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OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER): OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Creation of knowledge workers holds key for success of a country. Unfortunately, many of the countries though having chain of human resources yet are unable to transform human resources to their advantage as they face multiple challenges like poverty, poor economy, poor infrastructure, limited access to education and inadequate technological growth. Fortunately, India is one of among such countries in the recent past which has improved its position in the world forum and has taken a big stride by transforming human resource into knowledge workers. The entire credit goes to government of India, their schemes and most importantly the people working tirelessly in the higher education institutions. But, the percentage is very low.The reason is higher education of India is plagued with several challenges like poor quality of teachers, poor infrastructure, poor libraries and poor educational resources. Unless high quality of education both in terms of infrastructure and academic is not provided and sustained in all higher education institutes, it will be difficult to match with global world. One way it could be done at least in academic front is developing and disseminating quality educational material among the institutes of higher education. National Knowledge Commission has recommended that problems of educational material to a large extent can be reduced by Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Access (OA). The easy and widespread availability of high quality educational material will change the paradigm of teaching and learning and thus improve the quality of education. Government of India has started several innovative programs and schemes like SHAKSHAT, NMEICT, NPTEL, OSCAR, E-grid etc. related to developing and disseminating educational resources. The national and global level are tremendous but it comes with many challenges specifically in a country like India which has a diversified population.The present paper will try to focus on the opportunities and challenges with respect to OER in Indian higher education.

Key Words: OER, higher education, challenges, opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

> *"Open Educational Resources (OERs) are any type of educational materials that are in the public domain or introduced with an open license. The nature of these open materials means that anyone can legally and freely copy, use, adapt and re-share them. OERs range from textbooks to curricula, syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, tests, projects, audio, video and animation."*
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> - UNESCO, Home Page dated 2nd October2013

Over the past two decades the electronic revolution has changed the world scene. Never in the history, has technology influenced education so much as it is doing today. In recent years, the rate of technological change happened in electronic medium has never been so fast, what is used to be two decades ago. Technology has changed our world in ways previously unimaginable. No one has ever imagined that with a click of mouse the money can be transferred one place to other place, one can talk live face to face via mobile(3G)across the country, one can attend conferences, workshop almost virtually.