OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Guidelines for Schools

Contents

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES - GUIDELINES

BACKGROUND

The Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamsala conducted an *Assessment of Education Strategies and Programmes* which was executed by ERU Consultants Private Ltd, New Delhi in the month of Sep – Oct 2017. The ICT expert of ERU assessment team made specific recommendations regarding the integration of ICT and usage of OERs in teaching and learning process where students will have the opportunity to use ICT in learning subjects. This document is a guideline which aims to provide suggestions for integrating OER into school education and encourage the schools and educators to produce, modify, share and use OER in the classroom learning to improve the quality of curriculum and pedagogy.

WHAT ARE OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER)?

The concept of Open Educational Resources (OER) has numerous definitions. OER are educational resources which are freely accessible and openly available in text, media or any other digital form that can be used for teaching, learning and research purposes. The term was first conceived during UNESCO Forum on Open Courseware held in 2002.

Open Educational Resources are defined as 'technology-enabled, open provision of educational resources for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purposes.' They are typically made freely available over the Web or the Internet. Their principle use is by teachers and educational institutions to support course development, but they can also be used directly by students. Open Educational Resources include learning objects such as lecture material, references and readings, simulations, experiments and demonstrations, as well as syllabuses, curricula, and teachers' guides.

(Wiley 2006)

GUIDELINES TO OER USAGE

The use of OER in schools is to provide an alternate or enhanced educational paradigm. A huge number of OER are available on the website free of cost. These sources can be located by teachers in specified topics to make learning enjoyable. Such sources of websites can be recommended to students for self-study and self-exploration in order to develop interest towards learning of the subject.

As per recommendations made by ICT expert of ERU assessment team and with the follow up meeting held at respective pilot schools, the DOE offers following 10-point guidelines for the Open Educational Resources (OER) usage in the schools:

1) For effective and timely use of ICT and its applications in teaching-learning process, an ICT committee should be formed in the school comprising of the principal, headmaster, subject teacher and computer teacher.

2) The responsibility for assuring the quality and reliability of OER used in the classroom learning environments rest on individual teacher and the institution. The 'quality of OER' depend on:

   (a) Which resources they choose to use;

   (b) How they choose to adapt them to make them contextually relevant; and

   (c) How they integrate them into classroom learning activities.

3) Teachers are encouraged to use OERs in the classroom learning environments but they should carefully examine the OERs to be used. They can consider the following criteria to evaluate the contents of Open Educational Resources:

   (a) Accuracy
   - Is the information in the resources accurate and updated?
   - Did the author make any major content errors or leave out relevant content?
   - Does the resource contain any factual, grammatical, spelling or typographical errors?

   (b) Relevance
   - Is the content relevant to your course and will meet the course objectives?
   - How is the content useful for teachers and students?
   - Is the content age appropriate?

   (c) Clarity, Comprehensibility and Readability
   - Is the content clear and understandable to students and teachers?
   - Is the content well-categorized in terms of logic, sequencing and flow, and easy to navigate?
   - Is the audio and video quality high for audio and video resources?

   (d) ACCESSIBILITY
   - Is the content accessible to all the students and teachers?
   - For audio resources, did the author include a transcript or subtitles?
   - For video resources, did the author include close captioning or subtitles?
   - For text resources, did the author make a text-to-speech translator available?

(e) Interactivity

- Does the OER promote active learning, class participation and collaboration?
- Does the resource provide opportunities for students to test their learning?

(f) Licensing and Adaptability

- Does the resource's license permit educational use of it?
- Does the license allow users to share, reuse, modify or adapt the materials?

4) Students' use of OER needs careful planning within teachers' lesson plans to seek subject connections, which will show purpose, scaffolding on use of resources and topics, and facilitate skills to evaluate good resources.

5) Subject teachers should work collaboratively with peers and publishing materials openly (OER) which are already part of their teaching and learning which includes curriculum and syllabus, hand-outs, teaching notes and assessment tools etc.

6) Expert subject teams should be formed in the schools to share and review OERs and its practices periodically.

7) After through consideration of evaluation criteria of OER, teachers should adapt and contextualize selected OER to respond to diverse learning needs of students and support a variety of learning approaches to support the learning goals.

8) The schools should develop a central digital space to store, manage and share students' projects or artefacts, teachers' lesson plans, and other resources, both internally and externally.

9) To prevent plagiarism and to acknowledge the original work, we must make sure to attribute the work to the original creator when we use it.

10) The school administration must ensure that teachers and students have maximum access to necessary ICT infrastructure and internet connectivity.

The above guidelines includes the recommendations provided by ERU assessment team, suggestions from ICT pilot project schools and inputs from web resources and references.

ORGANISATIONS DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING OER

The list of organisations or individuals involved with developing and promoting OER is ever expanding. However, following are three globally active institutions that are worth highlighting as a part of information for the teachers.

(a) The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
   https://www.hewlett.org/strategy/open-educational-resources/

(b) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
   http://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer

(c) Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
   https://www.col.org/

WEB RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_educational_resources

2. http://researchguides.austincc.edu/oer/criteria

3. http://affordablelearninggeorgia.org/documents/R4_criteria.pdf

4. https://ctl.learninghouse.com/how-to-find-quality-open-educational-resources-oers/

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   http://www.ncert.nic.in/departments/nie/desm/publication/pdf/phy_sci_PartII.pdf