Continuous Professional Development through Distance Education: 
*Highlights of the Role of the AAOU*

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Secretary General

Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU)
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Introduction

- The Nature of Distance Education has its obvious through its design, development and implementation of education system
- Strong possibility of collaborative works through Distance Education for the implementation of continuous professional development
Introduction cont...

• Asia population increases very rapidly within the last 15 years, it now stands at 3.78 billion or about 56.5% of the world population (InternetWorldStats, 2009).

• Human resource development has become a problematic issue for the majority of Asian countries due to the lack of access to higher education system

• DE has been considered as a vehicle to accelerate the capacity building of the ample HR, especially in tertiary level
Distance Education in Asia

• In Asia (Jung, 2007):
  – No less than 70 institutions offer DE programs
  – 12 out of 15 world’s largest mega-universities are in Asia serving more than 8 million students

• Asian Association of Open University
  – 62 members from 23 countries
  – All 12 mega-universities in Asia are full members of AAOU
AAOU

• Established in 1987
• Objectives:
  – Widening the educational opportunities available to all the people of the region and to improve the cost of member institutions by exchanging management information, teaching materials and research;
  – Promoting education by distance teaching systems, and develop its potentialities;
  – Promoting professional and ethical standards amongst distance educators;
• Working together with official bodies and others directly or indirectly interested in education at a distance;

• Facilitating cooperation with other similar regional and international bodies in all the above objectives; and

• Fulfilling all other things incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objectives.
AAOU Major Programs

- Annual Meeting of Executive Board
- Annual Meeting of General Body
- AAOU Annual Conference
- Meritorious Services Award
- Best Paper Award
- Young Innovator Award
- Inter-University Staff Exchange Fellowship
- Best practices in DE Curriculum Development and Quality Assurance
## Profiles of Mega Ous
(adapted from Wikipedia)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>China Central Radio &amp; TV University (CCRTVU)</td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3,818,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)</td>
<td>New Delhi, India</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU)</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1,806,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Anadolu University (AU)</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>1,391,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Payame Noor University (PNU)</td>
<td>Tehran, Iran</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1,070,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bangladesh Open University (BOU)</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>600,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Universitas Terbuka (UT)</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>588,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar OU (BAOU)</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>450,000</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU)</td>
<td>Nashik, India</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Symbiosis Center for Distance Learning (SCDL)</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>210,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Open University (OU)</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>203,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Korea National Open University (KNOU)</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>183,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU)</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>181,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED)</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University (MPBOU)</td>
<td>Bhopal, India</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Common Characteristics

- Still using printed-based materials as the main learning medium supplemented/complimented with other non-printed materials
- Incorporating Internet-based platform to support interactions and communication with and among students
ICT utilization in Asia still faces many challenges, mostly due to the lack of infrastructure, course materials, and technical support (Baggaley & Belawati, 2007; Latchem et al., 2008).

- IGNOU (India): online resources can only benefit those who are “digitally rich” and can “have access to the Internet or can manage to visit learning and teaching centres regularly”. (Panda, 2005)
- UT (Indonesia): only about 6.5% of the students take advantage of the UT Online learning and resources (Belawati, 2008)
Internet User & Penetration

Internet Users in the World by Geographic Regions - 2010

World Internet Penetration Rates by Geographic Regions - 2010

Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
Estimated Internet users are 1,956,514,816 on June 31, 2010
Copyright © 2010, Minwatts Marketing Group

Penetration Rates are based on a world population of 6,645,009,966 and 1,966,514,816 estimated Internet users on June 30, 2010
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Challenges for Asia DE

Survey Web accessibility by PANdora Network in 13 Asian countries (Baggaley et al., 2007):

- Slow connection
  - Web pages created using combined HTML and PHP coding took, 10-19 seconds to load in the browser.
  - Pages delivered by Moodle LMS took up to 39 seconds to load, about 4 times slower than the 10-second benchmark recommended in web design since the mid-1990s (Neilsen, 2007).

- Often fail to get connection at all
  - To get to any intended URL has to go through > 20 web servers (in Canada only goes through about 6 hops) - mostly through North America or Russia

- Asia is facing a rapid utilization of hand-held devices, such as smartphone, PDA, or HP
Challenges for Asia DE

Jung (2007) surveyed QA in 30 DE providers

- Different stakeholders view quality differently – different DE providers use different approach to assure quality – different QA criteria and standards

- There is still a need to
  - embrace QA in all operations
  - regard QA as an essential tool for educational development
  - to focus on lessons learned and actions needed
Opportunities & New Trends

• Mobile Learning/ use of mobile phone for learning support
• Social Networking phenomena
• Global movement on Open Educational Resources (OER)