

National Institute of Open Schooling International Conference

Education for All: Role of Open Schooling (13-15 March 2013)

Venue: IDSA, 1 Development Enclave (Near USI),
Rao Tula Marg, New Delhi, India
Day 3: 15th March, 2013 (Friday)



The last day of the conference began with a keynote address on “Integrating Skill Development in School Education: Implications for Open Schooling”. The chair was Prof. R.B. Shivagunde, Joint Director, Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE), Bhopal, and the speaker was Prof. (Dr.) Mukti Mishra, President, Centurion University, Odisha.

Dr. Mishra began his lively and engaging presentation by noting that indifference and inefficiency till infinity are two of the major problems confronting India. He lamented that since education policies for rural areas are decided in Delhi, education has lost its relevance. However, he continues to believe in creating a world of hope and of possibilities, without lapsing into irrational exuberance. As he pointed out, skill is not a business model it's a social model. In this context, the importance of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) cannot be underestimated. In addition, Dr. Mishra stated that NIOS must focus on creating a cadre of teachers, be open to ideas and conduct its own internal review.



Prof. Shivagunde congratulated Prof. Mishra for his out of box and pragmatic thinking which he is actually carrying out in Centurion University, Odisha.

After a refreshing tea break, the conference resumed with a panel discussion on “Institutional Related Issues and Operational Strategies”. Prof M.M. Pant, Former Pro-Vice Chancellor, IGNOU, chaired the session. The speakers were Prof. M.N. Deshmukh, Former Director, SSA, IGNOU; Dr. R.C. Sharma, IGNOU, New Delhi; Dr. Kuldeep Agarwal, Director (Academic), NIOS, Delhi; and Sh. S.K. Prasad, SAP, NIOS.

Prof. Pant opened the session by reminding all present that we are at an important stage in ODL. Partly because ODL is no longer seen as a second rate option, and partly because of the global shift towards



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inclusive education, thanks to the MDGs. The world is moving towards recognising the importance of a talent pool, rather than raw material, so the purpose of education had to become inclusive. As he pointed out, we need a system where millions of people can be taught well and at low cost. He remarked that technology is becoming easier and can be seen as a prosthetic, aiding in learning

which would transform ordinary learners into better learners and ordinary teachers into better teachers.

Prof. M.N. Deshmukh spoke on Resource Based Learning in Open Schooling: A Case of OER Project of NIOS India. He stated that information is now in abundance, so the new challenges are selecting and converting information into actionable knowledge. The role of teachers has changed they are now facilitators. In his thoughtful presentation, Dr. Deshmukh also touched on the basic tenets of constructivism, as well as the paradigm shift from behaviourist to constructivist; from content to context; and from inform to per form. He listed the three skill based vocational courses at the secondary and post-secondary level:

- ◆ ICT
- ◆ rural technology
- ◆ tourism and hospitality

Next up was **Dr. R.C. Sharma**, who addressed Virtual Open Schooling. He began his remarks by noting that the various measures and initiatives in place are still inadequate because a large number of students remain to be covered. He pointed out that virtual schools are the fastest growing trend globally and that the key is to de-link the degree from the job, thus emphasising the skill.

Dr. Sharma was followed by **Dr. Kuldeep Agarwal**, speaking about Life Skills Integration in Open Schooling: Towards Holistic Education. He began by asking what is the end point of learning? And what should it lead to? He outlined the paradigm shift with regards to the emphasis on learning, the constructivist approach, experiential learning and RPL. He referred to the UNESCO Pillars of Education: learning to know; learning to do; learning to live together; learning to be.

Sh. S.K. Prasad was the final speaker for the session and addressed OER for Vocational Education: A Case of



NIOS. His topic was **Mukta Vidya Vani** NIOS Initiatives Free Audio Content to Learners. This web based, live audio streaming programme, launched in July 2012, is a fine example of virtual schooling. Its attributes are that it is live, interactive, participatory and cost effective.



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Parallel Session

Paper Presentation on *Issues of Access and Equity* (Parallel Session VIII)

Chair: Prof. N.K. Dash,
School of Education, IGNOU, N. Delhi

Papers:

Progress and Problems in Achieving Goal of Education for All in Nepal: A Review of literature

Mr. Amarendra Mishra

Education for All: Reaching the Unreached Through NIOS

Mr. Ajit Kumar

Role of Distance Education in the Context of Universalization of Secondary Education in India

Prakash. K. Pr. Mohapatra

Open learning and education for all

Ms. Peeyush Kamal & Mr. Dori Lal Chaudhary

Role of NIOS in context of RMSA in India

Dr. Sonia Behl

Access to Secondary Education: Issues concerns and strategies for out of school children of special focus group **M.K. Misra**

Paper Presentation on Issues of Quality (Parallel Session IX)

Chair: Prof. C.R.K. Murthy, STRIDE, IGNOU

Papers:

Virtual schools and open schools: a perspective from Europe on Asia

Prof. Paul Bacsich

Technological and Pedagogical Implications for Developing Quality Virtual Schools

Dr. Vandana Singh

Challenges of Opens Schools and the development of Satellite campuses: Increasing access and improving quality of instructional delivery in Teacher Training Institutions in Belize

Priscilla Brown Lopez

Use of Mobile Phone Technology in Promoting Tutor- Learner Interaction in Open Schooling

Cherla Raja Mouli

Schooling the Mobile Generation: A Critical Review of Role Mobile Technology in Open Schooling for Education For All **Sambhu Sankar Deep**

Paper Presentation on Institutional Related Issues and **Operational Strategies (Parallel Session X)**

Chair: Dr. Sanyam Bharadwaj,
Director Student Support Services, NIOS

Papers:

Towards Positioning A Paradigm for Partnership among different Stakeholders of Secondary Education System for Promotion of RMSA in Jharakhand
Shilpi Kumari



Education for All Role of Voluntary Organizations in Networking and Collaboration

Anil Nair

Quality audit in distance learning: experience of regional centre managers in Botswana

Godson Gatsha

Effective Monitoring and Management in the Context of Quality School Education Through Open Schooling

Dr. S. K. Panda

Monitoring quality education in open school

Mrs Meera Subramanian

Open Schooling with special reference to quality education

Prathith Biswas

Paper Presentation on Vocational Education and Skill Development (Parallel Session XI)

Chair: Dr. Sadia Afroze Sultana,
Dean, Open School, Bangladesh Open University

Papers

Issues Pertaining to Skill Development through Open Schooling Linking the Public and the Private; the Formal and the Informal

Joshua C. Mallet

Need to start "Skills Training Hubs" under NIOS, to provide skills training for vocational students of ODL.

Dr.(Mrs.) B. Satya Jnaneswari & Dr.(Mrs.) Swasti Shubham



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Valedictory Session

Following the tea break, the valedictory session of the conference got underway. The session was chaired by **Dr. Fredrika Meijer**, Representative, UNFPA, India & Country Director, Bhutan. In this closing session, **Dr. S.S. Jena**, Chairman, NIOS, gave a welcome address wherein he hoped that the conference was useful and had provided some takeaways for the participants. On the role of RTE, he noted that it focuses on the formal education system, rather than on ODL. He asked if it can be extended to the 10th Standard and said that a window for ODL must be provided. NIOS' role in reaching the target of 12 million children under RMSA must be diversified a centralised role won't work in a country as diverse as India. Hence, NIOS is also mandated to encourage and support the states to establish their own open schooling systems. After touching on the 400 million learners that NIOS and the National Literacy Mission Authority hope to reach and the upcoming assessment of 72 lakh learners on 17 March 2013, Dr. Jena noted that NIOS must adhere to a time bound action plan. He concluded his address by asking the foreign delegates what collaboration they can arrange for NIOS.



This was followed by the conference report from Dr. Kuldeep Agarwal wherein he noted the success of the conference lay in the unprecedented response of over 120 papers being received. He listed several important recommendations, including the fact that ODL must play a crucial role in attaining EFA goals, and that it will be the most important method of achieving the universalization of secondary education. He emphasized on the point that collaboration, cooperation and communication between nations, organisations/institutions, as well as individuals, will help in boosting the open schooling movement for achieving the EFA goals as well as MDGs. Networking at national and international level will be important in this context.

Next up was an NIOS success story the experiences of Mr. Sarat Kumar Jena, an NIOS alumnus who was one of the delegates who presented the papers. Sharing his story, he said that he had joined NIOS because it was the only board at the time that offered a good mix of science and maths courses. He suggested that NIOS students be invited to share their stories at future conferences and seminars.

From the feedback of a home-grown experience to one from the foreign shores, Mr. David Manuel, from British Columbia, Canada, shared his five takeaways from the conference:

◆ the importance of measuring and sharing quality
◆ the shift from teaching to learning
◆ the importance of building relationships with regular schools
◆ how ODL can validate RPL
◆ the international collaboration in ODL is unprecedented and more widespread than it is in the regular system

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- ◆ the shift from teaching to learning
- ◆ the importance of building relationships with regular schools
- ◆ how ODL can validate RPL
- ◆ the international collaboration in ODL is unprecedented and more widespread than it is in the regular system

The Chief Guest, Dr. Fredrika Meijer, then gave the valedictory address. Dr. Meijer was deeply honoured to have been invited to the conference. She noted that UNFPA places great emphasis on life skills for health. With the Adolescence Education Programme that UNFPA is engaged in with the GOI, they are also working with school education. However, with NIOS they have understood as well the importance of providing life skills enriched secondary education to adolescents.

Sh. U.N. Khaware, Secretary, NIOS, then delivered the vote of thanks. He quoted Swami Vivekananda's exhortation that we arise and awake, and not stop until the goal is reached. He thanked everyone for their hard work during the three days. While acknowledging that there are many challenges ahead, he reminded us that hope is the need of the hour, rather than giving in to despair over not achieving EFA and the MDGs.

On this poetic note, the conference was officially closed.

Participants Comments on Conference

The speaker one world class and excellent
Dr. Priscilla Brown Lopez EdD (Belize C.A.)

You have done a wonderful job. We appreciate your kindness and your well organized events
MR. RASHID CHUACHUA

Excellent platform for me to learn and feel enriched
Mr. Paavo A Pea (Namibia)

Exceptionally well organized and very enriching conference. The keynote speakers were a cut above the best and pitched the level of the conference to an exciting level
Dr. Godson Gatsha (Botswana)

It is a great opportunity for me to be in this conference. Everything in this conference is well organized. Thanks to all from NIOS
Dr. Sadia Afroze Sultana (Bangladesh)

Excellent Keynotes. Very inspiring
Mr. DAVE MANUEL (Canada)

Well organized ; brilliant keynote papers/address; good food ' Excellent ! no shopping
JOSHUA C. MALLETT (Ghana)

The conference has given me a chance to Network, share and learn from others. I am angered to go on with pointing Open Schooling in keys
Frances Ferreira (Canada)

Congratulate NIOS- great conference/great speakers/great organization/good food/hospitality thanks
Jane Ngima Muthiga (Kenya)

Each event of the NIOS conference is managed well. It is excellent, I like to congratulate the organisers for their effort to make the conference success.
Mr. A.K.M. IFTEKHAR KHALID (Bangladesh)

Well organized, I am happy to participate here.
Mohammad Mamunur Rashid (Bangladesh)

Excellent efforts put in by the organisers my sincere greetings to all the organisers/committee members. Lot of good interaction/lectures/keynote addresses. Good meaningful exchange of ideas took place. Very well organised event.
Ms. Swaleha A. Sindhi (India)

My sincere appreciation to the organisers of NIOS. The conference opened eyes on many issues. The logistics and arrangement were very good.

Mrs. Meera Subramanian (India)

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