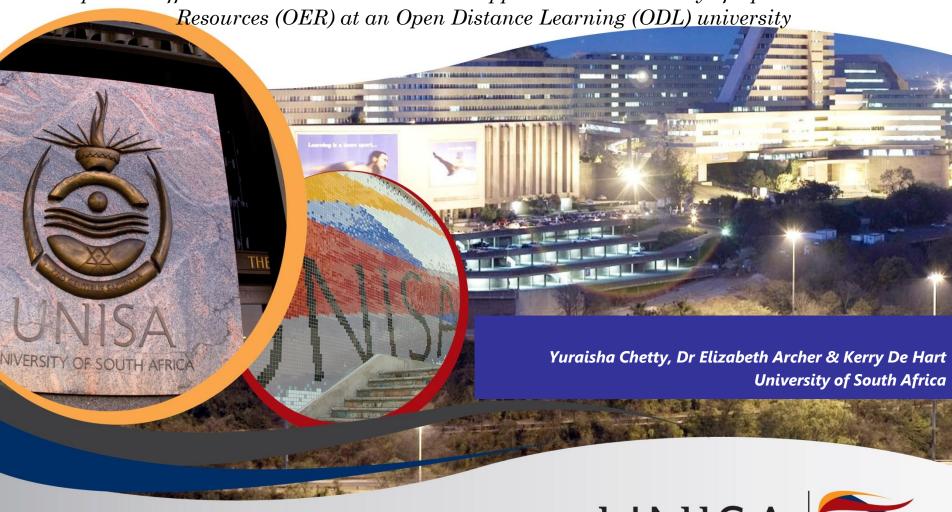
#### 21st Annual SAAIR Conference, Saint George Hotel 16-18 September 2014

An example of institutional research embracing 21<sup>st</sup> century developments in higher education to provide effective evidence-based decision support: A baseline study of Open Educational



Learn without limits.



#### **Authors**

- Open Education
- ☐ Yuraisha Chetty, Director: Institutional Research, Directorate: Institutional Research
- ☐ Dr Elizabeth Archer, Specialist: Institutional Research, Directorate: Institutional Research
- ☐ Kerry De Hart, OER Coordinator, Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellors

### **Acknowledgements**

- ☐ Pro-Vice Chancellor's Office
- Academic and Support Professionals at UNISA



### **Outline**

- Explaining OER
- ☐ Setting the IR scene
- □ Literature
- □ Institutional context
- □ Rationale
- Methodology
- ☐ Limitations
- ☐ Profile of respondents
- Survey results
- □ Recommendations
- ☐ Future possibilities











#### NOT







• OER OESTROGEN RECEPTOR

OER OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT

OER OXYGEN EXTRACTION RATIO



#### What are OERs?



 The term Open Educational Resources (OER) was adopted at a UNESCO Forum on Open Courseware in 2002

...technology-enabled, open provision of educational resources for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purposes. They are typically made freely available over the Web or the Internet. Their principle use is by teachers and educational institutions to support course development, but they can also be used directly by students. Open Educational Resources include learning objects such as lecture material, references and readings, simulations, experiments and demonstrations, as well as syllabuses, curricula, and teachers guides (Wiley, 2007)

Digitised and non-digitised learning materials



# **Setting the scene**



- To provide an example of IR providing evidence-based decision support
- To demonstrate that IR can and should embrace 21<sup>st</sup> century developments in higher education such as OER, and enable institutions to make decisions in this regard
  - Keeping up with the global ICT revolution and its impact on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education......MOOCs
- To demonstrate that IR practitioners should be preoccupied with the impact and relevance of their work, and the powerful SO WHAT?
  - Conclusions and recommendations emanating from the research are intended to assist management in taking forward <u>actionable</u> activities/initiatives





# **Setting the scene**



- Not always possible for institutional researchers to provide recommendations, which lead to action and then impact/influence
  - Nature of research/lack of expertise or skills
- At times, we perhaps deliberately steer away from this
- In this study, the articulation of recommendations was facilitated by coopting colleagues who are "experts" in the area of OER and knowledgeable about systems and processes
- Resulted in succinct recommendations with a focus on actionable interventions

Important tip/lesson: Consult experts & relevant stakeholders when crafting recommendations



### Some literature



He who receives ideas from me, receives instruction himself without lessening mine; as he who lights his taper at mine receives light without darkening me"

#### **Thomas Jefferson**

- Encapsulated in the above is the notion that education/ expertise should be about sharing in a spirit of non-rivalry. At the heart of this is the principle of openness as a philosophy which underpins education
- Open Educational Resources (OER) a fairly recent disruption gaining increasing attention and momentum in HE across the world
- Mulder (2011) OER have become an unstoppable development since MIT started publishing educational resources online as OpenCourseWare (OCW) in 2001



### Some literature



- Core of <u>open education</u> commitment of open access to high quality education on a global scale as well as collaboration between higher education institutions
- Increasing number and range of OER initiatives and programmes globally is a testament to its recognised potential to change traditional modes of higher education provision and the development of study materials
- Initiatives are furthermore enabled by the rapid rise of various information and communication technologies (ICTs) and software technologies
- OER can be seen as the "emergence of creative participation in the development of digital content in the education sector" (OECD, 2007, p. 21)



#### **Institutional context**



- A key academic strategy in Unisa's Institutional Operational Plan (IOP) is to review/re-develop relevant curricula to be aligned with new policies, the market and innovations
- Infusing **OER** in the design and development of course material is an important action linked to the achievement of this overall strategy
- A baseline assessment of the uptake of OER among staff was identified as one
  of the key targets
- Prior to this: IR provided support for the OER initiative through
  - Extensive literature review on OER (Chetty, 2011)
  - Qualitative research within Unisa among key stakeholders (Chetty & Archer, 2011)

IR is starting to lend support to new and innovative developments in teaching and learning Becoming 21<sup>st</sup> century practitioners is the new challenge!



#### Rationale



- The primary focus was to determine the uptake of OER at Unisa
- Research explored a number of aspects including, but not limited to:
  - Awareness and knowledge
  - □ Communication channels
  - ☐ Frequency of participation in OERs (reuse, redistribution, revision and remixing)
  - ☐ Barriers to the use of OERs at Unisa
  - Benefits

Reuse: copying verbatim with attribution

**Redistribution**: sharing with others

Revision: adapting and reusing

**Remixing**: combining with other resources



### Methodology



- Survey research design
- Online survey with quantitative (close-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) aspects
- Intention was to provide staff with an opportunity to expand on their views and experiences

### Sampling frame

- Aimed at all academic staff (total population). Targeted professional & administrative staff involved in teaching and learning or research issues (purposive sampling)
- First three HEMIS personnel categories of staff, including both establishment & UNISA temporary staff:
  - Instructional/Research professionals
  - Executive/Administration/Management professional
  - Specialised/Support professional

Link sent to 3 800 staff members; 483 respondents; response rate: 12,7%



# **Study limitations**



Baseline study on the uptake of OER by staff

 An exploratory investigation conducted within an ODL context based on a purposive sample

As such, findings cannot be generalised across all higher education contexts

 Does provide insights into the uptake of OER, some of which might be relevant to a variety of teaching and learning contexts.

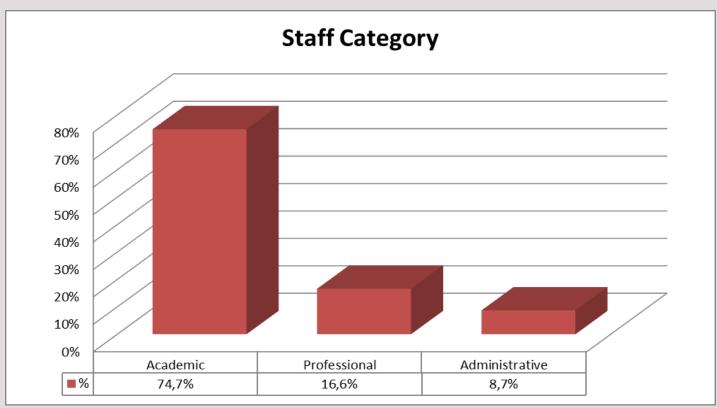




Mostly academic staff from UNISA's Gauteng region in the Teaching and Learning Portfolio, from the colleges of Humanities and Economic and Management Sciences, in non-managerial positions with equal representation of women and men



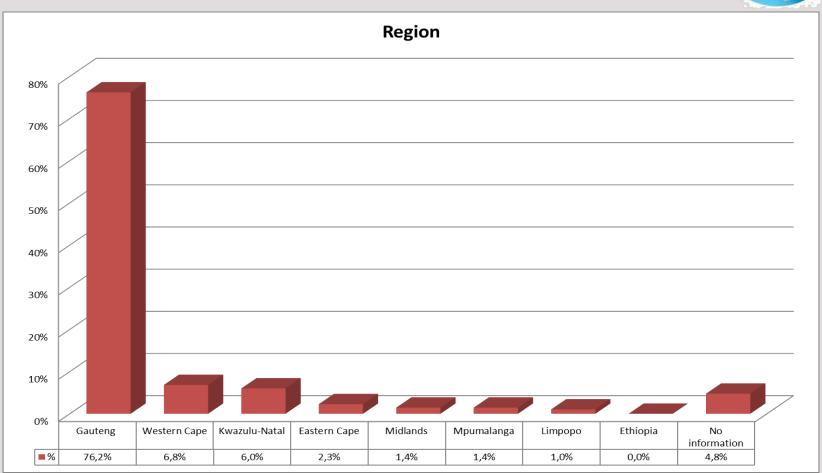




$$n = 483$$



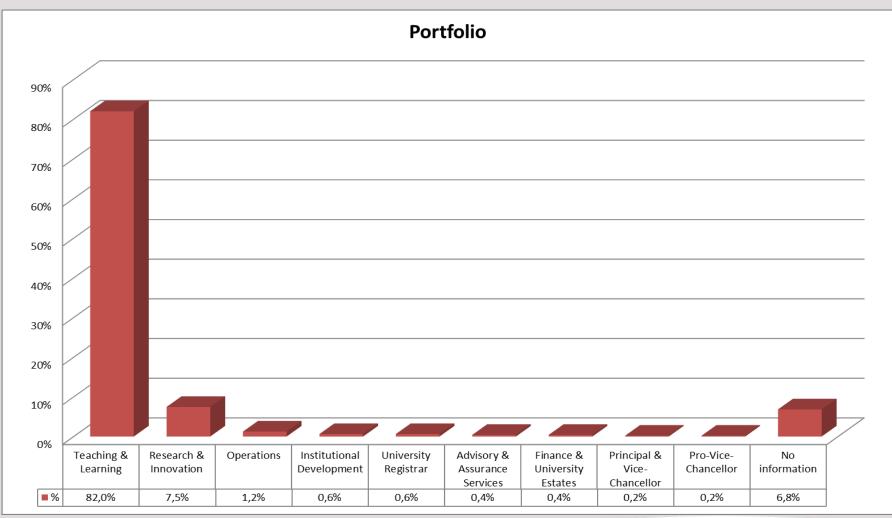




$$n = 483$$



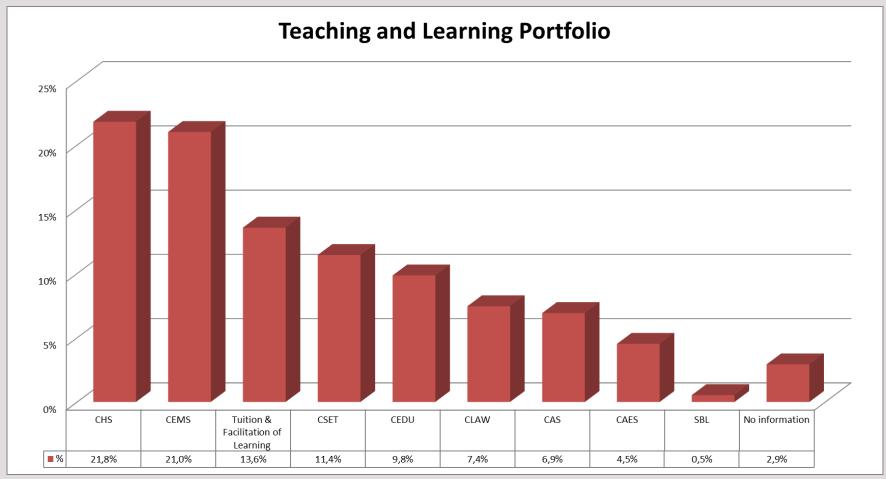








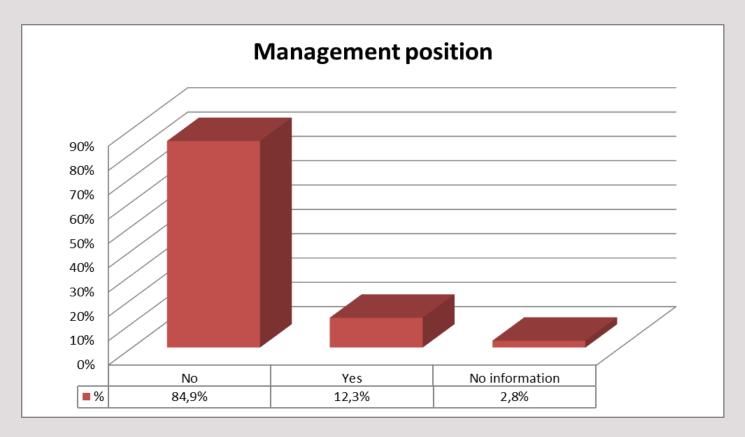








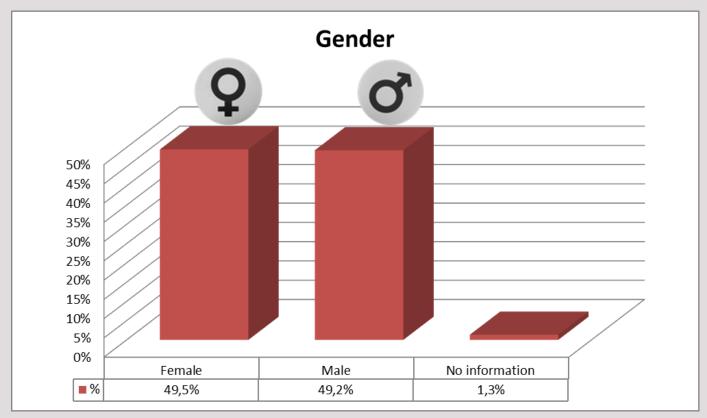




$$n = 457$$







n = 457





# **Survey Results**



## **Awareness and Knowledge**





Of the 457 respondents, 336 (73,5%) were aware of the OER concept

121 (26,5%) were unaware

High level of awareness among respondents is positive

How long? Fairly recent awareness at 3,3 years on average



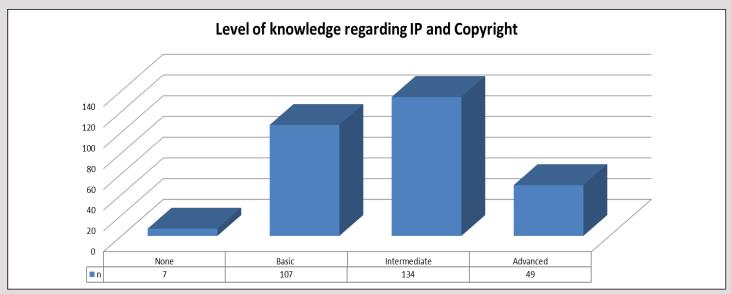






## **Awareness and Knowledge**





n = 297

Source where you first heard of the concept of OER

Internet	66	22,2%
Unisa communications	65	21,9%
From colleagues	45	15,2%
Academic journals	31	10,4%
Unisa initiative	24	8,1%
Initiatives at other institutions	24	8,1%
News reports	5	1,7%
Unsure	28	9,4%
Other	9	3,0%
Total	297	100%





# **Awareness and Knowledge**



#### WHICH STATEMENTS APPLY TO OER (MULTIPLE-RESPONSE)

	n= responses	% of respondents (297)	% of responses
	ii responses	(237)	responses
Resources that may be freely accessed, reused, modified and shared	218	73,4%	18,8%
Resources that are licensed openly or		73,170	10,070
as public domain	217	73,1%	18,7%
Is free of cost to access	170	57,2%	14,6%
Includes Open Access publication	164	55,2%	14,1%
Includes Open Source Software	151	50,8%	13,0%
Includes printed material	108	36,4%	9,3%
May be used for commercial purposes			
if so licensed	75	25,3%	6,5%
Is free of cost to develop	46	15,5%	4,0%
Other	12	4,0%	1,0%
Total	1161	390,9%	100%





- One of the strategic priorities of the OER strategy is the systematic integration of high quality, available open educational resources into courses and their subsequent release for use by others
- Other than an awareness of OER and accessing OER, other activities in respect of OER (revision, remixing and development of new OER) are carried out **infrequently** at Unisa

Very often, often,		
sometimes	Activity	Never
74,1%	Accessing OER	12,5%
49,9%	Redistribution of OER	28,3%
49,9%	Re-using OER	22,9%
35,0%	Revision of OER	43,8%
36,7%	Remixing OER	43,1%
31,0%	Developing new OER	48,8%

 Positive: 73,4% of respondents indicated that they would like to be involved in OER activities in the future (item received 32,7% of responses)

n = 233





Reasons for involvement in OER			
	n= responses	% of respondents	% of responses
Improves the quality of my teaching	135	63,08%	17,8%
Helps students to become digital scholars	122	57,01%	16,1%
Saves me time	113	52,80%	14,9%
Gives me the opportunity to give back to the community.	101	47,20%	13,3%
Helps me to collaborate with other colleagues	94	43,93%	12,4%
Raises my professional profile amongst my peers	93	43,46%	12,3%
Showcases my research to the widest possible	72	22.640/	0.50/
audience	72	33,64%	9,5%
Other	29	13,55%	3,8%
Total	759	355%	100%

n=214





# Conditions I am comfortable with for sharing my own work

Statement	Top Box Score: Strongly Agree/Agree
ONLY if I am attributed (or cited) as the original creator.	68,7%
ONLY if others are not allowed to make money from my creations.	67,9%
ONLY if others are restricted from changing or modifying my work without my written permission.	59,5%
Without ANY restrictions.	54,0%
ONLY if other educators are prepared to do the same.	46,0%

n = 252





Reasons for reluctance to share own work		
Statement	Top Box Score: Strongly Agree/Agree	
Others may make money from it	48,4%	<b>←</b>
Others may adapt it incorrectly	41,3%	<del></del>
Others may question the quality of my work from it	15,1%	

n=252



### **Policy Perspectives**



#### Factors important for the effective use of OER at Unisa

Statement	Top Box Score: Very Important/Important
Access to appropriate technology and infrastructure	96,4%
Advice and support on intellectual property issues	92,3%
Advice and support on intellectual property issues	32,370
Promotion of quality assurance	91,5%
Promotion of guidelines for creation and use	91,2%
Promoting awareness through planned initiatives	90,8%
Institutional support and recognition for projects and initiatives	90,7%
IIIIIIatives	90,778
Provision of financial support for initiatives	84,0%

n = 250



### The Value of OER for Education & Training



The highest value of OER was placed on the potential to increase collaboration within Unisa and internationally (Eight seven percent)

Over eighty percent of respondents also agreed that OER: are well aligned with academic traditions of sharing knowledge; are beneficial to learners; have potential to raise the international profile of Unisa; and have the potential to save development time

n = 240



### **General Aspects: OER**



Statement	Top Box Score: Very Important/Important
In order to stimulate the use of OER, specific technological infrastructure is needed. (e.g. an OER repository)	94,0%
In order to stimulate the use of OER, specific TRAINING is needed.	87,6%
In order to stimulate the use of OER, specific SKILLS support at Unisa is needed.	87,2%
The use of OER leads to new pedagogical practices.	84,9%
The mainstream adoption of OER is challenging for Unisa.	78,3%

n=250



#### **Barriers to OER**



The lack of an adequate ICT infrastructure to support the creation and/or use of OER was cited as a very important barrier by thirty three percent of respondents, the highest proportion in comparison to other statements rated as very important.

When combined with a rating of important, this increased the response to **sixty eight percent**. The need for an adequate ICT infrastructure is clearly a common theme beginning to emerge



Three other barriers were considered to be very important/important by about sixty percent of respondents, namely: the lack of quality OER; that suitable OER are difficult to find and a concern about copyright/legal considerations





#### **Barriers to OER**

Open Education

- 1 open-ended respond highlighting the student support dimension
- Pertinent in the context of ODL, where students require effective support throughout their educational journey



"I have looked at the OER policy and it seems that the emphasis is on pedagogical educational resources for the Unisa student. Where does the student support functions fits into this policy, i.e. If there is a repository for these OER's, will it only address academic material or will it also afford the students OER's in terms of the support that they require from Unisa. Learning must not only be looked at from the academic perspective but academic support issues that scaffold the learning process need to be also taken into account" (verbatim)







#### **Technological infrastructure**



- As new Organizational Architecture is implemented (to support a future in ODeL), it is important to ensure that Unisa creates a *technological environment conducive to* the creation and use of OER.
  - Unisa's Enterprise Content Management Systems provides for tagging of, and searching for, resources by licence type, as well as allowing for ingestion and storage of third-party OER as part of individual modules
  - Content workflows and authoring tools should include structured processes to review and harness existing OER before developing new content, as well as allowing for systematic use of OER as supplementary teaching and learning materials
  - Internet connectivity at all campuses and regional centres needs to facilitate regular searching of the Internet and third-party OER repositories as part of content authoring and module review processes.







**IP Policies** 



- Unisa's IP Policies should provide clear guidance to all staff, students, and the general public on Unisa's position regarding use of open licences (creative commons), as well as processes to be followed to use existing OER in modules and to release any Unisa materials under open licences.
  - o There will also be a need for **dedicated capacity** within various support units to support implementation of these policies and to help academics with any queries they have. The recently approved process to develop an overarching IP Strategy for Unisa should take these considerations into account









#### Capacity



- Where needed, capacity of all support staff, especially in key units such as DCLD, CPD, SMPD, and the Library, should be developed to enable them to integrate OER considerations into their support work and to help academics to think through important issues pertaining to OER.
  - Expanding on this, broader skills development can be enhanced through CPD programmes offered to staff, at a time when they require the skills in the process of developing teaching materials











#### **Policies and Guidelines**



• Furthermore, Policies or guidelines are needed that support the mainstreaming of OER in terms of development of teaching materials. A best practice guideline should be developed in conjunction with CPD and DCLD



IR providing actionable recommendations to facilitate implementation.....and hopefully impact thereafter!



#### **Into the Future**





#### Future possibilities



- Student perspective to allow for triangulation of results
- Monitoring digital traces in terms of students' use of OER from available repositories (e.g. number of downloads)



- Could propel this into the realm of **learning analytics** which is a topical discourse in HE
- Students as active participants in the learning process rather as a passive recipients – self-directed learning – digital traces
- Student agency co-constructors of knowledge
- OER can play a role in facilitating this when used by students



# Thank you

