



Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University
Centre for Staff Training and Development

Workshop on 'e-Content Development'

MODULE - KNOWLEDGE AND OPENNESS IN THE DIGITAL ERA (Sept. 4 to 6, 2013)

What is this Module about?

Humanity world over is at the cusp of a tectonic shift in the production, consumption, dissemination and distribution of knowledge. This warrants changes in frameworks of looking at knowledge, information and data in the digital era at multiple levels and by multiple players including students, academics, entrepreneurs, researchers, civil society, Universities and the State . Within this context of the digital turn, openness and transparency have gained newer significance. On the one hand emerging participatory knowledge production models of openness like Wikipedia¹ are increasingly pushing us to look beyond the traditional models of the bygone century;² on the other hand these models are being thought of to be effective even in pedagogy, governance and policy making. Open Educational Resources for instance is becoming a key caveat, for the students and higher educational institutions alike in imagining better pedagogy models. This creates a pre-condition for the transformation of society into a 'Knowledge Society', wherein the student is increasingly repositioned from a 'spectator' to 'spect-actor'.³ This module is curated and executed by Mr. T. Vishnu Vardhan, Programme Director, Access to Knowledge, Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore will focus on 'Openness' of knowledge in the digital era.

What will this Module offer? (Objectives)

This module will empower the faculty participants to get a comprehensive understanding of the changes that are brought about by the digital technology to the knowledge domain. It will also introduce them to various openness movements that informed the discourse on Open Educational Resources. Further, the module will also introduce the faculty to certain open and collaborative tools like Wiki and show them the significance of such tools in creating the biggest open knowledge platform – Wikipedia. The module

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1. Geert Lovink and Nathaniel Tkacz, Critical Point of View: A Wikipedia Reader, published by CIS and Institute of Network Cultures, available at http://www.networkcultures.org/uploads/%237reader_Wikipedia.pdf
 2. The Access to Knowledge programme of CIS has held several workshops and produced more than 60 blog entries in nearly 10 months. To read the impact of this work see <http://cis-india.org/a2k/blog/indian-language-wikipedia-statistics>
 3. A term coined by the Brazilian theatre practitioner Augusto Boal in the context of theatre. This formulation of spect-actor is very useful in reimagining the citizen in the digital era that has created preconditions for the citizen to effectively participate in governance. For more on Spect-actor see Augusto, Boal (1993). *Theater of the Oppressed*. New York: Theatre Communications Group.

will approach each of these issues within the context of Indian languages and higher education, so that the faculty could take back the learning to their immediate pedagogic and research environment.

How is this module structured?

Session 1: Open Source to Open Knowledge – A Beginners Guide to Openness in the Digital Era

(This session will give a historical overview of the Free and Open Source Software movement, Open Access, Open Content, Open Data and Open Educational Resources)

Session 2 & 3: Building Knowledge Bases and Platforms via Mass Collaboration on the Internet

(In these sessions participants will be introduced the changing trends in knowledge production post digital. It will look at how the advent and penetration of Internet has made possible the creation of new knowledge bases. The participant will also be encouraged to first take part in such a mass collaboration platform in an Indian language)

Session 4: e-Content in Indian languages – History, Challenges and Opportunities.

(This session will provide a brief history of the e-Content in Indian Languages and will provide a basic understanding of the computing principles that underpin the growth of e-Content. It will also discuss the necessity of Unicode and the need to have Open Standards, which are key to growing e-Content in Indian languages.

Session 5: Wikipedia Users to Wikipedia Authors – Exploring Wikipedia as an OER Tool

(This session will look at the mass knowledge platform – Wikipedia – that is used by faculty and student alike. Aspects of veracity, copyright violation, how to effectively use Wikipedia as an OER tool, etc. will be dealt with in this session.

Session 6: e-Content, e-Student, e-Faculty – Reimagining classroom in the digital Age

(This will be an interactive session which will focus on the need to re-imagine the classroom in the digital age. Participants will be introduced to the changing trends in pedagogic transactions brought about by the digital turn.)

Note to Participants: Your active participation is required. There could be small take home tasks that need to be completed. You will be sent a set of instructions in advance (at least 3 days before), which you need to follow to successfully learn and enjoy this module.