

COL-CEMCA UPDATES

February 2025



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

TiL-AI Bootcamp Empowers Mathematics Educators to Create OERs Using AI Tools

The TiL-AI Bootcamp, organised by COL-CEMCA in collaboration with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), aimed to enhance Grade 9 mathematics education in India.

Held on 8 February 2025 in New Delhi, India, the bootcamp brought together 80 mathematics teachers, both in-person and online, to collaborate on creating Open Educational Resources (OERs) using AI tools. The event focused on four main objectives: building a teacher community, identifying difficult mathematics concepts, sharing effective teaching strategies, and exploring how AI can aid in creating accessible OERs for personalised learning.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, highlighted the teacher-centric approach of the initiative, stating, "The role of teachers is central as the resources created will benefit educators globally. By integrating AI into OER development, we are not replacing teachers but rather providing them with innovative tools to enhance learning outcomes."

The bootcamp activities included analysing challenging topics in the Grade 9 curriculum, discussing their root causes, and sharing innovative teaching methods to make them comprehensible for learners. Teachers explored how AI could support education through automated problem-solving assistants and adaptive learning modules. The outcomes included identifying key teaching challenges and gaps in the curriculum, as well as brainstorming AI-powered solutions.

A significant outcome of the initiative was the encouraging peer collaboration to support global access to effective mathematics education. The event laid the foundation for AI-powered educational solutions while promoting a collaborative network among educators. Read more: <https://www.cemca.org/news/ai-powered-adaptation-oer-math-education>



A glimpse from the group work session of the bootcamp.

Workshop Aims to Strengthen Grassroots Communication through Community Radio

The Community Radio (CR) Awareness Workshop, organised by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) and COL-CEMCA, took place in Ranchi, Jharkhand, on 11-12 February 2025. The workshop aimed to promote the establishment and sustainability of CR stations, which are crucial for grassroots communication. Over 40 participants from several states, such as Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra, attended the event, which focused on empowering local communities through CR. It aimed to expand the network of CR stations in CR dark districts since they serve as vital grassroots communication tools.

Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, highlighted that CR stations are cost-effective, community-owned, and play a vital role in addressing local issues, promoting cultural heritage, supporting education, and fostering local partnerships. He also addressed the sustainability challenges faced by CR stations, emphasising the crucial role of community support in ensuring their long-term viability.

Delivering the inaugural address, Shri Rajesh Kumar Sharma, Additional Director (CRS) at MIB, highlighted the government's efforts to streamline procedures for CR station establishment and expand the network, which currently includes 528 operational stations.

Professor T. N. Sahu, Vice-Chancellor, JSOU, emphasised the role of CR in Jharkhand's development, particularly in extending the reach of education, promoting government schemes, and fostering connectivity among rural communities. He affirmed JSOU's commitment to integrating CR stations for the benefit of

students and the wider community, in collaboration with CEMCA and MIB.

The workshop included practical sessions such as a field visit to Radio Khanchi and discussions on content creation, community engagement, and sustainability. Participants also learned about applying for CR licenses and managing CR stations. The workshop concluded with a certificate distribution, marking a significant step towards strengthening CR as a medium for social change and community empowerment.

Read more:

<https://www.cemca.org/news/community-radio-awareness-workshop-aims-strengthen-grassroots-communication>



A glimpse from the workshop proceedings.



A group photo of the participants and experts after the workshop.

FDP on TEL and Blended Learning Equips Educators with Skills to Navigate Digital Education

COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and Apeejay Styra University (ASU), Haryana, organised an Online Faculty Development Programme (FDP) from 20 to 25 February 2025. It focused on empowering educators in Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL) and Blended Learning, equipping them with the skills to navigate the evolving digital education landscape in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The FDP was hosted by AIU's Academic and Administrative Development Centre (AADC) at ASU.

On this occasion, Dr Vijay Vir Singh, Vice-Chancellor, ASU, highlighted the significance of active learning and the role of teachers in designing engaging activities to maximise student outcomes. "In blended learning, the teacher is central. Hand-holding students is crucial to ensure effective learning," he added.

Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, described NEP 2020 as a forward-looking policy, which acknowledges how digitalisation, emerging technologies, and the greening of education are transforming every sphere, including teaching and learning practices. He also underscored the need for teachers to equip students with employability skills, addressing a common concern expressed by the industry sector.

Dr Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General of AIU, discussed the transformative role of technology in education, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. She highlighted the challenges teachers faced in adapting to technology-enabled teaching and the growing need for capacity building in the era of artificial



Dr B Shadrach, Dr Vijay Vir Singh and Dr Pankaj Mittal during the inaugural session of the FDP.

intelligence (AI).

The five-day FDP featured sessions by COL-CEMCA experts on TEL and blended learning, Institutional Blended Learning Policy template, OERs, MOOCs, and LMS, and skill development and graduate employability. These sessions enabled educators to imbibe innovative teaching methodologies, reinforcing ASU's commitment to leveraging technology to enhance learning experiences for both educators and students.

Read more: <https://www.cemca.org/news/fdp-tel-and-blended-learning-equips-educators-skills-navigate-digital-education>

Panjab University Hosts FDP on TEL and Blended Learning for Educators

Panjab University, in partnership with COL-CEMCA and AIU, hosted a FDP on "Empowering Higher Education Institutions in Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL) and Blended Learning" from 24 February to 1 March 2025. The programme equipped educators with the skills to integrate TEL and blended learning into their teaching practices. Aligned with NEP 2020, the initiative sought to leverage technology for transformative educational experiences.

Professor Renu Vig, Vice Chancellor, Panjab University, expressed gratitude to COL-CEMCA and AIU for organising this significant FDP. Underscoring the immense potential of digital platforms in education, she mentioned that universities can now offer 40 percent of their courses through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), with students earning up to 20 percent of their credits via these platforms. Panjab University has been a pioneer in this area, with its faculty serving as SWAYAM coordinators and creating courses accessed by over 90,000 students. Professor Vig stressed the importance of educators staying ahead in adopting artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure quality learning.

Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, emphasised the significance of open learning initiatives, revealing that Panjab University was one of 12 institutions selected for this year's FDP. He underscored the programme's role in helping universities implement NEP 2020 and develop institutional blended learning policies. Dr Shadrach also highlighted the potential for educators to create courses for Learning Management Systems (LMS), which can be shared across universities, reaching millions of learners.

Professor YK Rawal, Coordinator of the Academic and Administrative Development Centre (AADC), acknowledged the growing role of technology in education. Dr Yojna Rawat, Director of the Research and Development Cell, emphasised the irreplaceable role of educators while advocating for equipping them with technological skills to enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Ms Ranjana Parihar, Joint Secretary of AIU, praised the initiative for aligning with AIU's mission of strengthening technology-enabled teaching practices.

During the FDP, COL-CEMCA experts conducted sessions on TEL, IBLP template, OERs, MOOCs, and LMS, and skilling and employability. The FDP provided educators with a comprehensive understanding of innovative practices, bolstering Panjab University's commitment to embracing technology and enhancing learning experiences for both teachers, and learners.

Read more:

<https://www.cemca.org/news/panjab-university-hosts-fdp-technology-enabled-and-blended-learning-educators>



Dr B Shadrach, Prof Renu Vig and Dr Ranjana Parihar during the inaugural session of the FDP.

COL-CEMCA Participation in Regional Events

EdTech Conclave 2025, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, 5-7 February 2025

In his keynote address at EdTech 2025, organised by IIT Jammu from 5-7 February 2025, Dr B. Shadrach outlined a roadmap for integrating digital technologies in teaching and learning in Higher Education. He emphasised assessing the current landscape, envisioning a future, and developing strategies to achieve goals. The roadmap suggested by him aims to enhance access, quality, and innovation in education, preparing students for 21st-century challenges.

COL-CEMCA Joins the “AI@Work_LabNetwork” Launched by Inria, 11 February 2025

COL-CEMCA joined the AI@Work_LabNetwork, launched by Inria on 11 February 2024. It will contribute to the Network by sharing insights from India’s AI literacy programme for farmers, demonstrating its efficacy in preparing them for AI-driven changes, and replicating it globally with partners. COL-CEMCA will participate in discussions and colloquiums on “AI for ALL,” addressing challenges faced by informal sector workers in adapting to AI. Additionally, it will collaborate on joint research and publications, offering evidence-based solutions to enhance workforce preparedness and resilience in the evolving AI-influenced work environment.

Annual Convention of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) Alumni Association of India (JAAI), New Delhi, India, 23 February 2025

Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, participated as the Guest of Honour at the annual convention of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) Alumni Association of India (JAAI), held on 23 February 2025 in New Delhi, India. Dr Shadrach emphasised the importance of Indo-Japanese technical and cultural cooperation, praising Japan's efforts in climate literacy and AI. He discussed potential collaborations in AI and education, aiming to empower teachers and improve learning. He concluded by expressing hope for future partnerships between COL-CEMCA and Japan.



Dr B Shadrach with the dignitaries at the JICA Convention.

Resources

Graduate Employability and Emerging Skills in India, Commonwealth of Learning, 2025



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Graduate Employability and Emerging Skills in India

The report "Graduate Employability and Emerging Skills in India," commissioned by the Commonwealth of Learning, explores the challenges and opportunities in enhancing graduate employability in India. It highlights systemic issues such as outdated curricula, high dropout rates, and a disconnect between education and industry needs as the key challenges in this area. The report emphasises the importance of integrating vocational skills, digital literacy, and life skills into higher education. It also underscores the need for stronger industry-academia collaboration, career counselling, and continuous learning. The strategic recommendations include making employability skills courses mandatory, adopting micro-credentials, and fostering flexible learning pathways to prepare graduates for the evolving job market.

The report can be accessed at: <https://oasis.col.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/79fe59bf-58a1-461a-8470-138b0ca897e4/content>



10–12 September 2025



Innovative Open Education: Fostering Resilient Societies for Sustainable Economic Development

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PCF11 promotes open education to address key challenges such as educational inequity, stratification, and barriers to access. It fosters collaboration, innovative models, and solutions that build social resilience and adapt to global changes.

The theme of PCF11 is **Innovative Open Education: Fostering Resilient Societies for Sustainable Economic Development** and is accompanied by the following sub-themes and special focus areas:

Sub-Themes:

- Changing mindsets for innovative open education
- Gender, technology and innovation in innovative open education
- Skills development through innovative open education
- Sustaining communities of learning and practice in innovative open education

Special Focus:

- Emerging technologies for education and training
- Education for girls and women
- Youth

Important Dates

10 October 2024 — Call for abstracts and proposals

30 January 2025 — Last date for submission of abstracts and proposals

01 March 2025 — Notification of abstract/proposal approval

15 April 2025 — Last date for full paper submission

01 May 2025 — Notification for full paper submission

10 September 2025 — PCF11 commences

Contact: info@pcf11.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

Name: Development of Institutional Graduate Employability Framework in Open Universities (North)

Date: 1-3 March 2025

Venue: Vardhman Mahaveer Open University, Kota, Rajasthan

Name: Visit by the Vice Chancellor, Bangladesh Open University, Bangladesh, to COL-CEMCA

Date: 3-7 March 2025

Venue: New Delhi, and Nashik, Maharashtra

Name: Roundtable of Asian Open Universities' Vice Chancellors

Date: 6-7 March 2025

Venue: Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU), Nashik, Maharashtra

Name: Development of Institutional Graduate Employability Framework in Open Universities (South)

Date: 11-13 March 2025

Venue: Sreenarayanaguru Open University, Kollam, Kerala

Name: Development of Institutional Graduate Employability Framework in Open Universities (East)

Date: 20-22 March 2025

Venue: Netaji Subhas Open University, Kolkata, West Bengal

Name: Development of Institutional Graduate Employability Framework in Open Universities (West and Central)

Date: 27-29 March 2025

Venue: Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

COL-CEMCA, a Regional Office of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Vancouver, Canada, is an international agency.

COL-CEMCA's mission is to promote meaningful, relevant and appropriate use of ICTs to serve the educational and training needs of Commonwealth Member States of Asia.

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