OER in the Middle East: The UAE Experiences

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„The race for excellence has no finish line“

HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

(Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai)
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK - VISION 2021

- United in Responsibility
- United in Destiny
- United in Knowledge
- United in Prosperity

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<th>Cohesive Society and Preserved Identity</th>
<th>Safe Public and Fair Judiciary</th>
<th>Competitive Knowledge Economy</th>
<th>First-Rate Education System</th>
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<th>World-Class Healthcare</th>
<th>Sustainable Environment and Infrastructure</th>
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TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

- COMPETITIVE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY PROGRESS INDICATORS
  - Global Innovation Index
  - Global Competitiveness Index
  - Global Entrepreneurship and Development Index (GEDI)
  - Share of "Knowledge Workers" in the Labor Force
  - Research and Development Expenditure as % of GDP
FIRST-RATE EDUCATION SYSTEM

- UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda emphasizes the development of a first-rate education system, which will require a complete transformation of the current education system and teaching methods
- Emphasis on soft skills development
- Numerous reform steps at all educational levels
- Global campaigns to promote open educational resources and e-learning
- HBMSU - the first e-learning platform in the UAE
- Open education and e-learning concepts officially recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHESR)
- UAE Journal of Educational Technology and eLearning
UNIVERSITY APPROACH: THE PARADIGM

- The Paradigm shifts from teaching to developing knowledge and research
- Analysis of the student skills to guide in selecting University mayors
- Both University teachers and management follow the paradigm shift
- Focus on experiential learning
- Widespread application of open education platforms and ePortfolios
- CAA (Committee for Academic Accreditation) requirements encourage Universities to utilize OER
- Students involved in the academic research (example of the academic research on mobile learning and social media use, performed predominantly by students and presented at 2017 Innovation Arabia conference - link: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315374600_Social_Media_in_Higher_Education_Students_Perspectives_on_Social_Media_Use_in_Classroom)
HAMDAN BIN MOHAMMED SMART UNIVERSITY

- Open education platform in the centre of the process
- In line with its vision and commitment to support the Dubai Smart City project, the University launched an online learning platform, Cloud Campus, an innovative solution for the 21st century learner
- Strong networking and partnerships on national and international levels
- University as an innovation hub
- Cloud Campus & Smart Campus concepts
- E-Store for the students
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN THE EMIRATES

- In-house built online platform - aKademia
- Permanent teacher-student interaction online
- Strong emphasis onto involvement of students into the research work
- Adjusted curricula to match needs for the development of soft skills
- ePortfolios and online resources available
- Access to the myriad of free software for both faculty members and students
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Further development of blended learning concepts
- Development of the faculty members’ skills to utilize smart learning concepts, augmented reality and virtual reality
- Further encouragement of the academic research
- More connections with the Universities in Europe
- Content production for e-learning platforms remains an issue
- Use OER to create more engaging and interactive learning environment
- Training for both faculty members and students to use free software
AT THE END

- What are the needs of the 21st century learner?
- What are the habits of the 21st century learner?

- UNIVERSITY DIDACTICS SHOULD MATCH THESE NEEDS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE PERMANENT SUCCESS AND ASSURE THE EFFICIENCY OF LIFELONG LEARNING!

- E-concepts, smart solutions and online integrative platforms should be the key tools to achieve student-centered lifelong learning!
THANK YOU!

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