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Blended Language Learning at the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic

Linda Pospíšilová



Introduction

The Language Centre of the University of Pardubice provides specific language training to 5 non-philological faculties in the fields of Business, Chemistry, Transport, IT, and Health and Medicine in English. For the past four years both the full-time and part-time (distance) programmes have been supported by e-courses designed in LMS Moodle and further extended by implementation of digital portfolio using the open-source system called Mahara.

LMS Moodle as an open source learning management system belongs after more than ten years of its existence to one of the most widespread LMS used worldwide. Moodle learning environment offers tools for synchronous and asynchronous ways of communication including various collaborative tools, nevertheless its main focus still remains on the tutor as a manager of the course and on the content presented by the tutors themselves to the students. Thus the focus seems to be more on teaching than on learning process. Downes [1] mentions in his contribution on eLearning generations when dealing with the fourth generation of eLearning the foundation of content management systems created primarily for content construction and content management. At the same time the fourth generation of eLearning is characterised by Downes as the generation of Web 2.0, which can be

described as an era of social software development, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube to name a few. This period of time can be further defined as a stage of individual content construction and self-presentation also by means of blogging and micro blogging, e.g. by using Twitter.

On one hand, the LMS Moodle version 2.5 brought, in my opinion, revolutionary improvement when a new option emerges which lies in allowing students the right to participate on the course content creation. On the other hand, implementation of a digital portfolio allows for a student-centred constructive learning environment and guided autonomous learning at the same time. It can be interconnected with the Moodle environment; Mahara users can record their learning progress, collect their digital or digitalized artefacts and share them according to their own preferences and learning purposes. At our institution we avoided using single sign-on in order to prevent the situation in which the university graduates who no longer attend University of Pardubice lose access to all learning systems of the university, namely university administrative systems and LMS Moodle courses. We considered student's uninterrupted access to digital portfolio to be an elementary condition being in compliance with the philosophy of lifelong learning. For this reason our Mahoodle as such does not represent a

complete technological interconnection between Moodle and Mahara including the so convenient single sign-on option and at expense of losing this comfort a continuous access to student's ePortfolio is maintained and the system is open to our partner institutions allowing various ways of cooperation and project promotion.

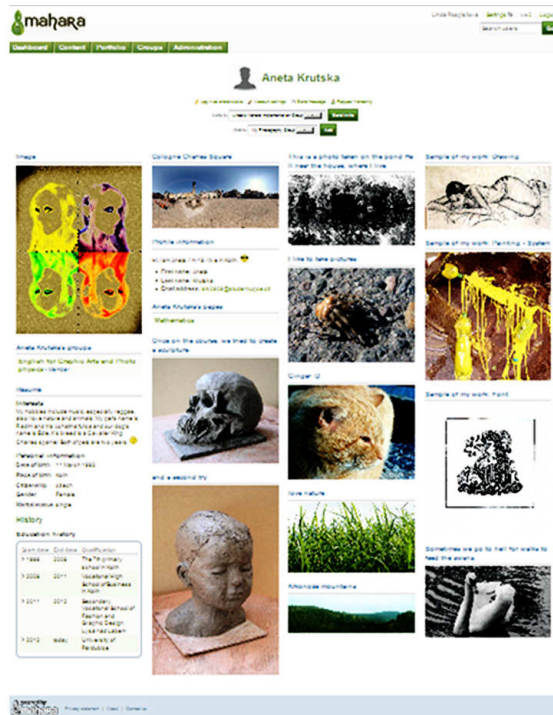
There is one more term to be mentioned and explained in relation to ePortfolios and it is the so called PLE, personal learning environment, which is defined by Attwell [2] as a "new approach to using technologies for learning" further explained by Lubensky [3] as "a facility for an individual to access, aggregate, configure and manipulate digital artefacts of their ongoing learning experience", thus perfectly matching the definition of digital portfolios.

ePortfolio in Practice

Work with ePortfolio in the language learning and teaching process is considered to be beneficial and supportive for language skill development for its long term effect. On the contrary, progress reporting and learning process record can be one of the drawbacks of implementation of this tool in learning and also in formal education processes due to limited language lessons provided by the university.

In the academic year 2013/14 Mahara was first used in three groups for four separate purposes to test its opportunities and threads. The first hurdle could be seen in introducing Mahara ePortfolio system to new users and the aspect of Mahara complexity and intricacy is often explained as the main reason why teachers do not pursue in using and introducing Mahara to the students. I decided to overcome this obstacle by providing students with necessary face-to-face initial training and ongoing support in a form of video tutorials placed on the Group Page in Mahara. The students having particular

difficulties were treated individually. It can be said that my enthusiasm and strong belief in Mahara's potential bought student's interest and helped to overcome the initial difficulties. Another important aspect was giving students clear instructions for their Mahara assignment and I always used my own Mahara Page or Blog post as the first contribution which could function as a sample assignment. To my satisfaction the students did not use my contributions as model assignments and were not influenced by them. In the academic year 2014/15 we could already observe in some students studying more than one field or changing their fields of study within the university certain penetration of digital portfolio use in more than one study field.



Example of Visualised Résumé

Experimenting with Mahara

Mahara has been used in the following class projects related to language learning, developing various skills, subskills, and also soft skills:

- Résumé Creation
- Mahoodle Project – Page Minipresentation
- Blogging with Health Professionals
- Going International with Mahara

Résumé Creation

The students of English for Graphic Arts were instructed and consequently asked to create their Résumé in English language, design a view of the Résumé and share it with their tutor. The most beneficial aspect of this assignment can be seen in opening the door to students' creativity and visualization of the standard curriculum vitae format. It is essential to motivate students in updating their CVs regularly and maintaining their ePortfolio alive.

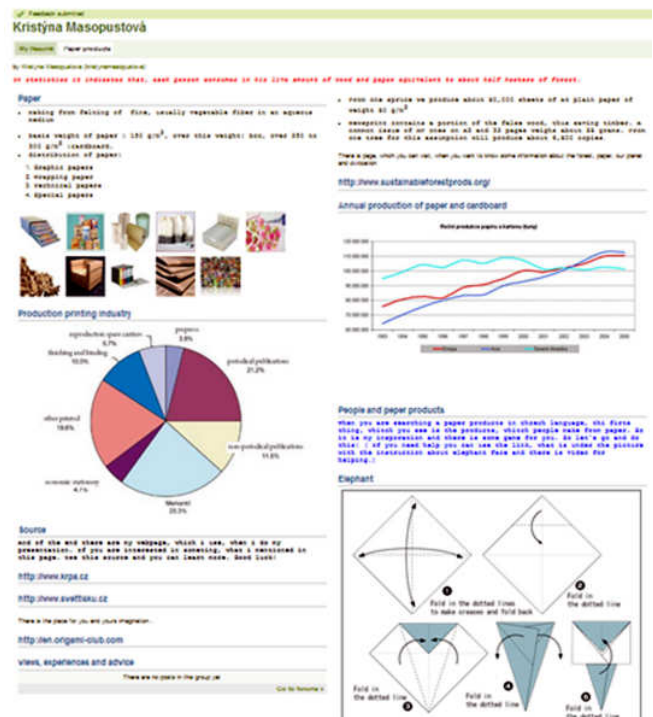
Mahoodle Project – Page Minipresentation

The students enrolled in Moodle course 'English for Graphic Arts' were also provided with specific content focused on basics of chemistry, graphics and printing techniques. They were asked to choose a topic of their interest and expand on the theme by means of designing a Page in Mahara ePortfolio and presenting their project in the face-to-face sessions. Optimally the student's class presentations were scheduled at the same time the theme was discussed thus expanding the topics and information presented by the teacher in the Moodle course. The drawback was experienced with low

level of repeatability of using Mahara as a presenting tool in the following semester the students frequently did not opt for Mahara when presenting a similar project and demonstrated their favour of PowerPoint. The reasons can be explained by the nature of Mahara ePortfolio tool which is not primarily a presentation tool.

Blogging with Health Professionals

A larger group of 43 students of Nursing was invited into Mahara to participate on the Blogging project. Firstly the Group Page on Blogging and useful tips created by the tutor was introduced to the students including a sample of Blog in English presented on the web and then the students were requested to share their hospital internship experience and anecdotes with the aim to offer students with no practical experience some form of professional advice. The students were at the same time motivated to read the blog posts of their peers and deliver their feedback.



Example of the Moodle course Topic "Paper Products" Presentation using Mahara Page

"Let's write together!
Let's inspire each other!
Let's learn from each other!
Let's write about what's meaningful!
Let's not worry about mistakes or the required number of words or lines!
Let's have fun!
Let's blog!"

Source: Lisa Serra: Weddings in Foreign Language Education, WTEED2013 Conference, Valencia

Source: www.Rickr.com, Author: stevenbrown, CC BY 2.0

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Create a Journal on your hospital experience (with one or more entries) see the video Manual if necessary and share it with our Group.

DEADLINE: 30/04/2013

2. ONE FEEDBACK TO A CHOSEN JOURNAL(BLOG) DEADLINE 03/05/2013

A Group Page excerpt introducing Blogging to Health Studies

Going International with Mahara

In the years 2013 – 2015 ePortfolio tool has been used to monitor, enhance, and reflect on the international cooperation between University of Pardubice and several universities in Finland, Germany, and UK. The portfolio has been used mainly as a tool accompanying students

participating at exchange programmes with partner universities to prepare, record, and reflect on their short study visits.

Conclusion: Feedback and Assessment

Implementation of ePortfolio Mahara tool in ESP teaching and learning at the Language Centre, University of Pardubice has been piloted for the very first time in the academic year 2012/13 and has been used for several purposes by 7 teachers since then. From the point of view of a tutor I would reflect on the past academic years as a period of intensive and rather successful attempt of moving the educational focus to students and to their

Reflective Diary - Ruda
by Alonzo 2015

Friday [🔗]
I really hate to write up early, but journey to Spain is waiting for me. I have cup of extremely strong coffee, something for breakfast and now it is time to catch train to Prague. After meeting of other people from our group and in 2 hours we are flying to Madrid. For me, plane is nice but small space inside especially for my shoes. After check-in hotel we are on way outside to see beautiful Madrid, we are only 6 in group, there were more interested by football stadium. We are enjoying small cup of espresso and fresh orange juice in the Plaza de Mayor. The sun is shining and we are about of turning our shirt - shirt of sun lotion are applied. We were also in main square - Puerta del Sol, we saw symbol of Madrid and some street artists. Royal Palace of Madrid and enjoyed some traditional food. We were so tired and went to sleep.

Saturday [🔗]
It was the first time to have opportunity to meet our lecturer for whole week. His name is David Elvís Learning (the Elvís Presley) and he introduced himself with (Shirley) Baker on the background. I really love this type of teacher, which is very rare in Czech Republic. He had nice, interactive lesson about ethics. I was impressed by his lecture and by relationship between him and his students. They were like friends but with rules which were respected by all of them. It was nice to meet new people and I respected nice view. We had also free time in the afternoon and we went to nice park in Madrid. From my point of view, Madrid was nice and clean but with some disturbing things, e.g. beggars were everywhere. In the evening we started to move to Alcala de Henares.

Sunday [🔗]
We visited castle and had beach time. After breakfast and small cup of strong coffee, we can go to the city Alcala by train. We climbed up to the castle called Santa Bárbara and made some nice pictures and enjoyed nice view. From the castle the beach was also visible, and we were looking forward to go there after lunch. After heavy but tasty lunch (spicy for whole week) we were on the beach. Sun was shining and water was not so cold to go in and we went. During both visits we met lot of kind people. After noon we are going back to the university hotel to have dinner (Pasta) and had a free time. (Small tip was located by small evening meeting in front of the hotel. I think it is one of best way how to get to know people and begin new strong relationships.

Madrid - Palace [🔗]
Retiro Park [🔗]
Castelo de Santa Bárbara [🔗]
Wednesday [🔗]

An excerpt from a reflective diary on an exchange visit

mahara

1) Finnish & Czech
by Alonzo 2015
A whole collection of Finnish and Czech

Introduction
My name is Alonzo and I'd like to introduce you myself and my project. One of my hobbies is studying foreign languages, especially Finnish and for the reason I'm excited to share it with you. I hope I'll have opportunity to visit the amazing country, because I'm interested of their amazing and so interesting.

Image
[Image of a Finnish flag]

FINNISH
18th century - First written form
Finnish is agglutinative language where all grammars is expressed by prefix and endings.
Belongs to the Ural: Finno-Ugric language.
Has 15 cases.
High proportion of vowels.

Image
[Image of a Czech flag]

CZECH
13th century - First written form
Czech uses prefixes and inflections, but doesn't make as long combinations of words as Finnish.
Belongs to the Indo-European, Slavic languages.
Has 7 cases.
High proportion of consonants.

Image
[Image of a map of Europe with Finland and Czech Republic highlighted]

1) FINNISH AND CZECH ALPHABET

Image
[Image of a keyboard with Finnish and Czech characters highlighted]

A Page prepared for the Finnish students as a part of an International experiment in Mahara

Q: Please, comment briefly on the MAHARA project (benefits, disadvantages, usage, suggestions)

- A1: It was the best what we have done. J, but it was little bit difficult to make the pages at the beginning
- A2: good for practising writing
- A3: I did my page on Mahara and I was happy that finnish student wrote me back. I was happy to speak with someone in English.
- A4: I believe that it could be more useful, if the students have a chance to work more often on the MAHARA. To write English and to read I find important as well as to speak.
- A5: I think that MAHARA is good way to diversity teaching.
- A6: Only comment is to mahara, and it is about its user-unfriendly environment - i found very hard to find some things in menu, and i am not total computer noob.

Selected unedited responses on Mahara implementation from a Feedback questionnaire

Literature

1. DOWNES, Stephen *E-Learning Generation*, 2012 [online]. [cit. 2012-02-11]. <http://halfanhour.blogspot.cz/2012/02/e-learning-generations.html>
2. ATTWELL G. *The Personal Learning Environments - the future of eLearning*. [online]. In: *eLearning Papers*, 2007, vol. 2 no. 1/2007 [cit. 2013-02-15]. <http://www.elearningeuropa.info/files/media/media11561.pdf>
3. LUBENSKY, Ron. In: Buchem, Ilona: *A collection of definitions of "Personal Learning Environment (PLE)*, 2010 [online]. [cit. 2012-08-25]. <http://slidesha.re/aCDw1k>.

active participation, reflection, and peer review through partial projects making a larger portfolio of an individual, the course, or even the institution. The students using ePortfolio in their courses are regularly asked to provide feedback reflecting their attitudes and opinions. Selected examples of their unedited comments are presented in the table below to best reflect on student's work in Mahara:

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Spotlight On...

Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia: Global Reference Centre in the Integration of Naqli and Aqli Knowledge

Dr. Nurkhamimi Zainuddin, Prof. Dr. Rozhan M. Idrus & Ahmad Farid Mohd Jamal



Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) is an emerging Islamic university which is fully owned and funded by the Malaysian Government. Being the 12th Public Institution of Higher learning, it aims to spearhead knowledge and be the global reference centre for Islamic Science. USIM embraces a holistic approach towards the delivery of knowledge, which unites revelational sciences (Naqli knowledge) and the rational sciences

(Aqli knowledge). USIM is committed to be excellent in three tracks in terms of its academic programmes and research which are;

1. Islamic Studies, Quran and Sunnah
2. Islamic Science, Technology and Engineering
3. Islamic Arts, Social Science and Humanities

¹<http://goalcentre.usim.edu.my/>

²<http://goals.usim.edu.my/>

The three tracks are supported by the six Centres of Excellence which are responsible for enhancing the research environment.

The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) as announced on April 2015, has emphasised the third phase of the Malaysian government's effort to achieve Vision 2020. Prior to this announcement is one of its Critical Agenda Projects (CAPs) which is the execution of e-Learning by Malaysian Public University. Driven by the government ambition, USIM decided to include e-Learning into its Key Result Area (KRA). Listed as an accented project, e-Learning development is a must and had facilitates the establishment of responsible department specifically to cater the needs and requirement of online education.

The popularization and prominence of e-Learning in USIM had given rise to the e-Learning centre founded by the 2nd Vice Chancellor of USIM; Professor Dato' Dr. Muhamad Muda. This centre was name Global Open Access Learning Centre (GOAL Centre).¹ GOAL Centre is responsible for the realization of online programme and the development of online education system. Officially operating on the 1st of October 2011, Currently, GOAL Centre is located in the Library building and run by twelve (12) staffs headed by the director; Prof. Dr. Rozhan M. Idrus.



The establishment of GOAL Centre move aligned with the development of the new online education system which took place on the August of 2011. This system, named Global Open Access Learning System (GOALS)² has fully replaced the previous system (myLMS Ver. 4.0) in November 2011. This system is a comprehensive and flexible e-Learning platform that is designed to provide users with a single dashboard; that integrate information, administration, teaching & learning, communication and support services. GOALS houses all the learning materials and content required for the programmes includes education activities such as quizzes, discussion and even web conference system. The establishment of this centre is also seen as an innovative ways of USIM to be more competitive in the global world by providing holistic graduates, quality teaching & learning facilities and world-class education.

Noted too that GOAL centre offers its online distance academic programme through fully online medium, known as;

1. Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia Open Education (USIMOE) programme.
2. Global Access Continuous Education (G-ACE)/Lifelong Learning programme.

As part of USIM responsibility to be a channel of knowledge transfer, GOAL Centre has developed an online sharing

platform known as USIM Open Educational Resources (OER). The main objective of OER is for the member of USIM to have a channel to share their knowledge and create a good relationship between USIM and local or international community and society, as well as a strategy to put the USIM in the public eye.

To acculturate the e-learning mentality, GOAL Centre have GOALSshare, a sharing platform in promoting the use of GOALS and also has purchase Turnitin in ensuring the proper writing of thesis and prevent the culture of plagiarism among university members. GOAL centre are also responsible in the development of e-content and the only centre in USIM responsible for the creation of e-learning module for the use of this institution.

USIM is currently among Malaysian higher education institution that has embarked on a MOOCs initiative, which were launched in 2015. USIM MOOCs adopt an approach where MOOCs are offered as courses that serve for full

university programmes. USIM MOOCs is available at www.openlearning.com/usimmooc. Vice Chancellor of USIM says,

“I envisage GOAL centre to be our effective artillery to transform the education mindset in USIM, aligned with the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education).”

Thus GOAL centre starts to collaborate with several parties including CEMCA in keeping itself abreast with internet pedagogies, new knowledge and information. These whole progress and strategy of providing virtuous online education is align with USIM strategic plan to transform USIM as a globally ranked education providers, as well as making USIM as a platform to promote interest in innovative teaching and learning, and provide the impetus of exciting and mesmerizing delivery medium for learners in particular and the society in general.

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Mr. Ahmad Farid Mohd. Jamal is the Assistant Registrar at the GOAL Centre, USIM and he can be reached at [ahmadfarid\[at\]usim\[dot\]edu\[dot\]my](mailto:ahmadfarid[at]usim[dot]edu[dot]my)

CEMCA Staff News



Ms. Sanjogita Mishra joined CEMCA as Programme Officer (Skills) in January 2016. Till recently Sanjogita was working as Dean – Skills Integration at Centurion University and Director Learning & Development for Gram Tarang Employability Training Services (GTETS), a social entrepreneurial outreach of Centurion University,

Bhubaneswar, India. Sanjogita holds a Bachelor of Engineering (in Electronics & Telecom) from Army Institute of Technology, Pune University and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Management, from XIMB, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar (India). She is passionate about contributing towards shaping the Skilling ecosystem of India. We at CEMCA and COL welcome Ms. Sanjogita Mishra and look forward to her contributions to serve our stakeholder better.

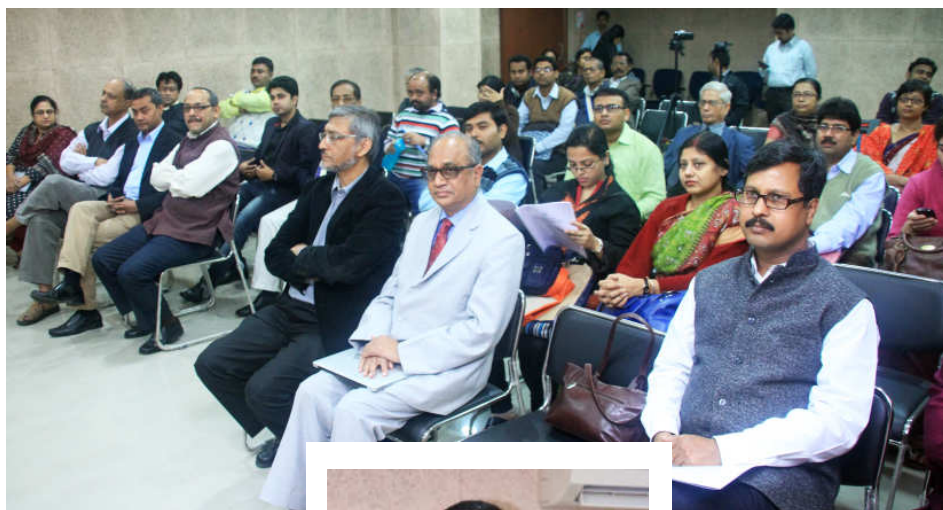


CEMCA wishes to acknowledge former Programme Officer – Skills, Dr. Ankuran Dutta for his contributions to CEMCA in the field of Community Media and Technology Enabled Learning. Dr. Ankuran Dutta served

in CEMCA as a Programme Officer from 18th Nov 2013 to 14th Oct 2015. He is presently working with Guwahati university as Associate Professor and Head of Department of Communication and Journalism. His email id is ankurandutta@gmail.com. CEMCA wishes him success in his academic pursuit.

Regional Round Up

National Conference on OER held on 18-19 December, 2015 at Netaji Subhas Open University, Kolkata, India



NSOU organised National Conference on OER from 18-19 December, 2015.

Open Educational Resources provide rich and massive open content infrastructure to foster creation and redistribution of free and high quality educational resources. The objective of the national conference was for articulating novel ideas and development on OER. It aims to enhance a spirit of innovation among all personnel of knowledge sector in order to reach the goal of Democratization of knowledge. It gives the platform for interaction on issues relating to OER among the academicians, researchers, and policy makers

Dr. Anirban Ghosh, Officer-in-Charge, School of Professional Studies of the University delivered the welcome address



mentioning the importance of OER in open education system.

Professor Phalguni Gupta, Director, National Institute of Teachers' Training Institute and Research dwelt at length in his inaugural address, the

security issue of the openness of everything. He is more concerned about the security of the materials. He told that if everything is open, there is no need to come to the class rooms for interaction with the teachers. Dr. Gupta reiterated that the teachers have to motivate the students to come to the classes in the www era. The on-line materials are not sufficient to gather knowledge as it would be nothing but a bookish knowledge. In this context, he also mentioned the system of open book examination for the students. In the same way for the on-line programme and on-line examination, deep

thought of teachers is required to set the questions. It should be designed in such a way that the answer cannot be readily available on-line. In case of openness, we should be careful and it cannot be misused. Before any materials are made public, the important factors like who is preparing and for whom it is being prepared are to be taken care of.

Professor Ashok Kolaskar, Vice-Chancellor, The Neotia University and former Adviser, National Knowledge Commission, India, opined that the quality and standard of the resources should be maintained and it should be clearly defined where the resources would be put. He also stressed upon the clear cut policy on educational resources. There should be an OER Policy to make the resources available to the public. The usefulness of OER is to share the knowledge among others. He also pointed out that the achievers evaluation through rubrics is very important in case of evaluating the OER. He stressed upon the degree of alignment and standardization of the OER. Quality assessment is another major issue of OER in respect of subject matter and the technology we use.

Professor Kolsakar also mentioned that the OER should be developed in regional languages to cater to the needs of the larger sections of the society. It should be developed in proper socio-cultural needs.

Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Education Officer, CEMCA began his lecture with the history of OER and stated its advantage in sharing the resources. He also told about the role of UNESCO and COL in promoting the OER. He mentioned that presently the CEMCA is working in developing the Institutional Policies of OER in Asian Countries. He described the 6Rs in respect of OER and different types of open licensing policies in using the OER.

Professor Uma Kanjilal, Dept. of Library and Information Science, IGNOU, in her key-note address discussed various issues relating to the open access, open

courseware, OER, MOOCs and e-learning. Prof. Kanjilal told that the OER will avoid the duplication of effort as a result the cost will be minimum. She described in detail the various types of licences under creative common. As far as quality is concerned, the contents which are made available on public domain, will be reviewed by others which in turn improve the quality. She also stressed upon a definite policy regarding the OER and described the importance of 'Stack' i.e. repository where all the OER will be available.

In his Presidential Address, Professor Subha Sankar Sarkar Vice Chancellor, NSOU, described the terms viz. Open Education, Open Educational Resources, Open Access and he mentioned that the common thing in these words - openness. He added that the OER is used with some riders like different types of licenses. Professor Srakar also advised that the OER should be designed in such a way that the intenders can easily search their subject matter. He also felt that for developing the OER, subject experts and

technology experts have to work together for a qualitative content.

There were five technical sessions viz.

Theme I: Open Educational Resources and Courseware, **Theme II:** Open Learning Spaces and Technologies, **Theme III:** Open Educational Practices and Higher Education-i, **Theme IV:** Open Educational Practices and Higher Education-ii, and **Theme V:** Quality Assurance and Open Educational Resources

Dr. Anirban Ghosh, Associate Professor, NSOU demonstrated how to create e-content through various ICT tools like wiki etc. Mr. Mizanoor Rehman from Bangladesh Open University presented a brief report on OER of their country.

The Organizing Committee received about 40 papers, Out of these papers, only 25 Papers were selected for presentation in these technical session as per the theme. About fifty participants including the participant from Bangladesh Open University attended the 2-day long UGC-DEB National Conference on OER.

The Valedictory session started with the presidential address, delivered by Dr Asit Baran Aich. Dr Manas Ranjan Panigrahi briefly expressed valedictory address with suggestions and recommendations regarding OER. The National Conference on Open Educational Resources was concluded by Dr Anirban Ghosh, Associate Professor of Commerce, Officer- in-Charge, School of Professional Studies.

After having all sessions, this conference recommends two major issues as follows:

- More and more awareness programme on OER may be conducted to make aware of the potential strength of OER in education system
- Framing of institutional Open Educational Resource mandates rather than institutional policy to ensure inclusive and equitable educational opportunities with OER provision.
- Inclusion of Open Educational Resource Repository in institutional library.

Open University Malaysia (OUM) hosted 29th Annual Conference of AAOU

The 29th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 30 November to 2 December 2015. The conference was organized by Open University Malaysia (OUM) with the theme of "New Frontiers in Open and Distance Learning (ODL)". The five sub-themes were - New Paradigm for Open Universities, Technology as Drivers in Open and Distance Learning, New Research and Practices in Open and Distance Learning, Quality Assurance in Open and Distance Learning, Open Knowledge Movement. Various parallel sessions were organized to focus on the sub-themes. More than 250 representatives from over 15 countries took part in this conference. Prof. Emeritus Anuwar Ali, President/Vice Chancellor, OUM, delivered a welcoming speech at the opening ceremony. He addressed in his welcoming address that ODL plays an important role in alleviating the constraint as it

allows higher education to be widely accessible to the masses anytime, anywhere.

Dr. Kam Cheong Li, Secretary-General of AAOU, Prof. Dato' Halimah Badioze Zaman, Head of ICT Cluster, National Professor Council, Malaysia, Prof. Asha Kanwar, President and CEO of the Commonwealth of Learning, Prof Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University, Prof. Ir D.r Tian Belawati, Rector, Universitas Terbuka Indonesia were invited to make keynote speeches on various dimensions of ODL including its development and research practices.

AAOU recognized individual for their outstanding service and contributions in the areas of open and distance education with the distinguished AAOU Meritorious Service Award. It also presented the Best Paper Awards comprising one gold and two silver medal awards for deserving candidates. Moreover, AAOU Young Innovator Award and AAOU Best Practice Award were also presented to encourage the academicians and researchers in the field of ODL.

The recommendations and outcomes of this conference will have far-reaching benefits to the ODL community.

Meeting of Vice Chancellors of State Open Universities on Reforming ODL system in India

and discuss the report “Status of the State Open Universities in India” to update and forward the recommendations; share the best practices of the open universities on ODL system; and Identify possible action oriented recommendations for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Four: “Ensure



CEMCA has conducted survey on the Status of State Open Universities in India which was commissioned under the Higher Education initiative at CEMCA. In order to provide a forum for the sharing the findings of status study and to discuss the different emerging issues of ODL system in India for reformation a meet of the Vice Chancellors of State Open Universities was organised on 14-15 December 2015 by CEMCA. The objectives of this meeting were to: share

inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030”. A total of 15 participants, comprising Vice Chancellors and their nominee of State Open universities including Dr. B K Bhadri, Assistant Education Advisor, MHRD, Govt. of India and Prof. H C Pokhriyal, SOL-Delhi University participated in the meeting. Prof. Manjulika Srivastava of IGNOU was the facilitator for the meeting.

The meeting began with an introductory by Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer, and CEMCA. He also explained the objectives of the meeting. Prof. Manjulika Srivastava of IGNOU presented the “Status of the State Open Universities in India” survey report and New Agenda, Economic Goals and Open Universities. Supplementing to both the presentation Prof. Pokhriyal highlighted on the New Education Policy special concerns to the Open and Distance Learning.

A detailed discussion took place on the report with a view to updating the contents and forwards the recommendation for the development of ODL system in India. Participants discussed in groups on different emerging issues of ODL system such as Curriculum (focusing on skills and competencies), Support Services, Accreditation of Open Universities, ICTs in programme design and delivery, and Staff Development. Participants also highlighted and share the Best Practices of their own open university which will lead to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the end of this meeting a set of recommendations and suggestive actions were made by all the participants. The meeting was concluded with summarising of the discussions by Prof. Manjulika Srivastava and Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi. Mr. R. Thyagarajan, CEMCA proposed the vote of thanks appreciating the contribution of all participants and overall success of the meeting.

National Consultation on Open Educational Resources, Convention Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

CEMCA, UNESCO and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) jointly organized a National Consultation on the theme ‘Open

Educational Resources for Inclusive Development: Identifying Challenges, Addressing Opportunities’ at the Convention Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru University on 1st and 2nd December 2015.

The objectives of this consultation were to (a) identify challenges to the creation and use of Open Educational Resources (OER); and (b) identify opportunities for interventions for inclusive development through OER at the institutional and national level. The Consultation focused on seven themes, each of which addressed during a

dedicated consultative session. The themes were: Examining the benefits and implications of the 2014 Open Licensing Policy Guidelines of the National Mission on Education through ICT; Examining good practices and case studies on OER-based learning; Exploring the role of digital libraries vis-à-vis OER initiatives; Adapting existing institutional OER policies; Developing and applying frameworks to assess the quality of OER; OER for persons with disabilities; and OER for skill development. A total of 150 participants including OER experts, practitioners and content developers from different parts of India participated in the consultation. A set of recommendations and suggestive actions were made by all the participants.



Delegate from Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) visits CEMCA

Officials from Global Open Access Learning Centre (GOAL), USIM Prof. Rozhan M. Idrus, Director; Dr. Nurkhamimi Zainuddin, Coordinator and Mr. Ahmad Farid Mohd Jamal, Officer visited CEMCA on 25th November 2015 to discuss collaborative projects relating to technical and vocational skill development, OER, MOOCs and for learners with special needs. Dr. Ramesh Sharma (Director, CEMCA) Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, (Program Officer, Education) and Mr. R. Thyagarajan, (Head, Administration and Finance) discussed various areas of collaboration like innovations in technology enhanced pedagogy, blended learning implementation and courses skills based etc.



Capacity Building of Special Teacher Educators of Odisha on ICT Integration in Teaching Learning for Differently Abled Children

CEMCA, New Delhi in collaboration with Chetana College of Special Education, Bhubaneswar organised a capacity building programme from October 28-30, 2015 for the special teacher educators of Odisha. This is in line with the CEMCA engagements in India for building a strong Communities of Practice (CoP) for ICT integrated teacher education and intended to: build and strengthen teacher educators' capacities to integrate ICTs into teacher-education, focusing on their professional development; and leveraging the CoP platform create an environment of peer collaboration; and assist teacher educators to develop and use digital libraries/OERs on technology and its use in education. A total of 30 special teacher educators (13 female and 17 male) having specialisation on Mental Retardation, Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Clinical Psychology etc. from 12 special teacher education Institutions of Odisha attended and received hands-on training.

The programme was inaugurated by Shri Mahendra Kumar Mallik (IAS), State Project Director, OPEPA, Govt. of Odisha who shared progress of inclusive education in brief such as about 102,485 Children With Special Needs (CWSN) enrolled in schools, 11,520 teachers provided training on Curricular Adaption for CWSN, 500 and 2000 teachers provided 7 days training on Braille and Sign Language each in Odisha. Accepting the utility of ICT in special education and its lack of extensive utilisation by teachers in Odisha, he agreed that OPEPA not yet initiated any training exclusively for special teachers. And he gave commitment with



the help of CEMCA we will promote and implement the approach “ICT integrated teaching learning through Community of Practice (CoP)” for our teachers of CWSN. Finally Shri Mallik wished all the participants to successful completion of the Programme. In his remarks Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, CEMCA shared the importance of ICT in education and briefed out about of usefulness of ICT in the field of education and special education. The Guest of Honour of the Programme, Shri Bibhuti Bhusan Pattnaik, Additional Secretary cum Director, Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Govt. of Odisha, stated that the development of educational standard of children with special needs in Odisha is a big challenge in inclusive setup as well as in special setup. ICT integration in education will minimise the challenges some extent. Appreciating initiation of CEMCA and Chetana he further stated that the use of ICT in teaching and learning is helpful for the children with special needs and special teachers.

The workshop was facilitated by Ms. G Mythili, IGNOU and Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer, CEMCA. The three-day training included Synchronous and Asynchronous Technologies; Online Tools for Teaching Learning; Understanding Open Educational Resources: Role in Teaching and Learning; Creative Commons Licences; Teacher Activities supported by ICT: Curriculum planning, Instructional design, Content delivery, Student Assessment; recent trends in online education; Using Wikis; Preparing teaching content: Using Audio/Podcasts; Using Blogs; Collaborative practices: Google Docs; Student Assessment using ICT, Creating quizzes (Hot Potato). Participants were exposed to theoretical as well as practical application of the different ICT tools through hands-on-experiences.

In the valedictory session, the participants expressed that the contents provided in the training was more helpful for them effectively use of ICT in teaching-learning. Dr. Ajay Mishra, President, Jewels International Chetana, Bhubaneswar, Odisha; Dr. Subha Kanta Mohanty, Deputy Director, RC-IGNOU, Bhubaneswar; and Prof. Narayan Chandra Pati, General Secretary, Jewels International Chetana, Bhubaneswar, Odisha were present in the valedictory session. The report of the workshop was presented by Mr. Binaya Bhusan Mohapatra, Principal, Chetana College of Special Education.

Capacity Building of Vocational Teachers of Bosch Vocational Center, Bengaluru on Open Educational Resources (OER)

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi in collaboration with the Bosch Vocational Center, Bengaluru organized a two-day training on Open Education Resources (OER) for Teachers of the Bosch Vocational Center (BVC) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) departments on 15th and 16th October 2015. The objective of this training program was to scale up the training activities at BVC and CSR by promoting the awareness and use of OER to support capacity building initiatives by BVC and CSR through open educational resources. Ten teachers of BVC and CRS in attended this training.

Dr. O P Goel, General Manager, Corporate Social Responsibility & Head - Bosch Vocational Training, Bosch Limited, Banaglore inaugurated the programme and explained the objectives of the capacity building programme. Dr. Goel welcomed Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer (Education) from the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi, who conducted the training. The technical sessions began by introducing the teachers to the universe of OER. This was followed by explaining the development and designing of instructional materials using Wiki and Creative Commons Platform. The vocational teachers were also introduced to the Creative Common licenses, Web Search for OERs and OER Commons. This two days training programme was full of hands-on practices and demonstrations on creating and searching relevant OER.

In the valedictory session, the participants shared their happiness asserting that, we will now start using the learnings from this training programme to develop course contents with the available OER found free of cost on the internet, in a structured manner. Dr. O P Goel has also expressed his interest in working with CEMCA for developing the Train the Trainer (TTT) Programme for higher scalability.

CEMCA supported work receives ICDE Prize for Innovation and Best Practice - 2015

A paper based on the adoption and implementation of the 'OER-based e-Learning' professional development online course of the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) at the Open University of Sri Lanka received ICDE Prize for Innovation and Best Practice – 2015 at the 26th ICDE World Conference held at Sun City, South Africa, 14-16 October, 2015. The activity was led by Prof. Shironica Karunanayaka, and conducted with the support of Prof. J.C.N. Rajendra and Dr. Uditha Ratnayake under the guidance of expert Consultancy provided by Dr. Som Naidu.



The paper entitled “From OER to OEP: Shifting Practitioner Perspectives and Practices with Innovative Learning Experience Design”, presented by Prof. Shironica P. Karunanayaka of the Faculty of Education, the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), with Prof. Som Naidu, Monash University, Australia was adjudicated one of the five best papers in

innovation and best practice category as selected by the Editorial Board of Open Praxis and scientific committee of the conference. It will be published in a future issue of Open Praxis. We congratulate Prof. Shironica Karunanayaka and thank Dr. Som Naidu for the support.

Curriculum Finalization and Training on Development of SLM as OER for Post-Graduate Diploma in Cyber Security

CEMCA has been supporting the development of skill based open and distance learning courses using OER. In this regard CEMCA has initiated developing a modular programme entitled Post-Graduate Diploma in Cyber Security in collaboration with Uttarakhand Open University (UOU), Haldwani. The UOU organized a workshop for Curriculum finalization and training on development of Self-learning Materials as OER for the

programme Post-Graduate Diploma in Cyber Security from 18-19 September, 2015 at UOU campus Haldwani. The experts and course developers reviewed the draft curriculum and syllabus, and also discussed the issues related to organization of practical, course duration and availability of the support materials for practical and internship.

In the inaugural session Dr. Jeetendra Pande from UOU, in his opening remarks discussed the relevance of the course on cyber security in today's time. He further spoke on the importance of spreading mass awareness on cyber security. The welcome address was given by Prof. Durgesh Pant, Director, Department of Computer

Science, UOU. Appreciating CEMCA's support and contribution for UOU, he informed the participants that the cyber war is the next biggest threat to the country. He advocated spreading mass awareness in cyber security through education and train the educated youth of the country over the defensive cyber



techniques and creates “cyber volunteers” to fight with cyber terrorism.

Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer Education, CEMCA made a presentation and led a discussion on development of SLMs using OER. The experts and course developers from various organization throughout the country, which included Cyber Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In), MDI Gurgaon, Cyber Security Consultants from Chandigarh,

Educational experts from Bhimtal and Uttarakhand Open University discussed and debated the course on cyber security in the school and college level and prepared the draft of the syllabus for the course, which will be develop using OER.

Prof. Subhash Dhuliya, Vice Chancellor of UOU congratulated School of Computer Science & IT and CEMCA for taking timely steps to develop the curriculum for cyber security programme and he further informed that UOU will offer this PG

Diploma in Cyber Security form the forthcoming session. Mr. Ashutosh Bahuguna, Mr Mukesh Kumar from CERT-In, Prof. Ashok Panjwani from MDI Gurgaon, Mr. Ashok Karatia, Mr. Charanjeet Singh, Dr. Sandeep Budhani, Mr. Rajendra Goswami, Mr. Balam Dafouti, Mr. Rajesh Aray and Mr. Vineet Paudiyal participated in the workshop and were the member of the draft committee for finalizing the curriculum on cyber security.

Capacity Building of Higher Education Teachers on e-Content Development using Moodle

CEMCA, New Delhi in collaboration with the Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB) organized a two-day (15-16 September, 2015) capacity building programme for university teachers on e-Content Development using Moodle at University premises.

The purpose of the training was to build capacity of teachers in providing them hands on training about the development of online courses. Since the University has been asked by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), New Delhi to develop Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), the programme was

intended to train the faculty in developing online courses. The University has already communicated to MHRD a list 41 interested faculty who will be developing 29 courses as MOOC. A total of 36 (30 faculty members and 6 Ph.D. scholars) attended the training programme.

Professor Ashok Dhawan, Dean of CUPB inaugurated the programme in the presence of Dr. Pankaj Khare, Registrar of CUPB and presided over by Prof. S.K. Bawa, Dean, School of Education. Dr. Shireesh Pal Singh welcomed the resource person Mr Ashutosh Taunk. Prof. Dhawan highlighted the role of knowledge expansion in higher education and how countries like USA have effectively used the MOOCs for educational offerings. Dr. Khare spoke about the utility of the training for the faculties of CUPB. Prof. S.K. Bawa highlighted the use of ICT in classroom situations and also the importance of such trainings.

experience on how to install Moodle, creating Admin page, how to enroll users and to assign student and teacher roles and also trained the participants on creating a course by uploading files such as PDF, videos, PowerPoints etc. The second day was focused on creating course using the IP address and on how multiple questions can be uploaded as Quiz. The method to take backups and to restore the same was also demonstrated. The trainer also introduced the participants to OER resources like OCW, Moodle HUB, Creative Commons Licenses, logo, copyright issues, plagiarism, similarity index, Moodle mobile and other free VLE tools. All the participants were also assigned a course and made as a teacher to the course on local server and also on KTS cloud. All have the logins to each, so that they can prepare the required content anywhere possible. Participants were also informed about Paypal, Microsoft, Google integrations and SSO capability.

The two days training was concluded with. Prof. R.K. Kohli, Vice Chancellor, addressing the participants during the valedictory highlighted that technology is the future medium of instruction and called upon all the participants to keep pace with the changing technology to face the challenges ahead. The report of the workshop was presented by Dr. Jubilee Padmanabhan, and the certificates were distributed for all the participants by The Vice Chancellor, CUPB.



The technical sessions started with a brief introduction on LMS and the need of implementing it in educational institution like CUPB. The Resource person helped the participants in gaining hands on

Case Study

Skilling – Where lies the Gap?

By Ms. Sanjogita Mishra

We are witnessing the coming of a new era in the country with initiatives like “skilling India”, “Make in India”, “Swach Bharat” and “Digital India”. With India being the most populous and the youngest nation today, the presence or absence of skills is going to make or break the destiny of India. “Skills” today is “*Bharat Bhagya Vidhata*”.

Given the potential of Skilling which has the ability to transform the demographic disaster to demographic dividend in India, it is absolutely imperative that we have a system in place that systematically skills and produces appropriately skilled youth in sync with their cultural context, aspirations and the demand of the market.

Historical Background

Traditionally, the ITIs and the Polytechnic colleges of the nation were put in charge of imparting “Vocational” training and produce skilled manpower in the nation. This system of training and education was considered to be inferior to the conventional modes of education. This meant that students opting to be trained in ITIs and Polytechnics were thought to be lesser in intelligence and incapable of coping with the conventional educational system and therefore, by extension, inferior. This kind of thinking, of treating tactile skills involving dexterity of hand being somehow lesser than mental skills, owes its origins to the ‘Caste System’. The upper castes had appropriated to themselves the more theoretical task of thinking and ruminating, analysis and decision making to themselves while relegating labour of body to the lower castes.

The conventional educational system was designed to impart analytical skills and decision making skills with no emphasis on hands-on skills. In any business or organization, only a handful of people are needed at the decision making level and a large number of people who work with other skills. The conventional education system did not lay enough importance on “Experiential Learning” and did not link skill with degree and certification. The result is a mechanical engineer who does not know welding or a civil engineer who doesn’t know mixing mortar.



Current Issue – Problem Definition

As a result of this kind of gap between hands-on and mental skilling, India today has educated youth but unskilled and hence unemployable. The supply of the small pool of skilled manpower does not match the demand in every sector. For example, the supply of “Engineers” (who can be technically called Skilled) is way more than the demand. As they say on a lighter note – “India is a country where people first become engineers and then figure out what they want to become”. Earning degrees is aspirational to the middle-class youth but acquiring skills is not. Either due to false pride of possessing degrees leading to lack of dignity of labour or due to mismatching supply-demand of skills, the youth is being rendered unemployable by the conventional system of education.

Quick Resolution

This inequality has led the Government of India to establish “**National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)**” in a PPP model with a mandate to partner with private players enabling them to impart skills to the youth culminating into employment. These institutions are called “**Vocational Training Partners**” (VTP/TP) as they partner with NSDC or with government departments like Ministry of Rural Development, DGET, MSME, Urban Department of Development. All these departments launched **Placement Linked Training Programmes (PLTPs)** under various names. Thus, various schemes were floated to incentivize the Skill Provider and the youth to participate in such Skilling movement.

Simultaneously there were efforts made to understand the demand for skilled manpower in various industry sectors and geographies. There was also a need for identification of various job roles in a given industry sector and standardization of skills required to perform the identified job. Thus were born the **Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)** which are a group of industry bodies in a given

industry sector, responsible for defining the job roles, developing the **Qualification Pack (QP)** for the job roles, defining the **National Occupational Standards (NOS)** in a QP and maintaining standards and quality in training, assessment and certification.

Challenges in Skilling Landscape

This quick-fix like all instant solutions has its challenges which are affecting the quality and efficacy of the process. Some of them are-

1. Lack of standardization

Even though Job Roles have been identified and QP-NOS defined painstakingly, it does not translate to standardization of training material and delivery.

2. Traditional Teaching-Learning Pedagogy

The teaching material and the pedagogy for Skill training is typically class room and theory based focussed on the knowledge bit and not on the “Skills” bit.

3. Lack of Training of Trainers

Trainers are mostly grown up trainees. There is not much difference between the capabilities of trainers and that of trainees in terms of education and exposure. Therefore it is imperative that Trainers be given rigorous and thorough training.

The cost of training of trainers have to be borne by the Training Partners who either have very little budget to spend on this or have high profit motive and therefore see Train the Trainer (TTT) conducted by the SSCs as a burden. These TTTs are conducted in metropolitan cities where the cost of lodging and boarding the trainer itself is high and has to be borne by the Training Partners.

Also the Trainer from a semi-urban training centre is unable to cope with the pace of TTT and the culture of the place where TTT is arranged. The SSCs on the other hand, cannot make the TTT sessions financially viable until a minimum number of participants show up for the Training.

Below is a snapshot of the TTT sessions planned and conducted by a certain SSC in the last 6 months

This is just an indicator of the fact that out of every 60 TTTs planned 35 end up being cancelled. Of the 40% of the TTTs conducted, there is no tracking of the Trainer trained to see if his capabilities have been increased because of the TTT.

S. NO	Month	TTT Planned	TTT Confirmed	TTT Cancelled
1	June	3	3	0
2	July	11	6	5
3	August	20	7	13
4	September	16	5	11
5	October	8	2	16

4. Substance to meet Scale and Speed

Skill Training Providers like Don Bosco or NTTF who are imparting quality skills, are not able to scale up numbers while Training Providers mass manufacturing “Skilled” manpower are only creating low quality manpower.

Solutions Proposed

“Technology Enabled Learning” can easily provide scalability and speed. Provided the right inputs have gone into building the technology, it will assure “Quality” or Substance. That way the 3Ss of Skill, Speed & Scale will be matched by the 3Ss of Substance, Stability and Sustainability.

1. Develop standardized learning content as OER

We need to consolidate resources in developing standardized (QP-NOS Compliant), re-usable content. To overcome the problems associated with traditional classroom pedagogy the learning content has to have elements of interactivity. Content must be augmented by **Audio-Visual narration and demonstration of Skill** appropriate to the NOS Element being taught. **Animation** must be inserted to make learning faster and effective.

2. Conduct Route Training for Trainers

Instead of calling Trainers from across India to a common venue for training of trainers program, the Master Trainer or let’s call him the **Master Training Commando** must go on a route, armed with various learning tools training all partners in his route. These commandos must be groomed for a group of job roles in a region. They must continue to mentor and provide lifelong learning options to the local trainers who in turn do the same for their students.

3. Multiple Touch Points with learners

Many learning media should be made available to learners, especially the Trainers for clearing their doubt or strengthening their concepts. Apart from traditional trainer guides and trainee workbooks, which are the least impactful for learners preferring kinaesthetic mode of learning, some other media are –

1. Audio-Visual content in regional language to be made available through smart phone apps and internet.
2. Audio content to be made available on IVR or audio media like radio programmes
3. Video content to be made available on visual media like Cable TV.
4. Setting up Helpline for technical assistance.

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Book Review

Quality Models in Online and Open Education around the Globe: State of the Art and Recommendations

Authors: Ebba Ossiannilsson, Keith Williams, Anthony F. Camilleri and Mark Brown; published by International Council for Open and Distance Education – ICDE

Lilleakerveien 23, 0283 Oslo, Norway:

<http://www.icde.org/admin/filestore/Resources/Reports/ICDEQualitymodels2.pdf>

By Prof. Paul Kawachi

This book is the project report proposed and funded by the ICDE. There are three parts to this work: the Executive Summary, the Full Report, and the Appendices - and these are published separately. The Executive Summary is at

<http://icde.org/admin/filestore/Resources/Reports/Qualitymodelsexecutivesummary3.pdf> although the main work does contain this as pp 6-11. The eight appendices span a further 39 pages, and are published separately via a link <http://icde.org/admin/filestore/Resources/Reports/ICDEQualitymodelsappendices2.pdf>.

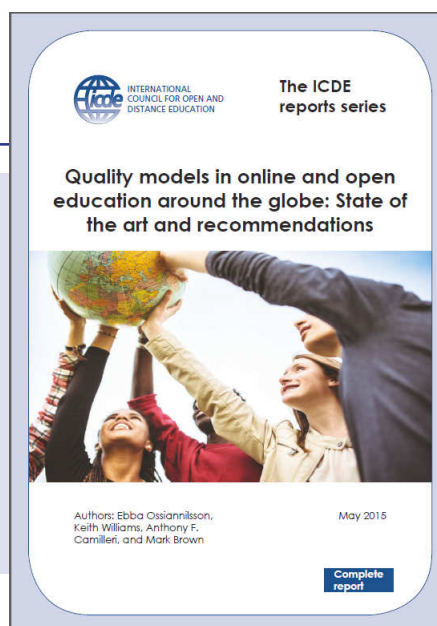
Ossiannilsson et al as authors are to be commended for this timely work surveying quality frameworks in ODE. The report is released under a Creative Commons CC-BY-SA attribution and share-alike open license allowing others to extract and reuse safely. The report itself is quite short - only 52 pages in total with the substance on 41 pages (pp 7-48), consisting of five chapters: (1) Setting the Scene, (2) Research methodology(4) Discussion and Conclusions, and (5) Recommendations. Of these the final Chapter-5 is the most adventurous setting down eleven recommendations on how to assure quality.

Chapter-1 gives a good overview of the challenges in Africa and Europe. It also refers to openness in place, and in time, and then openness in access bringing wider student diversity (p17), but does not mention openness to people, to methods, and to ideas (the cornerstone declaration for an open university), or openness to cost, and openness to languages. The Chapter-2 on research methodology is less than one page, but a further four pages (pp

16-19) are given elsewhere as Appendix-7. Chapter-3 refers to their survey of existing frameworks but the References are incomplete (eg Khan 2001 p9, Shelton 2011 p20, Williams, Kear& Rosewell 2012 p27) and include some that are not cited in the text. Chapter-4 gives a discussion that in particular finds that this “study showed well that e-learning today needs to be mainstreamed as we globally are living in an e-society” (p41) that is then incorporated into the main conclusion for elearning quality assurance to be merged with conventional educational quality assurance.

The six pages of Chapter-5 give eleven recommendations, and each of these is then covered on pp 33-37 of Appendix-8 as Proposals directed to ICDE. The eleven recommendations are (i) Mainstream e-learning quality into traditional institutional quality assurance, (ii) Support the contextualisation of quality systems, (iii) Support professional development, in particular through documentation of

best practice and exchange of information, (iv) Communicate and promote general principles,(v) Assist institutions in designing a personalised quality management system, (vi) Address unbundling and the emergence of non-traditional educational providers, (vii) Address quality issues around credentialisation through qualifications frameworks, (viii) Support knowledge transfer from open and distance learning to traditional quality systems, (ix) Support quality assurance audits and benchmarking exercises in the field of online, open, flexible, e-learning and distance education, (x) Encourage, facilitate and support research and scholarship in the field of quality, and (xi) Encourage, facilitate and support implementing quality assurance related to new modes of teaching. Most of these eleven recommendations are quite general - suggesting for example we encourage research in the field of quality assurance. Three of them however are quite significant ; - Recommendation (i) to merge quality for elearning into existing



educational quality frameworks - rather than isolate them from mainstream pedagogy - something that the CEMCA TIPS Framework has already advocated and done for OER and general pedagogy; Recommendation (ii) to make quality assurance frameworks available in non-English languages to reach other contexts - again something that the CEMCA TIPS has advocated and done with full versions in Urdu, and Chinese, as well as English, and abstracts in Chinese, German, Spanish, French, Italian and Polish (see for example <http://www.openeducationeuropa.eu/en/node/164389>); and Recommendation (iii) calling for compiling training materials appropriate for institutions and quality assurance agents - which has already been done by CEMCA and is currently well underway.

The main thrust of this report is to give an overview of quality assurance for elearning around the world not prescriptively and with an emphasis not to stifle innovation. The point of Recommendation (vi) therefore seems a little incongruous since it notes the diversity of educational provision and states this “will likely require widely (internationally) recognised standards for provision and providers at each unbundled level, backed up by appropriate inspection and compliance bodies regulated by law” (p47) that could open up some risk to stifling the innovation they seek to preserve and promote.

This book reports on how quality for elearning is defined in different regions around the world. The book takes on a lot and delivers a list of recommendations as quality benchmark criteria to be considered by institutions providing elearning. My recent work on quality assurance for open educational resources (OER) (Kawachi, 2013a ; 2014) offered criteria for creating OER that encompassed a defining eight OER-specific criteria and another thirty elearning criteria, so that teachers as creators had a full overview. This book goes much further advocating that their elearning criteria be blended in with general pedagogy criteria for guiding institutions on quality assurance. I agree with this approach. Here administration and teachers have a wide set of criteria that fully covers the real classroom context, where this includes online study inside and outside the institution.

While the study discusses at some length the concept of quality, it does not analyse and distil the various views into a useful takeaway definition of quality. This may be seen as an oversight, but the authors are trying hard not to commit to any one-size-fits-all conclusion, and they leave each reader to pick up points from here and there to build each their own workable definition. Good definitions of quality are given elsewhere by others (eg by Harvey & Green, 1993) and with respect to OER by Kawachi, (2014a) where a working definition varies according to context and the perspective of the individual.

One of the aims of this study (p3) is to inform government policy makers. The relevant parts of the text are; “governments and higher education institutions should work towards full open access of educational resources” (p23), and “governments [should be invited] to establish comprehensive systems of

quality assurance and accreditation for cross border higher education” (p34).

A key point made by the authors, and highlighted by Titlestad (2015) in his blog posting, is that quality guidelines should not stifle innovation. It is easy to see how a comprehensive guide to quality can feel oppressive to a teacher wanting some simple advice on a few points to bear in mind when she or he creates an OER.

The report states in the preface (p3) and executive summary (p6) that “improving the quality of student experiences is extremely important when considering quality in online education” but curiously does not ask any student for his or her perspective on what constitutes quality. This is despite the leading objective to establish an overview “encompassing the fundamental notion of students as active participants in an engaging experience” (p6) and the ‘critical’ role for ICDE “working ... to ensure student engagement in determining quality standards” (p11).

The report does mention however that it is necessary to “focus on what the learners (students) themselves see and define as quality. As consumers/customers their views may not necessarily be the same as other stakeholders. Accordingly there are demands for their involvement in co-definition of quality” (pp 23-24). The student perspective on OER quality is given as the base ground level in the Kawachi pyramid (Figure-3, p24, Kawachi, 2014), with the teacher perspective at mid-level, and the institutional perspective at the highest level.

In their Appendix-2 the authors refer to OER as “publicly-funded educational resources licensed to make materials needed for learners freely available to all” (lines 7-8) which emphasises the cost aspect, and does not mention the driving point for an open licence is legal safety to reuse. This description is a little strange and is likely just a verbatim extract from another ICDE document rather than a definition or effort to explain OER to governments.

The authors call (p46) for ICDE to engage with ISO in forthcoming ISO-21001 standards on quality for educational organisations. Most educational institutions at the tertiary level - and probably all at the primary, secondary and informal level - lack expertise in OER and elearning. It could be more practical in this regard to lobby governments to add OER and elearning into national teacher training curricula, and thereby develop the human capacity of ODE professionals.

ICDE recommend this report as essential reading for all ODE professionals; “It is a must read for any person concerned with quality” (p3), and in consideration of the masses of materials available to them as elearning frameworks (around forty or fifty in the English literature) this report offers a short basis for those wanting a global view.

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SMART Tips

ePathshala

Dr. Amarendra P. Behera

About the ePathshala

The digital India campaign has promoted extensive use of ICTs teaching learning process. The ePathshala, a joint initiative of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Govt. of India and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has been developed for showcasing and disseminating all educational e-resources including textbooks, audio, video, periodicals and a variety of other print and non-print materials.

Reaching out, bridging divide

The platform addresses the dual challenge of reaching out to a diverse clientele and bridging the digital divide (geographical, socio-cultural and linguistic) offering comparable quality of e-contents and ensure its access free at every time and every place.

The eBooks

Students, teachers, educators and parents can access e-books through multiple technology platforms i.e. mobile phones, and tablets (as e-pub) and on web through laptops and desktops (as flipbooks). ePathshala also allows you to carry as many books as their device support. Features of these books allow users to pinch, select, zoom, bookmark, highlight, navigate, share and make notes digitally.

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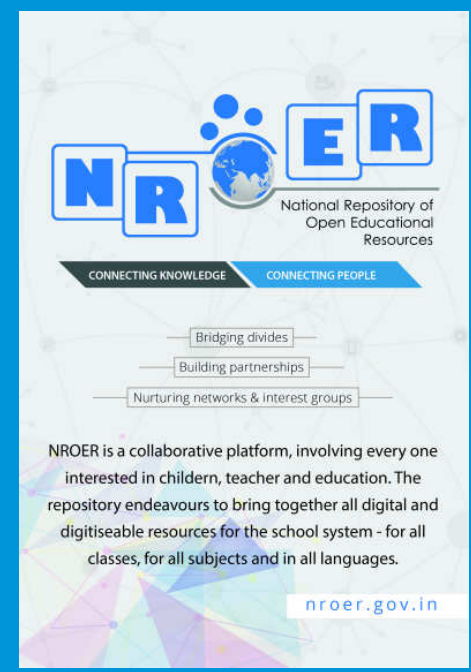
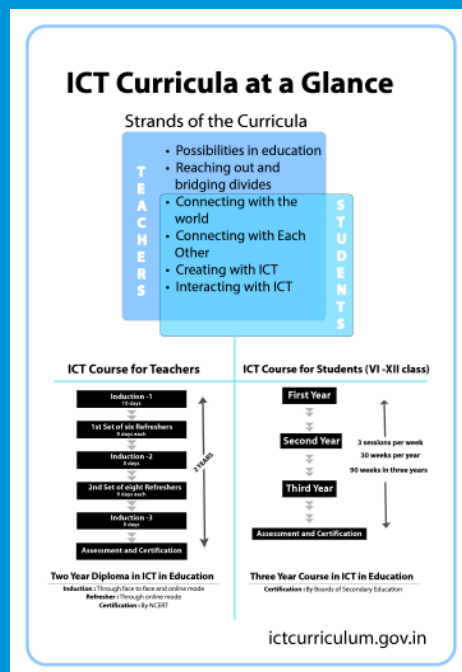
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Technology Tracking

Reporting Using SCORM in LMS

Mr. Ashutosh Taunk

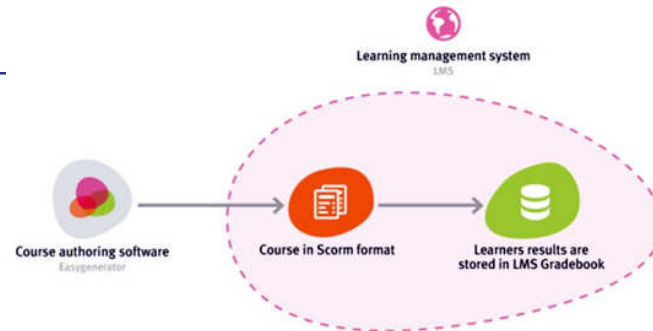
We are getting smarter and smarter day by day, and so is pushed to our technologies. Less is being manual, in a way it is good as it condenses human errors. One way is to utilize smart technology into our learning and teaching pedagogies, so that, our teachers can focus on quality of content more than the assessment and tracking, for example, who did what and how. SCORMs are an excellent tracking tool for learning and development.

Simply put, SCORM is nothing but, Sharable Content Object Reference Model, keep in mind this can be only used in conjugation with eLearning platforms or also called as LMS. The reason to be used with LMS is that, LMS is the place where the user participation will be tracked. SCORM will record the user id and will through the learning outcome or the user score to the LMS and that's how it reduces the burden of teachers, and they do not have to sit for hours and identify the user counts.

SCORM is a typical in e-Learning that makes it potential to track the results of learners in a LMS. To use SCORM features, a course has to be a SCORM compliant and it must meet the requirements of the standards set by the ADL, Advanced Distributed Learning. It makes it possible to create an e-Learning course in any authoring environment and run it in any SCORM compliant LMS and report your learners' results to that LMS.

How it works?

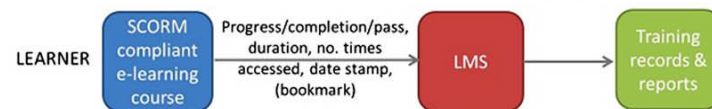
The basic set up of a SCORM compliant course is simple, here is how it works:



Create a course in an e-Learning authoring tool (like easy generator, articulate) or in a LMS, publish the e-Learning course as a SCORM package (something like save as SCORM), upload the SCORM compliant course in LMS and invite learners for participation. All results of your learners will be stored in LMS.

What SCORM Tracks?

If a course is SCORM compliant it can store almost everything:



- End result of a quiz/ entire course (fail, pass and the end result)
- Number and type of Questions answered, correct or incorrect
- Answers given
- Pages viewed and for how long
- Total time spent
- Score per Learning objective
- Incomplete results and progress (so the learner can resume a course later)
- You name it, it can be registered and stored, requires customization.

Does SCORM compliant always means the same

No it doesn't, as the last bullet above says, SCORM has some compulsory part (basically all the results) but also elements that can be added optionally. Bookmarks and results per learning objective are optional. This means that if you need to buy an authoring tool or a LMS you should check if that supports the elements that you need!

Report tracking. If the results are stored in the database of LMS it does not mean you can get them out in an easy way. That depends on the report contribution of LMS. Some LMS have very detailed report or a possibility to create one. If you want to make sure that the LMS does what you need, must check the reporting function!

Version of Application

SCORM 1.2 and SCORM 2004

Yes there are two version of SCORM: SCORM 1.2 and SCORM 2004. The latest version is SCORM 2004 but both are still in use. In fact the oldest version (SCORM 1.2) is the most popular one. So what is the difference? The core variance between the two is that SCORM 2004 adds selections for complex navigation and sequencing. If you need that, choose make sure both your authoring environment and your LMS are both SCORM 2004 compliant. If you just need the learners results SCORM 1.2 will do as well.

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Partner Speak



This year (2014-15) with the support of Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New

Delhi, JSS Karnataka Open School conducted two workshops to develop and finalize the course materials as OER for the Certificate Programme “*Nursing Assistance and Geriatric Care Assistance*” in a modular approach. CEMCA gave valuable technical and academic support regarding the development of course materials. Indeed, it was an important and useful activity to JSS Karnataka Open School (KOS). I thank CEMCA for providing all necessary help and cooperation to develop the course materials. CEMCA’s cooperation and guidance is highly useful for us to provide learning opportunities to the mass prospective learners. On behalf of JSS Mahavidyapeetha and KOS, I thank CEMCA officials whole heartedly for their support.

*Dr. K. M. Veeraiah, Director,
JSSKOS, Karnataka,
India*



Ideosync Media Combine partnered with CEMCA to undertake an in-depth participatory Action Research in South Asia to

explore sustainability of Community Radio. It was a pleasure working with the team at CEMCA. The CEMCA leadership understands the value of innovative work that departs from traditional practice and enables partners to bring their own experience and priorities to strengthen the outcomes of projects. I found CEMCA to be a supportive collaborator in the work that we undertook. I hope that CEMCA will continue this approach and engage with stakeholders in the region, partnering with organizations like ours in undertaking critical new work that informs and deepens both scholarship and practice in the field of community media and communication for social change.

*Ms. Venu Arora, Executive Director,
Ideosync Media Combine, 1381,
Sector 37, Faridabad,
India*



Three day training workshop was organised by Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

(CEMCA), New Delhi in collaboration with School of Education, Central University of Himachal Pradesh for teacher educators. DIET teacher educators of Himachal Pradesh were actively participated and trained in the workshop. CEMCA workshop keeps high standard and it was a wonderful academic ceremony to all the participants, faculty members and research scholars of School of Education, CUHP. Reflections of the workshop revealed that the duration of the workshop should be increased from three to five or seven days and also the follow-up training programmes of similar should be organised. Throughout the sessions of the workshop, the experts had given special care to balance the theoretical and practical aspects of ICT. In this regard the School of Education, Central University of Himachal Pradesh is thankful to CEMCA for providing all the support for organising the training workshop. In future, Central University of Himachal Pradesh will welcome such collaborations with CEMCA.

*Dr. Manoj K. Saxena, Dean, School of
Education, Central University of
Himachal Pradesh, India*



Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) is engaged in promoting adoption of blended approach to ICT integration in continuous professional development of teacher educators. In this regard, with the support CEMCA, Regional Institute of Education,

NCERT, Bhopal (RIE-Bhopal) organised a hands-on training programme for the DIET teacher educators of Madhya Pradesh. This training contributes to create and expand learning opportunities for DIET Teacher Educators by creating a status of trainer of ICT-education. The continuous

follow up was made from RIE-Bhopal and CEMCA to engage these trainers for further training, resulted that the trainees were using ICTs for teaching and learning and also providing training to peers. CEMCA provided an opportunity to the practitioners, through this training workshop, not only to equip with the ICT skills but also to implement it in the teaching learning. It was really an exciting and wonderful experience with the CEMCA. In future, the institute also expects the similar nature of collaboration with the CEMCA.

*Prof. Hrushikesh Senapaty, Principal, Regional Institute of
Education, NCERT, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India,
Currently Director, NCERT, New Delhi*

Community Radio and Sustainability

Ms. Venu Arora

Community Radio in India completed a decade in 2012; currently there are 183¹ operational community radio stations in India, and 15 in Bangladesh. Nepal has a longer history of CR with 246² community radio stations on air. Community Radio has been supported through a policy in India and Bangladesh and for several years through an open media environment in Nepal. The Community Radio practices in India, Bangladesh and Nepal are varied and there are nuanced differences in the approaches to community radio in these countries.

CEMCA in partnership with Ideosync Media Combine, (www.ideosyncmedia.org) a Delhi based communication for social Change organization that works with community media and has extensively worked with Community Radio in India, implemented a research to explore Sustainability indicators for Community Radio Stations in South Asia

The research uses participatory approaches by working with 12 selected CR stations in India, Nepal and Bangladesh. CR stations were purposively selected to represent the diversity in the geography, institutional underpinnings and policy guidelines currently extant in the sector. The

research uses a mixed method approach including qualitative and quantitative tools and is founded on Ethnographic Action Research principles. Research methodologies were validated through a stakeholder process. Community researchers from each participating CR station were trained in ethnographic research tools. Data was collected over six months during 2014 and included weekly diary notes, significant good practice stories, brief survey questionnaire, annual budgets and monthly expense sheets of the CRS. Ideosync researchers undertook field visits and in depth interviews with CR staff, volunteers and management committee members.

A desk research guided the formulation of key ideas around sustainability. Analysis of the data involved exploring relationships between different sets of data and triangulating the information gleaned from all the different methods. Core principles of Community Media were centred throughout the analysis to seek answers to the critical question – ‘what are the key practices that help CR stations sustain better and what challenges do they see to their sustainability?’

Key outcomes indicate that CR stations in the South Asia region have evolved several robust ways to engage and enable participation of their geographical communities especially in the process of content creation. Most CR stations report a fairly large number of women among their staff and volunteers. However, the quality of participation with communities’ especially marginalised communities and

women were varied and not intense. Overall the percentage of live programming across CR stations was found to be very low.

The research also shows that CR stations were not financially independent with very few having their own separate bank accounts. Further, CR stations had not yet evolved processes to be accountable to their communities. They seemed to be largely controlled by their parent organizations with few mechanisms for financial transparency in place. This is not to say that CR stations and their parent organizations did not want to be transparent but that processes and methodologies had not yet been evolved to ensure financial independence and transparency for the CR stations.

In terms of financial models for resource generation, several CR stations supported by large and medium NGOs are able to generate funds through development projects. Overall CR stations were low on community generated financial support.

In terms of financial sustainability, the research further showed, greater diversity of funding sources among smaller more community driven CR stations than in larger NGO or educational institution supported CR stations. The research establishes the need for public funding support for Community Radios in poor, remote and sparsely populated regions where local community have no financial resources to contribute for the CR station’s sustainability.

Some of the other key outcomes of the research include:

- CR Stations supported by large parent organizations enjoyed greater infrastructural stability, However there were concurrent anxieties around closure of the CR in case the parent organization’s support is withdrawn

¹ CRFC data accessed on 20th March 2015 <http://crfc.in/list-of-cr-station/?status=operational-station>

² ACORAB statistics accessed on 20th March, 2014 on <http://www.acorab.org.np/>



- Small NGO or cooperative run CR stations have greater financial diversity than university and Educational run CR Stations. For large NGO supported CR Stations, the capacities of the staff from the parent organization to bring in funds and /or the size and track record of the parent organization helped in creating greater financial sustainability for the station.
- CR stations that have had prolonged years of community engagement stand a better chance of generating community funding.
- In terms of finances for the CR station, the data indicates that higher the community participation in program production, lower the overall monthly expenditure of the radio station
- Transparency of financial decision making, financial independence of the CR Station and accountability to its community were some of the areas where most CR stations scored low.
- Almost all CR Stations in the study are perceived as being “for the community”- both by the volunteers and team members working at the station, as well as by listeners
- Data indicates that 25% of CR Stations in the study are able to create spaces for decision making by marginalized community members. However, presence of marginalized community members in either staff teams or management committee does not necessarily enable them to have a voice in

guiding the perspectives of various programs or deciding internal policies of the CRS.

- Gender parity is high in most stations however only five community radio stations out of twelve that participated in the study have formally adopted a gender policy. While women from the community may play a strong leadership role in the day-to-day content and broadcast management of the station, the same is not necessarily the case in areas like financial, technological or institutional decision-making.
- Stories that emerged as significant good practices show a high number of good practices around content and production while fewer or almost no good practice stories around internal CR policies.

To conclude, this research shows that the CR stations in the South Asiaregion are continuing to evolve strong community engagement practices that are leading them towards social sustainability however more work needs to be done to help them become stronger and more independent media institutions. This will require greater capacity building in terms of clarifying the purpose and goals of free and plural community media and lay down principles and practices for transparent and accountable institution building in order to strengthen the overall institutional sustainability of the CR stations. The research has also resulted in the drafting of Key Sustainability Guidelines for the CR stations.

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CEMCA's mission is to promote the meaningful, relevant and appropriate use of ICTs to serve the educational and training needs of Commonwealth member states of Asia.

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Forthcoming Events

Asian Education Technology Conference 2016 (AETC 2016)



Venue: ERC Institute (ERCI), 30 Prinsep Street, #01-01 ERCI Campus, Singapore 188647

Date: 29-30 November 2016

For more information visit:
<http://aetc.ear.com.sg/about-aetc-2016/>

The 25th AMIC Conference on Rethinking Communication in a Resurgent Asia



Venue: Manila Philippines

Date: 15-17 September 2016

For more information visit/ contact:
http://www.amic.asia/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=78:amic-25th-international-conference&Itemid=105

OER16: Open Culture 7th Open Educational Resources Conference



Venue: University of Edinburgh,

Date: 19-20 April 2016

Conference Theme: *OER16: Open Culture*

For more information, contact:
<https://oer16.oerconf.org/>

International Distance Education Conference (IDEC) 2016



Venue: Grand Excelsior Hotel, King Faisal Street P.O. Box 61191 Sharjah, 61191 United Arab Emirates

Date: 4-6 February 2016

For more information, visit:
<http://www.id-ec.net/>

11th International Conference on e-Learning (ICEL-2016)

ICEL 2016

Venue: Global Open Access Learning (GOAL) Centre, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Date: 2-3 June 2016

For more information, visit:
<http://academic-conferences.org/icel/icel2016/icel16-call-papers.htm>

30th AAOU Conference on Open Education in Asia: Changing Perspectives



Venue: Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria, in Metro Manila, Philippines

Date: 26 – 29 October 2016

For more information, visit:
<http://aaou2016.upou.edu.ph/> or <http://aaou.ouhk.edu.hk/conference.htm>

Fourth International Conference on Learning and Teaching in Computing and Engineering



Venue: IIT Bombay, India

Date: March 31st - April 3rd, 2016

For more information, visit:
<http://www.et.iitb.ac.in/latice2016/index.html>

Two - Day International Conference on Disciplinary Discourses in Use of Technology



Venue: University of Hyderabad, India

Date: March 17-18, 2016

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