Sustainable Development Goals and ODL - A Case Study of K.K. Handiqui State Open University, Assam, India

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Abstract

The role of education is not only boosting economic growth and development but also to enable people to lead a life of dignity. Access to higher education plays a very important role in socio economic empowerment of common people, inculcating knowledge and skills. According to all India survey on higher education, 2016-17, the estimated Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher education in India is 25.2%, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. However, India aims to attain a GER of 30% by 2020. The infrastructure of formal education system (higher education) in India is not adequate for providing education for its entire citizen. ODL system in India plays a very important role in promoting education in India. Moreover, it is only the ODL system, which **can** promote lifelong learning opportunities and ensure inclusive education for all.

SDG-4 talks about ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. In this paper, an attempt has been made to study the role played by Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University in promoting inclusive and equitable quality education in India particularly in the state of Assam. The prime objective of this paper is to highlight the role of ODL in India in improving GER and contributions towards SDG-4.
Key words: Sustainable Development Goals, ODL, KKHSOU

Introduction

Education is the basis of the society on which dreams of economic prosperity grow. The role of education is not only boosting economic growth and development but also to enable people to lead a life of dignity. Access to higher education plays a very important role in socio economic empowerment of common people, inculcating knowledge and skills. Quality education imparting skills and knowledge increase employability, income and helps in improving standards of living. The Task Force on Higher Education and Society-World Bank and UNESCO concluded that without more and better higher education, developing countries would find it increasingly difficult to benefit from the global knowledge based economy[1]. It is not just the size of India's population or the scale of its interventions that makes it so critical to the SDGs, but its unique convergence of extraordinary economic growth, commitment to sustainability, and social and technological innovations.

In the year 2015, leaders from 193 countries of the world came together to face the future and created a plan called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This set of 17 goals imagines a future just 15 years (by 2030) off that would be rid of poverty and hunger, and safe from worst effects of climate change.

Goal 4 of the SDGs on Education Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for all by 2030. The achievement of Goal 4 would be a remarkable success, but will require new and innovative approaches to overcome the many challenges that stand on its way.

The importance of meeting SDGs for India and the world can be understood from the words of Maria Fernanda Espinosa, President, UN General Assembly. On 7th October, 2018, she told the PTI (News Agency) that "India is indeed a very important player of the multilateral system. It is a friendly country to the United Nations. If India succeeds in the achievement of the 2030 agenda- we are talking about 1.3 billion people-this really can change the face of the world"

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[1]Higher Education in Developing Countries-Peril and Promise, 2002, Task Force on Higher Education and Society by the World Bank

Given the importance accorded by the Government of India for achieving SDGs, The National Institution for Transforming India decided to estimate the progress through a single measurable index that would serve as an advocacy tool and trigger action at the State level. Seventeen States and UTs are front runners with index score greater than or equal to 65. Eight states and UTs are categorized as Aspirants with index score less than 50. The state of Assam has a score 54 and is ranked as a performer state. Among the countries of the world India's SDG Index Score for the Goal of Quality Education is 58. India is yet to walk a long distance so far education is concerned.

Objectives

Education is the precondition for development, be it social or economical. The broad objective of this paper is to study the contribution of ODL institutions towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education in India is 25.8%, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. There is huge scope and need for improving GER. The ODL institutions in India can play a very important role in providing education to Indian masses. With this objective, the following objectives are set as the core issues of the present paper.

1. to study the status of ODL education in India
2. to study the role of ODL institutions in promoting education in India and its contribution towards SDGs through a case study of KKHSOU; and
3. the role of ODL institutions in improving quality of primary school teachers through a case study of KKHSOU

Methodology

For the purpose of the study, one ODL institution of India namely Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University is selected. For the purpose of study, both primary and secondary data are used. Primary data related to the learners are used for the study. Data related to teachers' training programme is also used for the purpose of the study. Secondary data are collected from various reports published by Ministry of Human Resource Development; India, United Nations, Census of India etc. In addition to the reports, articles and papers published by various institutions and individuals are also consulted for the purpose of the study. For the purpose of analysis, wherever possible, data of ten years are tabulated and percentages are calculated. Conclusions are drawn on the basis of such tabulated data.

Scenario of Higher Education in India

India is a vast country with more than 130 crore population. According to All India Survey on Higher Education, 2017-18, there are 903 Universities, 39050 Colleges and 10011 Stand Alone Institutions in India for imparting higher education. Number of colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the age-group 18 to 23 years) varies from 7 in Bihar to 51 in Karnataka.

Besides one central Open University, 14 State Open Universities and one Private State Open University there are 110 dual mode Universities which offer education through distance mode also. The following table gives the numbers of University operating in India. The following table gives the detail of higher education institutions in India.

Table-1

Types of Universities	No of Universities
Central University	45
Central Open University	01
Institutions of National Importance	101
State Public University	351
Institute under State Legislature Act	05
State Open University	14
State Private University	262
State Private Open University	01
Government Deemed University	33
Government Aided Deemed University	10
Private Deemed University	80
Total	903

Source: All India survey on higher education 2017-18.

Scenario of Higher Education in Assam

According to All India Survey on Higher Education, 2017-18, In the state of Assam, there are 21 Universities, which includes 2 Central Universities, 10 State Universities, 1 State Open University, 5 State Private Universities and 3 Institutes of National Importance. There are more than 500 colleges (state and private) in the state. Number of colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the age-group 18 to 23 years) is 14.

Gross Enrollment Ratio

According to UNESCO, GER is the Number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education in India is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. Total enrolment in higher education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage to the eligible official population (18-23 years) in a given school year. The GER is widely used to show the general level of participation in and capacity of higher education.

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education in India is 25.4%, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. GER for male population is 26.3% and for females, it is 25.8%.ForScheduled Castes, it is 21.8% and for Scheduled Tribes, it is 15.9%. The following table gives the trends of GER in India of last ten years.

Table-2
Trends of GER in India

Year	Male	Female	Total
2008-09	15.8	11.4	13.7
2009-10	17.1	12.7	15.0
2010-11	20.8	17.9	19.4
2011-12	22.1	19.4	20.8
2012-13	22.7	20.1	21.5
2013-14	23.9	22.0	23.0
2014-15	25.3	23.2	24.3
2015-16	24.5	25.4	23.5
2016-17	25.2	26.0	24.5
2017-18	25.8	26.3	25.4

Source: All India survey on higher education 2017-18

It can be observed from the data in table-2 that over the years India is improving its GER and from 13% in 2008-09 it has become 25.4% in 2017-18. At the same time India is able to improve the participation of women in higher education. From 2015-16 more female is enrolling in higher education than male which was not the case before 2015-16.

Over the years the ODL has become an important mode of obtaining degrees for a large numbers of learners across India who are either living in remote areas or unable to enroll in the formal education system. Distance enrolment constitutes about 11.0% of the total enrolment in higher education, of which 41.9% are female students. According to AISHE-2017-18, At Post Graduate, Under Graduate, PG Diploma, Diploma, Certificate level share of distance enrolment in university is 29.6%, 64.3%, 2.3%, 2.5%, and 1.3% respectively.

Role of Distance Education in India

Table-3
Enrollment in Distance Education in India 2017-18

Level	Male	Female	Total
Post Graduate	612906	565601	1178507
Under Graduate	1567538	986873	2554411
PG Diploma	51658	38421	90079
Diploma	72223	50521	122744
Certificate	36313	49289	85602

Integrated	178	73	251
Total	2340816(58%)	1690778(42%)	4031594

Source: All India survey on higher education 2017-18

From the data in Table-3 it can be observed that a huge numbers of learners enrolled in various programmes offered through distance mode in India which contributing in increasing the GER. A total of 4031594 learners enrolled during 2017-18 out of which 42% are female learners and 58% are male learners. Except certificate programme in all other programmes enrollment of male learners is more than enrollment of female learners. Highest numbers of learners are enrolled in Under Graduate programmes followed by Post Graduate and Diploma programmes.

Table-4

Trends of enrollment in important programmes in Distance mode of Education in India

Programmes	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Bachelor of Arts	1435302	1380114	1672872	1709598	1651499
Bachelors of Science	272898	283185	201265	243606	222128
Bachelor of Commerce	408957	460644	453274	507441	464807
Master of Arts	729028	700338	652216	708599	677641
Master of Business Administration	165260	148893	132929	127275	156911
Master of Commerce	148419	147253	149447	171101	171093
Master of Science	125970	108962	96367	113938	105507
Total*	3285834	3229389	3358370	3581558	3449586

Source: All India survey on higher education 2017-18

*Not the total enrollment in distance mode

Data in the table-4 shows the trends of enrollment in some important programmes in Distance mode of Education in India. It can be observed from the data in the table-4 that though a huge number of learners enrolled under various programmes in distance mode, however, there is a general decrease in enrollment through distance mode of education. Among the bachelor degree programmes maximum number of learners are enrolled in Bachelor of Arts programme followed by commerce and science. In case of Master Degree programmes maximum number of learners are enrolled in Master of Arts followed by Master of Commerce, Master of Business Administration and Master of Science.

Table-5

Enrollment in Distance Education in Assam 2017-18

Level	Male	Female	Total
Post Graduate	27781	32421	60202
Under Graduate	26702	13922	40624
PG Diploma	1049	894	1943
Diploma	3346	2894	6240
Certificate	5	1	06
All	58883(54%)	50132(46%)	109015

Source: All India survey on higher education 2017-18

Data related to enrollment in distance education during 2017-18is given in the table-5. It can be observed from the data in the table that a total of 109015 learners enrolled in distance mode different programmes during 2017-18 out of which 46%

are female learners and 54% are male learners. Maximum learners are enrolled in post graduate programmes followed by under graduate programme and number of female learners enrolled in post graduate programme is more than male learners. However, in under graduate programme the number of male learners is almost double than female learners.

The Case Study

Krishna KantaHandiqui State Open University, the only open university of North East India, is playing a very important role in providing access, equity and quality education in the state of Assam giving the opportunity to enroll in higher education to all section of people living in the society, without any age bar. The university is located in the state of Assam and the operational jurisdiction of the University is limited to the state territory. The University has taken the bigger responsibility of spreading higher education to the unreached one in the state, its motto being *education beyond barriers* for sustainable development. Since its inception in the year 2006, the University enrolled more than 1, 80,000 learners through various programmes. The University has given the opportunity of life long learning to all those who fail to enroll themselves in conventional educational institutions, they include the dropped out learners for any reasons, women who fail to continue her education due to early marriage, defence personnels, factory workers, jail inmates and so on and so forth. The University is tailoring various academic programmes to suit the needs of different section of the society so that more people can enroll in higher education and take the opportunity of lifelong learning. Over the years, the University has been able to increase enrollment of learners in various programmes by motivating various classes of people living in the society to enroll themselves in higher education and fulfill their dreams.

Table-6

Enrollment in UG Programmes of KKHSOU

Programmes	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Bachelor of Arts	4250	8080	13671	22312	19531	19580	19391	15110	19086	21453	8078	170542
Bachelors of Commerce	210	381	497	710	427	477	485	446	479	461	285	4858
Bachelor of Mass Comm	305	317	263	163	130	113	103	93	71	-	-	1558
Bachelor of Business Administration	281	252	189	123	83	73	62	66	40	57	65	1291
Bachelor of Computer Application	470	465	441	320	235	238	147	131	152	162	113	2874
Total	5516	9495	15061	23626	20406	20481	20188	15846	19828	22133	8542	181123

Source: KKHSOU

From the data in Table-6 it can be observed that the numbers of learners enrolled in different bachelor degree programmes increased from 5516 in 2008-09 to 22133 in 2017-18. However, there is drastic fall in enrollment in 2018 because of short duration of admission time (only 14 days) due to delay in getting permission for different programmes from University Grants Commission, India. It can also be observed from the data in the table that maximum numbers of learners are enrolled in Bachelors of Arts programme and other bachelor degree programmes attract less numbers of learners compared to Bachelors of Arts. Except Bachelors of Arts and Bachelors of Commerce enrollment in other bachelor degree programmes shows gradual decrease.

Table-7

Male Female Ratio of learners Bachelors Degree Programmes of KKHSOU

Programmes	Sex	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Bachelor of Arts	Male	2785	4556	7933	12564	11177	11623	11326	9037	11660	13952	4853	101466(59%)
	Female	1465	3524	5738	9748	8354	7957	8065	6073	7426	7501	3225	69076(41%)
	Total	4250	8080	13671	22312	19531	19580	19391	15110	19086	21453	8078	170542
Bachelors of Commerce	Male	194	334	441	625	367	419	421	382	415	389	249	4236(87%)
	Female	16	47	56	85	60	58	64	64	64	72	36	622(13%)
	Total	210	381	497	710	427	477	485	446	479	461	285	4858
Bachelors of Mass Communication	Male	193	196	167	99	83	70	60	55	45	--**	--	968(62%)
	Female	112	121	96	64	47	43	43	38	26	--	--	590(38%)
	Total	305	317	263	163	130	113	103	93	71	--	--	1558
Bachelor of Business Administration	Male	232	214	157	98	69	58	52	54	37	47	55	1073(83%)
	Female	49	38	32	25	14	15	10	12	3	10	10	218(17%)
	Total	281	252	189	123	83	73	62	66	40	57	65	1291
Bachelor of Computer Application	Male	383	377	352	255	187	165	87	105	114	134	101	2260(79%)
	Female	87	88	89	65	48	73	60	26	38	28	12	614(21%)
	Total	470	465	441	320	235	238	147	131	152	162	113	2874
Total	Male												11003(61%)
	Female												71120(39%)
	Total												181123

Source: KKHSOU

** The course was merged with Bachelor of Arts as Bachelors of Arts in Mass Communication

Table-7 gives gender wise classification of learners of different undergraduate programmes. An analysis of data in table-7 reveals that there is wide gender disparity in enrollment in various undergraduate programmes. Out of total learners enrolled during 2008 to 2018 in different bachelor degree programmes 61% are male and only 39% are female. There is a wide scope and need for improving this ratio in order to achieve SDG-4. Percentage of female learners enrolled during the period inBachelor of Arts is 41% compared to male enrollment 59%.

Table-8

Enrollment in Master Degree Programmes of KKHSOU

Programmes	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Master of Business Administration	21	61	46	93	96	83	168	168	44	780
Master of Mass Communication	12	34	35	39	38	22	22	03	--	205
Master of Computer Application	23	28	32	65	44	40	84	57	--	373
Master of Arts	--	1800	1909	1959	3127	3123	4279	4512	1180	21889
Master of Social Works	--	161	200	76	344	252	388	430	--	1851
M.Sc. in IT	--	--	--	20	26	36	27	43	--	152
Master of Commerce	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	11	11
Total	56	2084	2222	2252	3675	3556	4968	5213	1235	25261

Source: KKHSOU

Data in table-8 gives the trends of enrollment in Master Degree from 2010 to 2018. There is steady increase in overall enrollment of master degree programmes and a total of 25261 learners were enrolled during the period. Number of learners enrolled in master degree programmes has increased from 56 in 2010-11 to 5213 in 2017-18. Data in the table also reveals that maximum numbers of learners are enrolled in Master of Arts programme followed by Master of Social Work and Master of Business Administration.

Table-9

Male Female Ratio of learners of Master Degree Programmes of KKHSOU

Programmes	Sex	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Master of Business Administration	Male	38	78	69	63	138	127	41	554(79%)
	Female	8	15	27	20	30	41	9	150(21%)
	Total	46	93	96	83	168	168	50	704
Master of Mass Communication	Male	28	26	20	17	17	2		110(69%)
	Female	7	13	18	5	5	1		49(31%)
	Total	35	39	38	22	22	3		159
Master of Computer Application	Male	23	46	30	26	55	38		218(68%)
	Female	9	19	14	14	29	19		104(32%)
	Total	32	65	44	40	84	57		322
Master of Arts	Male	832	838	1485	1474	1964	1928	483	9004(45%)
	Female	1077	1121	1642	1649	2317	2584	697	11087(55%)
	Total	1909	1959	3127	3123	4281	4512	1180	20091
Master of Social Works	Male	126	155	194	140	208	216		1039(55%)
	Female	74	121	150	112	180	214		851(45%)
	Total	200	276	344	252	388	430	--	1890
M.Sc. in IT	Male		18	21	28	20	41		128(84%)
	Female		2	5	8	7	2		24(16%)
	Total	--	20	26	36	27	43	--	152
Master of Commerce	Male							9	9(82%)
	Female							2	2(18%)
	Total	--	--	--	--	--	--	11	11
Total	Male								11062(47%
	Female								12267(53%)
	Total								23329

Sources: KKHSOU

Table-7 gives gender wise classification of learners of different undergraduate programmes. An analysis of data in table-7 reveals that the more percentage (53%) of female learners are enrolled in master degree programmes compared to male learners (47%). However, if enrollment data of each master degree programme is analyzed it can be observed that only in Master in Arts programme female enrollment is high. Propensity of female learners is very low towards other master degree programmes as it shows wide gender disparity in enrollment percentage. It is a challenge before the University to reduce this disparity.

Improving skills of teachers

One of the targets (4.c) under SDG-4 is, to substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially Least Developed Countries (LDC) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by 2030. Realizing the importance of quality teachers especially in primary and pre primary school the government of Assam assigned the responsibility of imparting training and developing teaching skills among primary and pre primary school teachers of the state to KKHSOU. In five years the university trained 57728 government primary school teachers of the state of which 58% are male teachers and 42% are female teachers. From this year (2019) the university in collaboration with COL CEMCA, introduces one diploma programme and two certificate programmes viz. a) Diploma in Early Childhood Education for pre-school teachers; b) Certificate in Application of ICT in

School Education for upper primary and secondary school teachers; c) Certificate in Inclusive Education for school teachers in order to impart skills among the school teachers. All these efforts are in direction with the SDG 4(target 4.c). The following table gives year wise and sex wise details of teachers trained by KKHSOU.

Table-10
Numbers of Teachers Trained

Programmes	Sex	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
Diploma in Elementary Education	Male	4956	8486	8992	9316	1836	33586
	Female	4382	5846	5082	3965	4867	24142
	Total	9338	14332	14074	13281	6703	57728

Source: KKHSOU

KKHSOU- Reaching to the Unreached

KKHSOU with its motto "Education Beyond Barrier" played an exemplary role in promoting higher education in Assam. The University has more than 300 study centers across the state of Assam through which learners are enrolled. Most of these study centers are located in rural areas. Every Sunday study centres conduct counselling sessions for clearing doubts of the learners. The University is trying to make education accessible for all in the state of Assam so that it becomes a better place for living and its citizen can improve their standard of living. The University is trying to keep parity with SDG 4 which aims to ensure that all people have access to quality education and the opportunity for lifelong learning. The University has taken many steps in this regard. Some of them are analyzed as under-

1. **Free Education for Jail Inmates**: In Assam there are 31 Jails, with More than 10000 prisoners. Prisoners are the part of the society. To bring reforms in the life of prisoners KKHSOU has opened its study centres in 16 jails of the state so that they can live the life with dignity. The university provides complete free education to the jail inmates. So far 245 jail inmates had completed degree and diploma programmes from the university. At present 51 jail inmates are persuing different programmes under the University.

2. **Free Education for Differently able persons:** Life is more challenging for differently able persons. In our society they are underprivileged. Many times they are deprived of their rights. According to census 2011 data there are 21906769 (more than 21 million) differently able persons in India which is 2.1% of the total population. Out of total differently able population only 10% are graduate and above. The population of differently able person in Assam is 480065. The KKHSOU from its inception is offering free education to the differently able persons of the state for giving opportunity of higher education.

3. **Free Education for Transgender:** Transgender community in India has been living alongside for centuries but never had the same privilege in terms of access to resources or even as such an adequate environment to grow up like the rest. Exclusion from family and society, restricted access to education serves as obstacles to the basic foundation for an individual to grow and develop. With less or no education at all, it diminishes their prospects of getting better employment opportunities. In census 2011 data related to transgender were collected for the first time. As per census 2011, In India, total population of transgender is around 4.88 Lakh and in Assam it is 11374. The KKHSOU has taken the noble initiative of providing free education to transgender community.

4. **Conducting Awareness Programmes**: India lives in villages. According to 2011 census data 72.18% Indian lives in rural areas. People living in rural areas are less aware about education. Beside that the number of institutions providing higher education in India is less compared to her population. In order to make people aware about higher education in general and educational opportunities offered by KKHSOU in particular, the university holds awareness programmes in various parts of the states.

5. **Industrial visit for creating awareness:** There are a few numbers of industries operating in some areas of Assam. A good numbers of workers work there of which maximum are college dropouts and there are people working in administration and management of the industries who need MBA and diploma in human resource management, diploma in business management and sales and marketing management for improving their skills. This year team of University faculties and officials visited 15 such industries for creating awareness about the educational opportunities that the University is offering.

6. **Phone-in-Radio Programme:** Radio is a popular medium to reach people. For sensitizing people about ODL, the University broadcast live phone-in-radio programme through All India Radio (National Broadcaster) Guwahati Centre every Thursday from 9.15 A.M. to 10.15 A.M. Faculties and administrative staff of the University take part in the programme. Besides this, the University broadcast "EKLAVYA" an educational programme through two centres (Guwahati and Dibrughar) of All India Radio, every Saturday from 8PM to 8.30PM.

7. **Community Radio**: In India the concept of community radio is quite of a recent origin. KKHSOU took the first initiative to launch the first community radio service of the State of Assam. The University aims to provide education beyond barriers to reach the unreached of the society, has launched the first community radio "JANAN TARANGA" of the north east on 28th of January, 2009 at 90.4 MHz. Jana Tarang broadcast programmes from 9 AM to 8PM every day. The programmes include educational issues, social issues, environmental issues, programme for youth, music, news etc.

8. **Television Programme**: The University telecast live TV programmes of half an hour through regional private television telecasters from time to time for sensitizing people about ODL. Recently an MOU has been signed with Doordarshan the national television broadcaster to telecast programmes of the University.

9. **Concession for women and defence personnel:** The University is fully determined to reach the last person standing in the queue. In order to promote education and lifelong learning among the citizens specially the underprivileged class of the society the university has adopted a fee concession policy, Accordingly a concession of Rupees 1000/ is allowed on 1^{St} semester admission fees of all master degree programmes for female and defence personnel and a concession of Rupees 500/ is allowed on 1^{St} semester admission fees of all under graduate degree programmes for female and defence personnel.

Quality at KKHSOU

The KKHSOU from its inception is trying to provide quality education to its learners. Here, quality means quality of the content of SLM. In order to monitor the quality of education offered by KKHSOU, the University established Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA) in a revamped manner in the year 2017 as per UGC guidelines. In order to maintain the quality of Self Learning Materials (SLMs) the CIQA has been conducting regular workshops for SLM writers. CIQA also holds SLM audit programme for evaluation of SLMs. Recently CIQA has launched a learner feedback system through which feedback related to various issues like quality of SLM, course curriculum, counseling sessions, study centre, examinations are sought from the learners. CIQA also organized stakeholders meeting from time to time for taking the views of different stakeholders on different issues related to KKHSOU and ODL.

From the discussion it is understood that the programmes offered by KKHSOU, gives an opportunity to all groups of people to access education. Learners can lead a meaningful and improved life following educational attainment. KKHSOU is providing justice in terms of providing equity education and education for underprivileged section of the society. KKHSOU is promoting the concept of lifelong learning by giving the opportunity to enroll in different programmes to the people of all age groups. The KKHSOU has contributed significantly in improving the skill of school teachers through diploma and certificate programmes. The University is able to expand the horizon of higher education in the state of Assam and contributing towards the attainment of SDG-4.

Conclusions

To achieve SDGs, spreading quality education among the masses is must. Education is the precondition for empowering people in terms of their socio-economic and political development. The KKHSOU is playing an important role in this respect and has been striving to educate more and more people in the state of Assam. The KKHSOU and the ODL system in India are contributing significantly towards achieving SDG-4. However, it has a long way to go for making higher education available to all. There are a lot of things to do in terms of use of technology, introduction of new courses, research and innovation to give momentum to ODL system and fulfilling the targets of SDG-4.

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