



Slicing the Curtain: Nigerian Academics and the Challenge of Open Source

By

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Nigeria: A Brief

- **Independent from Britain October 1, 1960**
- **Population: 133ml (World Bank 2003 est.)**
- **GDP per capita: \$900 (2002 est.)**
- **Literacy: 68% of pop. (male: 75.7%, female: 60.6%)**
- **Political Organization:**
 - **Federal Republic**
 - **Civilian Administration 5th Republic**
 - “ **36 States**
 - “ **A Federal Capital Territory**
 - “ **774 Local Government Councils**

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A scenic view of a mountain range with a waterfall and mist. The mountains are dark and rocky, with a waterfall cascading down the center. Mist or low clouds fill the valleys between the peaks. The sky is a clear, deep blue. The overall atmosphere is serene and majestic.

Nigeria: A Brief (contd.)

- **Total Area: 923,768sq.km. (water: 13,000 sq. km., land: 910,768sq. Km.)**
- **Teledensity: c 4.1 million (1,200,000 fixed and, 2,900,000 mobile) by December 2003 .**



Nigeria: A Brief (contd.)

- **Tertiary Institutions:**

- **Universities : 52**

- **Polytechnics: 51**

- **Colleges of Education: 67**

- **Enrolments in Tertiary Institutions:**

- **4.3% of population**

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Internet Connectivity

- **Tertiary Institutions – c30%**
 - **Universities:- 77%**
- **Secondary Schools – c3%**
- **Primary Schools – c0.1%**

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Functional Intranets in the Universities

- **32 % of the 30 universities surveyed**

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A scenic view of a mountain range with a waterfall and misty atmosphere. The mountains are dark and rocky, with patches of green vegetation. A waterfall is visible on the right side, cascading down a rocky cliff. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is misty and ethereal.

Access (estimates) to Computers by Students of:

- **Tertiary Institutions – 70%**
- **Secondary Schools – 40%**
- **Primary Schools – 10%**



Open Ware Paradigm

- **A new phenomenon**
- **Open Source, Open Content, Open What?**

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Methodology

- **Survey of Nigerian University System (a pilot study)**

- Questionnaires administered to Key actors of ICT Units in the institutions

- Questionnaires administered to haphazard sample of students of the University of Lagos

- " Lagos, a megalopolis

- " Assumption: students in Lagos would be more conversant with web resources

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Response by Key Actors of ICT Units (Pilot Study)

- **Return Rate of Questionnaires:**
 - 30 out of 35 = 85.7%
 - 30 out of 52 = 57.7%
- **Willingness to contribute to Open Ware:**
 - 91%

Open What?

- **“Vulnerable to plagiarism”**
- **“My lectures can be made free but my publications will not”**
- **“No reservations. The exercise would expose students to a wider scope of learning with respect to a course or topic”**
- **“On an Intranet – No! But, on a larger network, e.g. Internet”.**

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Issues to Contend with:

- **Copyright**
- **Reward for course developers**
- **Learning enhancement**
- **Platform for web based learning**

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Definition of Open Source

- “Flexible systems programmes available for modification by users”
- “Source that is not exclusive to the originator alone”
- “Access free contents”
- “Invite lecturers or experts from anywhere available”

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Matters Arising

- **Some knowledge of 'open source'**
- **Ignorance quotient**

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Response by Students

- **Return Rate of Questionnaires:**

200 out of 200 = 100%

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Students engaged in electronic Learning

- **Some form of e-learning = 70%**
- **None = 30%**
- **e-learning medium:**
 - **CD-ROMs: 42%**
 - **Internet: 94%**
 - **Intranet: 16%**

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Preference for Free Software

- **Learning: 74%**
- **Operating System: 51%**

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Difference envisaged in learning strategy by use of free e-learning software

- **Great Difference: 77%**
- **Not Much Difference: 21%**
- **No Difference: 2%**

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Present Constraints in using e-learning resources

- **Lack of Computers: 57%**
- **Cost of Software: 53%**
- **Cost of Internet Access: 43%**
- **Lack of Internet Browsing Skills: 22%**
- **Unavailability of Intranet/Internet Services: 20%**

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New Teaching Environment

- **Challenge to**
 - **Orthodox lecture delivery**
 - **Academic research processes**
 - **Media of publications of teaching staff**
 - **Assessment criteria for academics**
 - “ **Publications media & quality**
 - “ **Lecture delivery & quality**

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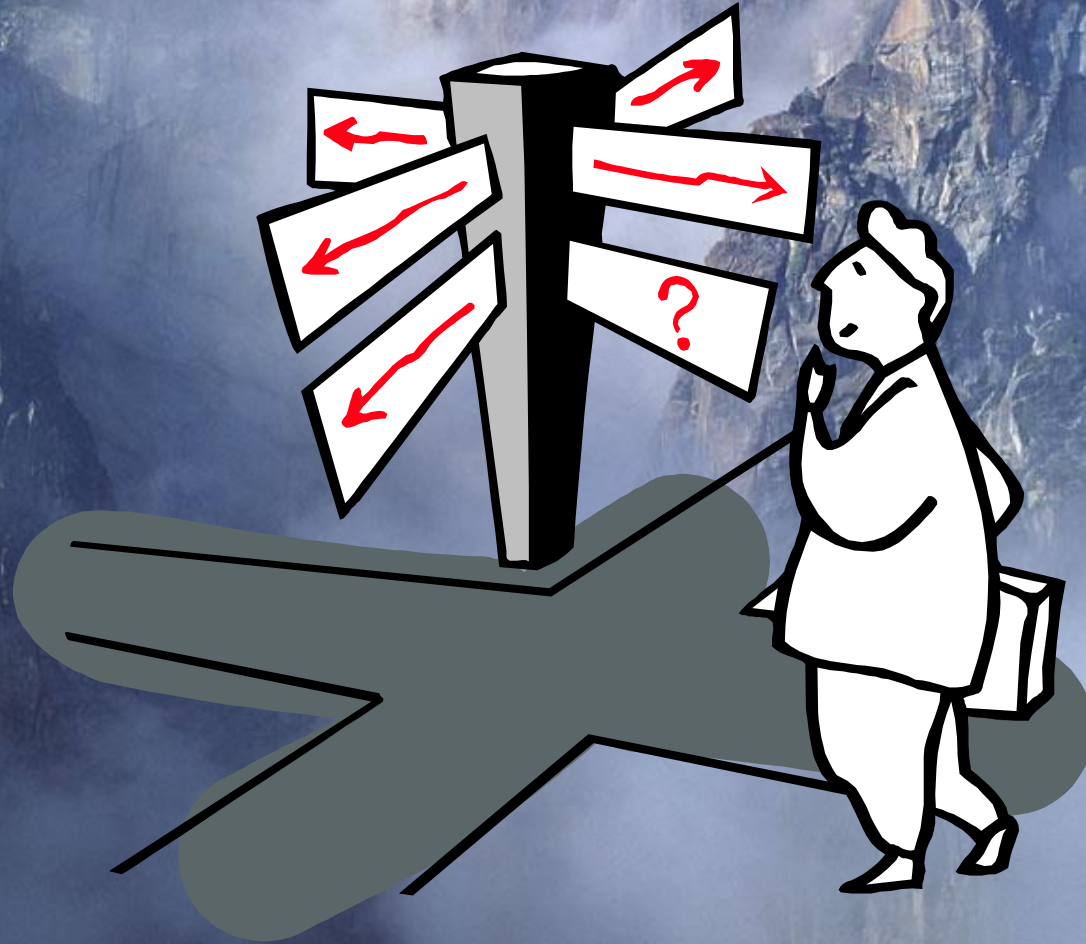


New Learning Environment

- **More options for students**
 - Learning resources
 - Pace learning
- **Web-based skills acquisitions**

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Where Do We go from Here?



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Action Plan

- **National & Institutional Strategies for migration to elearning environment**
 - Integrate Free & Open Source software
- **Success stories/Models**
 - Exemplify Private Universities
- **Bandwidth appropriation**

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Institutional Challenges

- **Development and adaptation of:**
 - **Open Content**
- **Adoption and contribution to:**
 - **Open Source development and patronage**

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And . . .

- Lest I forget

.. We need to slice *open* the curtain

“ We want *free* entrance into the new teaching and learning environment!



Thank you!

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