

Chapter 14

Integrating Digital Learning Management System (LMS) Into Institutional Policies on Open Education in India for the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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ABSTRACT

India is home to millions of potential learners at various levels. The current educational system and its infrastructure is bursting at its seams due to the burgeoning pressure of demands on it. Open education is often touted as the way out of this immense demand generated pressure. However, the slow assimilation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) stays put on such expectations. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) formulated by the UN lays down the road map for making the world a better place to dwell in all aspects of human existence.

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Education lies at the heart of attaining the goal of sustainable development. The limitations imposed by time, place and other barriers can be effectively met only by the infusion of new technology into open education systems, in countries like India. The substantial internet penetration in India gives it a unique advantage to affect a massive technology driven growth in high quality education.

INTRODUCTION

We need technology in every classroom and in every student and teachers' hand, because it is the pen and paper of our time, and it is the lens through which we experience much of our world. David Warlick.

The educational policy in India has been semi dormant for the last many decades. In spite of pious declarations, the back bone of Indian Education system remains class room, black board, teacher and pre-defined assignments. Innovations in teaching learning strategies have been least noticed. In many parameters, Indian education lags behind. For instance the student teacher ratio is still very low 70 years after attaining independence. The Kothari Commission had recommended the introduction of innovative teaching strategies by integrating technologies which were available at that time. Though efforts have been made to reach the unreached with technology, bottlenecks have been far too many in ensuring access to quality higher education without compromising equity.

Development is a multi pronged concept and goes beyond a simple rise in per capita income. Just as the concept deals with an improvement in the levels of incomes, it also stresses on the improvement of quality of life. Undoubtedly, education plays an important role in achieving both these parameters. Relevant education not only increases the flows in the system but also broadens the channels. The United Nations in the year 2000 propounded 8 seminal goals to be achieved by 2015 to thrust the Least Developed Countries on the path of development and high growth. However, in countries like India, many of the MDGs still remain unattained. It is in this context that the feasibility of attaining the newly listed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) assumes importance.

India has realized the importance of attaining these seminal goals enshrined in the SDGs and has gone to the extent of devoting one day in every parliament session for discussing the strategies for their attainment (NDTV, 2016). The policy makers clearly realize that the global attainment of SDGs depends on the performance of the Indian Nation. To quote, External Affairs Minister, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, “one sixth of humanity lives in India. Therefore global success in realizing SDGs

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