



CEMCA

**'Capacity Building Workshop for Learner Support Centre (LSC) Coordinators and Staff',
Organised by the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) and
Jharkhand State Open University (JSOU) at Ranchi in Jharkhand, India on
12 February 2024**

Speech by Dr B. Shadrach, Director, CEMCA

Dear Vice Chancellor Professor Triveni Nath Sahu, Registrar Dr Ghanshyam Singh, other officials of the University, Mr Manoj Agharia, Managers of JSOU study centres, my colleagues, Ms Joyce Sunny and Ms Ayushi Choudhury, and Dr Anirban Ghosh and Dr Papiya Upadhyay who have been retained as experts by CEMCA to represent the organisation and lend their expert support to the officials of JSOU at this event.

It gives me immense pleasure to join the inaugural session of this important event that orientates the JSOU Study Centre Managers of their duties and responsibilities, and the important functions undertaken by each one of them.

The backbone and strength of any Open University are the agencies that act as the interlocutors between the University and the learners. While the University works meticulously in designing, and developing study programmes aimed at the learners, it is the Study Centres that make things happen. They deliver high quality educational programmes to the learners at the last mile. Therefore, today's event is very important, and I trust and hope that this event is one among many that would happen in months and years to come.

As we are looking forward to interacting with the managers of the Study Centres. JSOU, as an Open University, strives to achieve the following:

- **Development of the State** through education, research, training, and capacity building
- Skill based vocational add-on courses for promoting **employment opportunities**.
- **Guaranteeing access and equity** in higher education

The Mission Statement of the University focuses on:

- Increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education in Jharkhand (**Expand access**)
- Establishing a network of Study Centers to reach the last mile and the underserved (**Enhance diversity**)
- Creating University-Industry interface (**employment**) and University-community linkages (**inclusiveness**)

Let us now look at how the study centres can help realise the above mission!

- **Study Centres are the front faces of the University!**
 - o Reception and front-desk
 - o Being the friend and ally
 - o Giving the best to everyone
- **Study Centres contribute to University's Outreach !**
 - o to everyone
 - o communicate about the university
 - o Emphasis on employability and academic enhancement
 - o Create awareness for skills as passport and knowledge as catalyst
- **Study Centres ensure expansion of access to University courses among the citizens**
 - o to everyone
 - o without entry barriers such as age, choice, method of learning, assessment, etc.
- **Study Centres provide facilities to learners**
 - o for research and advance learning
 - o elderly, in-service personnel, homemakers, people in remote locations
- **Study Centres forge partnerships at the local level**
 - o For delivering modern courses rural, agricultural, industrial, and commercial disciplines
 - o For delivering courses through Radio, and other means
 - o For delivering courses using the learning material and the local experts

In this context, it is worth considering the Vice Chancellor's message, who calls for:

- Focus on rural people, women, disabled, Dalits, economically weaker persons, who are unable to study in metropolitan and other cities, as well as many opportunities are also being provided for their all-round development.
- Provide access to quality higher education opportunities to all at an accessible, affordable cost.
- University is ready to start such professional courses which can provide means of earning livelihood to the students and which can be helpful in their development and that of the state.
- We expect the intellectuals of the state to actively support the university in making its programmes successful.

The Registrar, in his message, sees the role of the University as the following:

- Overcoming the main challenges facing the current education system (Accessibility, Flexibility, Quality, and Affordability)
- Implementing the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020).
- Discharging the social responsibility of academics.
- Expansion of Study Centres to ensure access to higher education aspirants along with quantitative and qualitative enhancement of academic programmes and employability.
- Technology is being promoted to ensure transparency and accountability in the university administration.
- The unity and efficiency of teachers, counselors, study center coordinators and staff of the university is the energy on the basis of which this university is alive and illuminated.

Let us all do our bit to realise the mission of the University and the plans set out by the leadership.