Innovations in Open and Distance Learning:

A Report of the Gold Medal 2015

National Centre for Innovation in Distance Education

Indira Gandhi National Open University

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A Report of the Gold Medal 2015

Contents

Summary

The National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE) at the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is a ground for nurturing bright minds whose ideas are expected to revolutionize the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system. NCIDE encourages innovations in distance education through collaborations within IGNOU and with other institutes in India and abroad. One of the initiatives by NCIDE to promote and encourage innovations in ODL system has been to award a Gold Medal for the best Innovation, instituted by IGNOU, at the Annual Convocation. NCIDE had called for nominations for the Gold medal (2015) on innovations in ODL system and received eight entries from various staff and faculty of IGNOU. Three entries were short listed through a committee among which one was awarded the Gold Medal for the year 2015. The second entry was awarded the Certificate of Merit by the University. This report presents these innovations in brief and also enlists the other contenders. This effort is expected to encourage the prospective innovators in distance education in the future.

1. Innovations in education and its impact

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is a pioneer in Open and Distance Learning in India and is among the prime educational institutions in the country. It has crossed the national boundaries, providing higher education and assisting other developing countries in this regard. IGNOU strives to provide cost-effective and quality education to all sections of the society, including those living in remote and far-flung areas through the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system. The infrastructure of IGNOU comprises various systems such as Schools, Divisions, Centres[1], Regional Centres[2], and Study Centres in India[3] and abroad[4]. Each system of this huge infrastructure has a very important role to play in devising new and innovative solutions to provide quality, cost effective and user-friendly services to the learners through the distance mode.

The ODL system has shown a tremendous growth during the past few decades due to its unique feature of being a user-friendly system. In this system, the students are free to learn at their own pace and convenience while being away from the institution. This uniqueness and the ease of gaining knowledge have a pivotal role to play in facilitating today's emerging knowledge society. In this new society, knowledge is the primary production resource. The knowledge society is powered by the ability to create and maintain the knowledge infrastructure, develop knowledge workers and enhance their productivity through creation, growth and exploitation of knowledge. Knowledge is converted into wealth for social good through the process of innovation. Innovations are carried out through an innovation system. Recognizing the need for such an innovation system in the ODL system, IGNOU established the National Centre for Innovation in Distance Education (NCIDE).

The NCIDE is an innovation system, which is a ground for nurturing bright minds whose ideas are expected to revolutionize the ODL system. The aim of the

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[1] Total number of Schools/Divisions/Centres/Units/Consortium/Chairs= 53
[2] Total number of Regional Centres = 67
[3] Total number of Study Centres in India = 2981
[4] Total number of Overseas Study Centres= 09

Centre is to develop a culture of constant search for new innovative solutions towards IGNOU's mission of seamless education, cost efficiency and borderless access to quality education. NCIDE promotes, develops and pilots innovations in all aspects of the ODL system and works through the build-operate-transfer (BOT) mechanism. It provides intellectual and technological support to the stakeholders for the growth and development of the ODL system. It acts as a resource centre for prototype development that ensures quality assurance, cost- and learner-related effectiveness, and system efficiency. Over the past ten years, the Centre has developed several innovative solutions in the fields of learning and student support. Some of these prototypes include the following:

1. Interactive Multimedia enabled IMNCI Package for Health Professionals
2. Online Package on IMNCI
3. On-Demand Examination System
4. Mobilets: Mobile enabled learning
5. Bilingual DVD enabled and Mobile Supported IMNCI Training package for Health Workers
6. Winex Software for Instant Generation of Question Papers
7. Virtual Training Lounge

The details of these are available on the NCIDE, IGNOU website.

NCIDE encourages innovations in distance education through collaborations within IGNOU and with other institutes in India and abroad. NCIDE has closely worked with Vigyan Prasar, Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India, and UNICEF on innovative projects, such as Science Olympiad and IMNCI package for health professionals, respectively.

The very first initiative by NCIDE is to promote and encourage innovations in ODL system. Recognising this initiative, a Gold Medal for Innovations has been instituted by IGNOU, to be awarded at the Annual Convocation. The Centre has developed an online database and management system for the innovations and ideas collected in the past ten years. This effort is named Navdharana and is available on the NCIDE, IGNOU website.

Today almost half of the students enrolled in higher education are receiving education through the distance mode, i.e. through the open universities or though the correspondence courses of traditional universities. However issues of brand equity of distance education (acceptability of students for higher degrees and suitable employment) persist. There is also an unprecedented opportunity with regard to open courseware. There have already been great developments with regard to the broadband and internet infrastructure needed to facilitate the spread of open courseware. This needs to be further developed in the country. Also in the wake of the UN Millenium Development Goals that emphasize on education for sustainable development, there is a need and demand for innovative programmes and courseware that would meet the requirements of diverse communities of the country. Further a repository of such material could be developed by national experts for use across institutions.

The success of the ODL system depends upon the organization which innovates. A concerted study of the system and its working is required which should be followed by introducing innovations and changes in the policies. Then only the innovation would be successful.

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2. Innovations in Open and Distance Learning: A brief overview

Innovations are required to increase the efficiency of an existing system. The word innovation is derived from the Latin word *innovare,* which means 'renew' or 'alter'. Innovation is the first attempt to carry out a new idea or invention into practice. In simple language we may say that innovation is the successful implementation of creative ideas within an organization or system. In this view, the creativity of an individual is the starting point for innovation. Broadly, an action can be identified as an innovation if it is new and useful to the system; increases the efficiency of the system; is cost effective; is compatible/adaptable with other similar systems.

The ODL system is a huge and diverse system that carries out diverse functions. Accordingly, the areas of innovation are also diverse. Broadly, NCIDE,

for the documentation and dissemination purpose has categorized these into the following:

a. Innovative Practices in Programme Development:

A Programme forms the core of the ODL system. It refers to either a certificate, diploma or degree programme that consists of a few courses (the number of which differs from programme to programme). Example: MBA programme, BDP programme, PGDDE programme, etc. The main component of a programme comprises instructional design. The programmes considered innovative should contain new content which includes contemporary development issues, e.g. programmes and courses on any social problem, such as HIV /AIDS, Gender Development Studies, Family Education, Dengue; or special education programmes for establishing a model operating system to cater to the emerging knowledge society in the cybernetic age. Programmes that are designed to innovatively promote Indian culture, constitutional laws, clean environment, etc., are also considered.

Several innovative programmes have been offered by different open and distance learning universities across the world including gardening, child labour eradication, personality development, museum studies, life coping skills, horticulture, natural resource management, vocational skills, mushroom cultivation, water treatment, and sustainable community development. These programmes encourage capacity building and impart knowledge to a lay person. Various other innovative programmes on special education such as parent education, parenting skills, child psychology, school phobia, school psychology, sex education and information, staff development, aromatherapy, reiki etc. are offered all over the world in traditional mode. These can be offered in India through the ODL system.

b. Instructional Design and Delivery Mechanism

Instructional design is the special design of the instructions to the learners (study material) of the ODL system. The instruction is learner-centric instead of

teacher-centric and has features that the learner easily understands. It is designed in such a way so as to cater to learners with a wide range of qualifications and learning abilities. It is designed in the form of printed and non-printed self-reading material where instructions, pictorial depictions, several languages, interactive dialogues and stories etc., are used liberally.

The delivery of the instructional material is done through the print, and multimedia using the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools. Today ICT touches all parts of life including education. The impact of ICT in education can be felt strongly by observing the uses of multiple media in teaching using ICT tools. These ICT tools support the predominant print media being used by the ODL system. The current multiple media being used by the ODL system includes audio and video cassette tapes, CD-ROM, interactive radio, television, teleconferencing, video-conferencing online teaching through multimedia and recently, instruction delivery through iPods.

Another important ICT tool -the mobile is showing good promise as a means of instructional delivery to the ODL learner. Mobile learning aims to make the learning process more flexible, accessible and personalized. Mobile learning is about exploring new ways to use mobile environments to improve access to information for the learners who want to update their knowledge continuously to satisfy the everyday demands of their jobs.

The ICT tools are also expected to help teachers in finding solutions to learning problems by providing them with new instruments for the analysis and continuous monitoring of students learning processes.

c. Innovations in Learner Support

The life cycle of a learner in the University starts with the pre-admission process where the learner explores the various options available to her for pursuing higher studies in the University. This step is followed by the actual admission process that involves a variety of options, such as walk-in-admission, online admission or through entrance tests. After the admission is over, the

learner is assigned a study centre where s/he has to go for orientation. Thereafter, the study material is dispatched to the student and the learner begins his studies. During the course of the study, her/his learning is supported through contact classes in the study centres; through ICT tools, such as audio, video CDs, teleconferencing and IGNOU YouTube; through assignments and project work etc., and through laboratory support. The next step is the examination, which is held twice a year. The learner has the flexibility to chose the courses in which s/he wishes to appear. The next step is the declaration of the results and issue of grade cards. The final step is the award of the degree. All these steps involve complex processes at the University end, which is closely coordinated with the needs of the learner. These processes require constant innovation to be able to manage the learner support system efficiently. There is much scope of innovation in the area as the learner support system is overloaded and slow owing to several factors. Any new practice that helps the students to facilitate their studies is considered an innovation under this category.

The use of ICT tools are needed in student support solutions such as online student registration, online programme delivery, online evaluation of assignments and project reports, online examination, online availability of results. An innovative practice that is useful and effective; and also has the characteristic of user-friendliness and cost effectiveness, or an innovative application of technology and idea in learner support has been considered as an innovation in this category.

d. Innovations in Examination and Evaluation

Evaluation of students in ODL system becomes critical since student is not present physically in front of teachers/evaluators as in case of traditional teaching/evaluating mode. The student in ODL system is generally evaluated by providing self assessment questions in the course book itself, questions at the end of each unit, multiple choice questions, projects, assignments and lastly through term end examination (TEE). Any innovative method or practice that contributes

to the efficiency of the evaluation system is considered an innovation under this category.

e. Innovations Supporting Convergence of Systems

Innovations supporting convergence of systems include creation of intelligent solutions to address credit transfers, exemptions, transfer, recognition of prior learning, or to consider and approve the grade point average (GPA) to percentage conversion (PC) across the programmes of the University etc.

f. Monitoring and feedback

Quality management plays a key role in developing and maintaining quality in distance education institutes. It deals with the quality of the learning experience and the support services. It helps to ensure the completion rates of studies and diminishes dropout figures and results in satisfied students who may in the future be willing to start new studies. Benchmarking is one form of monitoring and measurement used in quality management. Benchmarking is being highly used in educational organizations to evaluate various aspects of the teaching-learning processes in relation to best practice or innovations. It provides new methods, ideas and tools to improve the effectiveness of the organization. A practice that has markedly improved the quality of the ODL system is considered an innovation under this category.

3.1 Gold Medal 2015: Master of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies: Programme Development

Innovators: Prof. Anu Aneja, Dr. Nilima Srivastava

Team Members: Dr. Himadri Roy, Dr. Smita M Patil and Dr. Sunita Dhal

School/Division: School of Gender Development Studies (SOGDS), IGNOU

Area of Innovation: Programme Development

Description of the Innovation

Master of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies (MAWGS) is a pioneer academic programme which addresses the concerns raised by the proponents of both Women's Studies and Gender Studies. The programme aims at providing comprehensive knowledge with the help of concepts, theories and study of socio-cultural, politico-economic factors and psychoanalysis by questioning gender relations, their impact on women and men, thereby opening up vistas of cultural transformation in society. This programme weaves in international perspectives and contextualizes them to Indian scenario. The Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) is offered as a generic programme internationally, but to have a wider learner base and to offer learners the possibility of in depth study, two specializations were created in 2nd year of MAWGS. Thus, offering specialization is another novel attempt which has not been found in the curricula of WGS world over.

Another pioneering effort has been the WGS Online Interactive Forum to provide additional web based support to the learners of the MAGWS programme by creating of an interactive platform for direct interface with the faculty (Programme and Course coordinators). This web based online forum addresses their queries and concerns, provide additional inputs, updates and allow peer learning, bridging barriers of distance, time, and geography. For Programme Coordinators, it is a mechanism to assess efficacy of the self learning material (SLM), learners' understanding of the same and inculcate critiquing of factors/forces responsible for subordination and marginalization of women and men in society.

The features of the MAWGS programme are presented below (Fig 1.):

- The SLM is made visually rich by adding pictures, paintings and weblinks to facilitate understanding of complex theories and the critique of the text in question.
- Cover designs also convey the objectives of the course that learners intend to read.

- Assignments have questions that need learners to read up newspaper articles and youtube uploads to answer questions.
- Additional reading provided for when learners ask for it.
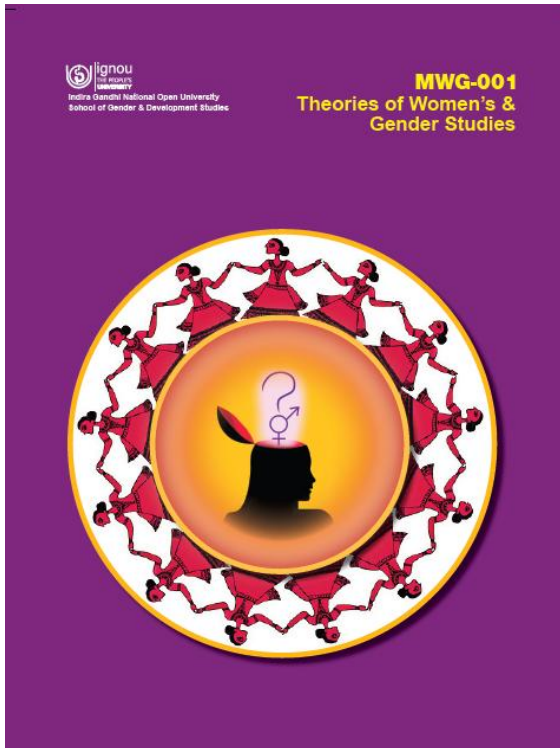
Figure 1. The cover page of the Master of Arts Women and Gender Studies Self Learning Material.

Technological Features of the Innovation

The WGS Online Interactive Forum is a totally technology based initiative with the following features (Fig. 2.):

- On line interactive web based educational portal.
- Open to only registered learners of MAWGS.
- Open source (free for users) of providing and receiving additional educational inputs.

- Attractive, innovatively designed web pages based on School's colour code along with imaginative use of cover page of MAWGS study material.

- Moderators (Programme and Course co-ordinators) manage interaction and can regulate the same too.

- Flashing announcements for immediate attention of users.

- 'Unread' posts denoted by a red icon and 'read' ones in green.

- Template layout is interactive and compatible with laptop, mobile and desktops.

- Follows World Wide Web Consortium protocol.
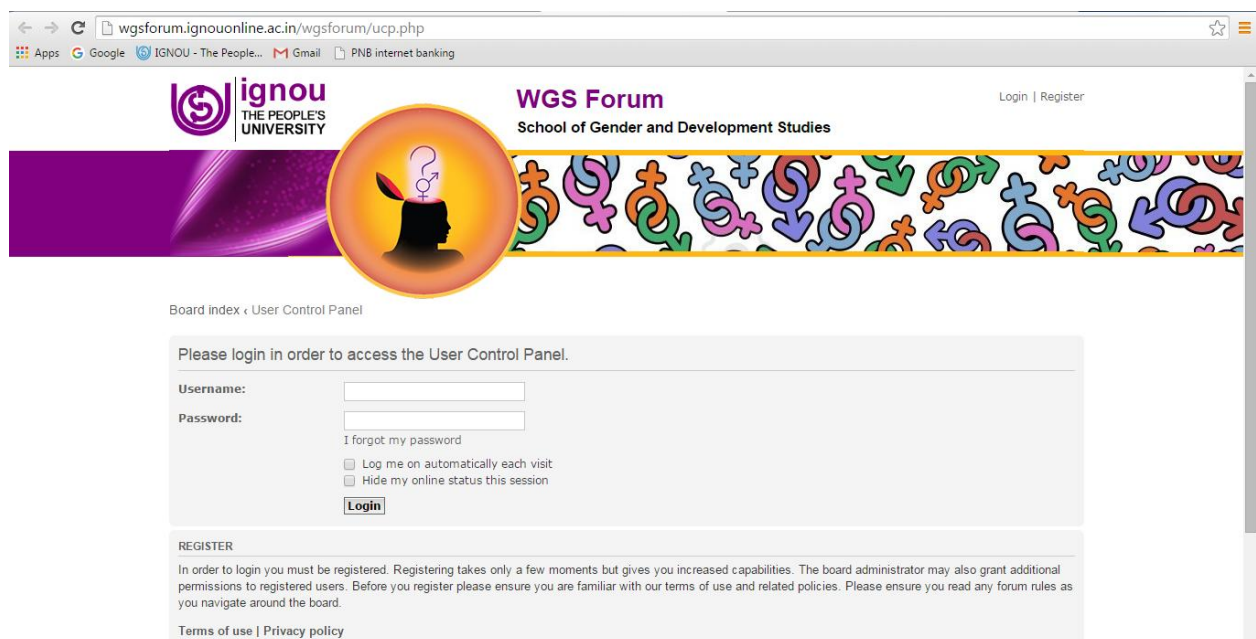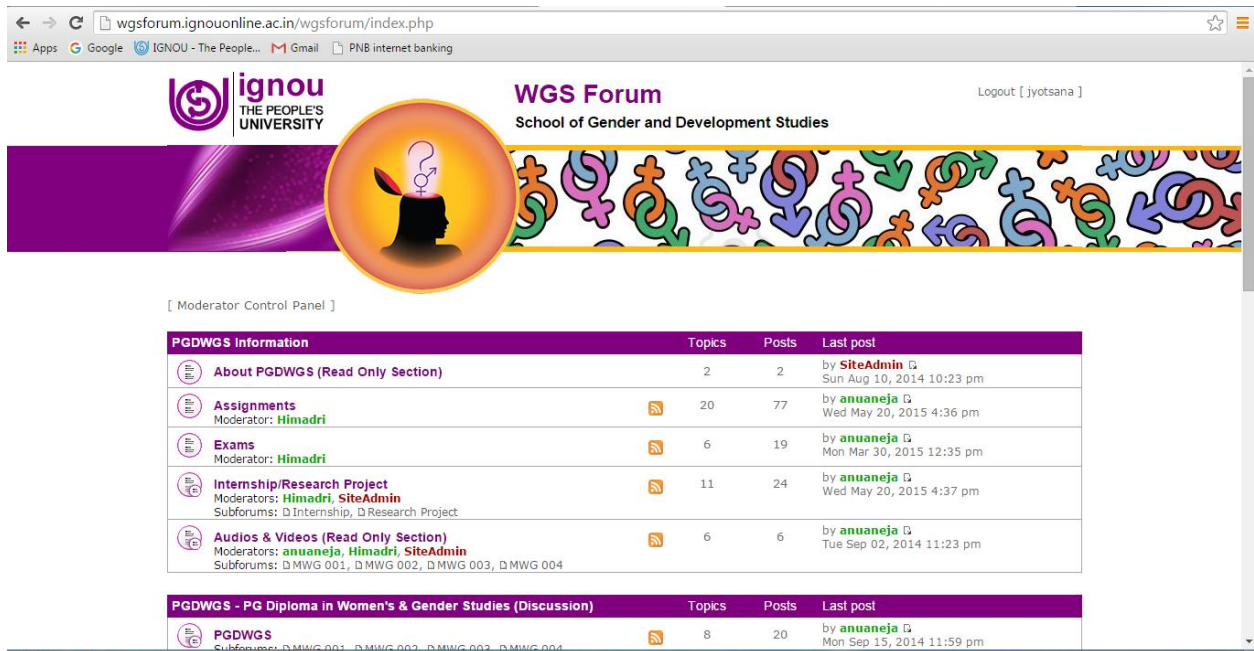
Figure 2. Screenshot of the Women and Gender Studies Online Interactive Forum.

Creative Breakthrough

Innovations with regards to the said programme have been on account of the following attributes:

- The Genesis of the title: Since the mandate of SOGDS has ' gender' with a wider understanding than the 'notional' understanding of gender pertaining to women, the title of the Programme was formulated (1) to keep up with the concerns of a large section of society namely, women, who face subordination, marginalisation and also oppression in certain ways (2) to include a broader academic understanding of gender as a category of analysis.

  Thus, WGS internationally emerged as a disciplinary area of enquiry that retains focus on women's issues within the larger rubric of academic discipline of GS. IGNOU is the only University in India offering a programme in this combined form.

- Programme Designing and Development: MAWGS was designed based on learner centric, bottom-up approach. During the need assessment study various areas of inquiry were proposed based on the current academic trends in

the disciplinary area and the most widely opted ones namely, Literature and Culture and Social Sciences are being offered as specialisation in 2nd year after reading the core foundational courses in the 1st year. Also, between Post Graduate (PG) Diploma and PG Degree, PG Diploma was a more popular choice. Learners can choose to exit after completing the 1st year (two Semesters) and get a diploma in WGS. Others interested in acquiring a MA degree can move on to the chosen specialization.

So,

(1) MAWGS was designed in such a way that all the popular choices were accommodated.

(2) One programme caters to the need of learners from two streams namely, humanities and social sciences.

- Assignments: For one cycle, assignments for MAWGS were made in a conventional format that is, long, medium and short notes types questions based on SLM. A few learners tended to repeatedly copy material verbatim from the SLM or from external sources. The faculty members also felt that given the nature of the course material and its focus on issues of gender equality, it was important to explore creative ways of making assignment questions so that learners are encouraged to connect the readings to lived realities. Thus, MAWGS assignments now regularly incorporate questions which ask the learner to engage with issues beyond the course material, while using the latter as a basis of critical enquiry. For instance, newspaper clippings about relevant matters, articles on gender issues, recent legal rulings related to the status of women, and other related issues are provided to the learners as part of the assignment questions. These questions push the learner to use the study material as a theoretical basis for analyzing/ responding to/ agreeing or disagreeing with the viewpoint presented in the article/ editorial.

- Web based additional academic support to the learners of the Programme: Women and Gender Studies is a niche and emerging area of study in India. In its initial years of launch the Regional Centres (RCs) found it a little difficult to

activate this programme, it being a multi and interdisciplinary programme. Thus, identifying Study Centres (SCs) was a bit difficult for the RCs. To overcome this problem a strategy was developed to provide web based academic support in addition to counselling at the SCs and Programme Study Centres (PSCs) (wherever activated). The WGS Online interactive forum provides a perfect platform for accomplishing this aim. The unique features of this forum are as follows:

a. It is totally in sync with the philosophy of the ODL system.
b. Audio/Visual (A/V) supplementary study material is available at the click of a mouse.
c. Learners can read posts and hold discussions.
d. Interaction with the Faculty members is provided by the online platform, which is generally not happening in the ODL system.
e. Creates a feeling of 'in-group' amongst learners across semesters thus promoting bonding amongst them.
f. The forum functions like a virtual classroom.
g. Learners get personalised attention even in a big group.
h. Individual level of engagement by each learner.
i. No additional financial implications for the University.

Implementation and Impact

Implementation of both the initiatives (MAGWS Programme and the WGS online platform) is cost effective as human and technological resources available with the University have been garnered for launch of MAWGS and the WGS forum. Both the initiatives promote the mandate of SOGDS (addressing broader gender concerns), vision of IGNOU (reaching the unreached for instance the differently able and housewives; and advance and dessiminate learning and knowledge by diversified means including the use of communication teachnology) and philosophy of ODL system (learner centric, overcoming barriers of time and distance, open, flexible) .

Impact of both the initiatives is visible in many different ways as it is widely appreciated by all the stakeholders. The innovations are seen to be having following impact:

MAWGS Programme Design:

- Increase in annual enrolment.
- Due to the innovative and cutting edge design of the Programme, Course writers/editors and other academics who worked on MAWGS are ready to be associated with the School in various other capacities, such as Resource Persons for Interactive Radio Counselling (IRC), production of A/V material for the Programme, Experts for developing other programmes in the School, and as School Board members.

WGS Online Interactive Forum:

- In spite of optional registration by the learners, the forum has generated good participation by way of leading /initiating discussions, replying to the posts, raising their queries and concerns and replying to ones raised by either the faculty or other learners.
- The learners have also posted their own publication and pieces of creative work (poems, articles etc.) and receive responses on the same.
- From time to time the faculty members update developments related to issues raised in the text (for example, when the Bill on Sexual Harassment at Workplace was changed to an Act in 2012, the same was posted in the forum).
- Faculty initiate debate on contemporary situations and incidents that impact gender relations like Nirbhaya case, Verma Committee report etc. which enables learners to discuss current issues and provide hand-holding to distant learners by appreciating or adding up to the discussion amongst them.
- The forum broadens the exposure and experience of learners vis-à-vis learners to learners and faculty to learners and vica versa learning opportunities in ODL.

Thus, the initiative has provided a better platform than the conventional classroom learning experience (which has the bindings of time and location) while providing quality educational inputs.

Scalability of the Innovation

- User-friendly template
- Quick time response

Sustainability of the Innovation

Both the initiatives are totally sustainable as resources required to keep up are well within the purview of the University system and not constrained by factors like time, technology or human efforts that affect sustainability of any initiative. There is no extra cost involved so the two initiatives are 'on ground' cost effective. The only requirement for sustainability is presence of committed human effort which is ensured by the concerned faculty.

Alignment with the Concept of ODL system

Both the initiatives are totally aligned to the requirement of ODL system and in fact promote the efficacy and philosophy of ODL.

Highlight

- The programme design which incorporates core, fundamental courses in the 1st year and two separate specializations in the 2nd year is a unique, novel and previously unexplored feature for any such programme in WGS.
- Incorporation of online educational portal as an additional academic support to the learners is another pioneering effort and has strengthened the overall success of the Programme.
- Innovations have also been attempted in format of assignments and exam questions to encourage original thinking , creative and critical analysis on the part of the learner.
- The programme has been designed with a futuristic perspective along with emphasis on high quality of academic inputs and transforming realities at the societal level.

4. Contenders

There were two other close contenders for the Gold Medal. These were judged to be the second and the third in the following order:

a. Mr. Ravi Ayyagari (Applicant), Arif Hasan Naqvi, Virendra Chhikara, R.Sekhar, and Amitosh Dubey (Team members)- Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC), IGNOU

b. Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar, Dr. Nehal A Farooquee and Prof. B.K. Pattanaik- School of Extension and Development Studies

The second entry was awarded the Certificate of Merit by the University. The details of these innovations are provided below.

3.2 Teaching Learning Targeted for 21st Century: Instructional Design & Delivery

Innovator: Mr. Ravi Ayyagari

Team Member: Arif Hasan Naqvi, Virendra Chhikara, R. Sekhar, and
                 Amitosh Dubey

School/Division: Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC), IGNOU

Area of Innovation: Instructional Design & Delivery

Rank: 2nd among 8 entries.

Description of the Innovation

The team conceived this prototype that enables developing high quality instructional design for ODL. It is a combination of virtual set, High Definition (HD) technology and multiple media. The produced educational content compatible for delivery through live broadcasting and through web based platforms. It is easily accessible online, offline and on demand via television, computer, iPad and mobile phone for the learner.

Figure 3. Virtual set

This prototype integrated educational tools like computer, PowerPoint, 3 dimensional (3D) graphics, animation, and Wi-Fi with the available virtual studio that has high definition cameras and recording equipment installed at EMPC, IGNOU. The use of this model removed the blockages that were hitherto experienced, both by the producers and teachers at IGNOU. The prototype is suitable for production of equality instructional content and delivery for teaching/learning in the ODL process by saving the time and cost.

Figure 4. Educational video from the virtual set on the mobile.

This prototype was well received both by the producers and teachers. This prototype also led to an increase in number in program productions by the producers as well as the physical and on-line interactivity with the learners. The same content was deposited on the web-based platform, Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs).

The following Programmes were produced with this prototype:

1) Introduction to MOOCs {series} for School of Computer and Information sciences with Dr. P.V. Suresh as the subject expert

2) Using Open Educational Resources (OERs) in Transitional Education for the School of Sciences with Prof. Balasubhramanyam Chandramohan, Institute of Commonwealth of Advanced Studies, University of UK, and Prof. S.C. Garg, School of Sciences, IGNOU.

Technological Features of the Innovation

The introduction of various educational tools in this prototype permits online/offline teaching from multiple angles and with multimedia animation and simulation. This prototype offers flexibility to the learner to absorb new concepts at their own pace anytime anywhere. Since it is interactive, it facilitates the continuous evolution of knowledge of the distant learner.

Creative Breakthrough

The use of the prototype enables the subject expert and the virtual set to move together in tandem with the virtual camera's movements. This allows for total 3D view, which is highly suitable for science and other related subjects. Further, as a part of the presentation, the teacher can also import external elements such as image files, and clippings of LIVE external video feeds in a variety of formats. Those elements can be placed as textures enhancing the realism of the set. Learners from multiple locations can watch and listen to the teacher in real time and also maintain interactivity from those multiple locations. Locations may also be remote. This two-way visual and verbal interaction of the traditional classroom/laboratory in a realistic situation can be created.

Implementation and Impact

This prototype of convergence of blended technologies for instructional design and delivery in teaching/learning process both for LIVE/recorded sessions with the use of all available educational tools results in increased effective learning process at a distance.

Linked with the mobile, web-based platforms for teaching/learning for ODL provides wide reach good interactivity (both synchronous and asynchronous) and offers flexibility to the learner to pursue at their own pace anytime anywhere. It also allows discussions with the teacher/learner and peer groups in both synchronous and asynchronous mode. This prototype facilitates high quality content generation along with the freedom to view or download any missed LIVE/recorded session at any place and at any time.

Scalability of the Innovation

This prototype offers application and adoption suitable for ODL in India, such as individual academic programmes for various streams of IGNOU as well as the large scale general programmes of IGNOU, such as its convocation and memorial lectures. This new integrated virtual set approach is scalable both upwards and downwards depending on the need of the institution. It is also highly cost effective. All the generated material for presentation like 3D graphics, animations can always be re-used. It can be used not only for the curriculum, but can also be extended to student support and administration. It facilitates consistent attention and commitment to meeting the needs of learners.

Sustainability of the Innovation

This new method of using convergence technologies also has the advantage of easy approach to sustainability from the policy level, its main advantages being adaptability and the ability to handle ever rapid and constantly ongoing changes in the field of education. Considering the new policies by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) through the National Mission in Education through ICT (NMEICT) project, this approach will be sustained for a long time, both in ODL and conventional education and it helps immensely in collaborative knowledge sharing, uniformly among all the universities spread all over the country

Alignment with the concept of ODL system

Selection and applicator of media is a major question while preparing instructional design and delivery for the ODL system. Considering the changes in student behavior, attitudes or interest (use of mobile, Internet, iPad, etc), restructuring of instructional design and delivery methodology of ODL material is a big challenge. This prototype encourages the use of all the available strategies which motivate the learner, hold student attention and stimulate learning.

Highlight

Innovation: This is definitely the very first time in India that this prototype of convergence of technologies was used in the field of Open Distance Learning effectively.

Implementation: This prototype was implemented to develop high quality of instructional material for the school of computers (series on MOOCS) and for the school of sciences. The programs were well received by the teachers, participants and by the producers. Interaction with the participants is also available. The recording of the content generated was also uploaded on Moocs platform of a pioneer institution under MHRD. Currently, this model is adopted and put in to use by the EMPC. This also increased the number of quality productions in a cost effective and time saving model with increased scope of interaction.

Scope: This comes in an appropriate time considering the quality of content, dissemination, and reach along with the scope of being good database for collaboration and sharing of knowledge among the various universities and institutions, this is perfectly in sync with the NMEICT-MHRD mission.

3.3 Promotion and Student Support Services - The Case of Post Graduate Diploma in Urban Planning and Development (PGDUPDL): Programme Development

Innovators: Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar, Dr. Nehal A Farooquee and Prof. B.K. Pattanaik

School/Division: School of Extension and Development Studies (SOEDS)

Area of Innovation: Programme Development

Rank: 3rd among 8 entries.

Description of the Innovation

The PGDUPDL programme coordinators have designed and implemented successfully a zero cost innovative programme promotion and student support facilitation model. The model components includes team work, division of responsibility and commitment of programme coordinators; extensive use of mass media, e-mails and Google group; partnerships with Central/State governments/other organizations for promotion/sponsorship; academic relationship establishment with learners and care; and achieving good students enrolment in the launch cycle, high students turn-out in the first TEE and pass-out rate of 31 per cent. The model is sustainable and can be scaled-up as it involves no cost.

Technological Features of the Innovation

Technologies like e-mail, Google group, IGNOU website, and mass media (newspapers) have been extensively used in programme promotion and student support services with regards to PGDUPDL. Without spending a single rupee, how these technologies were innovatively utilized is described in the subsequent sections.

Creative Breakthrough

The salient features of the innovation include the following:

- *Need analysis of the programme*: It not only established need for the programme , but also identified expectations of the learners on possible course contents and important likely takers of this programme. This helped in promoting programme with relevant and specific target groups.

- *Team approach*: Team work approach has been followed in the development, coordination and promotion of the PGDUPDL programme. About 25% of course material was prepared by programme coordinators.

- *Involvement of Central and State Governments*: This helped in creating a huge awareness about the new programme among top bureaucrats and higher officials in all States and Union Territories (UTs).

- *Attractive publicity material*: Programme visiting cards is a new idea - not many attempted in IGNOU system.

- *Free news items in news papers in English, Hindi and Regional languages*: They created huge awareness about the programme and disseminated information on usefulness of the programme to stakeholders. They also helped in encouraging enrolments.

- *Promotion through e-mail*: Nearly 50,000 e-mails were sent to general and specific target groups. They created awareness about the programme and provided direct inter- personal communication between prospective learners and programme coordinators, besides horizontal programme promotion.

- *Sponsorship from Andhra Pradesh Government and Housing and Urban development Corporation Limited (HUDCO).*

- *Promotion campaigns in NCR region.*

- *IGNOU website advertisement: Attracted the attention of IGNOU website visitors.*

- *Continuous interaction with students through e-mail and Google group*: A welcome e-mail, provision of programme guide, project handbook, assignments through e-mail, academic support on assignments, clarifying doubts, and time to time reminders on assignment/TEE form submission. They helped in collaborative learning and a significant pass-out rate of 31 per cent in TEE.

- *Scalability of the innovation in other new ODL programmes*: This is easily possible in other new programmes as PGDUPDL model would not require any

resources other than programme coordinators' time, dedication and internet facility.

- *Sustainability*: The PGDUPDL model will be sustainable if programme coordinators minimize the faulty process by division and identification of work, frequent evaluation of involvement, trust in team members, and personal responsibility. The programme promotion efforts are required until a sufficient number of learners are admitted/ passed-out across country, which is called 'critical mass' in social dynamics/diffusion of innovations theory.

The relevance of this innovative programme promotion and student support facilitation has been felt across India and resulted in good enrolment as well as good pass-out rates. This initiative is an effort to meet IGNOU's social commitment and stand to it motto of being People's University.

Implementation and Impact

A. Programme Development

(a) *Background of PGDUPDL Programme*: The Ministry of Urban Development had approached IGNOU to develop an ODL programme to promote professional competency and capacity building of pre-service and in-service people in the field of urban development. Accordingly, the SOEDS had received a suggestion from the competent authority to look at the possibilities of launching a Post Graduate Diploma in Urban Planning and Development.

(b) *Need Analysis of the Programme*: Globally it is projected that two-thirds of the population will live in urban areas by 2025. India is the second largest urban system in the world with more than 30 per cent of urban population. It is expected that by 2025, half of India's population will be in urban areas. Population residing in urban areas in India, according to the l901 census, was 1.4%. This count increased to 28.53% according to 2001 census, and reached to 31.16% as per 2011 census. As per World Bank data, India, along with China, Indonesia, Nigeria and the United States of America, will lead the world's urban

population surge by 2050.

The excessive urbanization has created .manifold problems such as transportation, poverty, unemployment, unauthorized housing colonies, slums and squatter settlements. One of the estimations shows that at least 33 per cent of the Indian urban population lives in slums with related implications for development. Thus, urbanization will be a problem to address as well as an opportunity for key initiatives for urban planners and policy makers in the years to come. Therefore, proper planning and management of urban development programmes hold the key for urban planners and policy makers.

However, the criticality of the urban problems has not been properly understood due to less emphasis on urban development issues in the academic curriculum at the graduation and post-graduation levels. This lack of academic exposure to personnel working in the urban sector is leading to their inability to understand urban development issues and related consequences. Considering the usefulness of ODL to reach all stakeholders in urban planning and development, needs assessment study was undertaken with key survey questions on: the need for urban planning and development education in ODL; the reasons for urban planning and development education in ODL; the entry level qualifications to enroll for the programme; job/ career prospects; duration of the programme; and, suggested broad course contents. The results revealed that the majority of respondents felt the need for a one year post-graduate level ODL programme on urban planning and development. The need assessment study has been published in Indian Journal of Open Learning.

Impact: Besides establishing the need of the programme, the study had also reflected expectations of the learners on possible course contents and important likely takers of this programme viz., functionaries of municipalities, urban local bodies, architects, civil engineers geographers, administrative officers, NGOs working on urban development and general graduates interested to pursue carrier in urban development. Based on results the programme coordinators promoted the programme among relevant stakeholders.

(c) Practices Followed:

Model: The Coordinators-Writer-Editor model was followed within the overall framework of the course team model. The three coordinators of the PGDUPDL are SOEDS faculty, whereas unit writers, editors are from within and outside IGNOU. Though the overall responsibility for the quality of the programme/ courses lies with the course team, this model made the programme/course coordinators more responsible for quality.

Team Approach: The SOEDS is a new school. The programme coordinators had joined in the school in the year 2009 with past work experience in multi-disciplinary research teams:

- Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar from ICAR

- Dr. Nehal A Farooquee from G. B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development

- Prof. B.K. Pattanaik from ICSSR

With a strong conviction and work experience in inter-disciplinary research programmes, the team work approach has been followed in the development, coordination and promotion of the PGDUPDL programme.

Out of six courses in PGDUPDL, each coordinator took the responsibility of the following courses in a time bound manner.

- Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar - MEDS-44, MEDSP-045 and Programme Guide

- Dr. Nehal A Farooquee -MEDS-41 and MEDS-42

- Prof. B.K. Pattanaik -MEDS 43 and MEDSE 46

(d) Course Writing and Editing

About 25 % of course material was prepared by the programme coordinators, and the rest by outside experts. Format editing and proof reading of all the courses

was done by programme coordinators, while content and language editing was given to external experts. Audio and video programmes were de eloped with the involvement of both programme coordinators and external resource persons.

B. **Programme Promotion**

In the launch year, the programme got an encouraging enrolment of 1108 (636 in July 2014 and 472 in January 2015) due to an innovative programme promotion activities by the coordinators without spending any money. The programme promotion activities undertaken including the following:

1. *Letter from Joint Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India (GOI) to Principal Secretaries (Urban Development) of all States and Union Territories*: The programme was launched in July 2014 session. On 22nd January 2014, the programme coordinators had approached the Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, GOI with a request to send information about the programme to all the States and Union Territories. Based on this request, the Joint Secretary wrote to Principal Secretaries (Urban Development) of all States and Union Territories about the programme. In the letters, the Joint secretary gave full details about the programme viz., how it was developed, who involved in the development process, to whom the programme will be useful, admission process, fee details (which can be considered even for reimbursement), and to give publicity in the State / UTs.

   Impact: These letters have created a huge awareness about this new programme -PGDUPDL among top bureaucrats and higher officials in all states / UTs.

2. *Attractive Publicity Material*: The following three types of publicity material have been developed to cater to various stakeholders following the principles of ABC - Attractive, Brevity and Clarity:

• Posters - for publicity at Regional centres, study centres and public places.

- Brochures - for distribution among prospective learners
- Programme visiting cards for distribution to participants at urban development related seminars/ conferences etc.

   Impact: These publicity materials helped in bringing awareness and generate interest among stakeholders across the country about this new programme. Programme visiting cards is a new idea, which may not have been attempted in IGNOU system yet.

3. *Free News Items Published in News Papers across India in English, Hindi and Regional Languages:* Free news articles about the programme were published in National English and Hindi dailies as well as in Regional languages.

   Impact: The newspaper items had created huge awareness about the PGDUPDL programme launched by IGNOU and also helped in disseminating information on programme usefulness to stakeholders. These news items helped in encouraging enrolments in the launch year.

   Example: In June 2014, one of the programme coordinator learned Telugu typing using Shree Lipi software and prepared PGDUPDL news item in Telugu language. The Telugu news item was sent to the Telugu dailies - Eeenadu, Saakshi, Andhra Prabha etc. All the dailies published the item free of cost which created a huge awareness about the new programme - PGDUPDL. This was repeated again in December 2014 for the January 2015 session.

   Impact: The outcome was that 276 admissions took place under the RCs-Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam in July 2014 and January 2015 session.

4. *Promotion through e-mail*: The new programme has been promoted through e-mails extensively among general and specific target groups.

   General Target group

   - Over 8000 e-mails of researchers/ faculty members from various research organizations and universities were collected from various

journals, publications and contact databases. The PGDUPDL brochure and admission procedure details were sent to all of them with a request to encourage their students I colleagues I batch mates etc to take admission.

- Over 30000 e-mails of old students of IGNOU from related programmes were collected and PGDUPDL brochure and admission procedure details were sent to all of them with a request to forward the mail to their contacts.

Specific Target Groups

- Over 10000 e-mails were sent to municipal corporations, municipalities, urban local bodies, urban development authorities, architectural colleges, civil engineering and geography departments in different universities, NGOs, professional associations etc., (based on likely takers as identified in need assessment study).

- E-mails of July 2014 session PGDUPDL students: Out of 636 students joined in July 2014 session, 406 students gave their e-mail id in admission forms. These 406 students were requested through e-mail to inform their friends/ colleagues/ batchmates etc., about the programme and encourage them to take admission during January 2015 session.

- E-mail enquiries: After the admissions were closed during July 2014 session, we received several e-mails I phone calls for admissions. We advised them to take admission in January 2015 session and an e-mail reminder to all of them was sent when admission for January 2015 session started.

Impact: E-mails provided direct inter-personal communication between the prospective learners and programme coordinators and helped in clarifying programme prospects and admission procedures etc., besides horizontal programme promotion.

5. *Sponsorship from Andhra Pradesh Government*: As part of the programme promotion, one of the programme coordinator (who was on a project fieldwork visit to Hyderabad) had met the following officials of Government of Andhra Pradesh/ Telangana in March 2014 at Hyderabad.

- Chief Secretary

- Secretary (Urban Development)

- Special Secretary, Department of Municipal Administration and Urban Development

- Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration

The programme coordinator had explained them about PGDUPDL and its prospects for in-service municipal administration employees. The officials had decided to sponsor their employees' fee for PGDUPDL from the Andhra Pradesh Municipal Development Project grant.

Impact: The municipal administration department, Govt of Andhra Pradesh had sponsored 63 employees for PGDUPDL programme in July 2014 session. They also sponsored employees during January 2015 session. For July 2015 session also, they invited applications for sponsorship from employees.

6. *Sponsorship from HUDCO*: Similar effort was made to get sponsorship from HUDGO and they agreed for sponsorship of their employees.
   Impact: Keeping in view the relevance of the programme to its activities, the HUDCO has desired that this programme is to be offered to all the interested employees for their capacity building. During the January 2015 session, from Delhi alone HUDCO sponsored fees for 7 employees.

7. *Promotion campaigns in NCR, Delhi University, JNU, Sonipat, and RCs in NCR to bring about awareness and interest among students*: The programme coordinators have enrolled as academic counsellors in the National Capital Territory RCs and conducting counselling sessions free of cost.

8. *IGNOU Website Advertisement*: A brief advertisement about the PGDUPDL was prepared. The programme coordinators had requested the Computer Division, IGNOU to flash the advertisement link under 'Announcements' in the IGNOU website

Impact: This had attracted the attention of several IGNOU website visitors. The programme coordinators used to receive a large number of phone calls, e-mails requesting further details about programme.

C.   Student Support Services

1. *Continuous interaction with Students*: Once the admissions were closed for July 2014 session, the e-mails of PGDUPDL students have been collected from the Student Registration Division. A welcome letter was sent through e-mail to all the students on 17th September 2014 with details on the PGDUPDL programme, teaching-learning process in IGNOU, self learning   material, audio-video   and IRC programmes.   The soft copies of the programme guide and assignments were also attached with the email for ready reference. A similar communication was sent to all January 201 5 session admitted students as well. A separate e-mail was sent to 120 out of 636 students who opted for elective project work-MEDSP-045. This e-mail includes guidelines on project work and project work handbook soft copy.

    Impact: A sense of academic relation and care was established between programme coordinators and students with this welcome e-mail, which continued further through Google group.

2. *PGDUPDL Google Group*: For   continuous   interaction between programme coordinators and learners, as well as to promote lateral interaction among learners, a Google group was created (pgdupdl@googlegroups.com). Several hundred e-mails were exchanged between (a) programme coordinators and learners, and (b) between the learners on academic support.

    Impact: Collaborative learning occurs when learners are actively engaged where learning-takes place through explicit or implicit collaborative efforts. Google group is an easy way to send communication to all students. Also this group helped in collaborative learning by the students. Time to time reminders was sent to the students about submission of assignments and term end

examination forms. This has increased the overall turn-out in the June 2015 TEE as per the details given below.

PGDUPDL Students -July 2014 Batch			
July 2014 Enrolment	Students appeared in the TEE June	No of students passed	Pass-out % (out of 636)
636	209	197	31%

The average pass-out rates of ODL students reported in literature was 8.85 % (Reddy,M.V.L. 2002, *Indian Journal of Open Learning*, 11(1), 117-121); a pass-out rate that is significant, which can be attributed to the overall student support activities and facilitation in an innovative way.

Scalability of the Innovation

Scalability involves successful adaptation of PGDUPD model in other new ODL programmes. The other new ODL programmes can easily adopt PGDUPDL model as it would not require any resources other than programme coordinators' time, dedication and internet facility. As pointed-out by one of the Senior Regional Director through e-mail, if programme coordinators put some additional efforts, the innovation can be scaled-up in other new ODL programmes as well.

Sustainability of the Innovation

The sustainability of PGDUPDL programme promotion and support service model depends on the following factors :

1. *Continuation of Group/Team Work*: Group productivity laws predict that the actual productivity is equal to potential productivity minus losses owing to faulty process. This faulty process is the tendency of groups to become less productive due to Coordination Losses (lack of simultaneous group efforts) and Social Loafing (tendency of people not to work so hard when they are in groups). The model will be sustainable if the programme coordinators minimize the faulty process by division and identification of PGDUPDL work,

frequent evaluation of involvement, trust in team members, and personal responsibility.

2. *Self Sustainability*: In order to be self sustainable, the model needs to be promoted until a sufficient number of PGDUPDL learners are admitted/ passed-out across the country. This sufficient number of learners is called 'critical mass' in social dynamics under the Diffusion of innovations Theory. When critical mass is reached, the rate of admissions into PGDUPDL becomes self-sustaining and attracts further admissions without the efforts of programme coordinators. The Programme Coordinators are planning to scale-up the PG Diploma into Masters in Urban Development. When the Masters programme launched, this critical mass will become primary target group and would likely have takers.

Alignment with the concept of ODL system

The innovation described above is in ODL system only.

Highlight

The team entered into ODL system in 2009 and quickly adopted to the system. They were the first to launch ODL programmes among the new schools. They worked as a team improve efficiency and bring innovation in programme development, promotion and student support facilitation. This approach also addressed the requirements of multi-disciplinary components of the programme. The success of the programme not only in terms of the enrolment, but also the pass-out rate demonstrates the efficiency of the model. The team implemented successfully a zero cost, sustainable, scalable and innovative programme promotion and student support facilitation model by utilizing simple technologies.

Proforma

Indira Gandhi National Open University
National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education

Application Form for -'Gold Medal' for Innovation in Open and Distance Education~2015

1.   **Name of applicant:** ……………………………………………………………………

2.   **School/Centre/Division**: ……………………………………………………………

3. **Applicant contact information:**

Office Address:…………………………………………………………………………

Phone (o): ………………………………… Mobile Phone: …………………………………

Email:………………………………………………………………………………..

4.   **Team members** *(include Name, Department & Email address):*

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5.   **Innovation title**:

………………………………………………………………………………….....

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6.   **Area in which Award is claimed:**

☐ Programme Development   ☐ Instructional Design & Delivery

☐ Learner Support   ☐ Examination & Evaluation

☐ Administrative Facilitation   ☐ Monitoring & Feedback

☐ Supporting Convergence and Conversion of Subsystems

7. **Brief summary of the Innovation** (*Max 100 words*):

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

*Please enclose necessary evidence in support of your claim and support material that substantiates your evidence

8. **Technological Features of the Innovation**

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9. Creative Breakthrough *(Outline the salient features of the innovation)*
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10. Implementation and Impact*: (Please indicate how the innovation is implemented and what impact your innovation has or going to have on the ODL system.)*
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11. Scalability of the Innovation
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12. Sustainability of the Innovation
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13. *Alignment with the concept of ODL system:*
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14. *Did you apply for this Award earlier? If yes, indicate specific progress/advancement since last submission to Innovation Awards (If applicable):*
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15. *Explain in about 100-200 words why you think you qualify for this award.*
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16. Signatures:

I confirm that:

❑ Information presented here is **not confidential**

❑ The work submitted is our original work,

❑ Members of the innovation team and our institution, have been consulted, and agree, to this submission.

Applicant (name)	*Applicant (signature)*
	Date:
Director/Head of Division (name)	*Director/Head of Division (signature)*
	Date:

Please forward **FIVE** hard copies of the application and supporting materials to the Director, NCIDE, G-Block, Zakir Hussain Bhawan, New Academic Complex, IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi – 110068 by **30th July, 2015.** You may also send softcopies of the application at ncide@ignou.ac.in

If you have any questions please call 011-29536413 or email ncide@ignou.ac.in

Annexure II

LIST OF OTHER NOMINATIONS RECEIVED WITH BRIEF INFORMATION

S.No.	Name/Institute	Summary
Programme Development		
1.	*Dr. Deepanwita Srivastava, School of Foreign Languages (SOFL), Room No. 06, Block 15-D, SOFL, IGNOU Maidan Garhi, New Delhi.*	• The Certificate Programme in French was launched with support from the Embassy of France and experts from other Indian Universities apart from the in-house team at IGNOU. This is the first model for French language to be put into practice through the ODL teaching/learning mode. • The material developed and instructional design perform a dual task of • Addressing needs of the Indian learners having a unique linguistic repertoire, and • Establishing international standards of French Language teaching/learning as laid down by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) on the one hand and the UGC on the other. • The material prepared is a Trilingual one with French, Hindi and English where learners have options of using Self Learning Material prepared either in Hindi or the English medium that combines innovation, inclusivity and communicative competence. • Creative pedagogical techniques taking cognizance of learners' resources in terms of Learner Profile, Prior Cognitive Knowledge and Linguistic/cultural background.
2.	*Prof. Rampelli Satyanarayana Staff Training Research Institute in Distance Education (STRIDE) Room No. 15, Block-16, Prof. G. Ram Reddy Block, IGNOU Campus*	It is a theoretical perspective of Open Distance Education in comparison with face-to-face education drawn from the Indian mythology. It is an analogy and an explanation the situation at learner centred and teacher centred education. The first way can be compared to Learner Centred Education, otherwise understood as self learning. In Sanskrit it is called 'Markataka Kishora Nyaya'. In Sanskrit the meaning of Markataka Kishora Nyaya is: Markataka means Monkey. Kishora/Suta means kid (son/daughter). Nyaya means Justice.

		To sum up MARKATA KISHORA/SUTA NYAYA means monkey's justice towards her kid or (her baby monkeys). Here the mother monkey does not protect her kids, but the kids protect themselves by clinging onto the belly of their mother. This can be compared as self/independent learning, which is closer to Open and Distance Learning. The second way is 'Teacher Centric Education' which can be compared to face-to-face education/learning. In Sanskrit it is called Marjala Kishora/Suta Nyaya. The meaning of Marjala Kishora/Suta Nyaya means: Marjala means Cat. Kisora/Suta means kid-son/daughter. Nyaya means Justice. To sum up, Marjala kishora/Suta Nyaya means 'Cat's justice towards her kid' or (Cat's justice towards her baby Cat), where in the mother Cat protects and trains her kid by shifting the kitten from house to house. Here, the kid is protected and trained by the mother Cat by taking kitten in her mouth. This situation can be compared as teacher aided learning, which is closer to face-to-face Education/Learning.
Learner support		
3.	*Dr. Sanjay Kant Prasad and Mr. Santosh Kumar Pandyan* *National Centre for Disability Studies, G Block, New Academic Complex, IGNOU and Electronic Media Production Centre, IGNOU*	• A video in Sign Language on IGNOU for persons with disabilities. • Provides information about IGNOU's establishment, its aims and objectives, features, facilities, enrolment process, programmes offered etc. • Contains Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about admission procedure and related queries with answers. • Not only useful for persons with hearing impairment but also for the persons with visual impairment and other disabilities.
4.	*Dr. Umesh Chandra Pandey and Mr. Satish Patel* *IGNOU Regional Centre Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)* *12, Arera Hills Near Old Jail, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh*	The interventions in the villages of Khandwa (Madhya Pradesh) through village panchayat have unfolded the new possibilities. The response in the pilot experiment has shown that the village panchayats if properly sensitized, can prove to be powerful instrument to sensitize the people. The villagers have much greater trust on panchayat members rather than any outside agency persuading them to take admission. They are more receptive to them as functionaries of Panchayats meet them on day to day basis, speak the same

		language and are drawn from same community setting.
Monitoring and feedback		
5.	*Ms. Neerja Sood,Assistant Professor, School f Health Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi*	The Certificate in Diabetes Care for Community Worker (CDCW) Programme was offered by SOHS from 2009. To review the programme after five years, it was essential to monitor the implementation and receive feedback from the stakeholders. It was observed that monitoring outside Delhi was not feasible due to cost and time constraints. Therefore a unique monitoring format was designed, which included the key questions, feedback from stakeholders, and the use of ICT tools to reduce cost and time constraints.

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF THE GOLD MEDALISTS AND THE CONTENDERS

1. **Innovation area:** Programme development

   Rank: 1st among 8 entries.

   Name and address: *Prof. Anu Aneja, Dr. Nilima Srivastava, Dr. Himadri Roy,*

   Dr. Smita M Patil and Dr. Sunita Dhal

   School of Gender and Development Studies, Block 15B Ground Floor, New Academic Building,
   Indira Gandhi National Open University, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi – 110068, India
   ☎ +91-011-29571611, 64788934
   ✉ sogds@ignou.ac.in

2. **Innovation area:** Instructional Design

   Rank: 2nd among 8 entries.

   Name and address: *Mr. Ravi Ayyagari, Arif Hasan Naqvi, Virendra Chhikara, R. Sekhar, and Amitosh Dubey*

   Electronic Media Production Centre Indira Gandhi National Open University, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110068, India Ph. 91-011-29532163/ 29532164/ 29533065

3. **Innovation area:** Programme development

   Rank: 3rd among 8entries.

   Name and address: *Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar, Dr. Nehal A Farooquee and Prof. B.K. Pattanaik*
   School of Extension and Development Studies Block-15-F
   Indira Gandhi National Open University, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi – 110068, India
   ☎ +91-+91-011-29571664,1662,1665
   ✉ soeds@ignou.ac.in

National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education

The National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE) at the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Maidan Garhi, New Delhi, is an all embracing facility for promoting, supporting, engineering and disseminating innovations in Open Distance Learning/Education system. It is a ground for nurturing bright and inquisitive minds whose ideas and explorations are expected to revolutionize the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system and thus provide for transforming India into a learning society.

The goal of the Centre is to develop a culture of continued search for new and innovative solutions to issues and problems on the way of University's mission to offer seamless education across the various levels, achieve cost efficiency in its operations and provide borderless access to quality education and training.

To achieve this goal, NCIDE:

- promotes, develops and pilots innovations in all aspects of the ODL system and operates on the principle of Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) strategy.
- provides intellectual and technological support to the stakeholders for the growth and development of the ODL system.
- is a resource centre for prototype development that ensures quality assurance, cost- and learner-related effectiveness, and system efficiency.
- encourages innovations in distance education through collaborations within IGNOU and with other institutes in India and abroad.

Activities

- Innovative Learning and Support Solutions
- Research and Development
- Documentation and Dissemination of Innovations in ODL system
- Capacity building
- Collaboration and Networking
- Innovation Management

Contact

Director
National Centre for Innovation in Distance Education
Indira Gandhi National Open University
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