From Director's Desk

Dear Readers,

We are happy to bring you the third issue of CEMCA Newsletter which also happens to be our year-end issue. It is packed with news, views and updates on CEMCA's activities in the region, plus a host of useful educational information.

The highlights of the issue include an article by Prof. Dênia Falcão de Bittencourt where she shares her experiences of research aimed at analysing the implementation of Institutional Self-Evaluation Methodology (ISEM), - a set of systematized procedures, in the pedagogical management of distance education projects. Distance education institutions would surely benefit from ISEM.

Recently I was reading the 2015 edition of the Hays Global Skills Index (http://www.hays-index.com/) published in collaboration with Oxford Economics, on the challenge of locating skilled workers organisations need to operate and succeed in their businesses. The report indicates that the "BRICs markets, once the engine of global growth, are facing an economic slowdown which is slackening the demand for skilled workers in those respective countries." Hays' Chief Executive, Alistair Cox suggests, "*Education and training schemes need to be better aligned and tailored to produce sufficient levels of the skilled resources businesses need.*" Highlighting the increasing demand for education and lifelong learning needs, Dr. Luciano Sathler, in his timely article, reflects on access to tertiary education in Brazil and how distance learning could cater to the need of innovative approaches, new skills and abilities, in line with the digital age and the increasing demands for higher education.

In the SMART Tips section, Zaid A. Alsagoff shares an interesting format of online learning through a Nano Open Online Course (NOOC), created to empower learners. It helps learners explore, learn and be assessed (certified) on the essentials of one competency, skill or area of knowledge at a time, within 12 learning hours or less. The core of a NOOC is a Nano Learning Experience (NLE) which can be experienced online (e.g. in a NOOC), or in a face-to-face (F2F) learning environment. Zaid says that for a NLE, the learning experience must include learning content, activities, assessment and a completion-point (certification or badge).

A number of initiatives are being set in motion for Open Educational Resources (OER) to provide teachers and learners access to all open resources available, ensuring their quality, though, is a big concern for many of us. CEMCA has developed a set of comprehensive guidelines for Quality Assurance of OER in a TIPS Framework. Akash Agarwal has created a MediaWiki Extension for quality assurances which can be integrated to an OER you create (or add) on a wiki with the extension (freely available under CC licence) installed, and get feedback on the quality of the created OER from colleagues, friends, and educators. This MediaWiki Extension can also be used for self-evaluation of OER quality, using the framework and improve upon it.

MOOCs are being created and implemented by institutions, supported by governments. The issue you are holding in your hand carries a review of the book, 'MOOCs and Open Education: Around the World' edited by Bonk, Lee, Reeves, & Reynolds, and a special feature on the Nanyang Technological University, a rising star in higher education.

We also bring you the latest news and updates on CEMCA activities in the region, in the last few months.

We hope you enjoy reading the issue and find the articles useful. We look forward to your feedback.

With best wishes,
Ramesh C. Sharma

Self-Evaluation as a Tool for Distance Education

Prof. Dênia Falcão de Bittencourt

In this paper, the result of a doctoral dissertation, a research is presented that aims at analyzing the contribution of the institutional self-evaluation methodology (ISEM) in the Pedagogical Management of Distance Education Projects. The ISEM is described, along with its results, and its use in a concrete situation, in the Course of Administration. The objective is to evaluate the potential of the ISEM as a tool for continuous improvement and innovation of the pedagogical management of DE projects.

Know thyself and thou shall know all the mysteries of the gods and of the universe.

- Socrates

Institutional Self-Evaluation is a current and relevant issue in the context of Higher Education in Brazil and worldwide; it has acquired significance as a tool for rendering accounts to society, and for social research. Alkin (2004, p. 12 and 13), in his effort to synthesize, compares the Evaluation Theory to a metaphor in the shape of a tree. Its trunk is rooted on a double basis that forms one root through social accountability, and another for social research. With such a structural basis the institutional Evaluation acquires significance as a tool capable of stimulating actions that make it possible to measure quality, the continuous improvement of academic performance, and the planning of educational management based on the identification of its own needs.

The institutional evaluation can be employed as a tool that helps higher education institutions at a distance to achieve a qualified professional formation in their courses; a formation that can fill in human expectations, and which ensures the formation of citizenship. In order to offer an integral formation, higher education institutions at a distance must ensure the access, the continuity and the offering of a qualified education.

Based on such a belief the doctoral dissertation in Education "Construir e Contribuir. A Metodologia da Autoavaliação Institucional - MAAI - na Gestão Pedagógica em Educação a Distância," was presented at the Faculdade de Educação at the Universidade de São Paulo, in São Paulo, Brazil, in 2012.

The necessary search for improvement in pedagogical management in Distance Education (DE) demands the use of methodologies that enable one to reflect on the processes and procedures of decision making, which are continuously changing, depending on the specificities and the technological and educational context of the projects at issue. The starting point of the investigation was the understanding that DE institutions are permanently in search for procedures to improve pedagogical management. The Institutional Self-EvaluationMethodology – ISEM – feeds the process of management and receives feedback from it. The ISEM offers contributions for pedagogical management of DE projects.

The thesis supported in that research suggested that there is a dialectic movement of building and contributing in the relations between the ISEM and pedagogical management in DE. The ISEM was defined as a set of systematized procedures that are turned to the analysis and development of pedagogical management in the DE project.

The Institutional Self-Evaluation Methodology

Essentially, the Institutional Self-Evaluation Methodology – ISEM – is a tool for pedagogical management. Its action through the agents of the project (coordinators, teachers, students, technicians) in DE must be used to promote self-knowledge and the continuous improvement of the educational service.

Thus, the ISEM is defined as a continuous process through which the institution builds knowledge about its own reality, in search for the understanding of the meanings of its activities as a whole in order to improve educational quality, and to achieve a greater social relevance. For that it systematizes information, analyzes

collectively the meaning of its accomplishments, discovers forms of organization, management and action, and identifies weak points, as well as its strong points and potential, while establishing strategies to solve the problems.

Thinking from inside the process (Figure 1), the generic model was proposed in four stages of development: planning, design, production, and educational services, suggesting that the closure of the last stage would be an evaluation to obtain certain information, and to feedback and improve the process every time the DE project is offered again. The proposed evaluation process, as it gives feedback from all previous stages, reveals its significance in the constitution of the whole system.
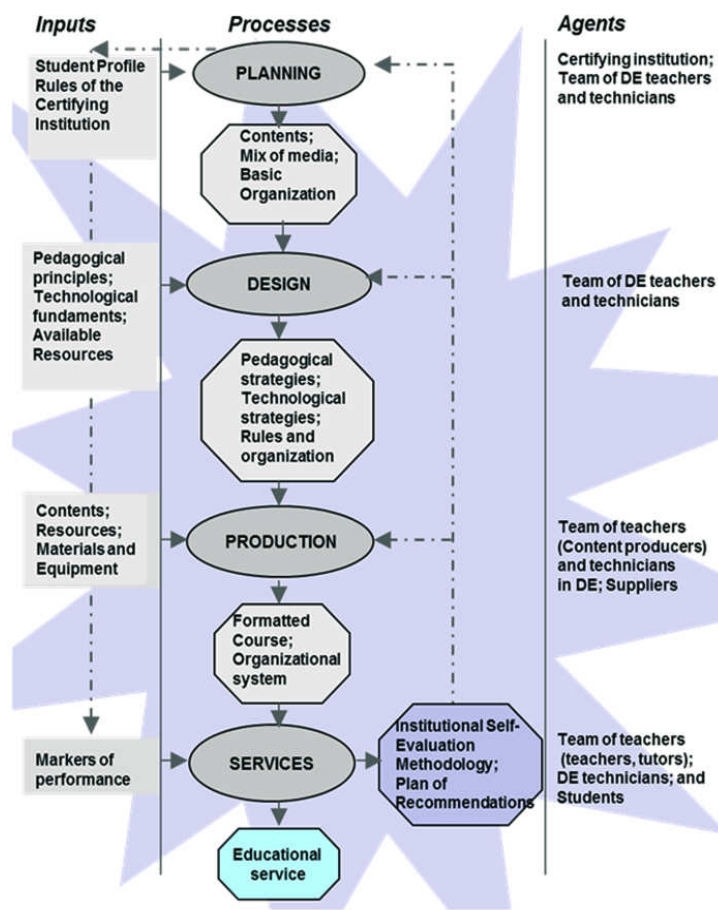
Thus the figure represents how the ISEM was born already integrated to the developing stages of DE projects. The model proposes that the evaluation must involve dynamic processes, which interact in search for the best adaptation to the existing context, and that, at the end of each cycle, it can point to necessary adjustments and recommendations for improvement in the next time that educational project is offered.

So it is at the Planning stage, after studying the context, the needs of the project, of the students, of the technology to be used, and during the development of the pedagogical management methodology, that the objectives and markers are defined. The performance markers shall be determined at the Design stage in a DE project, while taking in consideration the input and the pedagogical, academic and technological strategies.

The markers and items of performance selected must be directly related to the reason of teaching. Since the educational service is the production of knowledge, evaluation must take into account that in the same way learning is a continuous process, the educational process also is. The ISEM, by its nature, is

expected to be an efficient form of checking the fulfillment of patterns, of identification of problems, and of proactive action, in order to make the necessary innovations in the educational modality in which it works. It is based on the idea that reaching the goals in a DE project is related to the production of knowledge by people and, since that cannot be measured directly, it is necessary to develop, during its planning, models with markers and criteria to make evaluation possible.

To make possible the dialogue between internal and external agents one presupposes that the DE project foresees performance markers and items, which can offer indexes for recognition of, and adaptation to the given reality, and which state an identity, the characteristics and values to be promoted, so to establish evaluative patterns, and to make clear what are the representations for the quality of the educational service offered. It is necessary to identify the characteristics of quality that are important for students and teachers; it is necessary to ask to the user of the educational service (student), since he or she is the one in a better position to show what is important for his or her satisfaction.

The development of a quality level refers to those activities included in the educational service, or by the planning of the DE project. The planned quality, the satisfaction of the students, will be reached or not depending on the ability to produce synergy among the involved processes, agents and components.

The methodology of the pedagogical management of a DE project is a structured and sequenced set of combined actions, or sequential stages that shape and offer the educational service at a distance. The methodology applied in the DE project studied in this research thus coincides with the method

1 - The place of the ISEM in Pedagogical Projects in DE
Source: Adapted from Bittencourt (1999).

used in the organization of a DE system. In that sense, the methodology has the function of allowing the planning and organization; it guides the making of a DE project. And if it can help to plan and organize, it can also be used to guide in the evaluation of a DE project, including all of its processes, agents and components.

The items of performance are suited for evaluating the degree of the students' satisfaction; they are applied in the questionnaire of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Research, in the form of questions. The questions in the questionnaire are mostly elaborated as objective questions and, to a lesser degree, there are also some subjective questions. They are made for each grouping of performance items, which reflect a process in the offered pedagogical methodology: didactic materials, tutorial and communication systems, evaluation systems, collaborative and autonomous studies and general evaluation of the project. The subjective questions aim at qualitative hints on objective evaluations, since they ask the students to freely comment about the evaluated items, in order to allow a deeper understanding of specific questions (The analysis in this research uses such subjective questions).

The idea proposed in the ISEM is that by analyzing the satisfaction obtained from each component and agent (item of performance) that constitutes the educational service, together with the suggestions and comments, the analyst shall be able to keep a systemic view for following the needs of management both in the answers of "one" or of "many", thus considering their level of representation and significance. And also that by developing the ability to understand the whole, the analyst will improve his or her ability to manage the DE project.

Analysis of the Contributions from the ISEM

The ISEM and the pedagogical management at the Campus of Unisul Virtual (UV) evolved at the same time. The following up of the evolution of the ISEM makes evident how much its contributions can be positive for the pedagogical management in DE. Since the beginning that comprehensive view conveyed by means of reports and meetings was able to contribute with suggestions and recommendations for the distinct processes and agents. The result of the actions carried out is evaluated in contrast with the next results from ISEM.

In the research of the dissertation the ISEM was analyzed within a concrete experience of management and evaluation of the Course of Administration at a distance, with the aim of assessing the potential of such a tool for continuous improvement and innovation of the pedagogical management of DE projects. The research employed a qualitative approach for the analysis of contents and of the critical-dialectical method.

On Chart 1 it is possible to follow the results along the different periods by means of the set of quantitative items of performance in the institutional self-evaluation researches, translated into one only index. The Chart shows the evolution of the indexes obtained by the Course of Administration in contrast with the evolution of the medium indexes obtained by the rest of the courses at UV.

On the Chart one can follow visually a significative evolution in the general indexes obtained by the Course of Administration.

The evolution of the general index of the course can indicate that, arguably, the successive application of the ISEM – giving information about satisfaction, or offering suggestions for the educational service – produced interventions carried out with the agents and generated new actions in the pedagogical management of the Course of Administration at UV – which contributed for the continuous improvement of the course.

For the categorization and analysis of the comments and suggestions made by the students from the Course of Administration in the institutional self-evaluation researches three dimensions of the pedagogical management were defined: resources, teachers and
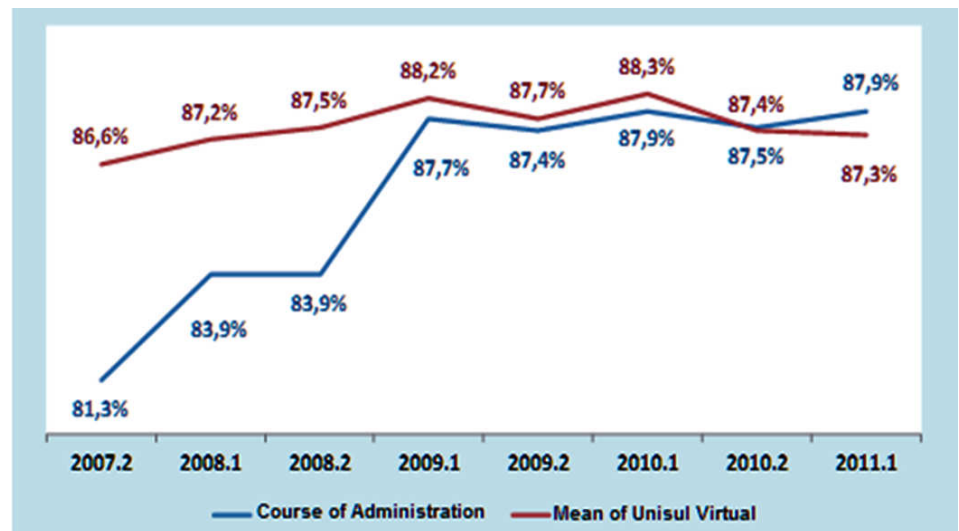
Graphic 1 – Evolution of the general index of the Course of Administration in relation to the mean result from all undergraduate courses at UV
Source: Banco de dados relatórios UV, 2007.2 a 2011.1.

students. In the dimension of resources, which stresses the relation between education and technology, it was possible to see, for instance, a growing demand for more interactive didactic elements, for the improvement of multimedia. From the analysis of the data one can also note where the materials need adjustment or the perfecting of the contents, and the correction of orthographical errors. In the dimension of the teachers, one can see, among other issues, the growing demand for an interactive experience with the teacher. The teacher had to improve his evaluation and feedback tools. The analysis of the data also showed what aspects need to be improved for the teacher to be better prepared for the educational service. And in the dimension of the students issues were analyzed, which involved the methods employed in order to favor learning by the students at a distance, and how to make that learning more significative, practical and efficient. For example, to increase those learning activities meant to favor learning and to allow the students to study with greater autonomy.

The research thus showed the relations between the ISEM and DE pedagogical management. It made evident how the DE project can be improved when the ISEM is applied.

Considerations and perspectives

By focusing on the Institutional Self-Evaluation Methodology – ISEM, the research presented as its general goal to analyze the contributions from such a methodology for the pedagogical management in DE projects. It shows how the ISEM can be an important tool for information, which can result in appropriate action plans, capable of developing competences in the didactics of learning, and in the pedagogical management of DE as a whole.

The research confirms and identifies the building and contribution of the

Institutional Self-Evaluation Methodology – ISEM – of the Pedagogical Management in DE. The following Figure presents how that movement occurs in a spiral.
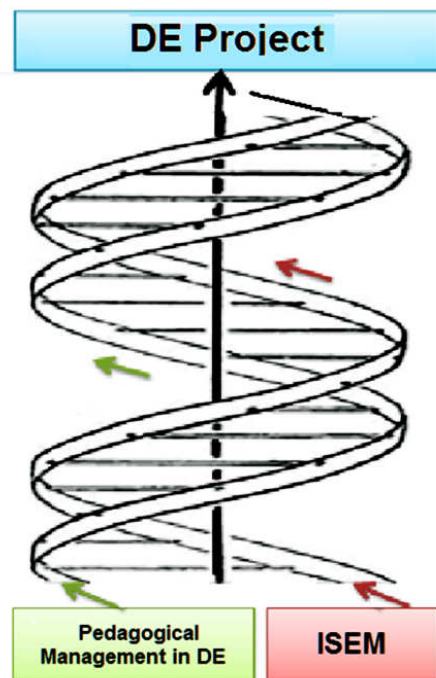

Figure 2- The ISEM and DE

As the ISEM gives a feedback to the pedagogical management in DE, it helps the people involved to better understand what are the necessary innovations and adjustments in the educational projects. It gives access to information for the planning, execution, following up, control, and self-regulation for the pedagogical management in DE, all necessary components.

After been completed, this research allows one to claim that there is a dialectic movement of building up and contribution in the existing relations between the ISEM

and the Pedagogical Management in DE.

Finally, considering that the ISEM was analyzed in the context of a specific project, in order to validated it for any other project in DE I suggest that it should be replicated in future research projects for other institutions and educational processes at a distance.

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Spotlight On...

Nanyang Technological University: A rising star in Higher Education

Dr. Aman Vats, Ms. Reshma Wadhwani and Ms. Alka Singh
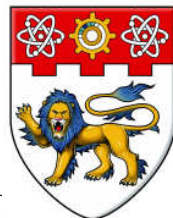
Universiti Teknologi Nanyang as called in Malay and famously known as NTU Singapore, by the world; is one of the largest public and autonomous universities in Singapore. The university's main campus is a 200-ha residential, garden campus located in the south-western part of Singapore.

"Lyon the lion" symbolises the University's values of strength, courage and fearlessness. As the embodiment of the NTU spirit; designed by an NTU student, it made its debut in August 2013.

View of the University campus

Nanyang Technological University (NTU Singapore) was inaugurated in 1991, when its predecessor institution, the Nanyang Technological Institute (NTI) merged with the National Institute of Education (NIE). NTU Singapore has since grown to become a full-fledged comprehensive and research-intensive university, with over 32,500 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the four colleges of engineering, business, science, and humanities, arts and social sciences. NTU Singapore is also home to world-class autonomous entities such as the National Institute of Education, Interdisciplinary Graduate School, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Earth Observatory of Singapore, and Singapore Centre on Environmental Life Sciences Engineering. The latest addition to the university, the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, is set-up jointly with Imperial College London, and opened its doors in 2013.

NTU continues the innovative and leading edge educational approaches by actively designing, developing and implementing an increasing number of online/blended learning courses in the University. NTU recognises that to bring forth the NTU Education goal of producing students with Character, Creativity, Competence, Communication and Civic-Mindedness, the learning and teaching at the University needs to inculcate active and socially collaborative approaches to learning. Specifically, the focus has been on the flipped classroom approach where deeper learning and discussions take place in face-to-face sessions.

Online/blended learning courses facilitate the flipped classroom approach by allowing fundamental, core content elements to be delivered online before students come to class. To achieve this, NTU has set up a support system and learning design expertise within the Centre for IT Services (CITS) to help faculty, schools and colleges to embark on designing online courses. This includes the MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) @NTU project, which has so far delivered two courses on the Coursera platform. The first, a course entitled 'Beauty Form and Function: An Exploration of Symmetry' had its first run from 17 February to 14 April, 2014 with more than 18,000 participants from around the world and more than 600 NTU undergraduates taking the course's Signature Track. NTU is the world's first university that allows credits or academic units from MOOC courses hosted on Coursera to be used to fulfil a student's degree requirements at NTU.

Under the Nanyang Technological University's five-year strategic plan, NTU 2015, to make its mark internationally in five areas – sustainability, healthcare, new media, the best of the East and West, and innovation.

President of NTU, Prof. Andersson says, "With our top-notch faculty and unique programmes that allow students to design their studies based on their strengths and interests, we have already seen a phenomenal 60 per cent increase in the number of top A-level students coming to NTU, compared to 2011."

Nanyang Technological University's global reputation attracts faculty, students and partnerships from Asia, North America, Europe and beyond. Working with local and global organisations, NTU actively explores cross-disciplinary solutions for the future.

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Meeting of Vice Chancellors of State Open Universities on Open Education Resources(OER) Policy, Creation, Sharing and Implementation Issues

A meeting of Vice Chancellors of State Open Universities on Open Education Resource Policy was held on 4th September 2015 at Chennai, India by Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi in collaboration with Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, New Delhi. The objectives of the meeting were to deliberate upon Use, Creation and Adoption of Open Education Resources (OER) for improving Quality, Access and Innovation; and Formulation of a National and Institutional OER Policy. Some of the recommendations of the deliberations were:

- There is a need for an OER policy and a separate OER department at each OU for the purpose of implementing OER and training the faculty how to develop OER.

- Each OU should select a particular area and develop OER in that particular area so as to avoid duplication of efforts. All programmes and courses should be placed in a Centralized Repository.

Development of ICT Policy of Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU), Meerut

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi assisted the Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU), Meerut towards developing ICT Policy of CCS University. To finalise it a meeting was held on 30th July 2015 at the University. Honourable Vice Chancellor Sh. Vikram Chandra Goel of CCS University emphatically stated that transparency, fairness and impartiality would be facilitated by ICT. He also mentioned that after struggle of three years, admission process has become transparent in the university. He focussed on the relevance of ICT in the present context. Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer, CEMCA assured full support and technical assistance to CCS

University in developing and implementing ICT Policy, and he acquainted audience with the key features of policy development and procedures. He discussed the policy development template with the audience.

After deliberations, it was decided that a number of policy statements will be prepared based on each of these areas and on the basis of these statements a draft policy will be prepared. Which will then be circulated among university stakeholders for wider consultation. Afterwards, a committee constituting experts from University, CEMCA, and other Universities/National organizations will evaluate the draft policy to give it a final shape. Prof. H. S. Singh, Pro-vice Chancellor, CCS University called upon the faculty members to focus on ICT development as well human development. The members present in the meeting were-Prof. Archana Sharma, Prof. P. K. Sharma, Prof. Aradhana, Dr. Jamal Siddiqui, Prof. Atveer Singh, Dr. Soti Shivendra Chand, Dr. J. S. Bhardwaj, Dr. Garima Singh, Dr. Vijay Jaiswal, Dr. Pradeep Chaudhary. Besides students of Pre PhD course work and M.Ed. have also given their inputs for formulation of ICT policy.

Community Radio Consultation organised in Islamabad

Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Islamabad in collaboration with CEMCA, New Delhi and Pakistan Community Media Network organised the 'National Consultation on Community Radio for Learning' in Islamabad, Pakistan on May 25, 2015.

Vice Chancellor, AIOU Prof. Shahid Siddiqui while chairing the preliminary session of the consultation announced that the University will strengthen its media support for its students through enhanced FM radio network. The media, he said, has emerged as most powerful social institutions and the AIOU wishes to take full benefit of it.

There were more than 45 academicians, media experts, social workers and broadcasters participated in the consultation representing different organisations like Radio Pakistan, China Radio International, Community Media Pakistan, FM-100 Islamabad, DIL FM, Health Communication Resources (HCR), UNESCO, UNICEF, DFID, British Council, Educational Broadcasters' Forum (EBF) Pakistan etc.

Dr. Ankuran Dutta, Programme Officer, CEMCA shared his experiences on the role of community radio for societal development from New Delhi through video conferencing. The consultation was also addressed by Dr. Syed Abdul Siraj, Chairman, Department of Mass Communication; Dr. Mukhtar Hussain Tarlpur, Director, Institute of Educational Technology, Mr. Masoodul Hasan Akhtar, Executive Director, Pakistan Community Media Network. Mr. Akhtar, in his address said, "I am personally and on behalf of Community Media Network thankful to CEMCA for their technical support which make it possible to take initiative on community media in Pakistan on small scale."

Mr. Zahid Majeed, Director, International Collaboration & Exchange Office, AIOU, Pakistan said, "Community Radio is a new concept in Pakistan, thanks to CEMCA, New Delhi for introducing it in AIOU and among stakeholders of Radio Community. It was my honor to coordinate the event and pleased to say that a good number of radio community stakeholders participated in the 'National Consultation on Community Radio' arranged by AIOU in-collaboration with CEMCA. The Government of Pakistan and the AIOU attached great importance to promotion of Community Radio for education, health, peace, religious harmony as well as to protect our culture, traditions and values. Hope this collaboration will go a long for achieving such targets".

Allama Iqbal Open University developed Flexible Curricula for Skill Training

Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Islamabad developed the curricula on 12 new skilled-based vocational courses in the discipline of media, electronics and agricultural sciences. In this connection, four-day workshop (26-29 May, 2015) was held at the University premises to develop the curricula of these courses in collaboration with Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi.

Presiding over the workshop, Vice Chancellor Prof. Shahid Siddiqui said that the University would

gradually switch over to online courses in order to facilitate the maximum number of students by taking full advantage of new technology. He thanked the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and CEMCA for their support in strengthening distance-learning system in the country. He announced that the University would soon set up a Research and Innovation Centre to promote research-based activities. The CEMCA's representative Dr. Ankuran Dutta took part in the workshop from New Delhi through video conferencing and assured full support and technical assistance to AIOU in introducing professional and skill based courses for the benefit of women, youth and common masses of the country.

According to the Director of the office, Dr. Zahid Majeed, "In Pakistan more than 60% population is

young and willing to contribute in national development. Educational opportunities are not enough and employment for educated class is very nominal/limited. In this scenario Vocational/Skill training helps them to overcome the problem of jobs, thanks to CEMCA its support in development of 'Flexible Curricula for Skill Training in Pakistan'. Both CEMCA and AIOU have agreed to develop 10 curricula for skill training; I am pleased to mention here that participants were so enthusiastic that at the end of the workshop they developed 12 courses. These 12 courses will be offered to AIOU students and people of Pakistan equipping them with necessary skills in different professional trades. We are thankful to Dr. Ramesh Sharma and Dr. Ankuran Dutta for guidance and support to make this initiative very successful. In future AIOU and CEMCA will develop detailed contents of two courses from these 12 courses." The Vice Chancellor Dr. Shahid Siddiqui is committed to enhance the AIOU's role in promoting skill-based education through ODL system. He has already instructed all the departments to take necessary steps to this direction.

CEMCA and UNESCO Commemorate CRVC (community radio video challenge) 2015 Awards Ceremony

Community Radio is said to be a medium for the people, of the people and by the people. Although, the term radio depicts it as an audio medium but what if you present an audio medium with the help of a video. How confusing it may sound but CEMCA not only successfully organised this unusual challenge in association with UNESCO and Apeejay Institute of Mass Communication (AIMC), but also received some marvellous entries that were awarded and presented in an award ceremony attended by more than 100 audiences at the India International Center, New Delhi on June 30, 2015.

The awards were distributed to the winners by a panel of eminent guests who congratulated and lauded the organisers for its efforts and the students for their creativity. Mr. Bhaskar Ghose, former Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Culture, Government of India gave valuable insights on the importance of community radio in the development of the grassroots people. RJ Raunak from 93.5 Red FM who graced the show and entertained people with his hilarious gigs.

Marking his presence in the event, Mr. SunitTondon, Director General of Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) spoke about the importance and relevance of community radio and appreciated the organisers for its initiative. "CEMCA has been doing several works in spreading the message and keeping the flame alive" he further added while addressing the audience.

The award ceremony started with the welcome address by Dr. Ramesh Sharma, Director, CEMCA and the session opened with remarks from Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director and UNESCO Representative to Bhutan, India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka.   Prof. Ashok Ogra, Director, AIMC explained the Jury process of the video challenge. A member of the Jury, Dr. Manoj Patairiya, Additional Director General, Prasar Bharati was also present along with the representatives from different organisations. Ms. Nidhi Ralhan of UNESCO announced the results of the CRVC 2015. Mr. R. Thyagarajan and Ms. Monica Sharma of CEMCA gave the concluding remarks and proposed vote of thanks respectively. This ceremony was coordinated by Dr. Ankuran Dutta, Programme Officer, CEMCA.

Professional Development Online Course on "OER-based e-Learning" - Certificate Awards Ceremony

The Certificate Awards Ceremony of the Professional Development Online Course, "OER-based e-Learning" adapted and developed by OUSL in collaboration with CEMCA, was held on 11th June, 2015, at the Faculty of Education, OUSL. Dr. Vijitha Nanayakkara, Vice-Chancellor of OUSL, attended as the Chief Guest of the Ceremony. The academic staff members of OUSL who successfully completed all five modules of this fully online course of six months duration received "Certificates of Completion" at this occasion.

Review and Finalisation of the Draft Learning Materials of Skills based Vocational Programme for Nursing Assistance and Geriatric Care Assistance

CEMCA has been supporting the member institutions towards the development of open and distance learning courses in compliance with the National Skills Qualifications Framework. Towards this, CEMCA developed a modular programme entitled Nursing Assistance and Geriatric Care Assistance in collaboration with Karnataka Open School (KOS), Mysore. This Certificate Programme for Nursing Assistance and Geriatric Care Assistance will be available for anyone who has Grade 10 qualification. In this regard the KOS organized a workshop for Curriculum finalisation and training on development of Self-learning Materials for the programme Nursing Assistance and Geriatric Care Assistance on April 29-30, 2015. Another workshop was also organised for review and finalisation of the draft learning materials from June 8-10, 2015 at the KOS Campus at Mysore. Dr. K. M. Veeraiah, Director, KOS, Mysore explained the status of the draft lessons for this programme. In his inaugural address Mr. Chidre Shankarayya Swamy, Director, JSS Mahavidyapeetha, Mysore highlighted the importance of technical and vocational skill development initiatives not only in India but also in the world. Further he appreciated the initiatives of CEMCA in the field of education and for giving this opportunity to KOS. Prof. C. K. Renukarya, Director, Pooja Bhagavat Memorial Mahajana Post Graduate Centre, Mysore and Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer from CEMCA facilitated the workshop. Eighteen experts (Seven male and eleven female) participated in the workshop to provide their valuable inputs to the programme.

Netaji Subhas Open University upgraded 12 Vocational Curricula to NSQF

CEMCA organised a curricula development programme in collaboration with Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) in Kolkata, West Bengal from June 3-5, 2015. In this programme, the experts of the School of Vocational Studies of the University upgraded the existing curricula of 12 vocational courses to National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF).

Professor SubhaSankar Sarkar, Vice Chancellor of the University explained the initiatives on the vocational and skill development programmes of the University. Professor Sarkar appreciated the initiative of CEMCA for upgrading the existing curricula to NSQF in a scientific process and thanked CEMCA/COL for the cooperation and support towards maintaining skills training through this endeavour. Sri Ashokendu Sengupta, Chairperson, State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Govt. of West Bengal inaugurated the programme.

While enumerating the importance of NSQF and alignment of the existing curricula into NSQF, Dr. Ankuran Dutta of

CEMCA said, "For skill development and to impart vocational education there is a dire need to develop enough Open educational resources in various skill sectors. Open Educational Resources can play an important role in realizing the dream of skilling India. CEMCA has been working continuously in creating awareness on OER for skill development and assisting different organisations to develop vocational courses." Prof. Vinay Swarup Mehrotra, Professor and Head, Curriculum Development and Evaluation Centre, NSQF delivered the keynote address on the National Skills Qualification Framework.

In the three days programme, the experts from different vocational trades upgraded the curricula of 12 vocational courses to NSQF on - Tailoring and Dress Designing, Nature Therapy, Sports and Competitive Yoga, Fitness management, Pre-Primary Teachers' Education-Montessori, Automobile Repairing & Maintenance, Electrical Technician, Refrigerator & AC Machine, Beautician, Disaster Risk Management, Soft skills, DTP and Networking. After completion of the activity, the participants mentioned that the entire process of upgradation was very much interesting and they could understand the differences between the curriculum and syllabus. The participants thanked the University for providing them the opportunity to upgrade the curricula and CEMCA for providing the technical support and assistance in building capacity.

National Capacity Building of ODL Professionals on OER Quality

CEMCA is engaged in reviewing & improving quality of Open Distance Learning (ODL) and Open Educational Resources (OER). CEMCA has developed the Quality Assurance Guidelines for OER: TIPS Framework for use by individuals and institutions engaged in OER production. In order to make the TIPS framework used in the online/offline environment, CEMCA organised a National Capacity Building programme from 27-29 May, 2015 on OER Quality at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU), Hyderabad for ODL professionals. ODL professionals from State Open Universities of India participated in this capacity building programme. The objectives of the programme were to develop capacities of Open University teachers and BRAOU faculties on OER and Quality Assurance Guidelines for OER: TIPS Frame work.

The workshop was inaugurated by Prof. V. S. Prasad, Former Director NAAC, who explained various critical issues pertaining to OER and emphasized the philosophical foundation of OER. While recalling the OER Quality issues he put three Ps i.e. Perception: philosophy of OER, Passion: attitudes towards OER, Pride: feeling in doing. Finally he stressed upon the need to integrate sectorial policy to the National Policy for OER in India. Dr. B. K. Bhadri, Assistant Educational Advisor, MHRD, New Delhi explained the various policy initiatives of MHRD viz. integrating skill development in higher education, promoting open and distance learning, etc. He also appreciated the CEMCA's initiatives in India for the development of learning. Prof. V. Venkaiah, Former VC of Krishna University spoke about 2012-UNESCO Paris Declaration, the need and importance of the OER in present context. He also suggested to all open universities of India to have OER policy on priority basis. Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer (CEMCA), highlighted the agenda of the three days programme and proposed vote of thanks.

The workshop was facilitated by Prof. Paul Kawachi from Japan, Prof. V Venkaiah and Mr. Akash Agarwal from India. The three-day capacity building programme involved: Concepts of Open Educational Resources; The CEMCA's TIPS Quality Assurance Framework; Design issues related to OER Quality and Media Wiki; Creating OER using CEMCA's MediaWiki; and Teacher Professional Development and OER Quality. The participants created content specific OER using CEMCA's MediaWiki in group and presented their plans and OER to the whole group for feedback and reflection.

National Consultation for Promotion of Virtual Open Schooling in India

CEMCA in collaboration with National Institute of Open Schooling, Govt. of India, organised a National Consultation for the promotion of Virtual Open Schooling in India at NIOS, Noida on 15 May, 2015. The participants from State Open Schools (SOS), National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) and NIOS participated in this consultation. The objectives of this national consultative workshop were to: promote Virtual Open Schooling in the country; provide an overview and concept of NIOS-Virtual Open Schooling; provide technical knowledge and skill to use online technologies to the participants; provide technical experience of MediaWiki and Learning Management System (Moodle) for development of open courses.

In his welcome address Prof. C. B. Sharma, Chairman, NIOS outlined the importance of Virtual Open Schooling through ODL. Dr. Ramesh Sharma, Director, CEMCA highlighted the background development and features of VOS and assured CEMCA's support to NIOS. The Inaugural address was delivered by the chief guest Prof. Mohd. Akhtar Siddiqui, Former Chairman, National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), Govt. of India. He said that the learners are the core of the teaching learning system and they should always be motivated. He also said that educational ICT is now seen as an opportunity to study anywhere at any time and VOS is an effective addition to it. Dr. Kuldeep Agarwal introduced the participants to Virtual Open Schooling

and explained the objectives of the workshop. Mr. S. K. Prasad (SAP, NIOS) presented a technical report on Virtual Open Schooling platform and its practical mechanisms. The participants were divided into groups on three themes- Registration/Admission Issues, Delivery mode and Evaluation and brainstormed on the challenges, opportunities and threats in these areas of Virtual Open Schooling. Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme officer (Education), CEMCA moderated the group presentation and discussion.

Regional Consultative Meeting on Teacher Education Using Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Asia

Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and Commonwealth of Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) are mandated to help governments, institutions and organizations expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning by using appropriate open, distance and technology-enabled learning. To effectively prepare for the next strategic plan (2015-2021), a baseline survey on the status of teacher education using Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Asia was commissioned under

the Teacher Education initiative at COL. In this regard a consultative meeting was organised on 11-12 May 2015 at New Delhi to share the findings of baseline survey and the COL-CEMCA's 2015 – 2021 Teacher Education Strategic Plan.

The meeting with 11 teacher educators from Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Maldives, and Sri Lanka began with an introductory by Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Programme Officer, CEMCA. Dr. Ramesh Sharma, Director, CEMCA in his opening remarks explained the activity

of CEMCA for teacher education initiatives in the Commonwealth Asian region. Dr. Jessica Aguti, Educational Specialist, COL explained the objectives of the meeting. Deliberating the Commonwealth Asia perspective, Prof. Mohan Menon (Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic) of Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia highlighted the Best Practices in Teacher Education in Asia & Teacher Training for the 21st Century. Prof. Chandra Gunawardena, Open University of Sri Lanka presented the Status of Teacher Education as based on the ODL Baseline survey report. Further to discussions on the baseline survey, recommendations were made to identify projects to be implemented over the next three years 2015/16 – 2017/18. By the end of this consultative meeting eight project proposals were formulated to be implemented for the next three years.

Workshop on Dissemination of Outcomes of Research on Community Radio Sustainability

Ideosync Media Combine organized a workshop in collaboration with CEMCA and UNESCO, New Delhi on the 'Dissemination of Research Outcomes on Community Radio Sustainability' at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on May 6, 2015.

The workshop began with an introductory speech by Mr. N. Ramakrishnan of Ideosync Media Combine. Dr. Ramesh Sharma (Director, CEMCA) in his opening remarks explained the role of CEMCA in promoting Community Media and Learning in the Commonwealth Asian region. Dr. Ankuran Dutta (Programme Officer, CEMCA) spoke about the importance of sustainability for the community radio stations of South Asia.

Deliberating the international perspective, Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi (Director and UNESCO Representative to India, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka) highlighted the role, use and importance of community radio in developing countries. He further expressed concerns towards the recent earthquakes in Nepal and stressed on the role of community radio in helping in times of Disaster.

Ms. Venu Arora and Ms. Leonea Fernandez presented the methodology adopted for this participatory research and the research outcomes. The representatives of various community radio stations such as Saiyarre Jo Radio and Waqt Ki Awaaz, India; Radio Bikrampur, Bangladesh; Radio Menchhyayem, Nepal spoke about how the research has helped their radio teams to look at sustainability of their respective stations. In addition to the representatives from participating community radio stations, Prof. Vinod Pavarala (UNESCO Chair on Community Media); Mr. Ashish Sen (AMARC); Ms. D. Rukmini Vemraju, Ms. Jayalakshmi Chittor, Mr. Anirban Sarma (UNESCO) also contributed to the workshop.

CEMCA Certificate in Community Radio Technology

The Certificate in Community Radio Technology course developed by CEMCA in collaboration with Broadcast Engineering Consultant India Ltd (BECIL) has been adopted and launched by Tamil Nadu Open University (TNOU) and Uttarakhand Open University (UOU) from the academic session 2015-16. CEMCA organised two programmes on Counselling of the CCRT Counsellors at Tamil Nadu Open University, Chennai on June 15-18, 2015 and at Uttarakhand Open University, Haldwani on June 23-26, 2015. A total of 55 counsellors were trained in both the counselling programmes.

CEMCA also developed a question bank of multiple choice questions which would be used to evaluate the progress / achievement of students enrolled in Certificate in Community Radio Technology (CCRT) course and broadly to test the technical knowledge of the enthusiasts of community radio. Based on these questions, CEMCA developed an Anroid based mobile aoolication called "CR Tech Quiz" and an IVR system. The

newly designed IVR (Interactive Voice Response) Assessment tool has been implemented for providing telephone based self-assessment platform to enhance the knowledge on community radio technology for the CR stations and Certificate in Community Radio Technology (CCRT) course learners. CEMCA in collaboration with Gram Vaani started the IVR assessment tools during the early march 2015 and it became functional from June 2015. Once the caller dialed the provided number, which is 09211789369, the server will automatically disconnect the call; however, the participants will immediately get a call back from another number. Once the participant received the call, the server will interact with the caller pronouncing certain instructions to follow as per one's choice only after going through the registration.

Case Study

Distance Learning in Brazil, Access and Equity Demanding New Skills and Innovation

Dr. Luciano Sathler

Brazil has experienced strong socioeconomic changes in recent years, including the reduction of poverty, the rise of a new middle class and higher proportions of elderly people. One of the main demands that accompanies and drives this movement is expanding access to *higher education* and the growth of lifelong learning needs.

As it happens in other emerging economies, the middle class is growing, pushing more demand for higher education. Access to tertiary education increases social development, citizenship and can be transformative for individual life chances and national economic growth.

However, in Brazil, public tertiary education institutions have not been able to keep pace with the rapid growth of demand for education, leading to a shortage of tertiary education seats. Demand for tertiary education is supporting the development of a private education sector – for profit and non-profit organizations - as changes to Government regulation enable private institutions to expand and complement the public systems. The entry of private institutions has enabled more students to access education, driven innovation in education systems, and helped fill urgent labor market gaps.

Unfortunately, private tertiary education is still unaffordable for many families. In light of capacity issues in public systems and the urgent need to widen education access beyond the elite, new approaches to financing education are a necessity.

On the other hand, distance learning is growing dramatically in Brazil in the last 13 years, somehow accompanying and collaborating with the social and economic changes that Brazilian society is experiencing. The numbers of undergraduate distance learning entrants

> Another important factor that drives the adoption of *distance learning* and educational technologies, including for children and teenager's schools, is the ease with which *digital natives* adapt to this new world and begin to show impatience with the traditional teaching models.

in the period between 2004 and 2008 grew always equal to or greater than 40% per year, reaching a peak of more than one million and two hundred thousands enrollments in 2013.

The percentage of students in *distance learning* among all higher education enrollments emerged from the level of 1.4% in 2002 to 16% in 2009, peaking at 19.8% in 2008, falling to 15.3% in 2013, due to some changes in national legislation. Almost one out of six students enrolled in undergraduate studies in Brazil

enters into a *distance learning* program.

There is an expectation that the number of *distance learning* enrollments increases thrice and reach 3.1 million over the next eight years. This expansion will occur mainly because of a group of about 25 million people, aged between 25 and 49 years, who graduated from high school but not enrolled in college.

Proponents of distance learning notice that the results of the national assessment program of higher education courses by the Ministry of Education are good for both on campus and distance learning.

Only in recent decades illiteracy was seriously faced in Brazil. However, television is present in the vast majority of Brazilian homes for over 40 years. The same for cell phones in the last 10 years. This means that in many places, especially in the countryside, it is common that television has become the primary means used to inform the population and learn about the reality around them. Perhaps Brazilians, who look as have less resistance in this regard, can identify it as a factor that facilitates the adoption of TIC.

Another important factor that drives the adoption of *distance learning* and educational technologies, including for children and teenager's schools, is the

Brazil - Undergraduate Enrollments

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
■ On Site	3.9	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.9	5.1	5.1	5.4	5.7	5.9	6.2
■ Distance Learning	0.05	0.06	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.9	1	1.1	1.2
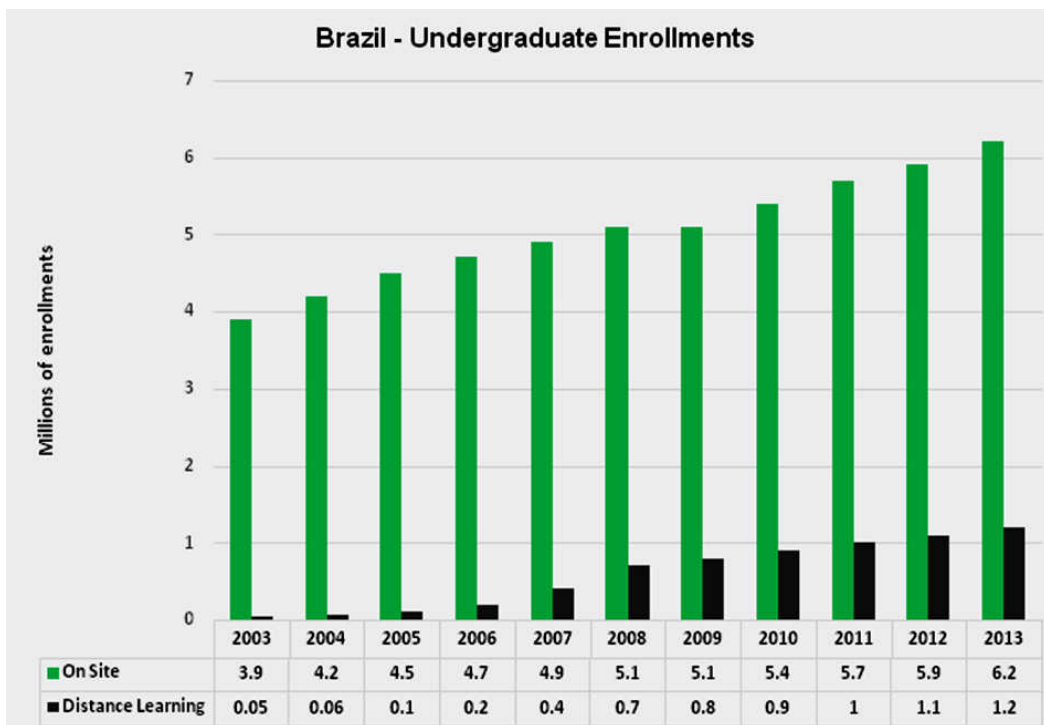
ease with which *digital natives* adapt to this new world and begin to show impatience with the traditional teaching models.

However, if we consider the *Informal* and *Non-Formal Education*, a recent survey showed that 11% of Internet Brazilian users go to the computer for some *distance learning* course.

Student profile: female and mature[1]

The predominance of women among students in distance learning courses in educational institutions is hardly news, even when compared to on-site courses. They are the majority in almost all cuts, with over 56% of the total, a percentage very similar to that already observed in the previous 2010, 2011 and 2012 Brazilian Censuses for Distance Learning.

However, the only exception, which is the group related to corporate courses, indicates an inversion of the

predominance of men in key positions of companies, those that generally require an investment in training. In this type of course, men are 54.5% of the students. As for the students' age, although some younger age groups begin to show a good presence among students in distance learning courses, their average age is still around 30 years or more. In regulated full distance courses (undergraduate and graduate, excluding open non-corporate and corporate), for example, 60% of all institutions surveyed indicated that the predominant age group of their students is from 31 to 40 years, while only about a third of them (32%) indicated as predominant the age group from 21 to 30 years.

The exception is for vocational courses, since they are directed to younger students who are still starting their careers. The age group of over 40 years is also a pattern for the modalities of blended courses and distance learning disciplines. It should be noted that open

non-corporate courses hold the youngest students, with 39% of institutions indicating the average age from 21 to 30 years. Now, in open corporate courses, the prevalent age range is from 31 to 40 years (63%). This mature age will reflect on the professional occupation of distance learning students, since the vast majority of them are already in the labor market. Among students who take regulated full distance courses (note that this category excludes open and corporate courses), for example, those who work are almost the totality (94%).

In general, in all forms, including blended or open courses or only distance learning disciplines, there is a percentage of about 90% in the "study and work" occupational situation. Thus, the great inclusiveness of distance learning is emphasized, allowing people who already entered the labor market to return to school or to invest in their career, even after the most appropriate time for studying has passed. In the two tables below, it is possible to evaluate this fairly typical age and occupational profile of distance learning students, according to the types of courses and educational level.

New skills and innovation

Distance learning is an educational process, essentially meaning that the educational values occupy leading position among the different evaluative categories that make up the human processes. The relationship between them is not configured as economic where educators assume the role of providers and learners of consumers or customers of information. It is a partnership in which the student improvement necessarily goes together with the educator improvement.

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[1] *BRAZILIAN ASSOCIATION FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION. 2013 Brazilian Census for Distance Learning. Curitiba: Ibpex, 2013. Available in <http://goo.gl/9RWuhr>*

Distance learning is an educational modality that demands expertise in a multidisciplinary context, meaning that one has to get by more than just pedagogical knowledge. This means that not just the domain of pedagogical knowledge. The pedagogical mediation and communication happens through different teaching resources. Mediation is educational because it isbased on a conception of education and the teaching-learning process purposes. It is because it involves different communication channels and modes of relationship between teachers and students, for example, synchronous or asynchronous, unidirectional or multidirectional; receptive or interactive, individualized and socialized among others. It implies different kinds of competencies, namely Communicational, pedagogical, technological and management.

In an educational perspective, the process of planning, production and implementation of a distance learning initiative is characterized as a class action, dialogically built and collaborative way. Different skills are integrated to build alternatives to this educational modality. From the simplest self-paced course till the most complex system composed of many elements and a number of variables, teamwork is a condition for a successful outcome.

The skills in distance education, both general and specific, refer to learn to know, learning to do, how to be and knowing how to live and aim to provide a frame of reference for the development of actions, as well as the contents that favor the acquisition or development.

Distance learning actions have skills of different natures. One dimension refers to the teaching, the structuring of teaching and the expectations that one has towards learning. Is associated with pedagogical content or theme with the information that will be part of the process. The content of the selection should be meaningful and should provide the domain, the application of information and the possibility of updating, expanding, deepening and enrichment.

Another dimension refers to the form of communication in distance education that could materializes through a text of a lecture by videoconference, a thematic video or by the interaction of the teacher with the student or among students. If communication is essential in education in

> **_Distance learning_ calls for innovative approaches, new skills and abilities, as well as different forms of financing to achieve the fullness of its democratic capacity, in line with the digital age and the increasing demands for Higher Education.**

general, it is also so special in distance learning. Indeed, communication is mediated and requires the treatment of content and resources to the public in order to be effective.

In the technological dimension, the distance learning action encompasses communication capabilities, processing and transmission of information. The field of communication and information technologies should favor the selection of means and adequate support to the student to ensure their access and their permanence in the educational process.

The management perspective in distance learning regards to decision making on the relevance of the projects developed, the links between the various agents in the process - human and material resources - aiming at an integrated and harmonious operation focusing on the student. Mediate conflicts between dimensions, providing solutions that improve the quality of actions, commitments are management, which help to ensure a good educational work.

Distance learning initiatives, from the simplest to the most complex, always involve action planning, production, validation, evaluation, and deployment.

The planning of _distance learning_ shares, is structured based on a pedagogical project and includes the analysis of the problem, the target, defining where and how to get there, and the evaluation of results.

Production refers to the development of all necessary resources provided for in educational planning, regarding the characteristics of the public to which the Project is intended and the appropriateness of the selected languages   means for its realization.

The implementation is the realization, in the field, of everything that was planned and produced and the achievement of educational intent by implementing the _distance learning_ action by people who were aimed previously, or even to a significant sample of this for validation of the obtained product.

The validation and evaluation of ODL action involve the analysis of results and improvement decisions in the educational process.

Distance learning calls for innovative approaches, new skills and abilities, as well as different forms of financing to achieve the fullness of its democratic capacity, in line with the digital age and the increasing demands for Higher Education.

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Book Review

MOOCs and Open Education Around the World

Edited by - Curtis J. Bonk, Mimi M. Lee, Thomas H. Reynolds; First published 2015 by Routledge, pp.358, ISBN 978-1-138-80740-2.

Dr. Lorne Oke and Dr. Christopher J. Devers

The pace of innovation for learning delivery systems in post-secondary education does not appear to be subsiding. As we move from face-to-face delivery, to online, to hybrid approaches, and now to MOOCs, the learning landscape is continually evolving.While neither the idea of MOOCs nor open education are new, they both seem to have become more prominent as digital capacities to access and deliver content increase. MOOCs have now reached millions of students and professionals globally. In spite of their documented success however, the exact form and function of MOOCs in the future is still rather unclear.

In this edited volume, Bonk, Lee, Reeves, and Reynolds (2015) offer one of the most pragmatic, comprehensive, and balanced views of MOOCs and open education. The chapters provide readers both the breadth and depth needed to fully understand the history, current state, and possible future of MOOCs. Three distinct elements in the book include, (1) international examples of MOOC execution, (2) tools for MOOC evaluation, and (3) strategies for MOOC design.Yong Zhao states, "[The book is] a most authoritative examination of
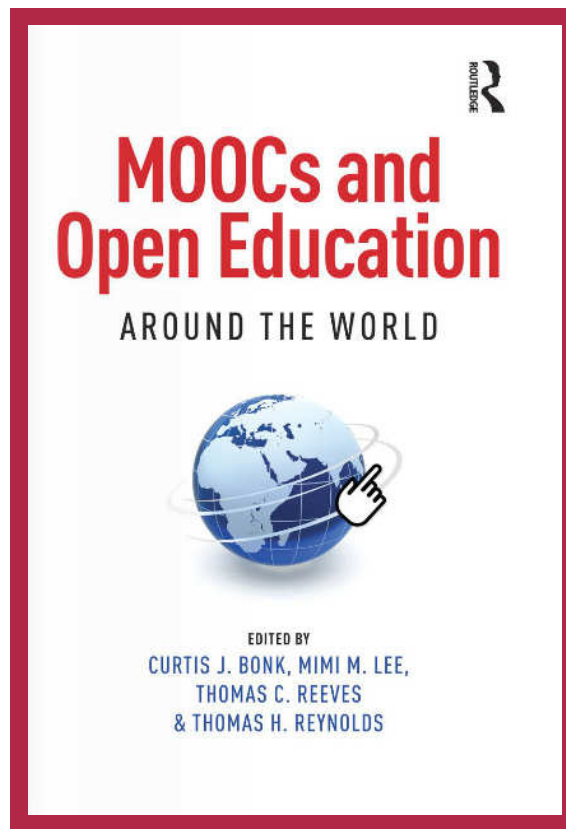
MOOCs and their implications for education in the world from some of the finest leading voices in the field" (p. inside cover).

To set the foundation for the conversation, the editors offer a variety of perspectives and provide a clear understanding of MOOCs and open education. Then, a wide range of chapters by peers from diverse learning

environments take the reader through an international commentary with real working experience. As a specific example, Chapter 10 of the volume explains an exceptional tool for characterizing the pedagogical approaches of MOOCs referred to as the AMP method.

While there are criticisms of practice in the book, most come from within the MOOC community, which could be a concern. Perhaps some voices outside the community could be enlightening; never the less, the authors certainly do not try to present MOOCs as the next silver bullet for education in spite of the absence of external criticism.

One of the primary reasons Bonk et al. set out to compile this work was to balance the hype of 2012 with the hate of 2013 related to MOOCs.They wanted to replace hasty conclusions with "extended analysis, global discussions, and thoughtful report" (p. xxix).Mission accomplished! Interestingly, in the process, two collective conclusions also emerged. First, learning in any environment takes concerted effort, and second, human engagement is complicated because environmental and cultural variables have an impact on learning - it is not the delivery modality that matters most (i.e., face-to-face, online hybrid, etc.), but rather the pedagogical techniques and thoughtful cultural awareness that facilitate learning.

Reference

Bonk, C. J., Lee, M. M., Reeves, T. C., & Reynolds, T. H. (2015). MOOCs and open education around the world. New York, NY: Routledge. (Note: additional information at: http://moocsbook.com/)

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OER Sharing/Creating using a MediaWiki and the CEMCA Quality Assurance Extension

Mr. Akash Agarwal

Using various technologies became possible due to the advent of the Internet, we have moved a long way from traditional teacher student based classroom learning to acquiring knowledge and skills from the best teachers in the world in their field. An educator now has the potential to reach students all over the world and not only a handful few of them in a classroom. This phenomenon has been greatly enhanced with the creation of Distance learning Technologies like freely available online Open Educational Resources (OER) and MOOCs.

There are several technologies available now for facilitating OER like wiki and virtual whiteboards for OER creation and ideation, tools like Moodle, Turnitin and Safe Assign for digitally evaluating a students work, collaboration tools that let us have conduct virtual meetings and aid in project tracking and management, and also simple tools like Email, IM, Social Networking, etc. While these tools gives educators several options to enhance learning using technology and makes it possible to have personalized learning, collaboration in all phases of the teaching-learning process and widespread availability of high quality content, they may not be sure what exactly will help them reach more student and improve their teaching. Also, these may be complex to learn and it may be difficult to provide the technological infrastructure to facilitate these tools.

Due to the above challenges, many OER professionals, especially in developing countries like India, are not able to reach worldwide audiences. A very simple solution to overcome this is to use a wiki. Wiki's are a single platform that can serve most technological needs for an OER professional. A wiki can be used as a tool for creating OER and as a content management system. There can also be fully fledged online open courses on a wiki. They have a robust version tracking and also a platform for discussion. To top it all, it's very easy to setup and maintain it and no technological expertise is required for using it. Using a wiki, OER can be shared over the internet very easily.

We all probably use Wikipedia every day. It is the world's largest encyclopaedia and also the largest wiki on the planet. Wikipedia is powered using a wiki called Mediawiki. Not only Mediawiki is very robust and designed in such a way that an extremely high traffic website like Wikipedia can be served. It is very simple to setup and use by individual OER professionals and institutions. Some examples of such portals are http://wiki.cemca.org.in/ and http://wikieducator.org. You can probably ask a computer science professor or student at your institution to set up a similar one for you. Also, Mediawiki is Open-source and maintained by hundreds of developers all over the world, and can be readily translated into hundreds of languages.

Thus, at CEMCA, we built the OER quality assurance extension as a Mediawiki extension, so that it can be used by everyone in any wiki.

Today, educators can create OER using their expertise and students at even the remotest places in the world can have access to them. It is thus very important to make sure that the quality of such OER is impeccable. The CEMCA TIPS Framework is a set of comprehensive guidelines for Quality Assurance of OER which can be used for the purpose. This framework can now be used effortlessly using the CEMCA Quality Assurance Mediawiki Extension. Just create (or add) your OER on a wiki which has the extension installed and you can ask your colleagues, friends, other educators, etc. for feedback on the quality of the created OER. You can also self-evaluate it for its quality using the framework and improve upon it. The extension is available freely under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.

The CEMCA Quality Assurance Mediawiki Extension is a Mediawiki extension for judging the quality of OER based on a subset of the TIPS framework 2.0. The extension allows one to enable a comprehensive review for the quality of an OER (it can be present on a wiki page itself or the wiki page can be used only for QA with a link to the OER) by adding a simple tag to the page. The extension is very simple to use and consists of a basic set of Quality Assessments ratings to be filled. All the underlying complexities of the extension are hidden from the end user.

Usage: Simply add the tag:*<qa></qa>*to the wiki page where the content of the OER is present.

India to start using a wiki at their institutions.

For support on using the extension and/or deploying a wiki at your institution please feel free to contact CEMCA.

To submit an assessment the user needs to click on the **Make a quality assessment of this article** button. Once this is done a very simple form like the one shown below appears. Once filled, both consolidated and individual assessments are displayed.

Additionally there is a "Show Detailed Assessments" button to view all assessments submitted for an article.

This will show the list of everyone who has made an assessment and the TIPS score of each. Clicking on any of them (Detailed Assessments) will show all responses of that particular user for the specific article.

It has been a great privilege for me to work on this with CEMCA. I was also presented with a unique opportunity to interact with educators from all over India during an OER Quality workshop organised by CEMCA and BRAOU at Hyderabad during May 2015. We had introduced the extension for the first time at the workshop and have since improved upon it. One of the major achievement for us at the workshop for to inspire some OER professionals from different parts of

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# Nano Open Online Courses (NOOCs)

Zaid Ali Alsagoff
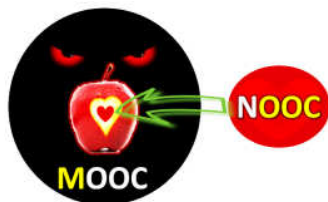
"The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me, and begin DROPPING IN on the ones that looked interesting."

– Steve Jobs

Nano Open Online Courses (NOOCs)

NOOCs will empower learners to explore, learn and be assessed (certified) on the essentials of one competency, skill or area of knowledge at a time within 12 learning hours or less. Each NOOC can be facilitated by one or more facilitators, depending upon one's preferences and ability.

Originally, NOOCs was code-named N-MOOCs (or Nano MOOCs), but Dave Cormier (who also coined the 'MOOC' acronym) suggested to take out the 'M' from its original acronym during a tweet conversation. And since then N-MOOCs has become NOOCs, which is a more appropriate.
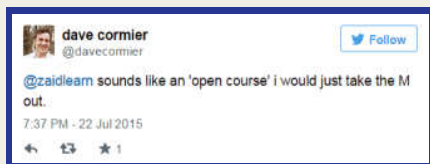
WHY NOOCs?

"Looking back at my personal MOOC experiences since 2008, I realize that I have yet to be inspired to complete a single one. I have probably explored more than a hundred MOOCs over the years, but none have interested me enough to swoosh through, do the assignments/quizzes, and achieve the certificate.

For me, the main reason is that when I register for a particular MOOC, I am usually only interested to really explore in-depth around 5-10% of it. The most I have explored in a MOOC is around 80% without doing the assignments...."

- Zaid Ali Alsagoff

Interestingly, based on the 'MOOC Completion Rates' project (2015), the current average completion rate for MOOCs is approximately 15%. Another study (Jordan, 2014) found that the average MOOC completion rate to be as low as 6.5%. The latest analysis based upon enrolment and completion data collected for a total of 221 MOOCs, shows that MOOC completion rates vary from 0.7% to 52.1%, with a median value of 12.6% (Jordan, 2015). Interestingly, it was found (Reich, 2014) that *22 percent of students who intended to complete a course earned a certificate (Harvard X courses)*, compared with 6 percent of students who intended to browse a course.

Although, there are many reasons for not completing a MOOC, these statistics do reveal that the current MOOC learning formats do not appeal, or is appropriate for all kind of learners.

Let's now explore why NOOCing could be more appealing than

MOOCs offered around the world to people like Steve Jobs and Zaid Ali Alsagoff.
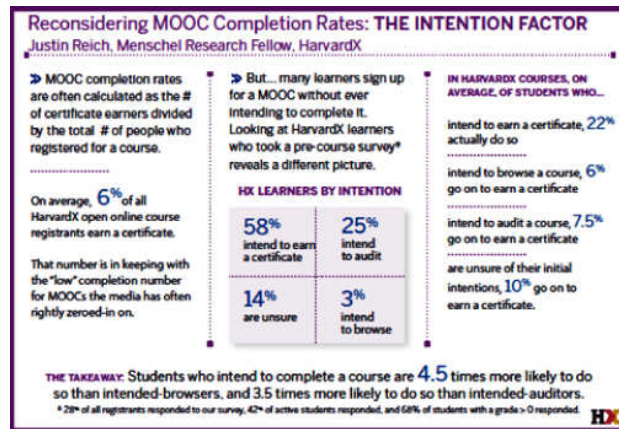
- **Learners**

  Instead of having to do the whole course, I can now focus on the juice (I want), get assessed, and be certified (or Badged) on it. Yes, a NOOC is more granular, chunked, digestible, meaningful (evidence) and juicy! Awesome!

- **Facilitators**

  I want to facilitate a MOOC, but where I am going to find the time, manpower or resources to do it? NOOCit instead! You only need to sacrifice one week for NOOCing, and perhaps 1-2 weeks preparing for it (as you should already be an expert in what you want to NOOC). Also, since 'M' for Massive is ditched, you don't have to have that pressure that it must achieve MassiveHOOD! Massive or Small, I am cool. Say no more!

- **Learning Design**

  The NOOC way to design learning experiences provide a more flexible course design model (can range within 12 learning hours or less) compare to the credit hour system. Think of designing a NOOC, like building something with LEGO. Better yet, one can always combine the LEGO pieces to fulfill 1, 2, 3 or 4 credit hours. More discussed later in this document.

Source: Reich, 2014

Defining a NOOC

A **Nano Open Online Course (NOOC)** empowers learners to explore, learn and be assessed (certified) on the essentials of one competency, skill or area of knowledge at a time within 12 learning hours or less.

NOOC is a format for experiencing learning online. The essence or nucleus of a NOOC is a **Nano Learning Experience (NLE)**. A NLE can be experienced online (e.g. in a NOOC), or in a face-to-face (F2F) learning environment. For it to be a NLE, the learning experience must include learning content, activities, assessment and a completion-point (certification or badge).

Let's now explore deeper the meaning for each letter in the 'NOOC'.

NANO

In **Malaysian Qualifications Framework** (MQF) for Higher Education, student's academic efforts are measured by using the credit system based on the total number of students hours that are required to achieve the learning outcomes. 40 hours of notional *Student Learning Time* (SLT) is valued as one credit.

Meaning, in a typical three credit (hour) course, students are required to spend on at least 120 hours (40 x 3 credit) SLT, which

include attending lectures, tutorials, seminars, research, laboratory/ field works, doing assignments/projects and quizzes, and exploring assigned learning resources.

As the NOOC idea is envisioned to transform all types of education, including corporate learning, SLT will be referred to from now onwards as (Learner's) **Learning Hours (LH)**.

A NLE is at least 10 times shorter than a 3 credit (hour) course (120 LH / 10) = 12 LH. An learning experience that is 12 hours or less is defined as a NLE. If the learning experience is more than 12 hours and less than one credit hour (40 LH) it should be defined as a Micro Learning Experience. Anything above 40 LH is defined as any conventional course learning experience (1, 2, 3, 4 or more credit hours).

OPEN

NOOCs should obviously be open and **FREE OF CHARGE** for anyone interested taking them.

Source (Slide 17): Social Media for Research at SNDT Women's University

All content (developed, reused, mashed-up, etc.) used in a NOOC should be using a **Creative Commons** or **Public Domain** license. If Copyright materials are used, it can still be claimed to be a NOOC, but from a content-point-of-view it is really a NCOC

(First 'C' = Copyrighted and Commercial), or just a NOC (Nano Online Course).

If the NOOC is offered for free (including a basic certification), it is still considered a NOOC if it has additional learning tracks for dedicated support and institutional/ company recognized certification(s).

ONLINE

The NOOC should empower the learners to experience engaging with or listening to the facilitator (expert) online live at least once during a webinar (real-time online interaction). It can automatically become a self-paced NOOC (if wanted).

NOOCs will be more appropriate than most MOOCs for Blended Learning, Flipped Classroom or Flipped Learning, as they are more granular to reuse, remix, adapt, and contextualize for the learning outcome(s). Better yet, a Flipped Learning facilitator can simply ask learners to be certified (or Badged) through the relevant NOOC as a pre-class learning activity.

COURSES

Designing a course for credit hours (2, 3, 4, etc.) is like writing a book that must be 200, 300, or 400 pages no matter what, according to a fixed requirement. NOOCs reverse this to focus on what really matters, and then filter out the non-essentials. Its not stuck with a fixed learning experience formula, which basically forces course designers often to integrate additional non-essential learning resources and activities to fulfill the credit hour requirements.

The NOOC way to design learning experiences provide a more flexible course design model (can range within 12 learning hours or less). Think of designing a NOOC, like building something with LEGO. Better yet, one can always combine the LEGO pieces to fulfill 1, 2, 3 or 4 credit Hours (if that is still the future standard).

Albert Einstein's quote below, defines the mindset for developing a NOOC:

"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler."

- Albert Einstein

Even cooler, you could even **transform a MOOC into multiple NOOCs** that are clustered together into 2, 3 or 4 credit hours. The key to converting a MOOC into multiple NOOCs, is that each NOOC must be a full NLE that has learning content, activities, assessment and a completion-point (certification and/or badge).

In other words, you could register for a MOOC, and decide to do say 2-3 NOOCs within a MOOC, and be certified for just that. This again would be fantastic for learning analytics and getting a clearer picture of why people are taking a course, and what they really want from it. In short, everyone will get a chance to learn and be assessed on what they want, whether it is the MOOC or NOOC way.

Also, corporate and higher education could be unified with a **common learning measurement system** in the form of Learning Hours (LH) rather than Credit Hours (40 LH), which is too long-winded to appeal to more granular and focused training offered by corporations. Learners could for example take a number of LH doing corporate NOOCs, which could be added to their other LH done through the University courses. Once the learner has achieved a certain number of LH, s/he can be awarded with a badge, certificate, diploma, under/post graduate degree, or the right to sit for a major exam.

To sum up, the current MOOC and Credit Hour systems are too bulky and outdated for the present and future learners. The new formula combining LH, NLE and NOOCs is the future of online, blended and F2F learning. Imagine having the freedom and flexibility to customize your own 4,800 LH (40 x 120 Credit hours) degree programme, rather than today's outdated 120-credit hour undergraduate program.

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NOOC Recipe(s)

NOOCs include (still exploring):

No.	Features	Required	Optional
1.	Promo-Video (1-3 min) for each NOOC.	*	
2.	Live and Recorded Webinar (1-2 sessions)	*	
3.	1-5 minute Multimedia/Video Tutorials		*
4.	Presentation Slides/Notes	*	
5.	Q&A Forum	*	
6.	Chat		*
7.	Online Resources (Reuse/Supplementary/Mashup)		*
8.	Social Media (Facebook, Google+, Twitter, more)		*
9.	Individual Assignment (to demonstrate and/or reflect learning)	*	
10.	Group Assignment		*
11.	Peer Assessment		*
12.	Quiz (Check your understanding)	*	
13.	Gamification (gamifying the NLE)		*
14.	Final Exam (Online assessment)		*
15.	Badges		*
16.	Certification	*	

NOOC Learning Flow (Sample)

*LO = Learning Outcome(s)   *TM = Tool/Method(s)   *ASM = Assessment Method(s)
*LH = (Learner's) Learning Hours

No	Learning Activities	LO	TM	ASM	LH
NOOC Learning Flow						

No	Learning Activities	LO	TM	ASM	LH
1.	**Intro-Video (Promo)** The facilitator introduce him/herself and what he/she will be exploring in the NOOC.	-	Video	-	5 min
2.	Ice Breaker Learners introduce themselves and share what they want to learn about_ (e.g. Super Memory).	-	Padlet Forum	-	15 min

No	Learning Activities	LO	TM	ASM	LH
3.	*Social Media* To connect, communicate, collaborate and initiate a community of practice, consider using various social media tools to empower this. Examples: Facebook Group, Linkedin Group, Twitter Hashtag..**170+ Learning Tools**.	-	Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Instagram BlendSpace 170+ Tools	-	-
4.	*Tutorials (Reuse, Remix or Create)* Short video tutorials, infographics, web-resources, notes, articles, etc. about __.	LO01	Video Infographic Article	Mini-Quiz	15 min
5.	*Online Forum(s)* Discuss anything regarding the __ (e.g. Q&A).	LO02	Online Forum	Formative	30 min
6.	**Online Webinar (1 or 2)** The facilitator(s) discusses live with the learners about the area of focus. Learners participate in the discussion via the chat-box in the web-conferencing tool used. If a 2nd Webinar session is facilitated, it is recommended to have a panel discussion, or invited expert speaker.	LO01 LO02	Web-Conferencing	-	60 min
7.	*Online Assignment* Assignment to assess whether learners have achieved the NOOC's learning outcome(s). Examples: 1) 200 - 500 word reflection submitted using the Assignment feature 2) Write a reflective blog post 3) Record a video to demonstrate what has been learned (upload to YouTube and then share the link).	LO01 LO02	Assignment submission	Online Assignment Rubric	30 min
8.	**Final Quiz (for Certification)** 10-20 MCQ or any closed-ended questions to assess the learner's understanding of the NOOC topic.	LO01 LO02	Quiz	Online Quiz	15 min
9.	*Summing Up* The Facilitator(s) produce a 5-10 minute video discussing and summarizing briefly what has been discovered and learned during the NOOC learning week.	LO01 LO02	Video	-	10 min
	Total			**Minutes**	**180**

Forthcoming Events

The 26th ICDE World Conference on Growing Capacities for Sustainable Distance e-learning Provision

Venue: Sun City, South Africa
Date:October14-16, 2015

For more information visit:
http://www.unisa.ac.za/ICDE2015/

Seventh World Innovation Summit for Education

Date: November 3-5, 2015
Venue: Doha, Qatar
Summit Theme: Investing for Impact: Quality Education for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

For more information, visit:
http://www.wise-qatar.org/2015-summit-education-apply-attend

8th Annual International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation

Venue: Seville, Spain
Date: November 16-18, 2015.

For more information, visit:
http://iated.org/iceri/

6thInternational Conference on Teaching, Education and Learning

Date: November15-16, 2015
Venue: Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS), 501 Stirling Road, Singapore

For more information, visit:
http://www.oss2015.org/

The 2015 Asia-Pacific Services Computing Conference

Date:December 7-9, 2015
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand

For more information, visit:
http://grid.hust.edu.cn/apscc2015/callforpapers.html

Two –Day International Conference onDisciplinary Discourses in Use of Technology

Date: March17-18, 2016
Venue: University of Hyderabad, India

For more information, contact:
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http://www.projectequal.net/equal/index.php

Sincere Acknowledgement

Brief Note on Resource Materials of CEMCA

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) established by the COL in New Delhi to provide support for effective media utilisation in Distance Education system in the Asiatic region serves as a model for enriching academic life in the ODL system of Higher Education. The Resource materials of CEMCA are enriching the knowledge and attitude towards several innovative thoughts in the reading minds to pursue something nuance to the research in ODL system. The new teaching and learning developments in the highly developed countries surely have its impact on the Indian distance learning and teaching system.

The resource materials particularly on Teacher's development, OER, MOOC, Online learning and Media influence on Higher Education system are highly useful and innovative to cherish the readers' knowledge.

I am immensely thankful for providing these wonderful resource materials and deeply express my sincere gratitude to CEMCA.

With high gratitude,

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