

Chapter 6

Alignment of OER Platforms With SDGs: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT

Given that India is a fast-developing country, education can play a transformative role in societal change in the country. However, disparities continue to persist in access to education, provisioning of quality education. This has been reiterated and manifested even in recently declared SDGs with specific reference to SDG 4. SDG 4 recognizes the need for inclusive education to drive the change. This chapter highlights the role and importance of OERs in transforming the education and making it more inclusive. More importantly, OERs can play a significant role in bridging the digital divide in the country by imparting access to education to both haves and have-nots. The chapter in this context focuses on comprehending the challenges, prospects, and finest practices connected with Indian Open Educational Resources (OER) initiatives. This chapter will also address some of the relevant queries or questions such as, ‘Why do Indian university, college, and school educators adopt—or are reluctant to adopt—OER?’

INTRODUCTION

India is a very diverse, multi linguistic and multi-ethnic country in the world. The development of information and communication technology (ICT) is a boon for Indians and has been connecting the digital divide in the country. ICT has enhanced Indian skill sets and productivity as best human resources in

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the world. With the introduction of emerging ICT enabled technologies such as block chains, Artificial Intelligence (AI) have revolutionized the use of such technologies in the education world too. Some of these technologies have found their places in education sector, which could significantly contribute in improvising the quality of education in the country by enhancing the access to educational resources among haves and have-nots in the society. There is an escalation in Open Educational Resources (OER) and open access movement because of two reasons; first, *reach of internet availability* and second, *its nature of digital content*, which can be shared.

The Agenda 2030 formulated by United Nation highlighted seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which focuses and support for developed and developing countries in integration their plans and policies to make sustainable and prosperous world to the future generation. Through SDGs 17 guarantee to assist in improvement of poverty, mitigate economic inequality, protect this beautiful planet and to make peace and prosperity among people in the world by 2030. Lane (2017) which study presented an outline how open education address the gap to help the SDGs and SDG 4. The study revealed that how potentials OER and its activities help at all education level for instances local, regional and national level to achieve SDGs and SDG 4. The ambition for open education to contribute to the SDGs is clear from this and other gatherings but the means to make it happen are not as clear, and many have claimed that little has happened since the SDGs were launched in 2015.

Given this brief background, the chapter aims at carrying out an objective assessment of the existing OER initiatives at national and international level. While doing so, the exploratory chapter has carried out an extensive review of existing OER platforms, both at national and international levels. In order to carry out the assessment, data have been collated from various websites of OER platforms. The chapter is organized sequentially following areas:

- It will introduce the concept and lays down the objectives and methodologies in brief with sustainable development goals special focus on SDGs 4 and also tried to align with OER concept.
- The next introduction sub-section will a brief overview on Open Educational Resources (OERs) history and its development indicators for instance with select OERs legacy which initiatives have taken place by national and international institutions and organizations level in table below.
- The study in sub-section of introduction highlighted SDGs 4 with its associated target with IFLA Global Vision and how it will be aligning with OERs concept.
- The study also elaborated on Open Educational Resources and HEI scenario in India and how OERs rich content effort helping India education system.
- The study also highlighted in detailed manner about various OER platforms and initiatives being operational at the national level and explained how its needed more to be done in order to address the challenges those exist in the OERs system.
- The study also attempted to carry out an assessment OER initiatives by international institutions and organizations and also stressed that how much content is rich these OER initiatives and platforms at globally.
- The study also emphasized on its associated challenges with the existing OER systems and opportunities that could be helpful to eradicate digital divide and educational haves and have-nots in the society.

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