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*A Quarterly of the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia*

### *From the Director's Desk...*

*When the renowned linguist, Dr. S.I. Hayakawa wrote about the ladder of abstraction in his seminal work on *Language in Thought and Action* in the 1940s, he could probably not have imagined the level of abstraction that virtual systems demand today. How does one give a physical shape to an idea or to a virtual system?*

*International agencies promoting the millennium development agenda are also endorsing the view that open and distance education and technology-enabled learning may provide the solutions to many of the educational problems of today. If we begin with this assumption, and if we take technology enabled learning generally, and virtual education specifically, how does one describe the system that emerges? Who are the potential beneficiaries, the provider institutions and countries that come together to create a system that know no walls, no national boundaries, and is not held rigid in time and space? What is the glue that will hold virtual education together or the weakness that will tear it asunder?*

*More concrete than virtual education are virtual libraries. On a hot summer day, the coolest place can often be in the stacks of a traditional library. But today's libraries and librarians, challenged by technological changes, are beginning to provide services that go far beyond the confines of library stacks and reference catalogues. Given that information is the key to knowledge, which in turn can lead to wisdom, the custodian and provider of timely, relevant information can make the difference between success and failure. And it is the challenges that have made librarians transform themselves into knowledge managers. Prof. Jegede addresses some of the issues*

*of knowledge management in open and distance learning in the guest column of this issue.*

*Moving from knowledge management to the application of information and communication technologies for literacy and adult education, we report a case study of an unusual international project currently underway in India and Zambia. We concentrate on the Indian segment of the project as we feel the lessons learned have a greater relevance for our region.*

*We turn our spotlight on one of Asia's established institutions in broadcasting. Located in Kuala Lumpur, AIBD is a unique regional inter governmental organization servicing 26 countries in the field of electronic media development.*

*We continue with our book and software reviews, hoping to bring to you knowledge useful, timely and relevant. Smart tips focuses on how to prepare questionnaires and we have scanned the world of the web for information on research methods and statistical tools.*

*It is our endeavour to ensure that you keep a copy of **EduComm Asia** as a handy reference tool even though we also carry news in brief about events and persons in open and distance education. If we have succeeded in making you file a copy of our newsletter for future use, do let us know. And, if we have failed, tell us what we should do to make this quarterly newsletter worthy of your interest.*

*Dr. Usha Vyasulu Reddi*

## Guest Column...

### Knowledge Management in Open and Distance Learning



**Olugbemiro Jegede**

*This is an edited version of the Valedictory Address by Prof. Olugbemiro Jegede (presented in absentia) at the AAOU Pre-Conference seminar on "Outreach Library Services for Distance Learners" held at New Delhi on February 20, 2002.*

#### Introduction

The task of a Librarian at any open and distance learning institution has become an enormous one as we march into the modern age of information and communications technologies (ICTs). The challenges are formidable and yet the Librarian in many institutions especially of the developing world is continually faced with lack of resources, dwindling volumes of books and printed materials and shrinking space as the student number grows. With the emergence of knowledge management, Librarians are now being called to do what they either never learnt during their professional training or forced to add on to their normal schedule. Librarians are no more seen in the restricted sense of taking care of a physically located

building for the provision of reading materials to students. They are now becoming knowledge managers undertaking versatile responsibilities. They are, in addition, expected to 'encourage the development and sharing of open learning/distance education materials, expertise, technologies, and other resources'. It is in this regard that I propose to share with you my thoughts on what I see as the challenges which face Librarians in the management, processing and distribution of knowledge in the today's world of education and especially the emerging open and distance learning environment.

#### How knowledge results and grows?

Fleming (1996) argues that a collection of data is not information and a collection of pieces of information is not knowledge unless they have some patterns and relations, are understood and contextual. Bellinger (1999) represents this diagrammatically as in figure below :



Learning takes place when we connect new information to patterns we already hold in our long-term memory. This becomes knowledge. Knowledge therefore becomes ideas and understanding, which can be used to take some action in order to achieve some

goals. Knowledge is stored in many ways and places. For example, it may be stored in a person's brain, stored in an organisation, or held in a repository such as a library, or organised in a database. Human beings engage in finding, selecting, distilling, organising, and presenting information in a way that within contexts can be used for several things once patterns and association can be discerned from them. Given the rate at which knowledge is generated today, individuals, organizations, and educational institutions must manage information and knowledge effectively and efficiently. Librarians' role today is to assist the distance learner to effectively process knowledge and information available in libraries to gain wisdom.

#### Knowledge management

Knowledge management is the capturing, processing, storing and sharing of data, information and knowledge through reliable, fast and rapid access. Knowledge management is increasingly being utilised in many areas of individual, organisational and national operations including strategic planning, decision-making, training, control and effectiveness. Knowledge management is exerting significant impact on the need for mass education, access and equity, cost-effectiveness and efficient system of delivery of instruction.

The concept of knowledge management is a recent one emanating from commerce and industry where there is increasing need to utilize knowledge for many areas of their operations such as strategic planning, corporate decision making, workplace training, control and effectiveness and competitive edge. According to Davidson (1996) knowledge management in an organisation must align with its mission (what are we trying to accomplish?), respond to competition (how do we gain a competitive edge?), should focus on performance (how do we deliver the results?), and anticipate and address change (how do we cope with

change?). Many organizations have now corporatised knowledge management as a way of continuous development and improvement of their operations and marketing. Hewlett Packard is one example of an organisation which has developed a knowledge management system called 'Knowledge Links' for identifying, codifying and storing company knowledge and accessible to all of its employees.

### Knowledge management and open and distance learning

Open and distance learning is changing within a larger global environment that is also changing in a number of ways. First, the world has moved from an industrial-based economy to an information-based one in which knowledge is seen as more profitable than capital services. Indeed there are many organisations existing today just to sell information, and they are doing so with high profits.

Second, the need to transmit the high volume of information and knowledge being generated in an emerging information-based economy has led to the phenomenal development we are witnessing in the area of communication. This development in information and communication technologies has transformed how, where and what is communicated at a speed far greater than what was imagined a few months ago. As a result, the variety of technologies available for transmitting information has changed the world's view of what information and communications are. It has globalised information and has brought world economies to the doorsteps of even the remotest farmer.

These recent developments in technology as mentioned above have two facets, which are now transforming teaching and learning. A few years ago we saw the emergence of affordable, portable, personal computers laden with

multimedia capabilities. Next was the availability of networking, which allows global contact asynchronously or synchronously. These have unleashed a tidal wave of unlimited growth of the Internet, which has made the use of the Web in open and distance learning and teaching possible. The indications are that we have not even scratched the surface of the tremendous potential of its use in instruction. It now means that individuals, institutions and organisations must devise means of managing knowledge in ways that would be efficient in meeting the needs of their customers. We need to give to the customer or learner the right information and knowledge they require at the point and time needed.

### Libraries

Before the advent of non-contiguous education which was variously known and labelled as 'correspondence', 'off-campus', 'extension', 'part-time', 'continuing' and 'distance' education, libraries have serviced learners through the professional delivery of information and knowledge. The collection, storage, and distribution of knowledge and information followed as a set pattern of management and served mainly on-campus learners and staff. Their system was closed and not often accessible to the public. The realisation of the need to provide the community with some limited form of information and knowledge led to the establishment in many parts of the world of community libraries. These are open to the public and all the information and knowledge contained in them is accessible to all. What needs to be mentioned is that the 'knowledge' within libraries is not strictly speaking managed as such. They are, from our definition of knowledge above, pieces of information and data which the learner or reader would need to acquire and attach some patterns and understanding to in order to become knowledge. However libraries, from my limited understanding of their operations,

have always engaged in and perfected their knowledge management system, which focuses on the acquisition, storage, and distribution of knowledge to their customers. There has been a shift in non-contiguous education both in practice and in nomenclature as outlined above. Now variously known as 'open', 'distributed', 'flexible', 'synchronous', 'asynchronous', and 'virtual', the offering of education at a distance has now taken a new dimension in which technology plays an increasingly dominant role in the delivery of instruction and therefore of information and knowledge.

Furthermore the emerging focus or refocus on life-long and life-wide learning will mean that libraries need to manage literacy instruction to the public in greater dimension than currently occurs. The library is therefore facing the challenge of providing information and knowledge to customers through reliable, rapid, and secure access. Several libraries are therefore turning to the Internet as a solution and they are going electronic or virtual.

### Virtual Library and Virtual Librarianship

Virtual libraries started, as a small experiment in the USA less than ten years ago, are having an effect all over the world. Many developing countries and institutions are establishing electronic or virtual libraries. Nigeria has recently launched its nation-wide virtual library project and it is the most extensive national virtual libraries so far.

From my search in the literature the main reasons why electronic library resources are being established include

- to provide easy, fast, round-the-clock and flexible access to the retrieval and processing of information to support learning.
- to eliminate unnecessary duplication and thereby maximise the cost-effective use of material resources.

- to provide a friendly learner-driven library support services to all learners, especially those remotely located from institutions and necessary facilities.
- to harness current development and global effort in information and communications technology for the provision of education for all, and
- to provide greater opportunity as well as reliable platform for research, ease of collection and monitoring of user statistics of library resources.

The justification for Virtual Libraries is not far fetched. Any educational system or institution worth its salt must provide information and material resources centre to support teaching, learning and research. Library resource centres provide access to literature and space for private study and referencing. Traditionally, library resources are housed in physical space locations, often hold multiple copies of materials, require extensive human and financial resources, and demand constant updating, replacement, and refurbishment of the resources. Apart from the fact that this situation exerts extensive strain on the system, it deplete resources, and increases wastage. In addition, as has occurred in recent times, it has been difficult if not impossible to keep up with the library resources needs of the ever-growing population of students and staff in developing countries. As a result it is possible to proffer as many reasons as there are librarians. But let me list just a handful of the reasons for an electronic library system.

*First* is the issue of the sheer size and scope of library resources provisions for education today. With the constant explosion of knowledge each institution will continue to require both qualitative and quantitative expansions to cope the resources required for teaching and learning. As a result an alternative system which is cost-effective, relatively cheap to

maintain, and provides access to current and latest materials needs to be found. Electronic library resources can be shared by all students within an institution or all institutions within a country at a fraction of the total cost required to support as all the physical libraries within the higher education system in the country. Furthermore, it is projected that 1,000 electronic databases/resources are equivalent to 300,000 volumes of printed materials. These will require 2,650m<sup>2</sup> of shelving space alone, which is saved if the library is electronic.

*Second*, the use of distance education methods to educate people in massive scales has become quite pervasive all over the world due to its obvious advantages in providing education services without compromising quality. The progression is that for the immediate future distance education mode would be the default mode rather the alternative mode. Therefore the availability of a library resource centre, no matter how remotely located, that is accessible via electronic means at the convenience of students and staff is of utmost importance. All students can share this sort of electronic provision in the system with little or no difficulty at all.

*Third*, the phenomenal development in telecommunications, computing and information and knowledge management has led to the advent and use of virtual education. The trend now is for institutions to go virtual in the delivery of instruction. A virtual education institution, as defined by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), is an organisation that directly, or indirectly, uses information and communications technology (ICT) to provide educational services; this includes traditional agencies such as universities or non-educational organisations that distribute virtual educational services. Virtual education is profoundly affecting access to educational services;

online distance learning is less onerous than a correspondence course. Furthermore, virtual learning has affected the ways and means with which people learn, the role of community tele-learning centres which provide access to ICTs.

*Fourth*, in recent times post secondary educational institutions have been under tremendous pressure for change as a response to diminishing budget, need to reach students other than their traditional clientele, and adapt current development in information technology for their the delivery of instruction. As a result, many institutions of higher learning worldwide have turned towards electronic networking in academic services. In summary, some of the advantages of an electronic library resources system are given in Table-1.

#### Challenges of modern-day Librarianship

The challenges, which face Librarians in the management, processing and distribution of knowledge in the today's world of education and especially the emerging open, and distance-learning environment, are multi-faceted and compelling.

The emergence of virtual libraries has thrown up several challenges to nations, institutions and Librarians. The training of library professions will now have to change. Librarians must first and foremost be proficient in the use of ICTs and especially web-based environment and become conversant with the daily changes in and on the Internet. It also means that for Librarians in open and distance learning, understanding all of the issues, which surround the provision of knowledge and information resources to remotely, located learners must be central to their training. Above all, improvisation especially in rural areas where the infrastructural provisions are either inadequate or non-existent becomes a challenge. However, there is another challenge

Table 1: Comparison of Library Services

No	Library Services	Traditional Library	Electronic Library
1	Opening hours	Limited	Round-the-clock, all- the-year round
2	Student remote access	Not possible	Possible
3	Services to non-traditional students	Grossly limited	Online delivery
4	Access to resources	Limited to shelf search in physical locations	Instant and electronic
5	Search engines	Manual and tedious	Electronic, easy and extensive
6	Time factor	Does not save time, in fact waste time	Significant saving, no travel time required
7	Seating space and Shelf space	No saving	No seating space required
8	Manpower requirements	High	Low
9	Multiple access	Not flexible	Easy and cheap
10	Resource sharing	Inconvenient, slow turnaround time	Convenient, fast turn-around.
11	Migration	Limited	Use the Internet to access other libraries and materials

which we must not lose sight of. In spite of all the noise being made about the ubiquity of emerging information and communications technologies, thousands of learners in rural and remote locations or even in urban areas who cannot access the Internet due to financial means will still need to be catered for. At the moment, from my subjective observation, about 90% of those who live in developing countries are yet to have any contact in one form or the other to the Internet due to illiteracy, poverty, physical distance or bureaucratic obstacles. Even for those who have access to the Internet, the issue of free access to all libraries or to all the information in libraries, which may not be those they are directly registered with, needs to be sorted out.

For librarians and administrators, providing electronic libraries is one thing but proving distance learners with library skills is another. It might not just be taking what is available for on-campus on-site users and dumping it on the Internet. Using the Internet requires completely different protocols and orientation, and one would hope that libraries would not fall into the same mistakes that web-based instructional developers are making. A secondary consideration is that in the old system, knowledge management was undertaken in the libraries by a few senior staff, especially the Librarian, senior administrators. The concept of knowledge management makes available all in-house information and knowledge including decision making to all staff in the organisation.

My limited experience with the electronic library of the Open University of Hong Kong and the Virtual Library project for Nigeria brings me to the next challenge. One great challenge that has arisen today is how do we train a Virtual or an Electronic Librarian? What should constitute the curriculum of a degree in Virtual Librarianship considering that the various areas of knowledge and information that a Librarian must learn continue to increase by the day? Who should do the training of Virtual Librarians when our current crop of Librarians were not trained as Virtual Librarians and have not the opportunity of becoming familiar or proficient in virtual librarianship? For a start, we may have to look for support and assistance in the direction of current databases in the world such as the ICDL in the UK, the CRIDALA of The Open University of Hong Kong, The World Bank Global Distance Education Network, and the recently established Commonwealth Open and Distance Learning Knowledge Network (CODLINK).


Another area of formidable challenge is how librarians can help distance learners to learn more efficiently. Distance learners are used to self-paced individualised learning supplemented or complemented by some tutorials and some form of conferencing with peers and tutors. Modern distance learners cannot avoid the explosion of knowledge or the necessity for using ICT in their studies, especially for retrieving information. Therefore, in addition to providing information and knowledge, libraries and

organisations should provide them with guidelines for managing the knowledge they are bombarded with in libraries, databases and other sources. How for example should a learner browse through hundreds of materials and web sites systematically to eliminate what is not significant or relevant to the information and knowledge needed for the course? How can learners keep their mind focused on accessing relevant information while ploughing through hundreds of web sites capable of sidetracking them? We need, as facilitators of learning, to guide learners towards efficient management of knowledge.

### Conclusion

Finally, I expect that at your next seminar issues such as how to train a Virtual Librarian, how to create an effective working environment for a Virtual Librarian, and how the librarian can meaningfully contribute to the quality of learning by a distance learner will engage our discussions.

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## Spotlight on...

# AIBD: A Celebration of Excellence in Broadcasting



### Introduction

The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) is a unique regional inter-governmental organization servicing 26 countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) in the field of electronic media development. The Government of Malaysia hosts it.

The AIBD is mandated to achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia-Pacific region through policy and resource development. The Institute



seeks to fulfill this mandate by mobilizing the intellectual and technological resources available within the national broadcasting organizations of its member countries as well as regional and international bodies through a well-established infrastructure and networking mechanism which includes government agencies, non-governmental organizations, institutions of higher learning, the private sector and individual professionals.

The new strategic plan of the AIBD calls upon the Institute, given its status as a centrally-located pan regional inter-governmental organization, to play a more assertive role for the benefit of its present and future members by serving as:

1. The regional platform to encourage dialogue and cooperation in the electronic media policy of the Asia-Pacific region, taking full

2. account of emerging current and global, regional and national issues;
2. The window for regional policy makers to access information to world-wide mass media policy formulation and regulations and vice versa;
3. A vehicle to establish inter-regional links and cooperation for transborder media and communications development;
4. A think-tank for the development of regional programming that reflects the traditional values of the Asia-Pacific region;
5. An agent of change in the regional IT environment;
6. A catalyst for national media development, taking account of new partnerships between manufacturers, service providers and the governments;
7. A media consultancy resource house to assist member countries;
8. A reference centre and provider for human resource development.

### The Institute

The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development is located on the second floor of Bangunan IPTAR within the ANGKASAPURI Complex, home to the National Broadcasting Organization of the Government of Malaysia - Radio Television Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur. Membership of the AIBD has so far been confined to sovereign states only but they are allowed to designate the broadcasting authority of the country to be the beneficiary. The Institute currently enjoys a membership of 26 countries and two-donor member, and moves are afoot to expand the membership rolls not only to include more sovereign states as full members but also to open it up

to the private sector and others to come in as associate members. The countries which are member of AIBD are: Afghanistan, Australia (Donor Member), Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Canada (Donor Member), Fiji, France, India, Indonesia, Iran, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Micronesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The AIBD was begun in the late 60's as an UNDP-Funded Project, implemented by UNESCO. The agreement establishing the AIBD was formally concluded on 12 August 1977 in Kuala Lumpur with Malaysia endorsed as the host country for the institute.

### New Paradigm

As the new millennium is right here and consequent upon a "soul-searching" exercise conducted by the Institute, a new Strategic Plan has been formulated to provide a direction to take the AIBD into the future. The Strategic Plan calls for the Institute to embark on a paradigm shift with a new vision, new mission and a new set of objectives.

### Vision

The paramount aim of the Institute is to achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia Pacific region through policy and resource development.

### Mission

In translating the vision into a mission, the Institute plans to undertake to:

- Encourage regional dialogue and cooperation in electronic media policy of the Asia-Pacific region;
- Provide an Asia-Pacific regional platform for international cooperation in the electronic media development;
- Assist member countries in human resource development in the electronic media, consistent with their development needs; and

- Assist member countries with electronic media consultancy.

### Objectives

Taking into consideration the developmental needs of broadcasters in the region and the



importance of a strong partnership between the public and private sectors since the latter is playing an increasingly significant role as a purveyor of information at the national, regional and global levels, the Institute has set its new objectives to:

- Promote discourse and dialogue that help to shape electronic media policy in the region;
- Promote closer regional cooperation among member countries in the electronic media development and convergence;
- Promote a partnership between the public and private sector that encourages the most effective utilization of the resources allocated for electronic media development;
- Promote electronic media management that encourages continuous human resource development;
- Collaborate in electronic media research;
- Establish strong inter-regional links for international cooperation and collaboration; and
- Supplement and compliment the activities of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU).

### Achievements

The activities of the Institute in the last two decades were, in the main,

in the area of skill development for broadcasters. These activities were "demand-driven" responding to needs identified by the member-countries themselves. As a consequence, the Institute emerged as the lead provider of broadcasting training in the region. Its relevance and success is manifested by the fact that more than 16,500 personnel from countries within the Asia-Pacific region have been beneficiaries of the Institute's training programme, several of whom now occupy senior managerial positions in the broadcasting industry.

### Activities

AIBD runs around 60 -80 activities a year covering all most all the regions. The training programmes provided by the Institute cover a wide variety of specialized fields from production to management of radio and TV operations, news and current affairs programming, digital transmission and satellite broadcasting to computer assisted instruction, computer graphics and animation to audience research and programme evaluation and training methodology. The institute is now emerging as key training provider of new media including Internet Broadcasting and Web-based learning.

AIBD successfully created a regional platform to discuss and



evolve media policies by organizing a number of seminars or road shows on public service broadcasting and audiovisual piracy and copyright issues. AIBD will be organizing a meeting of Ministers on Information and Broadcasting of the countries from Asia and Pacific

in February 2003 in Bangkok and hosted by Minister of Information, Royal Government of Thailand.

More recently, AIBD started *advisory services and consultancy services* in 2000 to its members in management, technology migration and media policy. AIBD adopts multi-media approaches to its effort to build up human resources development. It developed a number of publications and other prototype training materials in various media forms. One example is the interactive CD-ROM on News Reading and Commercial Production for Radio, launched in February 1998 and Virtual Learning Center for broadcasting in 2001 in collaboration with ABU and ITU. A number of printed publications and handbooks are also published in the last two years on issues on media policies and training methodologies. AIBD also developed Digital Information Resources Center in 2000 to provide a platform to the members to share their training resources, programmes and materials

### Partnerships

In its endeavor to successfully implement its core and other activities, the Institute had undertaken a three-pronged initiative at national, regional and international levels aimed at establishing appropriate partnership arrangements with all existing and future international and intergovernmental organizations that also attach priority to electronic media development. **ECA**

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## Case Study...

# Application of ICT for Adult Literacy

*Vineeta Sinha*

### The context

The case study examines the Indian segment of a pioneering international pilot project in the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in adult literacy. After the initial supervision of IGNOU, The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is currently implementing the project directly with state level collaborating partners in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Tamilnadu. All these states rank low in literacy levels.

### Literacy Rates in project States

States	% Population	%Female literacy	%Male literacy
Rajasthan	61.03	76.46	44.34
Madhya Pradesh	64.11	76.80	50.28
Tamil Nadu	73.47	82.33	64.55

Source: Census of India, 2001

### The Beginning

With the financial assistance from DFID, The Commonwealth of Learning initiated an ICT based adult literacy project in India.



Within the overall project goals to promote adult literacy in rural and semi-urban areas with the help of ICT, the project aims at promoting the value and assess the effectiveness of technology based community-learning centers in the provision of literacy training in

reading, numeric and appliance skills. The project also has an objective of placing emphasis on the community and being sensitive to the local information needs, community ownership of the equipment, demystifying technology and to develop ICT as a powerful tool in spreading information of both the social and economic relevance. The idea was to use ICT as an important means for improving the conditions of the poor.

### Technology-based Community Learning Centers

The partner organizations have established the Technology-based

Community Learning Centers (TCLCs) in the rural and semi-urban areas. The technological equipments were placed at these centers and the instructors were hired by the partner agencies to mobilize the community, conduct literacy classes with the help of the technology available for the adults who were illiterates, neo-literates, and semi-literates and for learners who are in the Post Literacy Phase and the Continuing Education phase. The technological equipments given to the TCLCs were two Pentium III computers, one Laser Printer, one still camera, TV, VCR, Audio music system, two Uninterrupted Power Supply systems, and other stationery items. The partners were also given Digital camera, Video recorder, LCD projectors, one Pentium III computer, CD-Writer, and other supporting equipments.

### The project

implementation approach  
**SRCs:** The project Coordinators at the SRCs were the contact persons who are responsible for taking up the project activities, mutually decided with the nodal agency in India. The SRCs had an advantage of working in the field of adult literacy through Primer based approach, as they were partners with the Government for the National Literacy Mission. The SRCs had a traditional bureaucratic set up of management with very less experience in community participation and addressing the community needs. The SRCs have a different approach and have adopted the literacy primers which have inbuilt tests to evaluate the literacy and numeric skills which are based on the Evaluation theories of the National Literacy Missions.

**MSSRF:** The third partner, the M. S. Swami Nathan and Research Foundation (MSSRF) at Tamil Nadu, an NGO who had adopted a community based participatory approach for promoting literacy through technology has a decentralized decision making system up to the community level. They adopted the concept of Family as a learning center and the community as a facilitator. The



family decides as to what the learner needs to learn and the community supports and provides guidance in this direction. The community manages the TCLCs, which are called *knowledge centers* and use these centers for their economic security by marketing their community products through the Internet. The community products are biopesticides, flowers and

fertilizers, banana paper etc. prepared by the women Self Help Groups. The adult learners have used the Digital camera to take photographs and prepare PowerPoint Slides to learn the alphabets, numbers and sentences.

The project in India had an advantage of comparing the benefits and constraints of two different kinds of partnerships for the implementation of the same project.



#### Project activities

##### ***Trainings and Capacity Building efforts: nodal level***

The capacity building inputs have gone into the project through the nodal agency in the form of trainings and sharing of documents along with field visits. A series of trainings based on the participatory approach have been conducted:

- The Orientation and Capacity Building of the project team members was organized at the center level for both the State unit partners. The workshop objective was to develop a common understanding of the project, build capacities on participatory methods of needs assessment, and enhance community participation.
- The project team members participated in computer training where they learnt skills in computer applications.
- The project team members and other staff members of the partner agencies also participated in a Multimedia workshop where they built their capacities in preparing literacy materials in CD-ROMs and have started the process of developing materials on the basis of the learner's needs.

##### ***Trainings and capacity building efforts: partner agency level***

Literacy for the adults per se cannot be isolated from their daily functional needs. Literacy curriculum integrated with the addressable needs of the community helps the program to sustain, thereby developing a sense of ownership among the adult learners. The partner agencies are continuously organizing training programmes and workshops for their instructors, learners as and when the need is felt. In order to fulfill the objectives of addressing the community needs apart from literacy skills, some workshops and seminars were organized for the adults:

- The instructors underwent computer training and methods of teaching for literacy classes. They were also trained in participatory philosophy, which mainly constitute the behavior and attitudinal changes to enhance the participation of the learners at the centers.
- A Writers Workshop was organized where the adult and adolescent learners participated and composed poems and stories. The Resource persons gave them tips to write good stories and poems. The creativity of some of the learners was recorded during this workshop in order to continue the process of generating learner-generated materials.
- The Soil test was organized in collaboration with the Krishi Vigyan Kendra where the farmers brought the samples of soil from their agricultural fields and tested their alkalinity and acidity levels to understand whether the soil would be supportive or harmful for agricultural production.
- A Health Camp was organized where women consulted their gynecological problems with the doctors and received medicines. An Eye camp was also organized where the rural people gained benefits from consultancies from the doctors who visited their village.

- An Animal Husbandry workshop helped the rural population take advice from the Veterinary doctors about the upkeep and maintenance of their cattle.
- The Renewable Energy Development helped the rural population develop some insights about the solar heating systems and appliances.

#### Profile of the learners

The learners comprise adults, adolescents, school dropouts, school going children and adult women. The adolescents and school going children find a lot of scope in their career growth and employment through these TCLCs as they can learn computer skills and can also acquire some knowledge about the hardware constitution at the center. The adult women have a keen interest to learn literacy skills so that they adopt better practices and behaviors in their daily lives. They are also interested to support their families through some income generation projects that would help them gain some economic independence and provide a better status to their family. The adult men generally do not come to the centers at the two State units for literacy skills as the program is not catering to their needs of agriculture and drought conditions that they have to face through.

#### Outcomes of the project

***Literacy skills:*** The learners have been able to learn the alphabets and numbers. At the SRCs, the adult learners are able to read books from



their libraries. They have finished the Post Literacy Phase and have proceeded to the Continuing Education status. The adolescents

have learnt computer skills and some of them aspire for getting jobs, which would help them earn their living through working with computers at different organizations.

**Functional skills:** Some of the adult men and women have learnt some skills in maintaining good health, balanced diet, cleanliness, safe drinking water, child health care, animal husbandry and compatibility factors of soil to different kinds of agricultural production.

**Capacity building:** The main component of the project is imparting capacity building inputs



throughout all the levels of the project. This has been taken up very strategically through trainings and documentation. The learners and instructors at SRCs and MSSRF core Project staff have received training in computer skills, developing Multimedia materials and have regularly received insights from the nodal agency about other experiments being undertaken worldwide and their experiences and lessons learnt through sharing of documents. The inbuilt evaluation system also enables regular monitoring and mid-course corrections in the project.

**Learner generated and instructor generated materials:** The learners have developed their own CD-ROMs where they have some photographs of their own village,

house and family with written text with their own voice over. The learners are using these materials as a learning material for literacy. The other materials are stories and poems composed by the learners along with some drawings in MS Paint. The learners at SRCs have also learnt to work with MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint etc.

### Evaluation and Lessons Learned

The project has an inbuilt evaluation system with international and national evaluators providing timely monitoring and guidance to assist in project implementation.

Evaluation teams consisting of highly skilled

adult and distance education practitioners have visited on more than one occasion and have provided valuable suggestions for project improvement.

While the preliminary

findings from the evaluation reveal interesting insights, they also reiterate what is known about developmental and educational projects in the developing countries. The ability of NGOs such as the MSSRF to address adult education projects in innovative ways juxtaposed with the traditional ways of addressing literacy as the acquisition of simple reading, writing, and numeric skills stands out as one striking feature. A holistic approach to literacy and adult education as used by the MSSRF stands out in contrast to the use of agency developed yardsticks for determination of literacy needs and development of literacy primers.

Technology availability at the TCLCs had its ups and downs.

There have been delays in procurement coupled with delivery and service problems faced by vendors when instruments are placed in remote isolated locations, as also the traditional dilemma of connectivity and access to the Internet.

Social issues that determine the use of technology also played a role, despite efforts to ensure that the centres would be available to all communities of learners. Equally important is the way in which community mobilization has taken place. The preliminary findings throw up very interesting issues for debate in the on going dialogues on the provision of adult education programmes in developing countries

Among the most important results will be those that relate to inter institutional collaboration and the international applicability of the results of the COLLIT project model. There have been a number of international and national partners (public and private sectors and non governmental organizations) working independently and in a coordinated fashion within a broad common framework. Monthly coordination through progress reports and monitoring by audio conferences and an on going consultation between the international and national project directors, partners on the ground in different locations and the evaluators has been a hallmark of this project.

While problems on the ground often obscure the overall goals and objectives of any project, it is when the project comes to an end in December 2002 and the final evaluation is complete that the real lessons from this pioneering effort will be visible. **ECA**

*For more details, please contact:*  
**Director,**  
**Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia**  
**52, Tughlakabad Institutional Area,**  
**New Delhi 110 062**

*Vineeta Sinha is a Consultant in the COLLIT Project.*

## Regional Roundup...

### AAOU Pre-conference Seminar on "Outreach Library Services for Distance Learners"

The Library & Documentation Division of IGNOU organized a one-day Pre-conference Seminar on



"Outreach Library Services for Distance Learners " on February 20, 2002 prior to XV Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) held from February 21-23, 2002 at Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi. The main objective of the Seminar was to provide an opportunity to share experiences of providing library and information services to different categories of distance learners and discuss challenges faced by the library professionals of the AAOU member institutions.

The inaugural function commenced with the welcome address by Prof. H. P. Dikshit, Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU and was followed by the introductory remarks by Dr. (Mrs.) Neela Jagannathan, Librarian and Information Officer of IGNOU, inaugural address by Prof. Andrew McDonald, Director, Information Services, University of Sunderland,

U.K. and the presidential remarks by Prof. S. W. Tam, President, AAOU and Vice-Chancellor of the Open University of Hong Kong. Mr. Harvey Gover of Washington State University, Tricity, Richland, USA delivered the Keynote address *"To Still Live our Ideals"* deliberating on transnational distance learning and library services and the ACRL guidelines for distance learning library services.

The Conference had an overwhelming response from library professionals of Bangladesh, Canada, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and United Kingdom.

Thirteen papers and two posters were presented on the Conference theme during two Business Sessions. The librarians and library science teachers of various universities and educational institutions deliberated and discussed various issues. Library technology vendors also

made commercial presentations during the day.

Dr. Neela Jagannathan moderated a Panel Discussion. Four panelists, Ms. Kalpana Dasgupta, President, Indian Library Association, Dr. H. K. Kaul, Chairman, Developing Library Network (DELNET), Prof. Andrew McDonald and Mr. Harvey Gover presented their views on varied aspects related to the Conference theme.

In the valedictory function Prof. Asha Kanwar delivered the valedictory address on behalf of Prof. Olugbemiro Jegede, Open University of Nigeria. The Pre-conference Seminar could successfully discuss various issues of outreaching library services to distance learners provided by the libraries of the Open Universities of Asia. **ECA**

### ABU appoints new Secretary- General

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union President Katsuji Ebisawa has announced the appointment of David Astley as the ABU's next



Secretary-General. Mr Astley is an Australian with extensive experience in broadcasting in the region, and has worked in and with companies in Australia, UK, Malaysia and Hong Kong. His knowledge in the industry, regional and urban broadcasting, free to air and pay TV matters will serve members well as he deals with the diverse membership base.

Mr Astley said, "I have no doubt that the primary challenge for the new Secretary-General in the coming years will be to ensure that the ABU maintains its relevance as a professional organisation in the face of so many technological, commercial and regulatory changes, and to ensure that it continues to provide services that meet the needs of its members." **ECA**

### Workshop on Research Agenda for GRADE


Dr. BRAOU through its newly established Prof. G. Ram Reddy Research Academy of Distance Education (GRADE) organized a one-day workshop on "Research Agenda for GRADE" on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2002 in its newly inaugurated building. The Workshop proceedings were conducted in four sessions. The

first two sessions were devoted to discuss 'the Role and Research Agenda of GRADE'. While the third session discussed the 'Resources for Action Agenda', the fourth session was on 'Research-Action Interface'. The deliberations of the workshop resulted in preparation of a formal agenda for action to be implemented by the GRADE. Some of the major highlights of the recommended

agenda include:

- Development of a Databank on Distance Education in Andhra Pradesh
- Undertaking Quality Assurance for Dr. BRAOU
- Networking and collaboration with Distance Education Institutes in Andhra Pradesh
- Establishing Research Interest Groups and Forums

- Dissemination of information on Distance Education
- Preparation of a monograph on research in Distance Education at GRADE

The workshop was attended by 15 experts from different parts of Andhra Pradesh and from Commonwealth of Learning and CEMCA. 

### BiblioFile...

**Jarvis, Peter (2002) *International Dictionary of Adult and Continuing Education*, Kogan Page: London ISBN: 0-7494-3736-7 (Pb)**

Adult and continuing education is in tremendous demand internationally. Since the first publication of this dictionary in 1990, the field has developed considerably in both scope and complexity. It is multinational in scope, presents an invaluable comparative perspective and is an authoritative aid to understanding adult education throughout the world. The dictionary covers adult, continuing, higher and lifelong learning in about 3500 entries.


**Heinich, Robert; Molenda, Michael; Russell, James D. and Smaldino, Sharon E. (2002) *Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning, 7/e*, Prentice Hall: London ISBN: 0-13-030536-7 (includes CD)**

*Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning* presents a complete range of media formats in terms of how they can be integrated into classroom instruction using the ASSURE model of lesson planning. Written from the viewpoint of the teacher, the text shows specifically and realistically how media, both traditional media and computers, fit into the daily life of the classroom.

**Ketteridge, Steve and Fry, Heather (eds) (2002) *The Effective Academic*, Kogan Page: London ISBN:**

To succeed in today's complex and fast-changing higher education environment, academics need a wide range of capabilities, skills and knowledge. Subject expertise and research experience are necessary but no longer sufficient conditions for success. It is a practical and direct handbook that looks at management and leadership in higher education.

**Srivastava, Manjulika and Reddy, V. Venugopal (eds) (2002) *Towards Virtualization: Open and Distance Learning*, Kogan Page India: New Delhi ISBN: 81-7554-172-5**

More and more institutions are adopting Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as a means of achieving competitive advantage as well as to meet the educational demands. The main purpose of the book is to examine and explore the wide range of initiatives that are taking place all over the world, which have been presented in the form of 34 case studies, representing virtual universities, dual mode universities and open universities, from, both the developed and developing countries. This book would serve as a major knowledge base for distance educators, policy makers, researchers and e-learning industry. 

### Research Proposals Invited

In order to promote research in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) application in education and especially in distance learning, CEMCA invites research proposals from teachers and scholars for appropriate funding. Research proposals can be submitted

anytime during the year. The present thrust areas include, but are not limited to:

- Digital divide
- Multimedia applications
- Online learning
- Teleconferencing
- Appropriate media use
- Gender issues in technology
- Technology for people with disabilities

**For application format and guidelines contact: Director, CEMCA.**

### Educational Media Consultants

CEMCA is in the process of developing a database of Educational Media Consultants in the region to promote the exchange of professionals and utilise the expertise available within the region. For inclusion in the database send your resume to Director, CEMCA or register online at <http://www.cemca.org>.

## Worth While Web...

*The Internet and its World Wide Web has become a great source of information. However, finding quality and reliable information is still a problem. In this issue we focus on **Research methods, Statistical tools and guidelines on survey techniques**. We hope, the links would be useful to you. All the links were working fine at the time of going to the press.*

**Electronic Statistics Textbook** offers training in the understanding and application of statistics. The material was developed at the StatSoft R&D department based on many years of teaching undergraduate and graduate statistics courses and covers a wide variety of applications, including laboratory research (biomedical, agricultural, etc.), business statistics and forecasting, social science statistics and survey research, data mining, engineering and quality control applications, and many others.

<http://www.statsoftinc.com/textbook/stathome.html>.

**Internet for Social Research Methods** is a rich source of information and resources for students, lecturers, researchers and professionals. This tutorial covers the key information skills for the Internet environment. Learn how to use the Internet to help with your coursework, literature searching, teaching or research.

<http://www.sosig.ac.uk/vts/social-research-methods/>

**Journal of Statistics Education** disseminates knowledge for the improvement of statistics education at all levels, including elementary, secondary, post-secondary, post-graduate, continuing, and workplace education. The intended audience includes anyone who teaches statistics, as well as those interested in research on statistical and probabilistic reasoning.

<http://www.amstat.org/publications/jse/>

**Minitab** is a general statistics package. Their site has FAQs, a macro library, online documentation, and white papers.

<http://www.minitab.com/>

### QSR's Qualitative Analysis software --

NUD\*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data by Indexing, Searching and Theorizing) is a qualitative research package that uses a variety of search tools to scan and code texts. NVivo is the next-generation version, including multimedia data capabilities, hyper linking, and more.

<http://www.qsr.com.au/>

### Qualitative Methods

**Workbook** is an "e-text" prepared for the college course Qualitative Research Methods (PSY 405) at Shippensburg University. While the contents are copyrighted, they may be downloaded and hard copied for educational and personal uses without permission, as long as the source is noted.

<http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/qualmeth.html>

### Questionnaire Preparation

provides guideline for the design and use of questionnaire for course and teaching evaluation.

<http://www.education.mcgill.ca/cuti/files/briefgd.pdf>

### Research Method Knowledge

**Base** is a comprehensive web-based textbook that addresses all of the topics in a typical introductory undergraduate or graduate course in social research methods. It covers the entire research process including: formulating research questions; sampling (probability and non-probability); measurement (surveys, scaling, qualitative, unobtrusive); research design (experimental and quasi-experimental); data analysis; and, writing the research paper.

<http://trochim.human.cornell.edu/kb/>

### Research Methods and

**Statistics Link** provide links related to research methodology, human and animal research ethics, statistics, data analysis, and more.

<http://www.socialpsychology.org/methods.htm>

**Research Methods Glossary** is list of key terms in the field of research methods.

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/departments/dacs/gold/glossary.html>

**Research Methods in the Social Sciences: An Internet Resource List** is a comprehensive guide to research methods links in social science prepared by the University of Miami Libraries.

<http://www.library.miami.edu/netguides/psymeth.html>

**Research Methods Resources on the WWW** provides electronic text and links to all-important issues. Provides an index of items to choose.

[http://www.slais.ubc.ca/resources/research\\_methods/index.htm](http://www.slais.ubc.ca/resources/research_methods/index.htm)

### Resources for Methods in Evaluation and Social

**Research** is a of list free resources for methods in evaluation and social research. The focus is on "how-to" do evaluation research and the methods used: surveys, focus groups, sampling, interviews, and other methods. Most of these links are to resources that can be read over the web.

<http://gsociology.icaap.org/methods/>

**SAS** "saves time, no matter how long it takes" is the motto of the SAS User's Group International (SUGI). The site includes a variety of useful SAS resources, including the SAS Library, SAS FAQs, and SAS macros and sample code.

<http://www.sas.com/>

### Social Science Research Methods: Resources for

**Teachers** collects and organizes material of interest to teachers of research methods in the social sciences.

<http://www.siu.edu/~hawkes/methods.html>

**SPSS** is the widely used statistical software for data analysis. The SPSS home site contains a variety of useful information, including the SPSS Answer Net and listings of SPSS macros and algorithms.

<http://www.spss.com/>

**Statistica** is a software package with a wide variety of statistical procedures, graphics, data base management capabilities, and a custom application development system.

<http://www.statsoftinc.com/>

*Compiled from the World Wide Web by Sanjaya Mishra, Ph.D.*

## Technology Tracking...

### Bridging the Generation Gap: The Move Towards a 3G Wireless World

**Tressa Stephen Gipe**

It wasn't long ago that wireless mobile phones made their debut, but already the original analog models of the 80s and early 90s seem primitive - no data, no multimedia, just voice. In the 1990s, analog wireless, which is referred to as the first generation (1G) of wireless applications, was supplanted by the second and current generation (2G) of wireless, which allows for digital voice services, one-way data transmissions, enhanced calling features (caller ID, etc.), and speeds of about 10 kilobits (kb)/sec. The second generation has begun to yield to 2.5G devices that feature enhanced capacity to receive phone calls/fax and email; send/receive large messages; enable Internet browsing, updates, and navigation information; and run speeds between 64 and 144kb/sec. 2.5G has proven particularly popular in Europe and Asia, where mobile telephony penetration rates have grown exponentially in recent years.

To many in the wireless business, the past is but a prelude to the most impressive version of wireless applications yet: third generation (3G). 3G is a concept that lingers between reality - countries like Japan have already begun implementing some 3G-based prototype systems - and fantasy because so many of the applications, connections, and interfaces have yet to be realized as practically marketable devices. 3G not only has important implications in promoting the seamless convergence of Internet, high-speed broadband, and the convenience of

mobility, it also has potential uses in promoting efficiency, interoperability, and unprecedented information-sharing on a mobile basis.

#### Features and Applications

The movement towards 3G is highly competitive in the wireless industries. Many of the large mobile and telephone carriers, including Verizon, SprintPCS, Vodafone, SK (South Korea) Telecom, and DoCoMo, are allotting considerable resources to the preparation of 3G products and implementation. The 3G allure is obvious because it has vast potential for creative configurations of nearly every type of mobile application. Key features of 3G include or will include:

- 144kb/sec-2 megabits (mb)/sec speed for packet and circuit data
- always-online data availability
- global roaming
- high-speed Internet
- videoconferencing
- navigation/mapping systems
- high-capacity email (send and receive)
- phone calls/fax
- video and television streaming
- high quality voice transmission
- common billing/user profiles

Most important is the fact that, in theory, users can take advantage of all these features simultaneously in a mobile environment. For example, while sitting on a train during a videoconference, an executive could check a fact on the Internet and receive an update presentation by email, all at the same time. A student could view homework assignments, send emails to friends, check movie times at the local cinema, and even make reservations at a favorite restaurant, all from the same device. 3G systems could also allow a person making calls using a local carrier in France to receive the same billing and call detail information as they would in Brazil.

In the foreseeable future, possible applications for wireless devices

include the obvious customization of laptops, tablets, personal digital assistants (PDAs), voice, ruggedized devices, and wearable computers. However, many analysts predict a phasing out of single-use devices in favor of multifunctional products. So far, companies like Fujitsu, Nokia, Alcatel, and DoCoMo are still showing concept devices that resemble slick hybrid phones and PDAs, but the future could bring anything as science and technology advance towards more efficient and miniaturized device components. For examples of concept designs, see:

<<http://www.3gnewsroom.com/html/images/index.shtml>>.

Clearly, 3G wireless devices also have potential applications in nearly all economic sectors. Strong growth is predicted for 3G services and products in such areas as educational services (wireless university systems and long-distance education), health care (emergency systems, record keeping, billing), retail (inventory, promotional, warehousing), field services (maintenance and repair of telecommunications networks), transport (shipping, logistics, cargo management), and military (battlefield logistics, data tracking, equipment maintenance).

#### Challenges to Implementation

The implementation of 3G is complicated by the fact that wireless standards are not necessarily the same in every country, particularly the United States where the move to 3G has been impeded by political issues with incumbent users and spectrum reallocation. Even though some analysts have touted 3G as a way to create harmonized global wireless standards, irregularities will continue to pose problems in the near term. In fact, there are three main types of 3G systems at present: Wideband Code Division Multiple Access (WCDMA), CDMA2000, and EDGE (Enhanced Data rates for Global Evolution), all of which are designed to allow easy

switching between standards. Despite these variations, the similar base of all 3G standards is a major step in facilitating the primary goal of a smoother global wireless network that allows for more diverse, but consistent services for customers and businesses.

Carriers are also challenged to develop products that are compelling, yet profitable in 3G systems, which are extremely expensive to implement and maintain. The age-old problem of sheer physics (also known as the "form factor") remains a barrier in creating useful, yet portable products. For example, how do you fit all the necessary equipment for high-speed video, voice, and computing into one small, lightweight device? Is the keyboard built-in or attached? What kind of screen would be most readable?

What kind of battery can accommodate multiple energy-hungry applications? Regardless of the impressive capabilities afforded by 3G, average users are still leery of tiny keyboards, miniature screens, batteries that add extra weight, and devices requiring too many attachments. Broader physical limitations also exist. For example, spectrum availability is currently constrained by the fact that the physical theoretical maximum has a finite capacity, putting some applications out of reach for the time being.

Companies must also consider that in an age of cyber attacks and vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure, many businesses and customers are rightfully concerned about adequate security for 3G devices that transmit large amounts of data. Many of these complex security concerns are being addressed or will be addressed by the combined efforts of individual companies, industry groups, government authorities, and multinational organizations like the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) as 3G gains greater worldwide presence over the next three to five years.

### A Bright Future

For 3G wireless, it is not a question of if, but a question of when and how implementation will occur. Around the world in countries like Switzerland, Australia, Slovenia, Malaysia, Korea, and Greece, 3G mobile auctions have been held in order to begin implementing the proper infrastructure for 3G wireless. Many plans aim for full implementation by 2005 or 2006, with some countries, such as Japan and many in the European Union, already gaining a head start on the process. Although recent global economic downturn has forced some modification of 3G rollouts and product development schedules, the future of 3G remains bright because of the fundamental technological drive toward converging wireless media into one seamless experience. 

### Resources:

DoCoMo Research:

<[http://www.nttdocomo.co.jp/corporate/rd/tech\\_e/mult01\\_e.html](http://www.nttdocomo.co.jp/corporate/rd/tech_e/mult01_e.html)>

Fujitsu Design Concepts for 3G Devices

<<http://www.itu.int/osg/spu/ni/3G/resources/future/Fujitsu%20IMT-2000%20HANDSETS%20PICS.pdf>>

International Telecommunications Union - About 3G:

<<http://www.itu.int/osg/spu/ni/3G/index.html>>

Mobile3G.com:

<<http://www.mobile3g.com>>

National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) - 3G Introduction

<<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/threeg/3gintro.htm>>

3Gnewsroom:


<<http://www.3gnewsroom.com>>

3G Newsroom (Future Terminal Designs):

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## Educational Media Database

As an ongoing project CEMCA has been developing and maintaining a database of educational audio and video programmes produced in the region. The database currently has more than 6000 records. The purpose of the database is to act as a reference point for sharing of information and resources. Educational institutions in the region are requested to continuously send us list of audio and video programmes produced by them for updating the database. By submitting information for inclusion in the database you are actually making it available to a wider community of users through our online website and the offline CD ROM. Now, it has also been decided to supply the database and its regular updates to participating institutions. Therefore please share information about your audio and video programmes and co-operate in updating this database. For further details contact: *Nimal T Fernando, Programme Officer (Broadcast Media), CEMCA.* 

*SMART Tips...*

## Preparing Better Questionnaires

**Ashok Sharma**

*Preparation of a better questionnaire saves a lot of headache during research. However, it is not easy to prepare a reliable and valid research instrument. In this section of Successful Media And Research Techniques (SMART) Tips we present to you how to prepare better questionnaires.*

### Introduction

Use of questions and questionnaires, for the purposes of evaluating one's learning, abilities, characteristics, and/or behaviour, has been made since ages. It is one of the most important tools in survey research. Now a days, questionnaires are available online, answered online, and the responses are scored and analyzed by the computerized statistical procedures and techniques. It is important to note, however, that bad or unclear questionnaires not only conceal what the researcher originally attempted to uncover but also defeat the basic purpose of research. So, it is highly crucial to prepare sound, reliable and valid questionnaires. Here are some useful tips that can help one prepare better questionnaires.

### Knowing A Questionnaire

- **Defining Questionnaire:** In simple terms, a questionnaire is a type of data-collection tool that is comprised of a set of questions related to a specific subject of study. The respondent is asked to reply these, typed or printed, questions. It should be noted here that a *questionnaire* is used to collect facts or factual information, and to collect opinions; an *opinionnaire* or *attitude scale* is used.
- **Forms of Questionnaire:** A questionnaire can be open-ended (unstructured form) or closed-ended (structured

form). As the name suggests, *open-ended questions*

invite a free response in the respondents' own words and sentences. Asking to "differentiate between open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires" is a good example of open-ended question. The open-ended form provides for qualitative information that requires a very careful treatment and analysis. On the other hand, *closed-ended* questions don't give much room to the respondents to speak or express beyond the alternatives provided. They are provided with fixed

**Questionnaires are available online, answered online, and the responses are scored and analyzed by the computerized statistical procedures and techniques.**

alternatives to choose from like, yes/no, or agree/disagree/undecided, or the like. For example, asking someone, "Do you have experience of conducting research using questionnaire method?" is a closed question. The respondent might be asked to choose from Yes or No, or check one suitable answer from the given alternatives. These types of questionnaires are easy to reply, economical in time, relatively objective, and can be easily tabulated and analyzed.

Which of these types is superior over other is hard to judge because both have their own pros and cons. One has to select the type as per his/her particular research problem. Besides, you might have heard of a questionnaire that is termed as *mailed questionnaire*. It is not a separate and third type, rather it deals with the administration mode of a questionnaire. As the name implies, if a questionnaire is mailed to the respondents to reply without the direct help of a researcher, it is

known as mailed questionnaire. In certain conditions, this is a useful tool of data-collection. However, it must be used very carefully because it suffers from the low response rate.

- **Administration of Questionnaire:** Depending on the purpose of the study, and nature and length of questionnaire, this tool can be administered individually, or to groups of individuals. Also, these can be administered personally (face-to-face). Mailed questionnaire can be useful in certain situations when all or some of the respondents cannot be contacted personally.

### Qualities of a Good Questionnaire

Every sound questionnaire possesses certain psychometric properties - the knowledge of which is inevitable to those who want to prepare better questionnaires. The most significant ones are:

- Reliability
- Validity
- Economy
- Interest

**Reliability:** It refers to the dependability, stability, consistency, predictability, and accuracy of a test/questionnaire/scale as reflected in the consistency of its scores upon repeated testings of the same group of respondents. Reliability is the most important psychometric property of a questionnaire and only a reliable test leads to comparable scores or findings in the repeated measurements. Reliability of a test can be ascertained by the test-retest correlation-coefficient technique or split half method.

**Validity:** Validity of a test means that the test actually measures what it is intended to measure, or it measures what it claims to measure. If a memory test, for instance, actually measures memory only, and not intelligence or personality, only then it can be regarded as a valid test of memory. Validity of a test can be established by correlating the findings of that test with an independent measure or outside criterion like peer reports etc.

**Economy:** Everyone is running short of time today. So, those tests get lot of cooperation of the respondents that can be given in a short span of time and consume less time. Those tests are regarded better that are economical not only in terms of time but also in terms of money (when you have a limited budget), ease of administration, scoring and interpretation of that test.

**Interest:** Last but not the least, the tool of your research should not be an instrument of torture to the respondent. If it is interesting and enjoyable it will attract the cooperation of the respondents. Dull and seemingly silly questionnaires torture the respondents, due to which, they feel discouraged and fail to respond or cooperate fully.

**Preparing A Questionnaire**  
The above discussion might give some idea to the readers that questionnaire construction is not an easy task. This is a technical process to be followed with utmost caution. However, to make this process a little bit easier, here are some tips and rules, to prepare better questionnaires.

**Planning:** This is the first and foremost step of the process of questionnaire construction. First you must identify the purpose of the questionnaire. Why you want a questionnaire? What it is intended to do? In this stage, you should plan in advance, whether you need open-ended or closed-ended questions (if open-ended, how much space you will provide for answers; and if closed-ended, what will be the response options), the approximate number of questions you need, how will you code and score your responses, and how will you tabulate and analyze the obtained results. All your further exercise depends entirely on this planning.

**Item Selection/Construction:** For this purpose, review of pertinent literature and subject experts' opinions prove to be of immense help. While preparing items, you must try to be as *simple, clear,* and *short* as possible. Note that

complex, unclear, lengthy questions and questionnaires fail to ensure proper response and cooperation from the respondents. You should ask only important and relevant questions. Your items should not deviate from the focal theme of your research. Specificity of the items adds to its strength and keeps the interest of the respondents alive. Even, the *sequence* of questions should be taken care of because this also affects the respondents. The ascending order of difficulty of items, if possible, is always preferred. Also, questions affecting one's *sentiments* should not be included in a questionnaire unless inevitable. Besides, if you include some questions checking the "*social desirability*", i.e. the

**Dull and seemingly silly questionnaires torture the respondents, due to which, they feel discouraged and fail to respond or cooperate fully**

tendency to hide facts and respond in the socially desirable way, it will lead to pure results and increase reliability of the findings.

**Analyzing Your Items:** As a general rule, the number of questions initially selected or framed are at least two to three times than actually needed. Submit this exhaustive list of items to experts of the field. You have to undertake this exercise, so that irrelevant items could be deleted, items could be reframed as per need, and only highly relevant and specific questions could be selected for the final version of your questionnaire. This will improve the quality, credibility and validity of your questionnaire. Item Analysis, actually, is a technique to determine the quality of each individual item of your proposed questionnaire.

**Covering Letter & Instructions:** This also is a very crucial element of a questionnaire. Your covering letter should include researcher's name and affiliation besides the significance of the study.

Information about the researcher builds confidence in the respondents and ensures their cooperation. The *significance of the study* should also be expressed in a very impressive manner, so that it may give such an impression to the respondents that by participating in this study, they are contributing significantly to the issue under investigation.

*Instructions* work as a guide to the respondents and help them in answering questions in correct manner. Your instructions should be "*neutral*" and should not suggest or direct the respondents to respond in one particular direction. Hence, these should be very *general, simple* and *straightforward*. Operational definitions of important terms should be inserted at appropriate places.

**Printing:** The proposed questionnaire should be printed on a good quality paper and its physical get up should be appealing because it also affects the attitude of the respondents. You may also use colour paper and colour printing to gain attention of the respondents.

**Pre-testing:** This is a type of rehearsal conducted in the same way as intended for the final study. The questionnaire is tested on a small sample of respondents for feedback. This pre-testing highlights your shortcomings and opens up new insights regarding the nature of your questionnaire, language and sequence of questions, scoring and coding system, etc. On the basis of responses given by this sample, *discrimination power* of the items should be judged. You might find some items on which most of the respondents pass or fail. Such types of items may either be too easy or too difficult to respond for almost all of the respondents. These items should be eliminated because these don't help in discriminating the abilities/characteristics of the respondents. To ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire, you should re-administer the same questionnaire on the same respondents at an interval of 10 - 15 days (or as per convenience), and compare the findings with those of the first administration.

Pre-testing helps you in recognizing and removing shortcomings and improves the questionnaire wherever necessary. Remember that use of unreliable and invalid questionnaires is just unethical wastage of time, money and energy. So, be careful and follow appropriate procedures of

questionnaire construction. Don't think of shortcuts. Just a little

**use of unreliable and invalid questionnaires is just unethical wastage of time, money and energy.**

carelessness will ruin all your purpose and labor. All these points taken care of, you will have a valid, reliable and sound questionnaire - ready to use! **ECA**

*Ashok Sharma, is a Lecturer in Psychology at Vaish P. G. College, Bhiwani - 127 021 (Haryana). He can be reached at : ashok\_sharma\_71@yahoo.com*

## News in Brief..

### *COL welcomes increased support from Canada*

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has welcomed the Government of Canada's announcement that it is increasing its annual contribution to the agency from CDN\$1.1 million to \$2.2 million. It will enable COL to maintain the vitality of its services to the Commonwealth, especially for the vast majority of Commonwealth citizens who live in developing countries.

"Canada's increased contribution to improve access to education in the Commonwealth through the Commonwealth of Learning is much valued and needed," said COL's President and Chief Executive Officer Professor Gajaraj Dhanarajan following the announcement by Canadian Minister for International Cooperation, The Honourable Susan E. Whelan.

The 54-member Commonwealth funds COL on a voluntary basis and Canada is one of its major contributors. Prof. Dhanarajan spoke of his appreciation for Canada's "expression of confidence in the ability of the agency's expertise and programming to make important contributions to literacy and other human resource development priorities that world leaders have identified." He added that, "Open and distance education, together with communications technology tools, can do much to improve current levels of access to learning, especially for women and girls."

In her announcement, Minister Whelan said that,

"Canada's support for the Commonwealth of Learning will improve educational materials, expertise and technologies that are made available to developing countries; making educational tools more accessible helps people around the world begin to build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities."

**ECA**

### *Online Citation Links*



Are you worried about the citation of your online publication?

With CrossRef

<<http://www.crossref.org>>, the citation and access of online materials would become much easier for the researchers, libraries and publishes as well. CrossRef is a not-for-profit network founded on publisher collaboration, with a mandate to make reference linking throughout online scholarly literature efficient and reliable. Its mission is to serve as the complete citation linking backbone for all scholarly literature online, as a means of lowering barriers to content discovery and access for the researcher. **ECA**


### *Virtual University for Commonwealth's small states*

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) organised a meeting of experts from 16-19 April 2002 to discuss the merits of establishing a virtual university to serve the small states of the Commonwealth. A

virtual university was one of the recommendations of the 14th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (14CCEM) in Halifax, Canada, in November 2000. The university would cater to states with less than 1.5 million people. Small states and small island developing nations account for 32 of the 54 Commonwealth members and issues affecting them, such as threats associated with national disasters, weak economies and isolation, have been a concern for the association as a whole.

At the end of four days of discussion, the group of educational leaders from small state regions and Commonwealth organisations concluded that there are several ways that a new "virtual university" could support the work of the institutions that are currently providing higher education in the small state regions of the Commonwealth. The advice of the "Technical Advisory Committee" was that there are three important functions that a consortium of existing higher education institutions, operating collaboratively as a "virtual university", could perform that would enhance their current capacity. These functions are a platform for collaboration in development, leadership in the planning and design of programmes, curricula and courses and supporting learners.

The Commonwealth of Learning will be presenting an initial report, including these recommendations, to a committee of Commonwealth education ministers later this year. If the ministers endorse the recommendations in principle, or make other recommendations, the next phase of the process for COL will be to prepare an implementation

plan for presentation to all Commonwealth education ministers when they next meet in Edinburgh in September 2003. 

### *Free Distance Learning Course Database*

Excelsior College's database of distance courses, DistanceLearn<sup>SM</sup> is now available



to the public distance learning community. DistanceLearn<sup>SM</sup> includes over 16,000 distance courses from 170 regionally accredited colleges and universities in the United States and government approved universities abroad. Institutions are welcome to list courses free of charge. Students may search the database free of charge to locate distance learning college courses in topics ranging from agriculture to veterinarian science. Excelsior College is a regionally accredited institution offering more than 30 associate and bachelor degrees and 2 master's through distance means with no campus residencies.   
<http://distancelearn.excelsior.edu>

### *Training Video on Radio-browsing Techniques*


A video training module on radio-browsing technique, produced by UNESCO and OneWorld International, is now available on UNESCO's community multimedia centre webpage (<http://www.unesco.org/webworld/com/broadcasting/broad04.shtml>). The video training module is intended to develop the skills of community radio and local FM radio presenters in developing countries.

In a radio-browsing programme, the radio presenter becomes the interface between the listener and the Internet. This formula offers mass, indirect access in local

languages to online information that is discussed, shared and conceptualized on air. Radio browsing is a key activity of community multimedia centres (CMCs), which combine community radio with a public access telecentre. The radio browsing programme raises awareness of the value of digital resources, overcomes language and other barriers to access and encourages individuals to come to the telecentre to learn how to use ITCs.

In addition to the English original, French and Spanish versions of the training module will be produced and the video will be available for free downloading and distributed on CD Rom and video to training institutions. The video is the first of what will become a complete suite of training materials currently being prepared by UNESCO to meet the need for new training inputs that match the new uses being made of ICTs by broadcasters and community telecentre managers for community development. 

### *Obituary*

**Dr. Robert Mills Gagne**, 85, a leader in the fields of educational psychology and instructional design, passed away on Sunday, April 28, 2002, in Signal Mountain, Tenn. During his career, Gagne never wavered from the idealistic vision of psychology that he expressed in his 1932 valedictory speech at Johnson High School in North Andover, in which he said that the science of psychology should be used to relieve the burdens of human life. His research and writing focused on how principles of human learning, established through scientific research, could be applied in education and training. He wrote five editions of a seminal book called "The Conditions of Learning" and also wrote numerous other books on principles of learning and instructional design. He was a great man who had a profound influence on educational psychology, and he will be sorely missed. 

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## Book Review...



**Kanwar, Asha S. and Taplin, Margaret (Eds) (2001) *Brave New Women of Asia: How Distance Education Changed Their Lives, The Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver***

**Kiron Bansal**

The role and importance of education in improving the socio-economic status of people has been widely recognized. Studies have revealed that it is more difficult for women than for men to take advantage of educational opportunities. The tendency of considering it less worthwhile to educate girls than boys cuts across different cultures and societies. The participation of women in higher education in the developing countries remains dismally poor due to stereotypical attitudes, which exist among women themselves and those around them. In such a scenario, how Distance Education (DE) can bring women of divergent ages, classes and backgrounds into the folds of learning has been captured in the book under review.

The book is based on the basic premise that DE is particularly suitable for women as no classroom attendance is required, there is no need for the woman learner to dislocate herself and because of the degree of flexibility inherent in the DE mode, the learner can adjust her study time table within the schedule of her household responsibilities.

The introduction delineates the aim of the book as, 'to inspire and

encourage women to participate in open and distance learning'. The

editors, Prof. Asha Kanwar and Dr. Margaret Taplin hope that by going through the experiences of other women, potential women learners will find that most of their fears and reservations are unfounded. The exposure gained will help them to get back to higher education and they are able to cope with the studies after a long gap at a mature age. The entire process will improve the quality of their lives and also provide protection from exploitation. These arguments are substantiated with the help of case studies from China, Hong Kong SAR, China, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The Chinese case studies highlighted how the schooling of three women was interrupted due to Cultural revolution and for them DE represented a second chance at education. All these women faced and overcame problems of family and work commitments by employing creative solutions and sheer perseverance. One of the women studied strawberry farming, which led to establishing of a successful model farm not only in her community but also throughout China. In Hong Kong, despite westernization, most of the families are still 'traditional' in the sense that women continue to take up major responsibilities at home and family. In such a situation how women overcame their impoverished childhood and how their studies helped children to develop good study habits was revealed in four case studies.

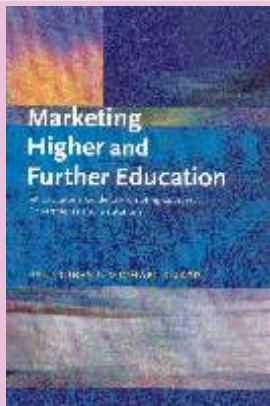
DE proved to be a panacea for a widow from India who needed formal qualification for her employment while working and raising her two young children alone. Another suffered from a physical disability, which made it difficult for her to participate in conventional education system. DE also helped women to champion the cause of others and thus developed leadership qualities in them.

Two women from Pakistan who were unable to have easy access to education in their younger years escaped from bad marriages and joined DE as an alternative method of education. They did menial jobs to raise money for course fee, overcame many difficulties and initial failures and finally established new lives for themselves and their children. The Sri Lankan case study revealed how women were unable to gain admission to conventional universities for various reasons and they found DE to be their salvation. With determination and careful time management, these women could succeed in balancing home and family responsibilities with studies. Case studies from Bangladesh brought out the varied needs and concerns of four women who undertook programmes to upgrade qualifications and improve employment prospects to support their children.

For all the women featured, DE represented a chance to make a new start in life. Their profiles selected from a range of backgrounds revealed that by and large women in the developing countries share the same fears, reservations, concerns and problems. After overcoming the family problems, cultural and social pressures, these women emerged not only empowered women but also stronger human beings. The persistence and perseverance of these women helped them to overcome their self-doubts about their adequacies as students. Apart from the career related rewards, the self-confidence, and self-conviction, they gained helped them to inspire their children, friends and colleagues to further their own education.

The profiles recorded in the book are highly readable and merit wide dissemination. In addition to those who believe in education, distance learning and feminism, the book needs to be read by those who believe in humanism itself. **ECA**

*Dr. Kiron Bansal is a Senior Lecturer at the Electronic Media Production Centre, IGNOU, New Delhi.*



**Gibbs, Paul and Knapp, Michael (2002) *Marketing Higher and Further Education*, Kogan Page: London pp.147**

**V.Venkaiah**

The educational service has assumed the role of business in recent years and the environment, both micro and macro, has been changing significantly. The educational providers are required to design suitable marketing strategies to successfully position their 'products'. The marketers of higher education programmes can no longer afford to ignore the students, the customers. The whole marketing effort should be directed towards the students since customer delightedness is the key factor for the success of any educational institution. Hence, student-centred approach shall be the cardinal principle in marketing educational programmes.

In this book under review, the authors have discussed the different marketing dimensions relevant to higher education sector. The book consists of 11 chapters. In the *first chapter* the authors have addressed to the question of why market? The *second chapter* is on the marketing audit, which offers a number of practical instruments with which one can audit one's market performance. Different forms are designed and presented in this chapter, which help in the assessment of performance. Assessment of learner and corporate services, product customer/learner matrix, product/customer matrix, the Ansoff matrix, the Boston Consulting growth share matrix, etc., presented in the chapter could be adapted by any educational institution to audit its performance.

*Chapter 3* covers market and consumer research. It is explained as to how research provides an enriched understanding of who your customers are and what they will want. Research can assist decisions in many areas, particularly the development of new programmes or qualifications, understanding existing student attitudes, providing insight into the judging the appeal of the institution to alumni, planning the style of a new prospectus or department flyer, perceived reputation of institutions, and engaging the support of the employers or other interest groups.

Market segmentation and differentiation strategies are discussed in *chapter 4*. The competitive strategies of market segmentation and product differentiation, which were successful in corporate business, could be successfully used in higher education sector also. Different examples are given in this chapter stating how different universities practiced marketing strategies.

*Chapters 5 to 8* are devoted to discuss the elements of marketing mix for the educational institutions. The marketing mix variables discussed in these chapters are programme design (i.e., service product) pricing, promotion and public relations. Designing new programmes is considered to be an exciting part of the marketing of education. The concepts of core offering, tangible offerings and branding related to educational programmes are discussed in the *fifth chapter*. The perception of price, pricing by reference to competition and pricing tactics are discussed in *chapter 6*.

*Chapter 9* is on student recruitment. Recruitment of new students and retention of continuing students are identified as the two key factors in enrolment management. The question of how to attract the students is addressed in this chapter.

The penultimate chapter is on "Fund Raising". The concept of relationship marketing, which is of recent origin, is analysed in the first few pages of this chapter. Relationship marketing aims at a close study and interaction with the consumer over time in order to tailor the value in offering to suit

consumer need. Educational institutions can follow relationship marketing by exhibiting reduced exit transfers, greater completion rates, and increased long-term student commitment.

The last chapter is on the E-education. This chapter examines the impact of information and communication technology on teaching-learning processes. According to a study Commissioned at Warwick University, "virtual teachers and computers that guide children through lessons could transform the face of classrooms within 20 years. Schools will become 'learning spaces' where face-to-face contact between teachers and pupils is strictly limited. Whatever could be the role and impact of technology, teachers will still be needed to ensure that students are protected from and guided through the vast amount of information available on the Web. And computers and technology learning aids will not replace the vital role of schools and teachers in helping children to develop social skills". This chapter describes how educational institutions can make use of the Internet and other electronic devices to augment their programme offerings and deliver their learning support services to the students.

Over all, the book under review is a significant contribution to the marketers of educational programmes in view of severe competition in the educational environment in the recent past. The educational institutions ought to orient themselves to 'Marketing Concepts to combat the competitive challenges encountered by them. The strategies like market segmentation, product differentiation, and other non-price strategies would become relevant to the educational institutions in the years ahead. The book is a valuable addition to the existing literature, particularly regarding the marketing function in higher education. This book indeed serves as a handbook for ready reference to the educational institutions and policy makers. **ECA**

*Prof. V. Venkaiah is Executive Director of Prof. G. Ram Reddy Research Academy of Distance Education at Dr. BR Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad.*

## Software Review..

### StarOffice 5.2

How familiar you are with the Office suite of Microsoft? Almost all of us now know of the Office 2000 and Office XP. However, very few of us are aware of a comparable open source Office package available free from Sun Microsystems Inc. StarOffice is available at [OpenOffice.org](http://OpenOffice.org) site to download and also through its

regional distributors. It is a cross platform product and are available for Windows, Linus, Solaris and MacOS X. For the Windows, it runs on 95, 98, NT, 2000 and XP. The installation of StarOffice varies from 150 to 200 MB, depending upon operating system used. The installation file is packed in a compressed file of about 75 MB.

Before running the installation setup file, you need to uncompress all the related files packed in the installer package into a folder. The specific features of the software are depicted here in a tabular format. It does all the tasks that an MS Office tool can perform. Additionally it has also a drawing tool and image manipulation tool. Interestingly all the features are integrated into one user interface. All the features of the package come free to the users.

#### INTEROPERABILITY

Feature	Function	Benefit
Built-in filters.	StarOffice[tm] 5.2 software users can open and view files created in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, WordPerfect, and AmiPro.	Seamlessly open, modify, save, and resend a document, without losing data or reformatting.

#### CROSS-PLATFORM FUNCTIONALITY

Feature	Function	Benefit
Binary compatibility.	Easily share information between StarOffice programs running on Solaris[tm] Operating Environment, Microsoft Windows, and Linux operating systems.	Documents look the same in all three environments. Choose the hardware and operating system you prefer, without sacrificing data integrity or a consistent user experience.

#### GRAPHICAL INTERFACE

Feature	Function	Benefit
Intuitive GUI based on Java[tm] technology.	The familiar interface and robust features simplify even the most complex tasks.	Because the StarOffice look and feel is similar to that of other desktop productivity suites, most users will be able to learn to use it quickly and easily -- no special training is required.

#### FLEXIBLE LICENSING

Feature	Function	Benefit
Open licensing model.	Users are not required to pay licensing fees to use the StarOffice suite. It can be downloaded at affordable, low cost via the Internet.	Because StarOffice 5. 2 is available with no license fee, educational institutions and businesses of any size can offer it to all their students and staff, without breaking the budget.

#### POWERFUL WORD PROCESSOR

Feature	Function	Benefit
StarOffice Writer.	A powerful tool for creating professional documents, reports, newsletters, and brochures.	You can easily integrate images and charts in documents, create business letters and extensive text documents with professional layouts, as well as create and publish Web content.

#### SPREADSHEET

Feature	Function	Benefit
StarOffice Calc.	A sophisticated spreadsheet application.	Offers decision-making tools for performing advanced spreadsheet functions and data analysis. In addition, charting tools generate impressive, high-quality 2D and 3D charts.

#### PRESENTATION TOOL

Feature	Function	Benefit
StarOffice Impress.	A tool for creating effective multimedia presentations.	Your presentations will truly stand out with 2D and 3D clip art, special effects animation, and high-impact drawing tools.

#### DYNAMIC DRAWING TOOL

Feature	Function	Benefit
StarOffice Draw.	A vector-oriented drawing module.	Enables the creation of dynamic 3D illustrations and special effects.

#### DATABASE MANAGEMENT

Feature	Function	Benefit
StarOffice Base.	A powerful database management tool.	Allows you to store names and addresses in a database, then merge them into a document and even print out mailing labels.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL TOOLS

Feature	Function	Benefit
StarOffice Schedule.	A seamless, integrated organizer.	Helps you keep events, tasks, contacts, and projects under control.

#### E-MAIL MANAGEMENT

Feature	Function	Benefit
StarOffice Mail and Discussion.	A sophisticated yet easy-to-use email application.	Facilitates communication between team members and enables participation in Internet newsgroups.

StarOffice comes in many language versions. Complex text layout support has been enabled for nine Indian languages on Windows 2000/XP. The languages are: Hindi, Gujarati (XP), Kannada (XP), Konkani, Marathi, Punjabi (XP), Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu (XP). The National Centre for Software Technology has provided the Indian language support (<http://www.ncb.ernet.in/bharateeyaoo>). This has been possible because of the open source feature of the software. If you are a developer there is enormous opportunity here to experiment and develop your own customized feature. Using this software, you can also use your old MS office files. Most of your Word and PowerPoint files can be opened in the StarOffice. This is a very good option for institutions, which do not want to pay through their nose. Why not try this today and save the budget of your institution? **ECA**

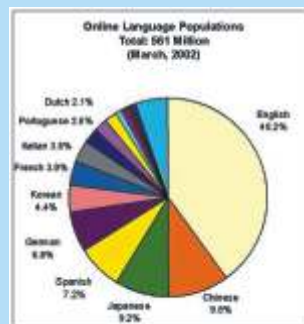
Website: [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)

### Research shows...

#### Did you know?

- **An estimated 2.5 billion hours were wasted online last year as people waited for pages to download, according to a study sponsored by Nortel Networks.**
- **By 2005, it is estimated that 60% of all Internet users will speak a language other than English.**
- **By 2003, the number of Internet users is expected to hit 350 million.**
- **According to a study by Nielsen Media Research, households with Internet access watch 13 percent less television than households that are not online.**

Source: <http://www.ucsi.cc/facts/facts.html>



### CEMCA News...

## Aquaculture Farmers' Meet

As part of the ongoing COL-CEMCA project on Multimedia courseware development on Aquaculture, a joint meeting of the aquaculture farmers of Andhra Pradesh and experts in aquaculture was organized on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2002 at the new building of the G. Ram Reddy Research Academy of Distance Education (GRADE), Dr. BRAOU, Hyderabad. Fifteen aquaculture practitioners participated in the discussion and provided their valuable suggestions for the multimedia courseware development project. A prototype lesson was shown to the participants for their feedback. Participants provided critical inputs in the process of learning material development. All the participants offered their services including the use of farmhouses for the development of learning materials as case and examples. The meeting, first of its kind as an interaction between practitioners and academia, helped in closing the gap between theory and practice of course development. With this the multimedia courseware development project has received suitable guidance to go ahead in developing the final modules. It is expected to be completed by the end of 2002. **ECA**

## Non-Print Media Library Management Workshop

A three-day workshop on non-print media library management was held at the CEMCA Conference room during March 6-8, 2002. Thirteen participants including a person from Open University of Sri Lanka attended the workshop. Doordarshan, India's national television channel sponsored participation of four persons.

Though the duration of the workshop is only for three days, it covered all the aspects in the field to familiarize participants on latest know-how on non-print media library management. Training methods in the workshop included lecture presentations by experts, hands on practical exercise on MEDLIB - a media library management software and a field trip to IGNOU's media centre.

This is the fourth in the series of workshop organized by CEMCA on the topic. **ECA**

## Forthcoming Events...



### Second Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning Conference on "Open Learning: Transforming Education for Development" from 29 July 2002 - 2 August 2002, International Convention Centre, Durban, South Africa.

Transforming Education for Development" from 29 July 2002 - 2 August 2002, International Convention Centre, Durban, South Africa.

*For further details contact:* Ms Jennie Louv, Conference Information Secretariat, PO Box 31822, Braamfontein, Johannesburg. 2017 South Africa. Fax: 27114032814 e-mail: jennyl@saide.org.za



### AAOU 2002 The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU)

shall be held at Seoul, Korea from 4-7 November 2002. The theme of the conference shall be "Open & Distance Learning in the Digital Era: Towards a Lifelong Learning Society". *For further information, contact:* 16 AAOU Conference Head Office, Korea National Open University, 169 Dongsoong-dong, Jongro-gu, Seoul 110-791, South Korea

Tel : 82 2 3668 4301  
Fax : 82 2 747 7100  
E-mail :  
AAOU2002@mail.knou.ac.kr

### AACE

The Asia-Pacific Chapter of Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education is holding a conference on "Learning communities on the Internet - Pedagogy in implementation". To be held in the North Harbour Stadium of Auckland, New Zealand, the conference runs Dec. 3-6, 2002.

*For more information, contact:* Julie Lyons, conference secretary,

Department of Information Systems, Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, New Zealand.  
Fax: 64 6 350 5725  
E-mail:  
icce2002\_admin@massey.ac.nz  
<http://icce2002.massey.ac.nz>

### International Federation for Information Processing: World Computer Congress 2002



Runs from 25th - 30th of August 2002, Montreal, Canada. Theme: information technology for our times: ideas, research and application in an inclusive world (Stream of the TC-3: TeLE-Learning).

*For further details contact:* Rosa Maria Bottino, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Istituto per la Matematica Applicata, Via de Marini 6, 16149 Genova, Italy. Fax. (+39) 010 6475660. E-mail: bottino@ima.ge.cnr.it Website:<http://www.wcc2002.org/en/index.html>

### EDUCAUSE

Educause, an American non-profit association of open learning, is holding its annual conference in Atlanta, Georgia, on Oct. 1-4, 2002. This year's theme is "Juggling opportunities in collaborative environments".

*For more information, contact:* EDUCAUSE, 1150 18th Street, NW, Suite 1010, Washington, DC 20036, USA  
Fax: 202-872-4318  
E-mail: info@educause.edu  
Web site:<http://www.educause.edu/conference/e2002>



IEEE International Workshop on Knowledge Media Networking (KMN'02) to be held from July 10-12, 2002 at Kyoto, Japan.  
*For more information, contact:* kmn02@khn.crl.go.jp Website: <http://tuff.ieee.org/kmn2002/>



IEEE International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies (ICALT2002) to be held from September 9-12, 2002 at Kazan, Russia.

*For more information, contact:* Ildar Kh. Galeev, Organizing Chair Email: monap@kstu.ru Department of Information Technologies and Technical Aids of Learning Kazan State Technological University 420015, 68, K. Marx str., Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia Fax: +7 8432 36-57-68

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**-Editors**