

Future Proofing Higher Education Challenges in Open and Distance Learning

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Abstract:

The idea of an online learning and distance education program focuses on universal access to education and training to free the learners from time and location restrictions and to provide flexible learning options for individuals and learner groups. Open and distance learning systems can generally be defined as composed of a variety of components such as: the mission or purpose of a specific system, programs and curricula, teaching / learning methods and techniques, learning materials and tools, communication and interaction systems, support and delivery systems, students, tutors, staff and other experts, management, housing and facilities, and assessments.

Keywords — ODL, Distance Learning, Accreditation, MOOC and DEC.

I. INTRODUCTION

The institutional framework consists of universities established under an Act of Parliament as Central Universities or a State Legislature as State Universities and, as of 31 March 2016, Institutes of National Importance, Institutions founded under the State Legislative Act and Colleges affiliated with the University, both government-assisted and unassisted the Ministry of Human Resource Development has listed 74 institutions under this category.[1] There are at present one National Open University,13 State Open Universities and 98 Directorate (DEIs/DDEs)

as on 16 September 2016, set up by the respective state grants, are single mode institutions, which means they provide education only in the distance mode.

At primary and secondary level, India has a wide private school network that complements government run schools, with 29 percent of students pursuing private education between the ages of 6 and 14.ment. While the HSCE is the most popular Standard XII test, it also offers the All India Senior School Certificate, Indian School Certificate, Vocational Education Certificate, Senior Secondary Certification, Intermediate Certificate and Pre-University Certificate. UGC,

NCERT and CBSE guidelines specify qualifying ages for candidates who wish to take board exams. The general curriculum for India's lower secondary school consists of three languages, including the regional language, an elective and English language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Sciences, Work/Pre-Vocational Education, Art, and Physical Education.

II. DISTANCE LEARNING

Distance programs, in communities where women lack equal opportunities for participation in traditional forms of education and training, also touch large numbers of women. In developing countries it is found that distance teacher training can reach large groups of students and have a profound impact on national education systems growth. Schooling is provided at state and private schools, but a private school also has more facilities and services than the government of India provides from both the public and private sectors, with power and support coming from three levels: central, state, and local. It is targeted at a wide range of potential partners, governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, specialist institutions, associations, industrial corporations, telecommunications companies, and others involved in this field, to seek their support through open and distance learning to meet today's urgent educational and training needs.

Young people who don't want to move on to tertiary education or who doesn't complete high school frequently enrol in private vocational schools specializing in only one or a few courses. Online education is primarily planned with the student's off-campus in mind, who cannot attend daily classes. Distance education is where a student is not expected to attend regular classes in order to be physically present and can only appear for exams. When you want the full advantage of distance education, you need to get a job and work side by side as work experience counts allotment. Distance Education is intended for those outside the affluent segment of society or for the working class,

because they can not go to the traditional school. Every day we receive thousands of job requests, which is again a shiny testimony of the great interest among discerning users to learn about the various opportunities that education has to offer.

III. BOARD OF ACCREDITATIONS

The National Accreditation and Evaluation Council (NAAC) was set up by the UGC to evaluate universities and college on the basis of an alphabetical ranking system from A++ through C. The All-India Technical Education Council was also set up to supervise the quality assurance of technical education and oversee the establishment of new private professional colleges. Higher education is supervised by the University Grants Commission, which is responsible for higher education growth, the allocation of funds and the recognition of institutions in India.

IV. COURSE OFFERED IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Since its inception in 1947, India's higher education system has been highly centralised and undergoing major changes. Such institutions are also facing new management and regulation problems, which demand significant attention, both at public sector institutions and also at those in the fast-growing private sector. The Indian higher education system is one of the world's largest of such programs. Admission to graduate programs (Master's, Postgraduate Diplomas, MBA, etc.) depends on completion of a bachelor's degree (3 or 4 years, depending on the subject matter) with a Second Class pass or above.

In India, non-university management education is popular, with many institutions offering post-graduate management diplomas lasting 2 years, and generally equivalent to an MBA. Diploma programs range from 2 to 3 years, and are offered in polytechnics, typically in a specific engineering or technology area, resulting in an Advanced or Post-Diploma. The founding of the United Kingdom Open University in 1969

inspired other countries to recognize the new model and its ability to make higher education more open, versatile and innovative.

In 1962, Distance Education for Higher Education was introduced in India in the form of Correspondence Courses, in response to the ever-increasing demand for higher education that the traditional system could not satisfy. In 1962 the University of Delhi established a Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education School. That inspired a few universities including Mysore University and Andhra University in the mid-seventies to pursue open education policies. Indira Gandhi National Open University, which maintains distance education standards and manages all distance education institutions, including open universities across the world. The committee set up by UGC stressed that the provision of access to higher education could be broadened through action on a number of fronts such as increased accessibility, course structure, organization of learning activities, new teaching methodologies, transferability between institutions and courses, the flow of advertisement content, student finances and the availability of new technology.

V. DISTANCE EDUCATION COUNCIL

Distance or Accessible Learning is a technique for providing education in which the teacher and student's direct physical interaction does not transpire at a predetermined time and location, but is versatile in terms of time, place and admission method without diluting the qualitative material. Distance Education Council (DEC) was established under The Indira Gandhi National Open University Act 1985 to organize, promote and decide the standards of Distance Education and Open University. The institution's task was to set guidelines for the quality of education, management, assessment and study, as well as to promote greater diversity, mobility, versatility and accessibility. The proportion of students enrolled in distance learning has gradually risen from 2.6 percent of higher education enrolment in 1975-76 to

11.5 percent in 1990-91. Over eight lakhs were enrolled in distance education programs during 1992-93. In 1962 Delhi University was the pioneer in introducing correspondence courses as a pilot project. Subsequently, it was appointed by the University of Delhi as a sub-committee to recommend various First Degree courses. This method of educational dissemination is gaining popularity as it allows the unhindered continuation of the educational cycle, the upgrading of skills and the upgrading of the working class, thus giving quality education.

In 2013, the University Grants Commission took over the Distance Education Council by setting up a Distance Education Bureau that would henceforth supervise distance education in India. There are currently two types of methodologies of distance education prevalent—correspondence courses and open universities. India's distance education market in 2015-2016 was to be worth Rs 8700 crores. The general aversion to open distance learning has begun to wane, which some analysts consider to be the key contributing factor to the country's growth of professional labour force. The fee structure of the courses offered by the institutions of Open Distance Learning is driven by various factors, including cost recovery, cross-subsidization, social causes, professional orientation and occupational orientation. There are extension programs that provide new communities with the resources of a university or college; adult education programs that provide non-traditional adult learning in designated areas; and extended campuses that offer seminars at different locations far from the official campus.

Online education is a wider framework in terms of both connotation and denotation, as opposed to the traditional education program. Distance teaching is just the fact that education technology plays a significant role in distance education. This will also involve a variety of teaching / learning methods referred to as education for correspondence, home study, independent study, external studies or distance teaching. It has a wider denotation in that it covers a large distance for

academic communication to take place. This does not mean however that open / distance learning can be described in any specific way.

These terms are

- ❖ Correspondence Education,
- ❖ Independent Study,
- ❖ Distributed Learning,
- ❖ Flexible Learning,
- ❖ Open Learning, etc.

These media are cassettes for radio , television, telephone, audio and video, computer, mobile, and could be some other electronic media. In this scenario, the learners live in remote areas and begin their study program in institutions of distance education (DE). Online tests are also available to the learners, where they can sit at home with all the requisite technical equipment and tests can appear.

- ❖ Separation of teacher and student
- ❖ Influence of an educational organization
- ❖ Use of technical media
- ❖ Provision of two way communication
- ❖ Absence of group learning

The most organized method of education requires participation. The Open University's operating cost is high as it has to build physical facilities, and hire teaching and administrative staff. It is less costly than the traditional method though the cost per student varies between the institutions of distance education.

VI. MOOC COURSE

UGC made it compulsory for all universities to bring amendments to their respective ordinances and rules to facilitate the transfer of their students' credits for the degree programs to be offered under Swayam, a massive online open course (MOOCs) network. The UGC (Credit Framework for Online Learning Courses through Swayam) Regulation, 2016, has recently been notified by the higher education regulator to ensure that Swayam will take off soon after it is launched as the Ministry of Human Resources Development races against time to complete all preparations for the roll-out of India's first MOOCs platform next month. By 19

August, the UGC made it compulsory for all universities to bring amendments to their respective ordinances and rules to facilitate the transfer of their students' credits for the degree programs to be offered under Swayam, a massive online open course (MOOCs) network. At the one hand we have some of the most excellent men in fields such as literature, information technology, engineering, management, medical, biotechnology; at the other hand we still inhabit considerably some of the world's most analphabetic today.

VII. VIRTUAL REALITY

Throughout this article, we explain how VEs allow transformed social interaction (TSI), teachers' and students' ability to use digital technology to alter their online representations and contexts strategically to enhance learning. Many studies have looked at the feasibility of virtual environments (VEs), digital simulations involving instructor, student and/or object representations for learning applications

Under a system of intersubjects, participants were randomly allocated to a classroom under one of three conditions of conformity: (a) positive, (b) negative, or (c) empty (control). Certain agents in the classroom were overwhelmed in the negative state did not pay attention to the teacher. In the positive condition, other agents in the classroom were attentive and focused their gazes on the teacher. The participants listened to a teacher present a 4-min passage about pharmaceutical companies and then completed a test on the material presented.

Immersion is created by the virtual technology and devices surrounding the user. Virtual glasses, movement sensor gloves, HMDs, surround sound, and any other item that produces sensory stimuli, or sensors that allow the user to interact with a virtual environment as in a real world. If an interactive device provides the impression of visiting a whole virtual universe, a semi-immersive (e.g., using several projection screens instead of glasses) or non-immersive

system (e.g. computer displays) produces a degree of realism but without such an enhanced sense of being there. Nonetheless, various implementations can have varying degrees of immersion.

VIII. ADVANTAGES

Distance education saves travel time; students from campus institutes don't have to fly to and fro. There is no movement from one city to another, when seeking distance education. Although some disadvantages are set in the Distance Education system, what you need to see is whether, in the larger picture, you benefit from it or not. As we all know these barriers are nothing compared to the interest you receive from distance learning. All, however, has its pros and cons and the Distance Education idea is not without this vice.

IX. DISADVANTAGES

Students of distance education do not have the experience of verbal contact, so on 1 basis they cannot communicate with the instructors and teachers. With theory-type courses such as Arts & Commerce, it's easy to learn by distance education, but for science-related courses, you can't just focus your education on online learning, as studies would be hard to conduct. Distance education may not be the perfect or most obvious form of education, but in a country such as India, where the rate of adult literacy is a challenge at 74.04%, distance education has and will have a significant role to play in raising the literacy rate to 100%.

X. OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

The Commonwealth of Learning helps governments and institutions broaden the reach, size and quality of learning through the use of new methods and technologies, especially those subsumed under the general term of open and distance learning (ODL). These international bodies are essentially coordinating agencies and hardly any role in regulating the functioning of distance

learning in the different countries The Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) is a non-profit organization of higher education institutions which is mainly analytical with distance education. AAOU was established by a number of open universities in the Asian region in 1987, which made the main contribution to distance education.

DEC helps in the growth of the learner-centric open and distance learning (ODL) program and ensures high quality education; faces access and equality problems in meeting the unattained, the Distance Education Council. The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) is the largest global open / distance education umbrella body, which is available to governments, educational agencies, business actors which individuals. The Distance Education Council (DEC) is responsible for supporting and organizing the Open University and the program of distance education and for setting the standards.

Teacher education is an important field where distance education in specific subjects, curriculum areas and instructional approaches has been widely used to include pre-service teacher training, upgrading of academic qualifications, and in-service continuing professional development. Throughout the course of this decade, distance education may play an increasingly important role in helping address the growing shortage of teachers, educational administrators, and other educational professionals in both developing and developed countries.

Online education can be used to include both in- and out-of-school services at the primary and secondary levels. In-school distance education services are used to assist teaching in schools where there is a shortage of learning resources, or when training is considered desirable. These can also be used where teachers do not have formal training, or to help subjects where the number of students is too limited for traditional teaching to be coordinated. Numerous methods are used, including Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI), radio classes, terrestrial and satellite educational television, internet-based multimedia schemes and web-based television.

The products can be built for young children, teens, and adults. Distance education is used in both primary and secondary out-of-school services to teach children and youth of school age who are unable to attend ordinary schools, particularly those with disabilities, suffering from long-term illness or live in remote areas or live outside their own countries. In recent years, technical and vocational education have played important roles, not only in contributing to a national labour market's improvement in productivity, but also in helping individuals improve their job prospects in rapidly changing socio-economic conditions. Inside this context the ODL.

Open and distance learning form a mixed and nuanced image in the field of technical and vocational education. It may include new mass communication approaches, often connected to some kind of group meetings and face-to-face support, as a way of providing a wide variety of educational and skill-based programs to support projects in agriculture, health and nutrition, political education and growth and jobs.

XI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

UNESCO role in international cooperation to expand the ODL program comprising intellectual cooperation as well as technical assistance. Cooperation is undertaken with intergovernmental organisations such as other UN system agencies, the Commonwealth of Apprenticeships, the World Bank, the Commission of the European Union, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, regional development banks, private and public sector partners, NGOs, in particular the International Open and Distance Education Council.

Great importance is attached to international interregional and regional cooperation for the promotion of open and distance learning, such as understanding, confidence and capacity building, mapping of relevant experiences, success and failures, networking between key players in distance learning and education technology,

piloting and adapting educational technologies in different settings and sharing of skills.

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