

Chapter 33

OER and Management Education in India: Managing Strategy in ODL System

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ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses the strategic perspective of OER in Management Education specifically in India. The study is exploratory and descriptive in nature and is based more on the secondary data. The primary data is in the form of informal feedback from the faculty and academic associates of Business Management in the State Open Universities having Management Departments/Schools in India. The primary data has been gathered using awareness, use, innovation methods and content delivery as the basic parameters for the purpose of study. The data was collected using informal questionnaire. The findings of the study show that there is limited awareness regarding the concept and theory of OER and therefore the use of the resource are not as expected. The study is limited to the Distance Learning Universities and the conventional Universities offering distance education have been omitted.

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing more difficult for success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things. (Kipp, 1999)

Open Distance Learning (ODL) has made its presence felt in the past few decades but still much is to be done to make best use of the system. ODL has been and is a potential agent to take care of the demand and supply equation in higher education. Looking at the present trends, ODL seems to be at the cross-roads. Despite the extraordinary growth of educational telecommunications, colleges and Universities have yet to exploit the full potential of technology to transform the teaching and learning process (Olcott Jr.,2012). Dr Olcott emphasizes on the fact that “Education on Demand” will dominate the marketplace and the institutions that fail on this front will find themselves out of the competition. The fact is that

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‘the choice is ours’. But if the institutions make the right choice, how is this choice to be used is the big question. It is not necessary that once the right choice is made, success follow without much effort. The aspect that how well this choice is planned and implemented makes all the difference.

After best alternative is chosen, the implementation part comes into existence and this requires a proper strategic framework. The management of the strategy in a proper way is very important. Use of innovative methods help in making the system stronger. Open Educational Resources (OER) has come up as new mode to enhance the delivery mechanism of the institutions.

Open educational Resources have gained momentum in the past decade. In 2001 MIT started with one of the first OERs in the world and probably the first in the Management Education. Later on many others like Harvard, Stanford, IIMs followed in the line. As of now many of the top most institutes of the world offering management education do have and OER. MITs Open Courseware is one of the most popular of all. Now these Educational Resources have also started providing the certification. Open course wares in various areas of Management provide certification of the leading universities through MOOC, Coursera etc. But the basic question still stands i.e. what is the scenario of OER in Management Education in India? To find answer to this pertinent an effort has been made to see the status of OER and Management education in India.

To start with let us first get an idea as to what is an OER?

According to Butcher, 2011 “the concept of Open Educational Resources (OER) describes any educational resources (including curriculum maps, course materials, Text books, streaming videos, multimedia applications, podcasts, and any other material that have been designed for use in teaching and learning) that are openly available for use by educators and students, without an accompanying need to pay royalty or license fees”. This is the simplest understanding of OER. But this is not all. There are many other parameters associated to it. This includes different variants like Open courseware (OCW) etc. Just knowing the concept of OER does not solve the purpose. The main aim is to know to what extent OER can be used in imparting the management education.

OER and related products have developed all over the world with more and more institutions participating in the development process. This is happening with support from colleges, universities, foundations, international organizations, and education management sections (Chen, 2010, Chen & Panda 2013). Statistics shows that the members of the Open Course Ware Consortium (OCWC) are distributed in the whole world. Around 250 universities or institutions run 100 project websites, and share more than 6200 courses and learning materials (including some Chinese Quality Open Course Ware [CQOCW]) among which 400 courses are translated in over 10 different languages, drawing on an average 2.5 million visits per month (Wang, 2008, Chen & Panda, 2013). The statistics is quite impressive but the studies throughout the world do not highlight the management education or professional education per se exclusively. The need of the hour is to find the use of OER in management education in ODL specifically.

ODL SYSTEM

The concept of ODL has been discussed off and on and there are number of views regarding this. The system came into existence as a result of providing more educational opportunities due to rapid technological changes and shifting market conditions. This was developed with the main motive of updating the knowledge base of the workers at their respective places of employment and trying to reach the unreached (www.uidaho.edu). Several researches have shown that ODL can be as effective as the tradi-

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