



## Higher Education and Open Distance Learning Trajectory in India: Reflections of an Insider

Book Review by

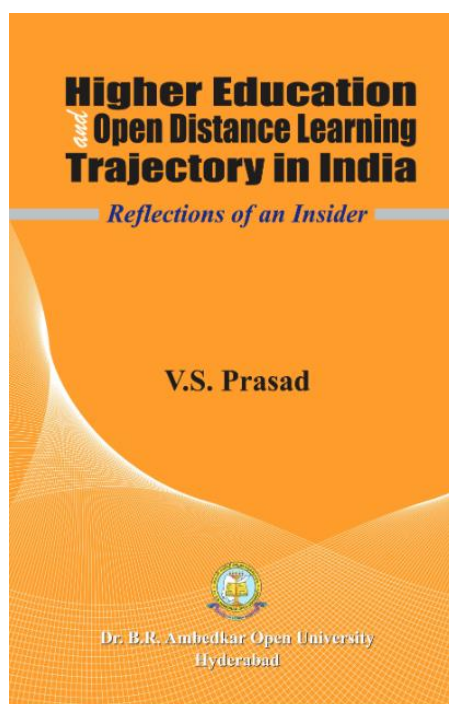
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### ABOUT THE BOOK :

Title	Higher Education and Open Distance Learning Trajectory in India: Reflections of an Insider
Author	V. S. Prasad
Publication year	2018
Publisher	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University Prof.G.Ram Reddy Marg, Road No: 46, Masthan Nagar, CBI Colony, Jubilee Hill, Hyderabad, Telangana 500033, India
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Higher Education Open Distance Learning Trajectory in India: Reflections of an Insider, the book written by Prof. V.S. Prasad mainly focuses on the challenges and issues faced by the higher education of India in general and distance education in particular.

It is a collection of his lectures and articles presented under three sections.

Section A ponders over the state of affairs in higher education of India. It highlights that though many folds increase in number of educational institutions,

facilities and enrolment has taken place but quality is still at crossroads. To overcome disparities in expansion, access and quality standards in higher education is a herculean task. For this a competent leader is required at the helm of affairs who understands the ground level realities and ensures effective governance. Foresight is essential for overcoming challenges and exploring new ventures. Author has rightly pinpointed that it should be top priority of universities to develop employable competencies and civilization competencies for individual development and nation building.

Section B throws light on open and distance learning, the progress and development of the ODL system and its challenges in India. In this section author has given an insight to the reader about the ODL. In backdrop of various commissions' recommendations, he strongly advocates for national ODL policy. As an insider, he understands the bottle-necks and suggests measures like easy entry/exit for the learner, more access to learning opportunities, promotion of open educational resources and learner generated contents. He has rightly stressed on optimization of resources, more involvement of stake holders and provision of technology enabled services in the ODL system. Quality of ODL mode should be at par with face to face mode to increase credibility.

In Section C, the last section of book, Prasad reminds again of quality in education. Here he talks about various agencies involved in quality control

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mechanism, their roles and measures to be taken for improving present practices. He argues not only for national but international accreditation specially for ODL. Maintaining and upholding high quality standards is a collective responsibility he opines.

This book offers a glimpse of ongoing issues in the field of open and distance higher education in India. Prasad has drawn attention towards anomalies that have been prevailing for long and need immediate attention. What is done, what should be done and how it can be done, the book provides a view about it to its readers though at many places the reiteration of same sentiments has taken place.

The book is a very engrossing read as it is penned in conversational style which is the hallmark of ODL practitioners. An in-depth analysis of the three important dimensions in Higher Education- the Higher Education itself, the ODL and the quality assurance makes this book reading unique. Reading it is like the three concepts are scaffolding in front of you and you can make meaning as you go deep into it. In turbulent times for ODL system when its credibility and quality are being questioned, this book tries to establish the relevance, quality and parity of the ODL system with conventional one in higher education. To sum up, the present publication by a stalwart insider is a useful collection of articles aiming to enrich the reader with holistic perspective of Open and Distance Learning in Higher education.