M.A. (Education) 3rd Semester

Course Code: EDUCE202

Course Type – Discipline Elective

DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Syllabus

Course Type / Nature: Discipline Elective
Course Code: EDUCE202
Course Title: DISTANCE EDUCATION
Credits = 6 {Marks = 100 (70 + 30)}

Course Objectives:
To enable the learners to;
1. Comprehend the Concept, Features, Objectives and Scope of Distance Education.
2. Acquaint with issues related to Planning, Management, Promotion and Coordination of Distance Education.
3. Apply the implications of Theories of Learning and Communication for Course designing to Distance Learners.
4. Design and Develop Self-Learning Print Material.
5. Apply new technologies in the Preparation of Print Material for Distance Learners.
6. Use the mechanism for Learner Support Services in Distance Education.
7. Describe the Role of different forms of Communication Media in Distance Education.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PAPER SETTER AND CANDIDATES
The question paper for ESE will carry a total of 70 marks and consist of five sections: A, B, C, D & E. Section A will consist of 6 objective type questions (MCQ, True/False, Completion type) carrying one mark each and 4 short answer type questions carrying 2 marks each which will cover the entire syllabus uniformly. Sections B, C, D & E will have two long answer type questions from the respective Units 1, 2, 3 & 4 of the syllabus & carry 14 marks each. The long answer type questions may contain subparts carrying different marks. The marks for each subpart and required word limit will be shown against it. Section A of the question paper will be compulsory and the candidates are required to attempt one question (and/or its sub-parts) each from the sections B, C, D and E of the question paper. Answers to short questions should be completed in around 80 to 100 words each. Answers to long answer type question should be completed in around 800 words.

BLOCK -1: Growth & Development of Distance Education

- Distance Education: Concept, Features, Objectives and Scope.
- Issues in Planning and Management of Distance Education Institutions.
- Promotion and Coordination of Distance Education at National and International Level

BLOCK -2: Designing and Development of Self-Learning Print Materials

- Factors affecting Design of Print Materials, Implications of Theories of Learning and Communication for Course Designing in Distance Education.
- The Process of Designing and Development of Self-Learning Print Material.

- Applications of New Technologies in the Preparation of Print Material.

BLOCK-3: Mechanism for Learner Support Services

- Learner Support Services: What, Why and How?

- Institutional Arrangements for Learner Support: Counseling and Tutoring Services, Practice and Media of Counseling, Face-to-Face Sessions, Interaction through Assignments, Tutoring through Correspondence.

BLOCK-4: Communication Media for Distance Education

- Issues in Communication in Distance Education, Applications of Communication Technology in Distance Education.

- Media in Distance Education: Radio, Television and Computer as an Educational Media. Uses of Satellite Technology and Internet for Distance Education.

Sessional Work / Activities
Marks = 5 (under CCA Component)

A candidate is required to undertake any one of the following activities and submit a detailed report to the concerned teacher / PCP Coordinator. The activity will carry 5 marks:
1. Critically analyze the self-instructional material of this course in the light of unit 2 and suggest some points for its further improvement.
2. Suggest some means by which we can make our distance education programmes more interactive.
3. Any other activity / activities that the concerned course teacher may think appropriate, can be allotted during PCP to the candidates.

REFERENCES/REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS:
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Daniel, J. S. et al; (1982): Learning at a Distance: A world Perpective. Athabasca University, Edmonton.
Dhillon, S.S. & Kaur, R. (2018). Information Technology Communication and Distance, Gyan Geeta Prakashan.
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Joshi P.K. (2007): Modern Distance Education. New Delhi: Anmol Publications.
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CONTENTS

UNIT-1

DISTANCE EDUCATION: CONCEPT, FEATURES, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

STRUCTURE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear Learner,

In recent years, distance education has emerged as one of the most feasible modes of instruction that aims at bridging many of the educational objectives and practices between the formal and the non-formal sector. For the last decade, distance education has attracted educators and policy makers as a new measure of educational provision. Especially in Asia and the Pacific, distance education institutions and/or programmes have developed rapidly and played an important role.

Distance learning is a form of education which has been created with the aim of delivering education among those students who are not able to attend regular school due to various reasons. It can also be defined as a education system to create as well as offer access to learning in a situation where the source of education and learner are away from each other because of time and distance. In brief, we can say that distance learning is an ideal way to offer education of equal quality to meet the educational requirement of a learner outside the classroom. This method of education is being adopted by a huge number of universities and institutes around the world.

1.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we intend to give you an overview of what we mean by distance education. However, it should be clear that we cannot capture the term in a conclusive and straitjacketed definition. The attempt is essentially, therefore, to put together the views of various thinkers in order to arrive at satisfactory working definition of the term distance education. In this context, we have also touched upon traditional education, kinds of open and distance learning because this will help us to understand the term distance education clearly.

After studying this unit, you should be able to

- argue that distance education is a learning activity.
- distinguish distance education from traditional education .
- explain scope of distance education.

1.3 CONCEPT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance education refers to a mode of learning in which most or all teaching is conducted by instructors who are physically separated from the students. This method is designed to offer greater flexibility and accessibility in terms of enrolment, curriculum, and structure. The development of distance education has evolved through four major stages, incorporating various essential components such as institutional goals, academic programs, teaching methods, learning materials, communication strategies, student support services, faculty involvement, management, and evaluation processes.

Distance learning is sometimes used to educate children and young people who are unable to attend regular schools. It also serves as a supplementary tool for classroom teaching at the primary and secondary levels. However, the majority of distance education programs are designed for adults, particularly in developing countries, where they provide opportunities for individuals seeking school-equivalent qualifications. In nations with large populations, open schooling systems that use various forms of media are especially valuable in expanding access to education.

One of the most significant contributions of distance education has been in the field of teacher training. It is widely used for initial teacher qualification programs, professional development, and continuous in-service training on specific subjects. Many developing countries have successfully used distance learning to reach large numbers of educators, leading to significant improvements in their national education systems. This approach is particularly useful for expanding and enhancing the quality of public education. Additionally, distance education helps teachers improve their skills in using modern technology, especially in accessing and utilizing educational resources available online.

Both public and private institutions have played an important role in offering vocational and technical training through distance education. This model allows working professionals to upgrade their skills while maintaining their jobs and provides learning opportunities for those who may not have access to traditional education. Distance education has also been effective in supporting large-scale public awareness

campaigns, such as those focused on health issues like HIV/AIDS, thereby serving as a vital tool for ongoing education and professional development.

Another important application of distance education is in non-formal learning and community development. It has been particularly beneficial for women in societies where they face barriers to traditional education and training. Distance education is well-suited for teaching complex topics that require insights from multiple disciplines, making it a valuable tool for addressing contemporary global challenges.

At the higher education level, distance learning has followed two primary trends. First, several specialized open universities have been established to accommodate large numbers of students. Second, many traditional universities have started offering distance learning options alongside their conventional programs. Advances in communication technologies have further strengthened this approach.

Distance education has the potential to introduce new ways of teaching and learning. Closely linked to developments in communication and information-sharing technologies, it aligns with evolving educational needs and modern methods of accessing and applying knowledge. It has been shown to inspire innovation in mainstream education and extend its influence beyond the classroom, playing a crucial role in shaping a knowledge-based global society.

Definitions of Distance Education

Several scholars have attempted to define the concept of distance education in different ways.

Borje Holmberg (1981)

Holmberg defines distance education as various forms of learning at different levels that do not involve continuous, direct supervision by teachers present with students in a physical classroom. However, despite the physical separation, students still benefit from a structured and well-planned educational program under the guidance of a tutorial system. This definition highlights the fact that distance education is not merely independent study but an organized instructional approach.

Charles Wedemeyer (1977)

Wedemeyer used terms such as ‘Open Learning,’ ‘Distance Education,’ and ‘Independent Study’ in his work, preferring the term ‘Independent Study’ the most. He defined independent study as an arrangement where teaching and learning take place separately, with teachers and students fulfilling their roles while being physically apart. Communication occurs through various means, enabling learners to continue their education in their own environment. A key purpose of independent study, according to Wedemeyer, is to provide learning opportunities outside traditional campuses while fostering self-directed learning, which is essential for personal intellectual growth.

Michael Moore (1976)

Moore provided a more detailed definition, emphasizing the distinct characteristics of distance education. He described it as a collection of instructional methods where the teaching process is conducted separately from the learning process. The usual face-

to-face interaction found in conventional classrooms is replaced by communication through printed materials, electronic media, or mechanical devices. Three essential aspects emerge from his definition:

1. Teaching and learning occur independently of each other.
2. Some form of direct interaction may still be part of the system.
3. Various media, including electronic tools, are used to facilitate education.

Gottfried Dohmen (1977)

Dohmen, who was a director of a German distance education institute, defined distance education as a structured method of self-study. In this system, students receive counseling, learning materials, and academic supervision from a team of educators, each with specific responsibilities. Distance education is made possible through the use of communication media that connect learners and instructors across long distances. Dohmen's definition underscores the importance of self-study, aligning with the perspectives of Wedemeyer and Moore. Like them, he also stresses the role of media in making distance education accessible to learners who may not have access to traditional classroom settings.

Key Aspects of Distance Education

From the definitions above, two critical components of distance education emerge:

1. **Self-Study** – Unlike traditional classroom learning, distance education relies heavily on independent study.
2. **Use of Media** – Learning materials are delivered through printed content, electronic platforms, or other communication technologies, replacing conventional oral classroom instruction.

Distance education is best understood as a structured form of education where learning resources play a central role in the learning experience instead of classroom attendance. It incorporates pedagogical strategies, instructional technologies, and system designs to provide quality education for students who are not physically present in a traditional learning environment. The ultimate goal of distance education is to ensure that learners outside the classroom receive an education that is as effective and valuable as conventional in-person instruction.

Self-check exercise– 1

1. ------- And ------ providers have made contributions to the development of industry through technical education.
2. -------- is an important area where open and distance learning has made a major contribution.

1.4 Characteristics of Distance Learning

A review of the works of Valentine (2002), Encyclopaedia Britannica (2012), Galusha (2008), and the Commonwealth of Learning & ADB (1999) highlights several key features of distance education:

- **Separation in Space and Time** – Distance education involves a physical and/or time-based separation between teacher and learner, allowing students to study from different locations and at different times.
- **Institutional Framework** – Learning takes place within an established educational institution rather than through informal or self-directed study. While these institutions may not follow the conventional classroom model, they are still subject to accreditation like traditional educational providers.
- **Use of Multiple Media Formats** – Course materials are delivered through various media, including printed materials, radio, television, video and audio recordings, computer-based learning, and online communication tools.
- **Interactive Communication** – Technology enables interaction between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves, fostering learning communities. Communication methods include emails, phone calls, and social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube.
- **Opportunities for Face-to-Face Interaction** – While primarily remote, distance education may include optional in-person meetings for tutoring, peer discussions, library access, laboratory work, practical sessions, and examinations.
- **Industrialized Approach to Learning** – In large-scale distance education systems, different tasks such as course development, content delivery, and assessment are divided among specialists, increasing efficiency.
- **Efficient Resource Utilization** – Distance education is structured to achieve maximum educational impact while minimizing time, effort, and cost.
- **Task Specialization** – Course materials are created and refined through collaboration between subject matter experts, instructional designers, and experienced educators.
- **Use of Modern Technology** – Teaching methods incorporate advanced communication tools and electronic data processing for efficient course delivery.
- **Step-by-Step Course Development** – Course materials go through structured stages of preparation, with specific adjustments made at each step to ensure quality.
- **Mass Production of Educational Materials** – Learning resources are developed on a large scale and distributed to many students.
- **Thorough Preparation** – In a structured educational setting, careful planning and preparation ensure the efficiency, quality, and speed of teaching processes.
- **Detailed Planning** – More comprehensive planning is required compared to traditional classroom teaching, as various elements need to be coordinated for smooth delivery.
- **Structured Organization** – The effectiveness of distance education is closely linked to well-planned and organized teaching methods.
- **Use of Scientific Evaluation Methods** – Distance education integrates structured assessment methods to measure the success and effectiveness of teaching strategies.

- **Predefined Learning Phases** – The structured nature of distance education requires clear planning of different stages of learning.
- **Standardization of Materials** – Educational resources are developed in standardized formats to ensure consistency and suitability for a wide range of learners.
- **Functional Differentiation** – Unlike traditional craftsmanship, where one individual handles all aspects of production, industrialized education separates tasks among specialized professionals.
- **Objective Approach** – The reliance on structured processes and technology reduces the subjective influence of individual instructors, ensuring consistency in learning.
- **Centralized Administration** – Large-scale distance education systems often require centralized management and financial investment, sometimes leading to market dominance by key providers.

Wedemeyer's Characteristics of Distance Education

According to Wedemeyer (1973), distance or independent learning systems function under six essential principles:

1. **Teacher and student are physically separated** – Instruction does not take place in a shared classroom.
2. **Learning occurs through written or other instructional media** – Instead of traditional face-to-face lessons, knowledge is transmitted through structured materials and communication tools.
3. **Teaching is individualized** – Learning is tailored to suit individual students' needs, rather than following a rigid classroom-based structure.
4. **Learning is student-driven** – The process relies on the learner's active engagement and participation.
5. **Convenience for learners** – Students can learn in their own environment, reducing the need to travel to an educational institution.
6. **Self-paced learning** – Students have the flexibility to start, pause, and continue their studies according to their personal schedules.

Self-check Exercise- 2

1. Which of the following characterizes distance education?

a) High level of structure

b) Low level of flexibility

c) High level of autonomy

d) Limited access to technology

2. Which of the following is a characteristic of distance education?

a) Face-to-face interaction

b) Fixed schedules

c) Self-paced learning

d) Limited access to resources

1.5 Objectives and Scope of Distance Education

Objectives of Distance Education

The primary goals of distance education are:

- **Expanding access to education and training** – Distance learning provides educational opportunities to a wider audience, ensuring that more individuals can pursue knowledge and skill development.
- **Facilitating continuous learning and skill enhancement** – It enables individuals to update their skills, undergo retraining, and pursue personal development.
- **Optimizing the use of educational resources** – Distance education improves the cost-effectiveness of educational materials and infrastructure.
- **Enhancing the quality and diversity of existing education systems** – It supports conventional educational institutions by offering alternative learning methods.
- **Building capacity in the education sector** – Distance education helps strengthen the ability of institutions to accommodate more learners.
- **Reducing educational disparities** – It provides learning opportunities across different age groups, ensuring equitable access to education.
- **Expanding geographical reach** – Distance learning extends education to remote and underserved areas.
- **Delivering large-scale educational programs** – It is effective for conducting awareness campaigns and training programs for a broad audience.
- **Providing rapid and targeted training** – Distance education is particularly useful for specialized training of key professional groups.
- **Supporting education in emerging fields** – It allows institutions to introduce and expand courses in new and interdisciplinary subject areas.
- **Balancing education with work and family responsibilities** – Distance learning provides flexibility, allowing individuals to pursue education while managing other commitments.
- **Developing diverse competencies** – It promotes lifelong learning through continuing education programs.
- **Enhancing international exposure** – Distance education connects learners with global knowledge and perspectives.
- **Improving the quality of education services** – It contributes to enhancing the overall effectiveness and efficiency of educational programs.

Scope of Distance Education

Distance education started as correspondence learning in traditional institutions, relying solely on printed materials. However, advancements in technology and communication have expanded its reach, making education more accessible, inclusive, and high-quality for diverse learners. Today, distance education caters to a wide range of individuals, including:

- **Those without access to traditional education** – Individuals who cannot attend conventional institutions due to geographical, financial, or social barriers.
- **Those who lack proper educational facilities** – People in regions where adequate educational infrastructure is unavailable.
- **Individuals who could not continue formal education** – Those who had to drop out of traditional schools or colleges but wish to resume their studies.
- **Unemployed individuals** – Those seeking to enhance their qualifications while studying from home.
- **Working professionals** – Employees who want to upgrade their educational credentials without leaving their jobs.
- **Learners seeking professional training** – Individuals looking for skill development, vocational courses, or career-oriented education.
- **People interested in alternative education paths** – Those who prefer non-traditional educational models such as vocational, professional, or technical learning outside conventional institutions.
- **Individuals facing social, economic, or physical challenges** – Distance education serves students with disabilities, financial constraints, or other disadvantages.
- **Workers in both formal and informal sectors** – It provides training and education to individuals employed in various industries, including education, healthcare, technology, engineering, agriculture, and social services.

Currently, **103 countries** offer over **34,000 courses** through **1,117 institutions**, serving approximately **30 million learners** across different age groups.

Distance education plays a crucial role in addressing diverse learning needs across society. By offering flexible, accessible, and cost-effective learning solutions, it supports lifelong education and contributes to the development of a knowledge-driven society

Self-check exercise-3

1. ------ Institutions used only print as medium of instructions.
2. At present 103 countries are offering ------- courses of different types.

1.6 SUMMARY

In this lesson, we attempted to give you an overview of the term distance education – with a word of caution that it is not easy to define the term comprehensively. The attempt was carried out by distinguishing the system of distance teaching and learning from the other systems of education. Towards the end of the lesson, we have said a few words in justifying distance education as a learning activity, which is more effective than the traditional systems of education.

1.7 GLOSSARY

Distance Education: Education of students who may not always be physically present at school.

Scope: The area that is includes in or dealt with by something.

Nature: The basic qualities of a thing.

1.8 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE

Self-check exercise-1

1. Private and Public
2. Teacher Training

Self-check exercise-2

1. c) High level of autonomy

2. c) Self-paced learning

Self-check exercise-3

1. Conventional/ Traditional
2. 34,000

1.19 REFERENCES/REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

- Koul, B.N., Singh, Baushise; Ansari, M. M. (ed) 1988. Studies in Distance education. New Delhi, AIU.
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1.10 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. Define the term distance education.

2. What are the characteristics of distance education?

3. Discuss in detail the objectives and scope of distance education.

UNIT-2

DIFFERENT KINDS OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

STRUCTURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear Learner,

A variety of terms describe the type of educational provision that involves some version of an open learning approach and uses open and distance learning techniques to a greater or lesser extent. In a dual-mode institution, students can choose to take courses or programs entirely online or entirely on-campus, or they can combine both modes to suit their needs. Mixed-method institutions aim to leverage the benefits of both distance and on-campus learning, providing students with flexibility, convenience, and face-to-face interaction. This approach can enhance student engagement, learning outcomes, and overall educational experience.

2.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss about single mode institution
- Explain about dual mode institution
- Discuss about mixed method institution.

2.3 SINGLE-MODE INSTITUTIONS

Single-mode institutions are **dedicated exclusively to distance education** and do not operate traditional on-campus programs or maintain physical campuses. These institutions focus solely on providing remote learning opportunities and include **online universities, virtual colleges, and distance education centers**.

Key Features

- **Designed specifically for distance learning** – Established with the sole purpose of delivering education remotely.
- **Minimal or optional in-person interaction** – Some programs may include face-to-face sessions, but they are generally not required.
- **Learning is facilitated through various forms of media**, such as:
    - **Print-based materials** – Study guides, textbooks, and correspondence courses.
    - **Audio resources** – Radio broadcasts (one-way or interactive), audio tapes, telephone-based instruction, and audio conferencing.
    - **Video-based content** – Educational television programs (both one-way and interactive), video recordings, and video conferencing.
    - **Digital and online learning** – Computer-based instruction, email communication, virtual classrooms, web-based courses, and online discussions.

Notable Examples

Some of the world's largest distance education institutions, often referred to as **mega-universities**, follow this model. Examples include:

- **Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) – India**
- **Universitas Terbuka – Indonesia**
- **Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) – Thailand**
- **United Kingdom Open University (UKOU) – United Kingdom**

These universities serve large student populations across different regions, utilizing diverse instructional methods and technology-driven learning platforms to provide accessible education.

Benefits:

1. Flexibility: Students can access courses and learning materials at any time and from any location.

2. Accessibility: Single-mode distance institutions can reach students who may not have access to traditional on-campus programs due to geographical or personal constraints.

3. Cost-effectiveness: Reduced costs for students, as there are no commuting or relocation expenses.

4. Scalability: Single-mode institutions can enroll a large number of students without infrastructure limitations.

5. Specialization: Can focus on specific areas of study or professional development.

Challenges:

1. Limited interaction: Students may lack face-to-face interaction with instructors and peers.

2. Technical issues: Technical problems can disrupt learning, and students may require strong technical skills.

3. Limited support services: May not offer the same level of support services as on-campus institutions.

4. Perception of lower quality: Some employers or academics may view single-mode distance institutions as less prestigious.

5. Limited hands-on learning: Some subjects may require hands-on learning, which can be challenging in a single-mode distance institution.

Self-check Exercise-1

1. What is a characteristic of a single-mode distance institution?
a) Offers both online and on-campus programs
b) Offers only distance education programs
c) Offers only on-campus programs
d) Offers hybrid programs

2. Which of the following is true about single-mode distance institutions?
a) They have a physical campus
b) They offer flexible learning options
c) They require on-campus attendance

d) They are not recognized by accrediting agencies

2.4 Dual-Mode Institution

A **dual-mode institution** provides education through **both traditional classroom-based learning and distance education methods**.

- Some universities **offer the same course through both modes**, with a **common examination system** for all students.
- They categorize students into **two distinct groups**:
  - **On-campus learners** (attending in-person classes)
  - **External learners** (enrolled in distance education programs)
- Policies regarding **cross-registration** (switching between modes) vary—some institutions allow it, while others do not.

Examples of Dual-Mode Institutions

- Himachal Pradesh University
- Panjab University, Chandigarh

These universities integrate multiple forms of media and technology to support both open and distance learning, ensuring flexibility in educational delivery.

Benefits:

1. Flexibility: Students can choose their preferred mode of learning, online or on-campus.

2. Accessibility: Dual-mode institutions can reach a wider audience, including students who may not have access to on-campus programs.

3. Blended learning: Students can benefit from both online and on-campus learning experiences.

4. Increased enrolment: Dual-mode institutions can attract a larger student body, including both online and on-campus students.

5. Diverse community: Students from different locations and backgrounds can interact and learn from each other.

Challenges:

1. Complexity: Managing both online and on-campus programs can be complex and require significant resources.

2. Infrastructure: Dual-mode institutions need to maintain both online and on-campus infrastructure, which can be costly.

3. Faculty training: Faculty may need training to effectively teach in both online and on-campus environments.

4. Student support: Providing support services for both online and on-campus students can be challenging.

5. Integration: Integrating online and on-campus programs can be difficult, and students may feel disconnected from the institution.

Self-Check Exercise-2

1. Dual-mode distance institutions offer only online courses- True /False

2. True or False: Dual-mode distance institutions have separate admission requirements for online and on-campus programs- True/ False

2.5 Mixed-Mode Institution

A mixed-mode institution provides students with multiple study options, allowing them to choose from independent learning, group-based study, or a combination of both.

- Offers flexibility in both the location and pace of study.
- Blends face-to-face learning with technology-mediated instruction, or a combination of both.
- Represents a convergence of traditional classroom teaching and distance education methods.
- Many institutions that were originally single-mode or dual-mode have evolved into mixed-mode institutions to accommodate diverse learning needs.

Example: The International Centre for Distance Education and Open Learning (ICDEOL) exemplifies a mixed-mode institution. It allows students to engage in self-paced study at home, participate in workplace-based learning activities, and attend in-person sessions during Personal Contact Programs (PCPs).

Benefits:

1. Flexibility: Students can choose their preferred mode of participation, either in-person or remote.

2. Human Contact: Regular interaction between students, either face-to-face or online, promotes social connection and community building.

3. Pandemic Adaptation: Mixed-method institutions can adapt to public health guidance during pandemics, ensuring continuity of education while maintaining social distancing.

Challenges:

1. Attention Demands: Teachers need to divide their attention between in-person and remote students, requiring effective classroom management and engagement strategies.

2. Connectivity Issues: Technical problems like slow or interrupted internet connections can disrupt remote learning.

3. Equity Considerations: Not all students have equal access to technology, potentially creating a digital divide and unequal learning opportunities.

Self-check Exercise-3

1. Mixed-method distance institutions offer only online courses with no on-campus requirements- True/False:

2. Mixed-method distance institutions have a single admission requirement for all programs- True/False:

2.6 SUMMARY

A single-mode distance institution is an educational institution that offers only distance education programs, with no on-campus programs or courses. Dual-mode teaching (also referred to as dual delivery, blended synchronous learning or hybrid flexible teaching) refers to a teaching method where the same learning activities are experienced by students on-campus (in-person) and remote (e.g. at home) within a single group session and at the same time (synchronous). Mixed-method distance institutions offer a balanced approach to distance education, combining the benefits of online learning with the value of on-campus experiences.

2.7 GLOSSARY

Single-Mode Distance Institution: - Offers only distance education programs

Dual-Mode Distance Institution: - Offers both distance education programs and traditional on-campus programs

Mixed Method Institution: - Combines elements of single-mode and dual-mode institutions

2.8 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE 1, 2 & 3.

Self-check Exercise 1

1.b) Offers only distance education programs

2. b) they offer flexible learning options

Self-check Exercise 2

1. False

2. True

Self-check Exercise 3

1. False

2. False

2.9 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READING

- Koul, B.N., Singh, Baushise; Ansari, M. M. (ed) 1988. Studies in Distance education. New Delhi, AIU.
- IGNOU (2008). Growth and Philosophis of D.E. New Delhi, Study material of PGDDE programme
- Harichandan, D (199). Open University System : A broad based attempt at Distance Education. University News, V0127 No. 36 pages 3-7, New Delhi, AIU.
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2.10 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. Discuss about different types of distance education institutions.

2. Explain in details characteristics of mixed method distance institutions.

3. How do single, double, and mixed methods differ in their ability to investigate distance education institutions and their programs?

4. What are the strengths and limitations of each method in terms of informing institutional decision-making and program development?

UNIT-3

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DISTANCE EDUCATION AND TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

STRUCTURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear Learner,

Distance learning is a mode of education where students and teachers are physically separated during instruction, with various technologies used to enable communication between them. It is particularly beneficial for non-traditional learners, including working professionals, military personnel, and individuals in remote areas who cannot attend regular classroom sessions.

3.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss about traditional education in India
- Explain about distance education
- Difference between traditional and distance education

3.3 TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Since COVID-19 and the ensuing educational overhaul, there has been much debate regarding which type of learning environment is superior. Even in-person classrooms have unquestionably been changed by the pandemic; many believe these reforms are for the better, too.

New technology, new belief systems, and a brand-new attitude regarding what makes for a valuable learning experience have all had their influence over teachers and college professors nationwide, but the most devout among them still believe strongly in what a physical classroom has to offer students, especially at the college and post-grad level. Absence, as they say, may make the heart grow fonder, which is why many educators are proud to protect a traditional experience, at least for their own learners.

Traditional learning, in a general, pre-pandemic sense, describes the scenario of an instructor leading a classroom of students in person, moderating the discourse and regulating the flow of knowledge. While remote learners certainly existed before the recent digital revolution, a traditional experience was the norm before 2019.

Characteristics of Traditional Education:

Here are some common characteristics of traditional education:

1. **Face-to-face interaction:** Traditional education typically takes place in a physical classroom setting where students interact with teachers and peers in person.

2. **Teacher-centered:** The teacher is often the primary authority figure and delivers instruction to students.

3. **Lecture-based:** Instruction is often delivered through lectures, with students expected to absorb and retain information.

4. **Standardized curriculum:** Students follow a predetermined curriculum with standardized lessons and assessments.

5. **Emphasis on rote memorization:** Students are often encouraged to memorize facts and formulas rather than critically thinking and problem-solving.

6. **Age-based grade levels:** Students are grouped by age and progress through grade levels together.

7. **Limited flexibility:** Traditional education often follows a rigid schedule and structure, with little flexibility for individualization.

8. **Focus on core subjects:** Traditional education tends to prioritize core subjects like math, reading, and science over elective or vocational courses.

Self-check exercise-1

1. Traditional education takes place in a _____ setting, where students and teachers interact face-to-face.

2. In traditional education, students follow a _____ schedule, attending classes at fixed times and locations.

3.4 DISTANCE EDUCATION

Long-distance learning—also called “remote learning”—takes place in a digital classroom setting. Traditionally, academic instruction is administered on –a college or school campus. Distance learning is a distributed learning model that allows students to learn from anywhere, sometimes even on their own time.

Virtual lectures over video, emails, instant chat messages, file-sharing systems, mailed media, and prerecorded content are some of the most common means of delivery between teachers and their remote pupils.

Distance learning shouldn’t be mistaken for online learning, sometimes called e-learning. The latter will usually involve some element of in-person instruction, supplemented by the flexibility of a virtual classroom. Distance learning, meanwhile, is completely remote—special events like graduation or final exams may warrant an in-person gathering, but students and faculty will usually be separated physically for the entirety of the semester.

Self-check Exercise-2

1. Distance education allows students to learn from anywhere with an internet connection, making it a highly _____ option.

2. Distance education uses various media, such as online platforms, video conferencing, and _____, to deliver course materials.

3.5 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL VS DISTANCE EDUCATION

Flexibility

Online Education offers more flexibility as compared to traditional education in terms of time and place.

Traditional education is less flexible as compared to Distance education in terms of time and place.

Cost Effectiveness

Distance education is most cost-effective as compared to traditional education.

Traditional education is less cost-effective as the institutions collect fees such as tuition fees, exam fees, and other related stuff.

Location: Traditional education takes place on-campus, while distance education takes place off-campus.

Delivery method: Traditional education is delivered in-person, while distance education is delivered through digital platforms.

Flexibility: Distance education offers more flexibility in terms of timing and pacing.

Accessibility: Distance education reaches a wider audience, including those with mobility issues or living in remote areas.

Cost: Distance education often reduces costs associated with transportation and accommodation.

Classroom setting: Traditional education takes place in a physical classroom, while distance education uses virtual classrooms.

Teacher-student interaction: Traditional education involves face-to-face interaction, while distance education uses digital communication tools.

Learning materials: Traditional education uses physical textbooks, while distance education uses digital resources.

Assessment methods: Traditional education uses in-person exams, while distance education uses online assessments.

Feedback: Traditional education provides immediate feedback, while distance education may have delayed feedback.

Self-check Exercise-3

1. Which type of education typically uses digital resources and online platforms for learning?

a) Traditional education

b) Distance education

c) Online education

d) Hybrid education

2. Which type of education requires physical presence in a classroom?

a) Traditional education

b) Distance education

c) Online education

d) Hybrid education

3.6 SUMMARY

Traditional education refers to the classical method of learning in a physical classroom setting, where students attend classes in person, and instructors teach through lectures, discussions, and hands-on activities. Distance education saves you precious time and money. You do not need to be concerned about the travel time or expenses to attend the classes. Course materials and tuition may be lower as well since there are fewer overhead costs involved as compared to in-person classes.

3.7 GLOSSARY

Traditional classroom: A classroom that follows a traditional teaching approach, with a teacher lecturing and students taking notes.

Distance learning: Education that takes place remotely, often through digital platforms.

3.8 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE-1, 2 & 3

SELF CHECK EXERCISE-1

1. Physical
2. Structured

SELF CHECK EXERCISE-2

1. Flexible
2. Correspondence

SELF CHECK EXERCISE-3

1. b)
2. a)

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3.10 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. What is the difference between traditional and distance education in terms of delivery method?
2. How do traditional and distance education differ in terms of flexibility and accessibility?
3. What is the main advantage of traditional education in terms of social interaction?
4. What is the role of the teacher in traditional education?

UNIT-4

ISSUES IN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

STRUCTURE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Dera Learner,

Open and distance learning (ODL) combines two educational approaches with the shared goal of increasing access to learning opportunities. Effective planning plays a crucial role in shaping this system, providing a structured framework for decision-making and encouraging innovative solutions beyond current limitations. It challenges stakeholders to think creatively about achieving their vision while aligning educational activities with national development objectives. Additionally, planning ensures sustainability, supports the preparation of funding proposals, and helps institutions better serve the needs of learners.

4.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- understand the planning and management of ODL
- Explain about various issues in planning and management of ODL

4.3 ISSUES IN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Effective planning is essential for evaluating an institution's progress and maintaining accountability both internally and externally. Regardless of the size of the program or institution, certain key functions must be carried out to ensure the successful development and implementation of an open and distance learning (ODL) system. Below are the critical aspects to consider:

Securing and Managing Financial and Other Resources

- Funding may come from grants or self-sustaining models.
- Initial setup and development costs can be high.
- Providing human support services is often a significant expense.

Developing or Acquiring Courses and Programs

- Course development requires considerable time and resources.
- Institutions may opt to purchase or lease courses from other ODL providers to optimize resource use.
- Course creation may involve a single author or a team of experts.

Student Recruitment and Outreach

- Understanding the needs of potential learners is crucial.
- Providing timely and accurate information about program requirements, costs, and participation methods is essential.
- Ensuring credibility and legitimacy to reassure prospective students.

Production, Storage, and Distribution of Learning Materials

- Course materials may include print, audio, video, or digital formats.
- Distribution can involve postal services, couriers, transport companies, or digital platforms.
- The production process is time-consuming and requires specialized staff and equipment for storage, packaging, and inventory management.

Enrolment and Registration

- Registration processes range from simple manual records to complex digital systems.
- Institutions may have fixed enrolment periods or allow continuous admission.
- Various delivery methods are available to accommodate learners.

Program and Course Delivery

- Effective communication between instructors and learners is essential.
- Continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms should be in place.
- Collaboration with external agencies and library services enhances learning experiences.
- Maintaining a robust record-keeping system is necessary.

Providing Student Support

- Personal support services, including academic counseling and guidance, are vital.
- Academic assistance includes tutoring, grading, and assessments.
- Support can be provided in-person or through digital communication channels.

Assessment, Certification, and Accreditation

- Different credit and evaluation systems may be used.
- Examination processes and credit recognition must be clearly outlined.
- Collaboration with professional bodies and external agencies ensures credibility.

Evaluating and Improving Institutional Processes and Programs

- Regular assessment of student performance and satisfaction is necessary.

- Ensuring that institutional objectives and goals are met.
- Addressing resistance to change and adapting to new challenges.

Staff Training and Professional Development

- Educators must be trained to adapt to new technologies and teaching methods.
- Awareness of the strengths and limitations of distance learning systems is essential for staff effectiveness.

Accessibility & Equity

- Ensuring access to distance education for all students, regardless of location or disability

- Addressing equity issues in course design, delivery, and support services

Quality Assurance & Accreditation

- Ensuring quality standards in distance education programs and courses

- Obtaining accreditation and recognition for distance education programs

Technology Infrastructure & Support

- Developing and maintaining robust technology infrastructure

- Providing technical support to students and faculty

Pedagogy & Course Development

- Designing effective distance education courses and curricula

- Training faculty in distance education pedagogy

Institutional Effectiveness & Sustainability

- Measuring the effectiveness of distance education programs

- Ensuring long-term sustainability and financial stability

Faculty Development & Support

- Providing training and support for faculty teaching in distance education

- Addressing faculty concerns and needs

Strategic Planning & Leadership

- Developing strategic plans for distance education initiatives

- Providing leadership and vision for distance education programs

Self-check Exercise 1

1. State two issues in planning and management of distance education institutions.

2. Give any two valuable considerations in managing the various issues in the management of distance education Institutions.

4.4 SUMMARY

In this unit we have learned about various functions that must occur at certain levels to cope up with the issues in Planning and Management of distance education institutions. While ODL offers flexibility and accessibility, addressing these challenges

requires empathy, creativity, and effort from both institutions and learners. It's an ongoing process of adaptation to the "new normal" of online education.

4.5 GLOSSARY

ODL: where in teachers and learners need not necessarily be present either at same place or same time and is flexible in nature.

ISSUES: a problem or subject for discussion

Accessibility: The ability of students to access distance education programs and services, regardless of physical location or disability.

Accreditation: The process of recognizing distance education institutions or programs as meeting certain standards of quality.

4.6 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE-1.

Self-check Exercise-1

1. Designing, Preparing, Delivery
2. Presentation and Communication.

4.7 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

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4.8 TERMINAL QUESTIONS:

Dear learners, check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. "Planning forms the basis for assessing institution's achievements". Discuss this statement in the light of meaning of planning and management in open distance learning (ODL).

1. What are the major barriers to access in ODL, and how can they be addressed?

2. How can ODL institutions ensure quality assurance and accreditation in the face of rapidly changing technologies and learner needs?

3. What strategies can be employed to overcome the digital divide and ensure equitable access to ODL opportunities?

4. How can ODL institutions foster a sense of community and student engagement in virtual learning environments?

5. What are the key challenges in designing and delivering effective online learning experiences, and how can they be overcome?

6. How can ODL institutions ensure the sustainability and financial viability of their programs?

7. What role can technology play in enhancing the planning and delivery of ODL programs?

UNIT-5

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

STRUCTURE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The institution mechanism for open and distance learning refers to the structural and systemic frameworks that educational institutions put in place to support and deliver open and distance learning (ODL) programs. This mechanism is designed to ensure the effective management, delivery, and support of ODL programs, providing students with a high-quality learning experience.

5.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain the institutional mechanism of ODL

- Discuss about Systems Model of an Open and Distance Learning Institution

5.3 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Institutional mechanisms refer to the structured processes that support decentralized planning, implementation, and monitoring within an educational institution. Each ODL institution has its own unique structure and history. These mechanisms play a crucial role in assisting learners with both academic and administrative matters, ensuring they stay motivated, utilize available resources, and progress effectively in their studies.

ODL institutions can be established under various legal frameworks, including:

As part of a government ministry or department.

A unit within an existing educational institution.

A semi-autonomous entity created through ministerial regulations.

An independent institution established by parliamentary legislation.

A non-profit organization such as a foundation, trust, or voluntary association.

A privately owned company operating for profit.

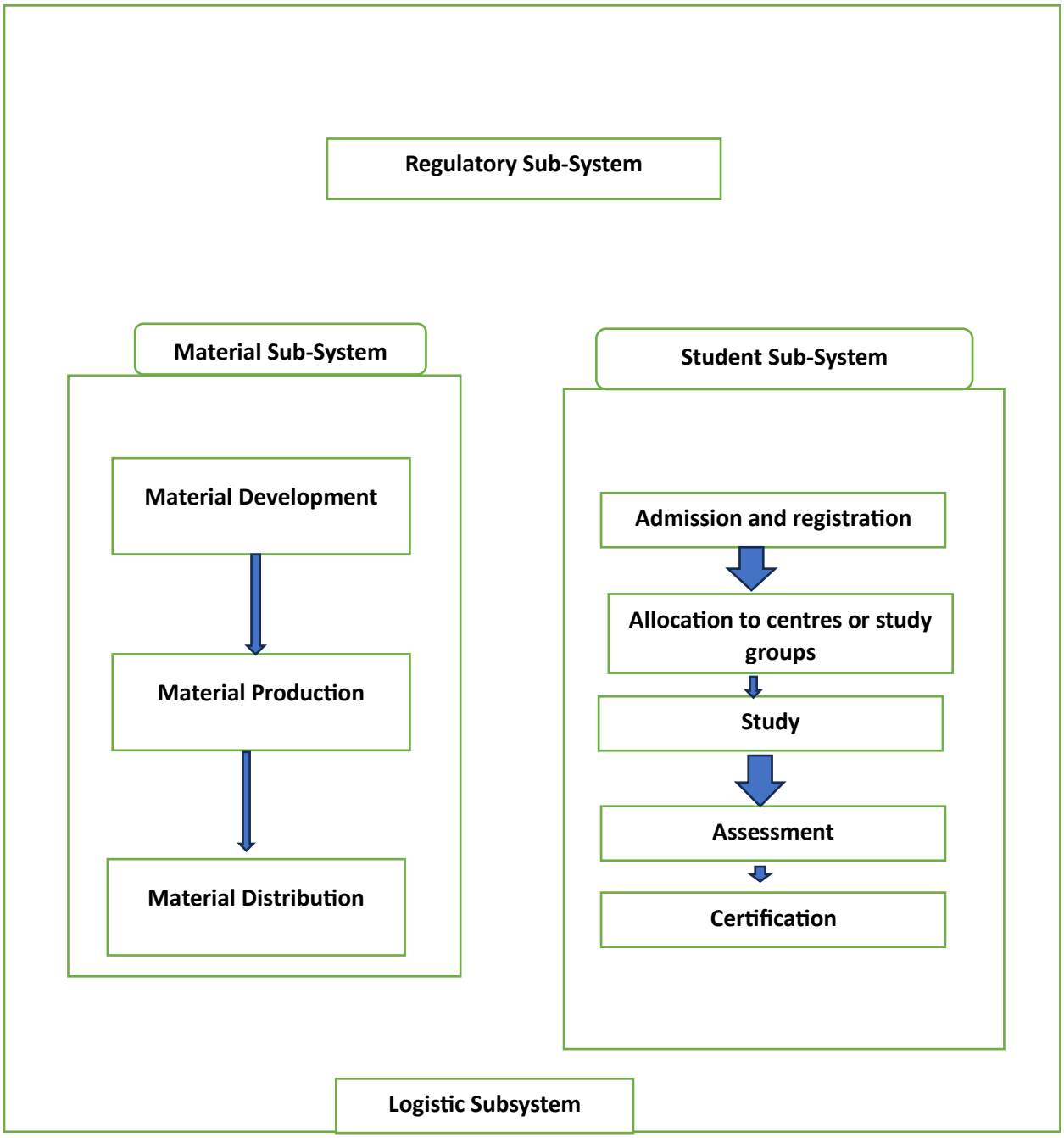
A publicly traded company operating for profit.

Despite government support, most ODL institutions do not function as profit-making enterprises. Consequently, it is rare for them to be structured as private or public companies.

Internal Structure of ODL Institutions

ODL institutions are organized in diverse ways to manage their operations efficiently. Rumble (1986) proposed a model that categorizes ODL institutions into four interdependent sub-systems, drawing a comparison between an educational institution and an industrial production system. Like a factory that specializes in manufacturing goods, ODL institutions rely on the division of labour and task specialization across different units to streamline their educational processes. This model helps in identifying the key operational areas of an ODL institution and illustrates the relationships between them. The four sub-systems in Rumble's model are illustrated in Figure 2.1 and described below:

Systems Model of an Open and Distance Learning Institution



Source: Rumble, 1986:17

Student Sub-System

Once the learning materials are prepared, the responsibility for learners is transferred to the student sub-system. This includes all activities, personnel, and

resources dedicated to supporting students in their learning journey and managing their academic progress within the program.

Logistical Sub-System

The student and materials sub-systems are supported by various operational units that handle the procurement and management of institutional resources. Departments responsible for finances, human resources, and information and communications technology form the logistical sub-system in any open university, college, or school.

Regulatory Sub-System

The overall administration and strategic direction of the institution fall under the regulatory sub-system, often referred to as the "brain" of the institution. This sub-system oversees policy development, strategic planning, and performance monitoring to ensure the institution achieves its objectives.

Many ODL institutions have incorporated Rumble's sub-system model into their internal structures by establishing separate departments for:

- Development, production, and distribution of learning materials
- Student support services
- Logistical operations
- Institutional management and governance

While the structure may vary across institutions, the following objectives have been identified to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders (Khanna & Basak, 2009):

Key Objectives of an ODL System

- **Enhanced Access to Student Services**
  The system should improve accessibility to student support, both in terms of time and location, through online platforms. It should also provide alternative methods for accessing non-web-based services. This can be achieved by leveraging widely available and cost-effective technologies such as web browsers and internet connectivity.
- **Support for Effective Teaching and Learning**
  The system should ensure seamless distribution of course materials and access to program information and learning resources. It should integrate existing instructional technologies with online learning tools and student support services to create a cohesive learning environment.
- **Improved Communication and Coordination**
  Strengthening communication between students and instructors, as well as fostering collaboration between different departments responsible for student support, should be a priority.
- **Responsive and Integrated Student Support**
  The system should efficiently connect students to relevant services based on their needs. Features such as search tools and user-friendly web interfaces can help students easily navigate institutional resources and support systems.

- **Flexible and Scalable System Infrastructure**
  The system should be adaptable to accommodate future technological advancements, program expansions, and institutional changes. This can be achieved by using open web standards, database management systems, and reusable information templates.

- **Self-check exercise– 1**
- 1) What is the full form of ODL?
- 2) How many sub systems are there in Rumble's model?

5.4 COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

That's a comprehensive list of the institutional mechanisms for open and distance learning (ODL)! Let me break it down into smaller categories with key points:

Leadership and Management:

- Clear policies and vision for ODL
- Strong leadership and management support
- Defined roles and responsibilities

Academic Planning and Development:

- Curriculum design and development
- Course material development and review
- Quality assurance and control

Student Support Services:

- Admission and registration processes
- Academic advising and counselling
- Technical support and helpdesk

Faculty Development and Support:

- Training and orientation for ODL
- Faculty support and mentoring

- Continuous professional development

Technology and Infrastructure:

- Learning management system (LMS) and other educational technologies
- Reliable internet and network infrastructure
- Hardware and software support

Quality Assurance and Evaluation:

- Regular evaluation and monitoring of ODL programs
- Quality assurance processes and standards
- Continuous improvement and innovation

Student Assessment and Evaluation:

- Effective assessment and evaluation methods
- Regular feedback and progress monitoring
- Fair and transparent evaluation processes

Research and Development:

- Research in ODL and educational technology
- Innovation and development of new ODL initiatives
- Collaboration and partnership with other institutions

Self-check Exercise– 2

What is the primary goal of the institutional mechanism for open and distance learning?

A) To increase enrolment numbers

B) To improve student engagement

C) To ensure quality and accessibility in ODL programs

D) To reduce costs

2. Which of the following is a key component of the institutional mechanism for ODL?

A) Traditional classroom-based instruction

B) Quality assurance and accreditation

C) Face-to-face interaction with faculty

D) Printed textbooks and materials

5.5 SUMMARY

The Regulatory Framework provides a structured approach to ODL, ensuring that institutions meet certain standards and requirements, and that students receive a high-quality educational experience. This system model highlights the interconnectedness of various components within an ODLI, emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach to delivering quality education.

5.6 GLOSSARY

Institutional Mechanism: The structural and organizational framework that supports ODL in an institution.

Quality Assurance: Processes and procedures to ensure the quality of ODL programs.

Regulatory Framework: Policies and regulations governing ODL in an institution.

5.7 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE-1 & 2

Self-Check Exercise-1

1. Open and Distance Learning
2. 4

Self-Check Exercise-2

1. c

2. b

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5.8 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. What measures do institutions take to ensure quality assurance in open and distance learning programs?

2. How do institutions facilitate student support services, such as academic advising and counselling, in open and distance learning?

3. What mechanisms do institutions have in place for monitoring and evaluating student progress in open and distance learning?

4. How do institutions ensure accessibility and inclusivity in open and distance learning programs for students with disabilities?

5. What strategies do institutions use to foster a sense of community and engagement among students in open and distance learning programs?

6. How do institutions provide training and support for faculty members to effectively teach and facilitate learning in open and distance learning environments?

UNIT-6

ROLE OF DISTANCE TEACHERS IN DISTANCE LEARNING

STRUCTURE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear Learner,

“Any meaningful communication is an education, if it is written or produced in multimedia or in multiple media; then it is called Open and Distance Education”

—Ravi Ayyagari and Rampelli Satyanarayana, 2014

In this unit, we will explore the role of teachers in the modern open and distance learning (ODL) system. ODL serves as a dynamic platform for innovation, experimentation, and creativity, where teachers play a crucial role in shaping and disseminating knowledge in today's knowledge-driven society. This discussion will focus on the responsibilities of teachers in an ODL setting and the methods they use to facilitate learning in the absence of traditional face-to-face instruction.

6.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Recognise the nature, scope and functions of a distance teacher
- Discuss the expected broad concerns and traits of a distance teacher
- explain the skills expected from a distance teacher
- Discuss orientation of a teacher in a distance education as a model different from the conventional face to face teacher
- Recognise guidelines stated by Distance Education Council for a teacher in Open and Distance Education.

6.3 NATURE AND SCOPE OF A TEACHER IN ODL SYSTEM

Defining the role and scope of a teacher in open and distance learning (ODL) can be challenging. Teachers in this system engage in diverse and complex tasks, working both independently and collaboratively within a team. While in traditional face-to-face education, a teacher's individual excellence is highly valued, in ODL, success is often attributed to the collective effort of a team. The combination of individual expertise and teamwork is essential for the effective functioning of distance education.

In the ODL system, teachers take on multiple responsibilities, including academic, administrative, and training-related tasks. They contribute both as subject matter experts and as part of a team responsible for instructional development and learner support.

Interactivity is a key characteristic of teaching in distance education. Effective communication is central to the learning process, and when it is delivered through written, multimedia, or multiple media formats, it becomes the foundation of ODL. According to O'Neil (2006), learning requires two forms of interaction: engagement with content and interaction with others. The communication skills essential for effective teaching in distance education are similar to those used in traditional classrooms. However, ODL educators must adapt to a new understanding of instructional time and space, requiring a shift in teaching methods.

A crucial role of a teacher in distance education is to demonstrate effective teaching through well-structured instructional materials and the appropriate use of communication technologies. Beyond subject expertise, ODL teachers are involved in various academic, pedagogical, and administrative functions, ensuring that learning remains engaging, accessible, and effective for students. These functions have been discussed in detail in the sections below.

6.4 BROAD FUNCTIONS OF A TEACHER IN ODL SYSTEM

In an open and distance learning (ODL) environment, teachers undertake a wide range of responsibilities, often requiring them to balance multiple roles. According to Kanwar & Pillai (2001), teachers in ODL must be adaptable, efficient, and skilled in various

aspects of instructional delivery and learner support. Some of their key functions include:

- **Course Team Coordination** – Collaborating with subject matter experts, instructional designers, and other stakeholders to develop course content.
- **Discipline Coordination** – Ensuring consistency and quality within a particular subject area or academic discipline.
- **Programme/Course Coordination** – Overseeing the structure, content, and implementation of specific courses or programs.
- **Curriculum Development and Instructional Design** – Designing and updating course materials to meet evolving educational needs and standards.
- **Expertise in Self-Instructional Material Development** – Creating content that allows learners to study independently while maintaining clarity and engagement.
- **Managing Programme Delivery and Learner Support Services** – Organizing and overseeing the smooth execution of educational programs, ensuring effective communication with students.
- **Application of Technology in Teaching and Learning** – Utilizing digital tools and online platforms to enhance the learning experience.

Self-Check Exercise-1

1. In ODL, teachers are only responsible for delivering pre-recorded lectures. True or False.

2. ODL teachers are responsible for developing their own course materials. True or False.

6.5 ACADEMIC FUNCTIONS OF A TEACHER IN ODL SYSTEM

In traditional classroom teaching, educators have the flexibility to adapt their methods and media based on learners' needs. However, in open and distance learning (ODL), instructional design plays a crucial role in determining teaching strategies. Course materials must be developed in advance, and the media supporting these materials are pre-selected. Teachers in ODL take on various academic responsibilities, including:

- **Curriculum Development Coordinator** – The teacher is involved in designing and developing curricula while selecting appropriate delivery strategies. They also function as instructional designers, assessors, and evaluators of learners, courses, programs, and the overall learning system.
- **Self-Directed Learning Design** – Creating structured, self-learning materials in their respective disciplines to support independent study.
- **Course Writer** – Developing course units or modules based on distance education methodologies.
- **Media Facilitator** – Utilizing various media tools, such as audio, video, radio, television, and teleconferencing, to enhance learning. Teachers also support virtual learning and e-learning by integrating multimedia technologies.
- **Course Editor** – Reviewing and refining course materials for both language accuracy and content clarity.

- **Counselor** – Providing guidance before and after course enrollment through face-to-face interactions and digital communication. They offer essential course-related information via program guides, newsletters, emails, and online platforms. Induction programs for new learners are also conducted through study centers and regional centers.
- **Guide** – Offering academic support by reviewing and providing constructive feedback on student assignments, helping learners improve their performance.
- **Trainer** – Conducting capacity-building activities, such as training sessions, workshops, and orientation programs, to enhance teaching methodologies and update faculty members on evolving disciplines.
- **Student Support Counselor** – Addressing the academic and personal challenges faced by distance learners through study centers and support services.
- **Promotional Activities** – Engaging in initiatives to promote open and distance learning, ensuring access to quality education for a wider audience.
- **Consultant** – Acting as an advisor for future distance educators and institutions interested in implementing distance learning programs.
- **Evaluator** – Responsible for setting examination papers, assessing student performance, reviewing assignments, and monitoring examination procedures.
- **Program Evaluator** – Reviewing existing ODL programs, providing feedback for improvements, and identifying gaps between expectations and actual outcomes.

Teachers in ODL play a dynamic role, requiring expertise in curriculum development, instructional design, learner support, assessment, and technological integration to ensure an effective and engaging learning experience.

Self-Check Exercise-2

1. Teachers in ODL systems are responsible for _____ and delivering high-quality online course materials.

2. An essential academic function of ODL teachers is to _____ online discussions and collaborations among students.

3. Teachers in ODL systems must _____ student learning and progress through various evaluation methods.

6.6 ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS OF A TEACHER IN ODL SYSTEM

In an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system, seamless coordination between various units, centers, and divisions is essential for its efficient operation. Both academic and administrative responsibilities hold equal importance. Since learning materials are subject to public scrutiny, maintaining high-quality standards is crucial.

Beyond developing instructional content, teachers in ODL must continuously oversee both academic and administrative functions, a significant departure from traditional

classroom teaching. In addition to their role as full-time educators, they undertake various administrative responsibilities, including:

- **Coordinating Program and Course Meetings** – Engaging with unit writers, editors, media teams, and evaluators to ensure smooth content development.
- **Supervising Material Production** – Overseeing the proofing, editing, and finalization of learning materials.
- **Monitoring Admissions** – Reviewing student enrollment data and tracking retention rates to assess program effectiveness.
- **Promoting and Marketing Programs** – Implementing strategies to increase student enrollments and enhance program reach.
- **Verifying Financial Transactions** – Ensuring accuracy in the verification and approval of bills related to course development and administration.
- **Managing Course Budgets** – Overseeing financial planning and resource allocation for different programs.
- **Maintaining Academic Records** – Keeping systematic records of course details, student progress, and institutional data.

Teachers in ODL play a vital role in bridging academic and administrative functions, ensuring the effective delivery of quality education in a flexible learning environment.

Self-Check Exercise-3

1. What is an administrative function of a teacher in ODL?

a) Developing course materials

b) Facilitating online discussions

c) Maintaining student records

d) Conducting research

1. Which of the following is an administrative task in ODL?

a) Creating online learning activities

b) Providing feedback to students

c) Managing online course enrolment

d) Developing assessment tools

6.7 SUMMARY

In the ODL system, teachers play a crucial liaison role by coordinating with course delivery personnel to ensure smooth program implementation. Academic staff actively promote ODL programs at regional and local levels, enhancing accessibility and competitiveness in the educational market. Their efforts contribute to the effective delivery and expansion of distance learning opportunities.

6.8 GLOSSARY

1. Community building: Creating a sense of connection and belonging among students in a virtual learning environment.

2. Facilitation: Guiding and supporting students as they navigate online learning materials and activities.

3. Mentorship: Providing one-on-one support and guidance to students in a distance education setting.

4. Pedagogy: The art and science of teaching, particularly in a distance education context.

6.9 ANSWER TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISE-1, 2 & 3

Self-Check Exercise-1

1. False
2. True

Self-Check Exercise-2

1. Developing

2. Facilitate

3. Assess

Self-Check Exercise-3

1. (c) Maintaining student records

2. (c) Managing online course enrolment

6.10 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

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6.11 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. What are the essential skills and competencies required for a teacher to effectively facilitate distance education?

2. How can a teacher build a sense of community and connection with students in a virtual learning environment?

3. What strategies can a teacher use to promote student engagement and motivation in distance education?

4. How can a teacher provide personalized support and feedback to students in a distance education setting?

5. What role does technology play in enhancing the teacher's role in distance education, and how can teachers effectively utilize these tools?

6. How can teachers ensure equity and accessibility in distance education, particularly for students with disabilities?

7. What are the challenges faced by teachers in distance education, and how can they be addressed?

8. How can teachers assess student learning and progress in distance education, and what are the limitations of these assessments?

9. What is the impact of distance education on the teacher-student relationship, and how can teachers maintain a positive relationship with students at a distance?

10. How can teachers continuously improve and develop their practice in distance education to ensure high-quality teaching and learning?

UNIT-7

PROMOTION AND COORDINATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

STRUCTURE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear Learner,

Open and Distance Education (ODE) has gained significant popularity worldwide, driven by continuous experimentation and technological advancements. The rapid expansion of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions highlights the need to assess their quality, especially in the era of globalization.

Open Learning plays a vital role in exploring new opportunities and advancements in ODE, with a growing user base globally, particularly in Asia. Over the past two decades, India and many other countries have witnessed remarkable growth in this sector. Innovations in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), along with the increasing demand for lifelong and inclusive education, have transformed ODE into a key contributor to knowledge-driven societies.

7.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the role of IGNOU and state open universities in promotion of distance education in India.
- Explain the role of commonwealth of learning and ICDE in promotion of distance education

7.3 PROMOTION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION BY IGNOU AT NATIONAL LEVEL

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established through an Act of Parliament in September 1985 with a dual mandate: to function as a National Open University and to act as an apex body for the promotion, coordination, and standardization of open university and distance education systems in India. Similar to the University Grants Commission (UGC), which oversees the entire higher education sector, IGNOU is responsible for maintaining quality standards in ODL. The institution plays a key role in:

Promoting Open Universities and Distance Education Systems

Standardizing Teaching, Evaluation, and Research in Distance Learning

Allocating and Disbursing Grants to Distance Education Institutions

By combining the responsibilities of both a National Open University and an apex regulatory body, IGNOU occupies a unique position in India's education system.

IGNOU's Efforts in Promoting Distance Education

In its early years, IGNOU focused primarily on strengthening its role as a National Open University and achieved remarkable progress both nationally and internationally. At the same time, it took various initiatives to promote and standardize distance education across India. Some of its key efforts include:

Collaboration with State Governments – Assisting states in assessing the feasibility of setting up new Open Universities.

Guidance to State Open Universities – Advising newly established Open Universities on planning and development strategies.

Resource Sharing – Providing learning materials to State Open Universities and other institutions, including translations, under mutually agreed terms.

Financial Assistance – Supporting Open Universities such as B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Kota Open University, and Yashwant Rao Chavan Maharashtra Open University with funding for technology infrastructure and faculty development.

Evolution of IGNOU's Role as an Apex Body

IGNOU's position as a national coordinating body for open universities and distance education has evolved over time through various steps:

In June 1987, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) recommended forming a Coordination Council for all open universities in India. IGNOU established and managed this council for several years.

A mutual agreement was reached between UGC and IGNOU, where UGC would assess the eligibility of State Open Universities for central assistance, while IGNOU would provide developmental funding.

In October 1990, UGC examined IGNOU's role in standardizing distance education and formed a high-level committee, including the Education Secretary, UGC Vice Chairman, and IGNOU Vice-Chancellor, to deliberate on the matter.

Establishment of the Distance Education Council (DEC)

Based on the recommendations of this committee, IGNOU formally established the Distance Education Council (DEC) in May 1991 as a statutory authority under the IGNOU Act. DEC was entrusted with the responsibility of:

Promoting, coordinating, and ensuring quality standards in distance education.

Developing a network of Open Universities and distance learning institutions.

Identifying key priority areas for distance education and providing necessary support for their implementation.

The DEC comprised representatives from Open Universities, Institutes of Correspondence Studies, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, and UGC. In its first meeting on April 28, 1992, the DEC initiated significant steps, including framing regulations for funding open universities and enhancing coordination among distance education institutions.

Self-check Exercise-1

1. In -------, Board of Management of the University formulated the statute for the establishment of the distance Education council.
2. -----, ----- and ----- are the only state open universities declared fit by UGC to receive central assistance.

7.4 PROMOTION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION BY STATE OPEN UNIVERSITIES (SOUS) AT NATIONAL LEVEL

There are at present 13 State Open Universities set up by the respective state grants (as per details below), are single mode institutions, which means they provide education only in the distance mode. These universities cater to people who are unable to pursue regular courses due to various reasons. These Universities are also instrumental in shaping the career growth of learner who are already employed. These are:

S.No.	Name of the State Open University
1.	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU), Hyderabad, A.P. - (1982)
2.	Vardhman Mahaveer Open University (VMOU), Kota, Rajasthan - (1987)
3.	Nalanda Open University (NOU). Patna, Bihar - (1987)
4.	Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU), Nashik, Maharashtra - (1989)
5.	Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University (MPBOU), Bhopal, M.P. - (1991)

S.No.	Name of the State Open University
6.	Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University (BAOU), Ahmedabad, Gujarat - (1994)
7.	Karnataka State Open University (KSOU), Mysore, Karnataka – (1996)
8.	Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU), Kolkata, W.B. - (1997)
9.	U.P. Rajarshi Tandon Open University (UPRTOU), Allahabad, U.P. - (1998)
10.	Tamil Nadu Open University (TNOU), Chennai, Tamil Nadu - (2002)
11.	Pt. Sunderlal Sharma Open University (PSSOU), Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh - (2005)
12.	Uttarakhand Open University, Haldwani, Distt. Nainitall, Uttarakhand
13.	Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University, Guwahati, Assam

Besides these state open universities, correspondence departments of state and central universities like ICDEOL are also promoting distance education at national level.

Self-check exercise2

1. How many State open Universities are set up to provide education only in the distance mode?

2. State true or false: Himachal Pradesh University is a state Open University.

7.5 COORDINATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION BY IGNOU AT NATIONAL LEVEL

The promotional efforts of IGNOU will be relevant only if certain built-in mechanisms for internal coordination are also simultaneously developed. In the opinion of the Committee the tasks of coordination concern the following areas :

- Development of a pattern and structure of distance education programmes which should more or less be common for all institutions throughout the country. This should include a credit system and a grading scale to facilitate inter-institutional mobility.
- Development of course preparation strategies involving participation of teams of experts drawn from within the higher education system as well as from the professions, user agencies, etc.
- Availability of programmes of distance education in all major languages in the country so that students from all States including those living in remote areas

have access to higher education programmes of an acceptable quality in their own languages.

- Development of an adequate student support system which ensures counselling, advice and guidance to students, providing them with all relevant information about courses and programmes, continuous evaluation of their performance through assignments, etc. and generally assisting them in sustaining their interest in the programmes.
- Development of systems and methodologies relevant to all aspects of distance education ranging from learner identification, programme determination, course design and development, production of materials, student support systems, evaluation methods, etc.
- Establishment of linkages between the distance education institutes, institutions in the formal system, user agencies and professional bodies such as UGC, AIU, AICTE, NCERT, NIEPA, NCTE, ICAR, etc.
- Training of distance education personnel including teachers, course writers, counsellors, planners, administrators, etc.
- Research in course design and development, curriculum structure, instructional designing and evaluation, delivery systems, etc.

Self-check exercise-3

1. ----- And----- are used to facilitate inter- institutional mobility.
2. Name any two professional bodies as a linkage between distance education institutes and institutes in the formal system.

7.6 SUMMARY

Several international organizations have, in recent years, established initiatives to assist African countries in establishing and developing distance education systems and in facilitating cooperation in their activities. These organizations include the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), The Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Consortium International francophone de formation à distance (CIFFAD), and the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE).

UNESCO. Among the United Nations agencies, UNESCO has taken a leading role in promoting distance education in Africa.

UNESCO and COL have entered into a formal agreement to establish closer working relations on matters of mutual interest and on common goals. In 1993 the two organizations co-sponsored the consultancy mission that finally produced the implementation plan for the Open University of Tanzania.

CIFFAD. The Consortium International francophone de formation à distance is an international body for the French-speaking countries that has played a role similar to COL's. Mauritius and Seychelles, which are bilingual, have benefited from both COL and CIFFAD.

Under the auspices of the International Council for Distance Education and UNESCO, a joint initiative entitled "Multi-Channel Learning Base" has been established to serve thirteen countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. Based in Harare, Zimbabwe, the project will attempt to strengthen the capacity of African countries to develop effective distance teaching systems.

Through support from The Commonwealth of Learning (COL)/Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) and coordinated by the Programme Advisory Committee for Southern Africa, DEASA has emerged as a major professional association for human resource development in the sub-region. Its main activities have focused on the training of staff in the various aspects of distance education, particularly course writing and editing, the application of media technologies, the production and distribution of handbooks developed at the training workshops, and the production of a regular newsletter to facilitate information sharing among the members.

The latest development in international collaboration for the training of distance educators is the Rajiv Gandhi Fellowship Scheme, an initiative of COL in association with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and with support from the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.

7.7 GLOSSARY

ODE: System wherein teachers and learners ned not necessarily be present either at same place or same time.

ODL: Flexible in regard to modalities and timing of teaching and learning.

COL: Intergovernmental organization solely concerned with the development of Distance Education and Open Learning.

7.8 ANSWERS TO Self-Check Exercise

Self-check Exercise-1

1. May 1991
2. ii) B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Kota Open University, Yashwant Rao Chavan Open University.

Self-check Exercise-2

1. 13
2. False

Self-check Exercise-3

1. Credit System and A Grading Scale
2. UGC, AIU, AICTE, NCERT….

7.8 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

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- http://www.distancelearningportal.com/partners/icde/
- http://mhrd.gov.in/distance-learning

7.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. Explain in brief the role of Commonwealth Of Learning.
2. Name any five State Open Universities which are set up by the respective State Grants to provide Education only in the distance mode.

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UNIT-8

PROMOTION AND COORDINATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

STRUCTURE

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear Learner,

International promotion and coordination of distance education enhance access, quality, and recognition of online learning, fostering global understanding and development. ICDE is a global membership organization that promotes open and distance learning worldwide. ICDE's mission is to promote access to quality education for all, particularly through open and distance learning.

8.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss about commonwealth of Learning.
- Details about International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)
- Explain in details International Activities of IGNOU

8.3 PROMOTION AND COORDINATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) was established in 1988 through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the governments of Commonwealth nations. This intergovernmental organization was created under the initiative of Commonwealth Heads of Government to promote the growth and exchange of knowledge, resources, and technologies in open and distance learning (ODL). COL plays a crucial role in supporting developing countries by enhancing access to quality education and skill-based training.

Based in Vancouver, Canada, COL is the only intergovernmental organization exclusively dedicated to the advancement and implementation of open and distance education. It is also the sole official Commonwealth agency operating outside the United Kingdom.

COL operates with voluntary financial contributions from Commonwealth nations, with India ranking as the third-largest contributor after the United Kingdom and Canada. India also holds representation on COL's Board of Governors and Executive Committee through the Secretary in charge of Higher Education.

Key Focus Areas of COL

COL directs its efforts toward improving educational access through:

1. Development of Instructional Materials – Creating and sharing high-quality learning content.
2. Advancement of Telecommunications and Technology – Promoting digital education and innovative learning technologies.
3. Information Services – Providing educational institutions with essential knowledge-sharing platforms.
4. Training and Capacity Building – Enhancing educators' and institutions' capabilities in distance education.

Additionally, COL has established the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) in India, reinforcing its commitment to distance learning in the region. The Joint Secretary responsible for Distance Education in India serves on CEMCA's Advisory Council.

COL has been actively involved in implementing distance education projects across seventeen Commonwealth countries in Africa, including South Africa. Through its initiatives, COL continues to strengthen global distance education by leveraging technology, fostering collaboration, and ensuring high-quality learning opportunities.

International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)

The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) is the leading global membership organization for open, distance, flexible and online education**,** including e-learning, and draws its membership from institutions, educational

authorities, commercial actors, and individuals. ICDE has consultative partner status with UNESCO and shares UNESCO's key value - the universal right to education for all. ICDE further derives its position from the unique knowledge and experience of its members throughout the world in the development and use of new methodologies and emerging technologies.
ICDE was founded in 1938 in Canada as the International Council for Correspondence Education and today has members from over 60 countries worldwide**.** ICDE's Permanent Secretariat is in Oslo, Norway, and has been hosted by this country on a permanent basis since 1988. ICDE is supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and by membership fees.
To advance the interests of its members, ICDE works to:

- Promote greater educational opportunity for all in the name of personal and national development.
- Further the acceptance of a wider range of learning modes.
- Drive best practice and the highest standards of educational provision.
- Support the development of new methodologies, and use of new technologies.
- Provide opportunities for professional interaction.
- Encourage and support linguistic groups and networks at national, regional and global levels.
- Promote intercultural cooperation and understanding

The following strategic objectives have been identified for 2013-2016:

- To promote the importance of open, distance, flexible and online education, including e-learning in educational policy.
- To encourage quality in open, distance, flexible and online education, including e-learning.
- To support the development of new methodologies and technologies.
- To facilitate cooperation and networking among members.
- To strengthen ICDE membership and governance, and engage members in collaborative activity and organizational development.
- To strengthen ICDE membership and governance, and engage members in collaborative activity and organizational development.

Major Activities:

The biennial ICDE World Conference on Open and Distance Education is widely recognized as the leading world event in open and distance education and offers a forum for the presentation of cutting-edge developments, network building, and professional development.

The World Conference attracts an average of 1,000 participants from around the globe representing the research community, teaching staff, management of educational institutions, the public sector, and both training companies and suppliers from the private sector.

Projects

ICDE has run and been involved in a vast number of research and collaborative projects during its long history. Forthcoming initiatives include projects to study intra-regional collaboration, excellence and accreditation strategies, comparative issues of quality, and how successfully to overcome the digital divide.

Support and strategic advice

ICDE provides support and strategic advice to its members during the planning of field seminars, study tours and academic exchange programmes, and invites members to take part in its own study tours. ICDE can also draw upon significant experience and expertise to help its members in their search for project partners and funding sources.

Prize of excellence

ICDE rewards outstanding achievement in open and distance education through the Prize of Excellence award for both individuals and institutions. The Prize of Excellence is normally presented on a biennial basis at the ICDE World Conference.

Nominations for the award are invited from ICDE members, who are asked to provide a statement of support for their nominee.

Winners are selected by an independent, international panel, and decisions to award the prize are based on merit alone with no political or cultural considerations being made.

Publications

ICDE's online journal *Open Praxis* was relaunched in 2012. The publication aims to demonstrate creative and innovative research and highlight challenges, lessons and achievements in the practice of distance and e-learning. ICDE invited applications from potential editors from ICDE member institutions to serve for a two-year term in 2011.

Self-Check Exercise-1

1. What is the main goal of ICDE?

a) To promote open and distance education worldwide

b) To establish a global network of open universities

c) To develop quality standards for online learning

d) To provide funding for distance education projects

2. Which of the following is an ICDE activity?

a) Accrediting online courses

b) Organizing international conferences

c) Developing online learning platforms

d) Providing scholarships for distance learners

8.4 INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF IGNOU

IGNOU operates on an international scale, offering its programs in numerous countries, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sultanate of Oman, Bahrain, Doha, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Maldives, Nepal, Kenya, Fiji, Caribbean Islands, Samoa, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan, Singapore, and Ghana.

Additionally, the university collaborates with UNESCO and the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa to provide distance education programs in Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, and Ghana. Similarly, through an agreement with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), IGNOU extends its educational programs to Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, Seychelles, Jamaica, Malawi, and Belize.

IGNOU plays an active role in international educational networks, such as the SAARC Consortium for Open and Distance Learning (SACODiL) and the Global Mega Universities Network (GMUNET). Additionally, various open universities and institutions worldwide are engaged in advancing and coordinating distance education.

Collaborations and Partnerships

IGNOU has partnered with UNESCO and the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa to facilitate distance education programs across multiple countries.

International Programs

The university provides its programs internationally, covering regions such as the United Arab Emirates, Sultanate of Oman, Bahrain, Doha, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Maldives, Nepal, Kenya, Fiji, Caribbean Islands, Samoa, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan, Singapore, and Ghana.

Regional Focus

IGNOU has placed special emphasis on the educational development of India’s North-East Region, establishing eight regional centers to enhance learning opportunities in the area.

Support for Disadvantaged Groups

The university has taken steps to support disadvantaged communities, particularly women and underprivileged regions. IGNOU has developed specific educational programs for women and set up study centers in backward areas and districts with low female literacy rates, ensuring greater access to education for all.

Self-Check Exercise-2

1. Which international organization has recognized IGNOU's efforts in open education?

a) UNESCO

b) Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

c) International Council for Distance Education (ICDE)

d) All of the above

2. Which of the following international initiatives has IGNOU been a part of?

a) Open Educational Resources (OER)

b) Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

c) International Open Education Consortium (IOEC)

d) All of the above

8.5 ANSWERS TO SLEF CHECK EXERCISE

Self-Check Exercise-1

1. a) To promote open and distance education worldwide
2. b) Organizing international conferences

Self-Check Exercise-2

1. d) All of the above

2. c) International Open Education Consortium (IOEC)

8.6 SUMMARY

IGNOU offers academic programs through overseas study centers in various countries. These canters provide opportunities for international students to pursue IGNOU courses. IGNOU offers academic programs through overseas study centers in various countries. These centres provide opportunities for international students to pursue IGNOU courses. Some of the countries with OSCs include Nepal, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Jeddah, Oman, Riyadh, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Mauritius. IGNOU has participated in ICDE conferences and workshops. IGNOU has collaborated with ICDE on research and capacity building projects

8.7 GLOSSARY

Coordination: The act of organizing and managing international distance education initiatives.

Global Initiatives: International programs promoting access to quality education through distance learning.

Promotion: The act of encouraging and supporting distance education internationally.

8.8 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

- Dikshit,H.P foreword to V.Venugopal Reddy and Manjulika .S , Ed., (2002), Towards Virtulisation Open and Distance Learning, Kogan Page India Private Limited, New Delhi.
- http://www.distancelearningportal.com/partners/icde/
- http://mhrd.gov.in/distance-learning

8.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, check you progress by attempting the following questions:

1. What international organizations play a key role in promoting distance education globally?

2. How do international conferences and seminars contribute to the development of distance education?

3. What initiatives have been taken by international organizations to promote quality in distance education?

4. How do international collaborations and partnerships enhance the reach and impact of distance education?

5. What role do international standards and guidelines play in ensuring quality in distance education?

6. How can international distance education programs promote cultural exchange and understanding?

UNIT- 9

SELF LEARNING MATERIAL (SLM) IN ODL

STRUCTURE

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Despite the availability of various modern tools for educators in distance learning, print continues to play a crucial role in most courses. In 2004, statistics showed that only 24 percent of distance learners had access to high-speed internet at home. While this figure has undoubtedly risen over the years, completely eliminating print materials from open and distance learning (ODL) programs could limit access for some students. Printed materials can function either as the primary mode of instruction or as supplementary resources, such as textbooks and other required readings.

Print remains a key component of distance education, particularly in developing countries, where technological infrastructure is either lacking or prohibitively expensive. As technology has advanced, instructional materials in ODL have evolved

from print-based content to interactive multimedia, web-based resources, and online learning platforms.

This unit explores various aspects of Self-Learning Materials (SLM) in ODL, including its concept, differences from traditional textbooks, stages of development, and evaluation criteria. These elements will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

9.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you would be able to:

- Explain the concept and characteristics of self-learning material (SLM).
- Describe importance of SLM.
- Explain steps in development of SLM in ODL.
- Discuss the implications of theories of learning for course designing in distance education.

9.3 CONCEPT OF SELF LEARNING MATERIAL (SLM) AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN ODL

Self-learning material (SLM) is specifically designed for a particular group of learners, keeping their needs in mind. It follows a learner-centred approach, using clear learning objectives and structured activities while maintaining a simple, informal, and personal tone. The content you are reading now is also an example of SLM. The structure of SLM is influenced by the institution offering the program. Once the curriculum and syllabus are finalized, detailed aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and outlines are developed.

The key characteristics of SLM include:

- **Self-explanatory**: The material is straightforward, conceptually clear, and direct, eliminating the need for external assistance.
- **Self-contained**: It includes all necessary resources, ensuring learners do not need to look for additional materials. The content is covered comprehensively within the scope of SLM.
- **Self-directed**: It functions like a teacher, providing guidance, motivation, and instruction. It engages learners through structured content, language, explanations, illustrations, diagrams, and assessments.
- **Self-motivating**: Since distance learners are physically separated from instructors, SLM plays a crucial role in keeping them engaged. It stimulates curiosity, encourages learners, presents relevant issues, and connects learning to real-life situations, making the process meaningful and enjoyable.
- **Self-evaluating**: Without direct teacher supervision, learners need a way to assess their progress. SLM facilitates this through self-check activities, assessments, and reflective exercises, enabling learners to gauge their understanding.
- **Self-paced**: The content is structured in a way that allows learners to set their own pace. It accommodates different learning abilities, ensuring flexibility in the learning process.

Importance of SLM in ODL

Self-learning material serves as the most critical resource for learners in open and distance education. It plays multiple roles as a teacher, guide, motivator, and evaluator, making it indispensable. When other instructional media are not incorporated into the instructional design, SLM becomes the primary source of learning, offering a comprehensive educational experience to students.

There is also a fundamental difference in the way SLM is written vis-à-vis text

Table 4.1: Difference of SLM and Textbook

Issues	**Textbook**	**Self-Learning Material**
Focus	Subject content	Learner
Aim	Scholarly writing	Successful teaching
Market	Wider	Specific target group
Objectives	May not be stated	Clearly stated
Structure	Only part of index	Defined outside and within text also
Self-check Questions	Not given in text	Given within text
Language	Formal and impersonal	Informal, simple and personal
Presentation	Dense and loaded	Unpacked and loose
Threats	Not anticipated	Anticipate difficulties and resolve
Eligibility	Prior experience is need to understand	Support is provided within text so no need for prior experience
Reading	Can be read passively	Demands active response

Since now you understand what SLM is and how it differs from any text book, we would be discussing steps in developing SLM.

Self-check exercise1

1. Give any three differences between Textbook and Self- learning Material.

2. State True or False: SLM is informal, simple and personal.

9.4 DEVELOPMENT OF SLM IN ODL

Each open and distance learning institution establishes its own process for developing self-learning material (SLM). While specific steps may differ, the fundamental principles remain consistent. SLM must align with course objectives, integrate print materials with other learning resources for maximum effectiveness, provide a mechanism for feedback, and offer adequate support to learners throughout their learning journey.

Instructional development follows a structured approach to systematically plan, create, and modify instructional content based on learner needs and subject requirements. This process is particularly crucial in distance education, where instructors and students often have limited shared background and minimal direct interaction.

Although various instructional development models exist, most adhere to the core stages of design, development, evaluation, and revision.

Before reaching the learner, SLM goes through three main stages: planning, development, and production (including revision). These steps ensure that the material is well-structured, engaging, and meets the learning objectives effectively.

Table 4.2: Stages of Development of Course in ODL

Course Planning	Course Development	Course Production
Needs assessment	Arranging topics	Editing
Defining objectives	Unit outlines	Layout
Resource analysis	Course writing guides	Printing
Resource selection	Decision about writers	Despatch
Development and trial	Writing texts	Revision
Self and external evaluation		
Feedback		

• **THE DESIGN STAGE**

- **Identify the Need for Instruction** – The first step is to determine the necessity for instruction by examining external data that justify the need. Consider the factors that led to this requirement and previous experiences that indicate whether the planned instruction can effectively address it.
- **Understand the Audience** – To cater to distance learners, it is essential to assess their demographic characteristics, such as age, cultural background, past learning experiences, interests, and educational qualifications. Evaluating their familiarity with instructional methods and delivery formats will help in designing suitable content. Understanding how learners intend to apply their acquired knowledge is also crucial. If possible, instructors should visit learning centers and engage with prospective students through discussions. This not only provides insight into their needs but also reassures learners that their instructor is not just a distant figure behind technology. Consulting colleagues with experience in working with similar learner groups can also be beneficial.
- **Define Instructional Goals and Objectives** – Based on the nature of the learning challenge and the characteristics of students, instructional goals and objectives should be set. Goals provide broad learning expectations, while objectives outline specific steps needed to achieve these goals.

THE DEVELOPMENT STAGE

- **Create a Content Framework** – Instructional development starts by structuring the content based on identified learning needs, target audience analysis, instructional goals, and the desired course content.
- **Evaluate Existing Resources** – Before creating new materials, it is important to assess whether available instructional resources align with the course objectives. Pre-packaged materials, such as telecourses, may not always be relevant to distance learners, especially those with diverse educational

backgrounds. If such resources are used, additional contextual elements should be introduced to ensure the content resonates with learners.

- **Organize and Develop Content** – A key challenge in distance education is making learning relatable through appropriate examples. The best examples simplify complex topics and ensure learners focus on the core content. It is especially important in diverse rural and multicultural settings, where learners may have different perspectives from the instructor. Engaging with a sample of the target audience can help identify suitable content examples.
- **Select and Develop Materials and Methods** – Effective course delivery often requires a combination of print, audio, video, and digital resources, along with face-to-face interactions when possible. The selection of materials should consider content requirements, learner needs, and available technological infrastructure. It is crucial to ensure that all learners have equal access to instructional delivery methods to avoid discrepancies in learning experiences.

THE EVALUATION STAGE

- **Assess Goals and Objectives** – Evaluation helps determine whether instructional methods and materials are effectively achieving the intended learning outcomes. The first actual implementation of the course serves as an opportunity to assess its effectiveness. If possible, pilot testing on a smaller scale should be conducted before full-scale implementation.
- **Develop an Evaluation Plan** – A structured evaluation approach should be established to assess the effectiveness of the instructional material.
    - *Formative evaluation* occurs during course development and delivery, allowing adjustments to be made in real-time. Distance educators can use methods such as feedback postcards after each session, which highlight strengths, weaknesses, technical issues, and content gaps.
    - *Summative evaluation* takes place after course completion to gather insights for future improvements. Conducting feedback sessions where students brainstorm potential enhancements can be valuable. To encourage honest discussions, a neutral facilitator may be involved in these sessions.
- **Gather and Analyze Evaluation Data** – Once the course is implemented, evaluation data should be collected and analyzed to identify gaps or weaknesses in instructional design. It is equally important to recognize successful aspects. The results will serve as a foundation for revising and improving the course.

THE REVISION STAGE

Even the most well-planned distance learning course can benefit from revisions. Recognizing the need for continuous improvement enhances confidence in the effectiveness of the course. Revisions are typically informed by evaluation findings, feedback from students, colleagues, and subject experts, as well as the instructor's self-reflection on the course's strengths and areas needing enhancement.

Revisions can be minor, such as breaking down large instructional units into smaller sections, improving assignment feedback, or enhancing student interaction. In some cases, significant changes may be required. Before implementing major modifications,

they should be tested on a small scale with learners, content experts, or instructors. However, it is essential to acknowledge that each batch of distance learners may have unique characteristics, and a revision that benefits one group may not be suitable for another.

Self-check exercise2

1. -----, ----- and -----are the three stages of development of courses in ODL.

2. In which stage there is a room for improvement in even the most carefully developed distance delivered course?

9.5 FACTORS AFFECTING DESIGN OF PRINT MATERIAL

- **The Number of Learners Enrolled** – The overall cost of developing curriculum and learning materials is influenced by the number of students enrolled. A larger student base allows fixed administrative expenses to be distributed across more learners, thereby reducing the cost per student. However, most cost reductions occur in the early stages, and as enrollment continues to grow, the efficiency gains diminish. Additionally, managing a larger student population may introduce complexities that could ultimately increase costs.
- **The Size of the Curriculum** – A broader curriculum requires the creation of more courses and instructional materials, which increases expenses. Unless a rise in student enrolment balances out these additional costs, the per-student cost will escalate. Course cost projections typically consider three factors: the direct cost per student multiplied by the number of students, the direct cost of maintaining a course in the curriculum multiplied by the curriculum load, and the cost of institutional overheads, which are usually fixed.
- **The Number of Years Over Which Courses Are Offered Without Change** – Capturing knowledge in formats such as text, audio, video, or digital media ensures that course materials remain available for future learners. This allows costs to be distributed over multiple years, making course development more economical. However, materials that are difficult to update can become outdated, requiring costly revisions. To prevent such issues, testing materials before large-scale production is advisable.
- **Containment of Course Development Costs** – Reducing the number of newly created materials can help control expenses. This can be achieved by supplementing existing textbooks with additional “wraparound” content that provides context and commentary. While this method is effective for learners who can study independently, less experienced students may require more structured and integrated materials.
- **Sharing Course Development Costs** – Institutions can lower costs by collaborating on course development. One method is publishing course materials as books in partnership with commercial publishers, generating revenue from sales to offset development costs. However, royalties from public sales are often modest. Institutions may also partner with other organizations to co-develop courses, but such collaborations can be challenging to initiate. Another option is purchasing pre-existing materials from other distance-learning institutions, though licensing fees can be significant. In some cases, developing materials in-house may be more cost-effective if a large number of copies are needed.

- **Technology Choice** – Since distance education emerged in the 19th century, the range of technologies used for instruction has expanded significantly. Each technology has unique cost implications, depending on equipment, operational expenses, and labor requirements for content creation and delivery. More advanced technologies often necessitate specialized technical staff. Generally, print materials, audiotapes, and pre-recorded instructional television (such as videotaped lectures) are the most cost-effective options for student populations ranging from under 250 to over 1,000 per year. With the rise of online education, there has been a shift toward interactive learning, where content is increasingly developed through student engagement rather than pre-prepared materials.
- **The Level of Student Support** – Effective distance education requires three key elements: high-quality instructional materials, efficient logistical systems, and responsive student support services. However, student support expenses rise with enrollment numbers, making distance education less cost-effective compared to traditional education. As a result, face-to-face interactions and individualized correspondence support are often limited. To optimize resources, support services should focus on students who need them most and be delivered as efficiently as possible using strategies from service management.
- **Working Practices** – The structure of course design significantly affects costs. Courses that require extensive study hours tend to demand more materials, and developing these materials often involves multiple contributors. Course teams, where responsibility for content and teaching strategies is shared, have proven to be effective but costly. Reducing these costs can be achieved by appointing an academic editor to oversee independent contributors rather than relying on a full course team. Additionally, designing smaller course modules that can be created by just one or two individuals helps keep expenses under control.
- **Labour Market Practices** – Cost efficiency can be enhanced by hiring course developers, editors, designers, and tutors on short-term contracts or paying them per student, per hour, or per task. Some open and distance learning institutions rely heavily on this model, operating with minimal permanent academic staff.
- **Structural Practices** – Open and distance learning systems require various functions such as content development, material production, distribution, student administration, teaching, and assessment. While some institutions integrate all these functions within a single structure, others outsource certain tasks to external providers. It is common for distance learning institutions to collaborate with media production agencies, printing companies, and local educational institutions to deliver ervices efficiently.

Self-check exercise-3

1. How does paper quality affect the design of print materials?

2. What role does the printing process play in designing print materials?

9.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THEORIES OF LEARNING FOR COURSE DESIGNING IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Here are three commonly known learning theories main categories or philosophical frameworks under which learning theories fall: behaviorism, cognitive and constructive. Behaviorism focuses only on the objectively observable aspects of learning. Cognitive theories look beyond behavior to explain brain-based learning. And constructivism views learning as a process in which the learner actively constructs or builds new ideas or concepts.

- **BEHAVIOURISM**

The behaviorist school sees the mind as a “black box,” in the sense that a response to a stimulus can be observed quantitatively, totally ignoring the effect of thought processes occurring in the mind. Skinner argued that since it is not possible to prove the inner processes with any available scientific procedures, researchers should concentrate instead on ‘cause and-effect relationships’ that could be established by observation. Behaviorists claim that it is the observable behavior that indicates whether or not the learner has learned something, and not what is going on in the learner’s head .

However behaviorists suggest Implications for Online Learning with respect to the behaviourist school:

1. Learners should be clearly informed about the expected learning outcomes so they can establish their own expectations and assess whether they have successfully met the objectives of the online lesson.
2. Course developers must structure instructional sequences by incorporating conditional or unconditional branching to other learning units while pre-determining the available choices within the course.

3. Learners need to be assessed to verify whether they have successfully achieved the intended learning outcomes.

4. The behaviorist learning approach emphasizes demonstrating the necessary operations, procedures, or skills by breaking them down into smaller components with appropriate explanations before expecting learners to replicate them. Proficiency is developed through frequent reviews, strategic check tests, and repeated practice with feedback.

COGNITIVISM

Cognitivism emphasizes the importance of understanding the internal processes of the mind rather than treating it as a "black box." In this approach, learners are viewed as information processors, similar to computers. Cognitive psychology asserts that learning involves memory, motivation, and thinking, with reflection playing a crucial role in the learning process. Learning is considered an internal process, and the amount retained depends on the learner’s cognitive capacity, the effort invested, the depth of processing, and their prior knowledge. This perspective also frames learning as an information-processing activity, where different types of memory are utilized throughout the learning process.

Cognitive theorists acknowledge individual differences and emphasize the need for diverse learning strategies in online instruction to accommodate these variations. Instructional designers should take the following considerations into account:

1. Learning materials should incorporate activities that cater to various cognitive and learning styles.
2. Instructional content should connect new information with prior knowledge stored in long-term memory by using advanced organizers to activate existing cognitive structures.
3. Learning content should be structured into manageable chunks to prevent cognitive overload. If more than five to nine items need to be learned, structured information maps—such as linear, hierarchical, or spider-shaped formats—should be provided.

CONSTRUCTIVISM

Constructivism views learning as an active process where new knowledge is built upon a learner's prior experiences. This theory suggests that knowledge is constructed rather than passively absorbed, making it an effective approach to learning. A key principle of constructivism is situated learning, which emphasizes that knowledge should be learned within relevant contexts. Learning activities should enable learners to contextualize information, enhancing their understanding.

In constructivist approaches, the instructor's role extends beyond observation and assessment. Educators actively engage with learners by asking questions, encouraging reasoning, and fostering inquiry-based learning. Constructivism places learners at the center of the learning process, with instructors serving as facilitators. This approach allows learners to develop their own interpretations of knowledge, influenced by their background, culture, and worldview. Social interactions and personal experiences significantly contribute to learning.

Key implications for course material design include:

1. Instructors should provide interactive instructional methods to support learners in constructing their own knowledge.
2. Learners should have control over their learning process, with a guided discovery approach that allows them to set their learning goals while receiving structured support from the instructor.
3. Collaborative and cooperative learning should be encouraged through interactive learning activities to promote constructivist learning.
4. Learning should be meaningful and engaging by incorporating real-world examples and case studies to illustrate theoretical concepts effectively.

Self-check exercise- 4

1. Which school sees the mind as a 'Black Box'?

    a) Behaviourism
    b) Cognitivism
    c) Constructivism
    d) None of the above

2. Which theorists see learners as being active rather than passive?

9.7 SUMMARY

In this lesson, we explored self-learning materials (SLM) from the learner's perspective. SLM plays a crucial role in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system as it is designed to be self-explanatory, self-motivating, and self-evaluative. We

discussed the characteristics and development of SLM, along with the key factors that influence its effectiveness. Additionally, we examined how various learning theories impact course design in distance education. With this understanding, you are now equipped to assess self-learning materials on your own.

9.8 GLOSSARY

SLM: Self Learning Materials

EVALUATION: Determination of the value, nature, character or quality of something or someone.

IMPLICATIONS: The effect that something will have on something else in the future.

9.9 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE 1, 2, 3 & 4.

Self-check exercise-1

1. Any differences of your choice
2. True

Self-check exercise-2

1. Planning, Development and Production
2. Revision Stage

Self-check exercise-3

1. Affects the choice of colour, imagery, and finish
2. Determines the colour mode, resolution, and file format)

Self-check exercise-4

1. Behaviourism
2. Constructivism

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9.11 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, check you progress by attempting the following questions:

Q.1 What is SLM? How it is different from textbook?

Q.2 Explain the stages of development of course in SLM.

Q.3 Discuss the implications of theories of learning for course designing in distance education.

Q.4 What is the ultimate goal of Student Learning Management, and how does it impact student outcomes, instructional quality, and educational equity?

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UNIT-10

APPLICATIONS OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION-I

STRUCTURE

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learners,

In this fast-growing world, communication technologies (radios, televisions, telephones, and the latest forms such as computers and cell phones) are indispensable. Educational systems are evolving rapidly, driven by technological

advancements. As new technologies emerge, they replace older ones and impact educational systems worldwide. Many university systems have adopted distance education to address educational challenges, utilizing advanced communication technologies and learning from successful implementations in other countries.

10.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- Discuss distance education technologies and media utilization.
- Explain the advantages of audio technologies.
- Describe the guidelines for incorporating video technologies.
- Explain emerging trends in technology.

10.3 DISTANCE EDUCATION TECHNOLOGIES, MEDIA UTILIZATION AND AUDIO TECHNOLOGIES

Distance education usually takes two forms:

1. Independent learner operation.
2. Classroom instruction accompanied by distance learning.

Technological transmissions and media applications are critical for delivering instructional materials to distant learners through print, audio, and video media. These technologies can be applied in both traditional and modern distance education systems in higher education worldwide.

AUDIO TECHNOLOGIES

Audio technologies offer a cost-effective way to enhance distance education. These technologies include voicemail, audio files and CDs, audio conferences, and podcasts, each providing different levels of interaction and accessibility for learners.

Voicemail

Voicemail is a widely used communication tool, especially when direct interaction is not possible. It plays an important role in distance learning by allowing students to leave messages for instructors at any time. Advanced voicemail systems also enable instructors to send messages to groups of students simultaneously. Additionally, voicemail serves as an alternative to email for students who do not have internet access. Since telephone access is widespread, checking voicemail messages is convenient for learners. However, there are limitations, such as restrictions on message length and the need for toll-free numbers for students outside the local area. Due to these constraints, voicemail is typically used as a supplementary tool in distance education.

Audio Files and CDs

Audio files and CDs provide an affordable way to deliver course content. Entire lectures, discussions, and instructional materials can be shared through these formats. Audio is particularly valuable in subjects that require tone and pronunciation, such as language learning, and can also benefit students with reading difficulties. These materials are easy to produce, distribute, and use, making them a practical option. However, they lack interactivity and visual support, which some learners may find necessary.

Audio Conferences

Telephones, being one of the most accessible communication tools worldwide, play a key role in distance learning. Audio conferencing allows instructors to reach multiple students at the same time through conference calls. If speakerphones are available at certain locations, several students can participate together, engaging in discussions guided by the instructor. More advanced systems use bridges that allow numerous participants to dial in using a toll-free number, creating a virtual classroom where discussions can take place. Audio conferencing helps build a sense of community, which is essential for an effective distance learning experience. However, as phone-based sessions lack visual elements, keeping students engaged for long periods can be challenging. To make audio conferences more effective, sessions should be structured, kept concise, and supported with visual materials distributed beforehand.

Table 11.1

Appropriate Media in Distance Teaching

	Information	Producers	Principles and concepts	Attitudes and values
Audio	- Readiness - Audio/videotape - Lecture - Student presentation - Guest speaker	- Demonstrations - Lecture - Readiness	- class discussions - peer teaching - case studies - panel discussions - group projects	- reaction panel - panel discussions - class discussions - case studies - role playing
Audio graphics	-	- demonstration - lecture - readiness	- readiness - audio/ videotape - lecture - student presentation guest speaker	-reaction panel -panel discussions -class discussions -case studies -role playing

Two-way audio/one way audio	-readiness -audio/videotape -lecture -student presentation -guest speaker	-demonstrations -lecture -readiness	-class discussions -peer teaching -case studies -panel discussions -group projects	-reaction panel -panel discussions -class discussions -case studies -role playing
Two-way audio/two-way video	-readiness -audio/videotape -lecture -student presentation - guest speaker	-demonstrations -lecture -readiness	-class discussions -peer teaching -case studies -panel discussions -group projects	-reaction panel -panel discussions -class discussions -case studies -role playing
Computer Conferences	-readiness - guest speaker	-readiness -tutorials	-class discussions -panel discussions -group projects	-reaction panel -class discussions -debates -role playing

Podcasts

Podcasts offer an efficient way to provide learners with digital audio and video content, making them accessible to students who have a computer and internet access. Learners can subscribe to an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed, which enables automatic downloads of new episodes posted online. These files can be transferred to portable devices such as CDs, MP3 players, or PDAs for convenient playback. The term "podcast" itself is derived from combining "iPod" and "broadcasting." Many younger students are already familiar with podcasts, as they were first introduced through platforms like iTunes. However, some learners who are less familiar with technology may require guidance to set up and access podcasts. If podcasts are used as a primary mode of course delivery, it is crucial to ensure that students have access to a computer or other compatible devices.

Self- Check Exercise-1

1. Which of the following is NOT a benefit of using audio files and CDs in distance education?

   a. They are easy to create and duplicate.
   b. They provide visual elements for students.

c. They can deliver entire lectures and instructions.
d. They are especially useful for courses requiring nuances of inflection.

2. Podcasts in distance education require students to have regular access to which of the following?

a. A telephone.
b. A landline.
c. A computer with internet access.
d. An audio cassette player.

10. ADVANTAGES OF AUDIO TECHNOLOGIES

1. **Inexpensive** – Audio and voice-based technologies are relatively low-cost, making them an affordable option for educational institutions and learners.
2. **Easily accessible** – A large portion of the global population has access to telephones, whether landline or mobile. Additionally, many students in developed regions have access to audio playback devices like cassette players or CD players, either at home or in their cars.
3. **Easy to use** – Most individuals are already familiar with using telephones and basic audio devices, eliminating the need for complex installations or configurations. Unlike other digital learning tools, audio technologies do not require specialized software or advanced technical knowledge, making them a user-friendly choice for learners and educators.

While audio technologies are cost-effective, widely available, and simple to operate, it is important to consider that some students may not have access to the necessary devices. When planning distance learning courses that rely on audio, institutions should assess whether additional support or accommodations are needed, as these factors may impact costs.

Self- Check Exercise-2

1. The main advantage of audio technologies in education is their _____.

10.5 SUMMARY

The unit discusses the importance of communication technologies in modern education systems, particularly in the context of distance education. It explores various distance education technologies and media utilization, emphasizing audio technologies due to their cost-effectiveness and accessibility. The chapter covers the use of voicemail, audio files and CDs, audio conferences, and podcasts as tools for distance learning. Each technology's advantages and limitations are discussed, highlighting their roles in enhancing the learning experience for students who may not have access to more advanced technologies. The chapter also presents a table summarizing appropriate media in distance teaching and outlines the advantages of audio technologies.

10.6 GLOSSARY

- **Distance Education**: A method of learning where students are not physically present in a traditional classroom setting but receive education through various communication technologies.
- **Voicemail**: An audio messaging system that allows students and instructors to leave and receive messages when direct interaction is not possible.
- **Audio Files and CDs**: Recorded audio materials that can be used to deliver lectures, instructions, and other educational content.
- **Audio Conferences**: Telephone-based conferences that allow multiple participants to engage in discussions or lectures simultaneously.
- **Podcasts**: Digital audio or video files that can be downloaded and played on various devices, often used in a series format for educational purposes.
- **RSS (Really Simple Syndication)**: A web feed that allows users to access updates to online content in a standardized format.
- **Net Generation**: A term referring to the generation of people who grew up with the internet and digital technologies.

10.7 ANSWER TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE 1 & 2.

Self- Check Exercise-1

1 (b) They provide visual elements for students.

2 (c) A computer with internet access.

Self- Check Exercise-2

1. Cost effectiveness

10.8 REFERENCES /SUGGESTIVE READINGS

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10.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions:

1. What are the two main forms of distance education mentioned in the chapter?

2. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of using voicemail in distance education.

3. How can audio files and CDs be utilized effectively in distance education?

4.What are the benefits of using audio conferences for distance learning, and what are some potential challenges?

5.Explain how podcasts can be used in distance education and the considerations instructors must keep in mind when incorporating them into their courses.

UNIT- 11

APPLICATIONS OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION-II

STRUCTURE

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learners,

In the realm of distance education, video and computer technologies have revolutionized learning by integrating multimedia elements that enhance engagement and accessibility. Computer technologies encompass a spectrum of tools such as email, online collaborations, and web-based resources. Email, for instance, facilitates asynchronous communication between instructors and learners, allowing for the exchange of assignments, feedback, and discussions. Online collaborations, including internet chat and conferencing, enable real-time interactions and virtual office hours, fostering immediate feedback and enhancing the learning experience. Web-based resources provide access to vast information repositories, supporting research and supplementing traditional course materials.

11.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss computer technologies in distance education.
- Explain the advantages of computer technologies.
- Describe the guidelines for incorporating video technologies.
- Explain emerging trends in technology.

11.3 COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES AND ITS ADVANTAGES

Computer technologies in distance education include email, online collaboration (internet chat and conferencing), and web-based resources.

E-mail

It is a fundamental and versatile tool in distance education, offering a straightforward and cost-effective means of communication between instructors and students. Asynchronous by nature, email allows learners to send and receive messages at any time, making it particularly useful for those who cannot participate in real-time interactions due to time zone differences or scheduling conflicts. Entire courses can be structured around email exchanges, where instructors distribute assignments, provide feedback, and facilitate discussions. Students can submit their work, ask questions, and seek clarification without the pressure of immediate response, fostering a more reflective learning process.

Moreover, email can supplement other educational technologies, such as print, audio, or video materials, by providing an additional layer of communication and support. Bulletin boards and listservs, which are often integrated with email systems, enhance this interaction by allowing for group discussions and announcements. These platforms enable students to engage with their peers and instructors, share resources, and collaborate on projects.

Despite its simplicity, email is highly adaptable. It supports attachments, which means that documents, presentations, and multimedia files can be easily shared. This flexibility makes email a powerful tool for delivering a variety of educational content. However, for effective use in distance education, it is essential that both instructors and students have reliable internet access and basic email proficiency. Additionally, managing email communication can be challenging if not organized properly, thus, clear guidelines and expectations should be established to ensure efficient and meaningful interactions.

Online Collaboration: Internet Chat and Conferencing

Online Collaboration: Internet Chat and Conferencing are essential components of computer technologies in distance education, enabling real-time communication and interaction among students and instructors. These tools include instant messaging, online chat, shared whiteboards, and videoconferencing platforms. Internet chat

allows for text-based communication, where participants can discuss topics, ask questions, and share resources instantaneously. This method is particularly beneficial for students who need quick responses or prefer written communication. On the other hand, conferencing tools like videoconferencing and shared whiteboards provide a more immersive experience. Videoconferencing allows participants to see and hear each other, simulating face-to-face interactions, which can enhance understanding and engagement. Shared whiteboards enable collaborative work, where multiple users can write, draw, and interact with content in real-time, making it ideal for group projects and brainstorming sessions. These synchronous technologies facilitate immediate feedback and dynamic discussions, enriching the learning experience by fostering a sense of community and collaboration among distant learners. While highly effective, these tools require reliable internet access and adequate technological infrastructure to ensure smooth and uninterrupted communication.

Web-based Resources

Web based resources refer to educational materials and tools available online, offering a wide range of information and interactive learning opportunities. These resources, accessible through the internet, significantly enhance distance education by providing formats such as text, images, videos, and interactive elements. Types of web-based resources include educational websites like Khan Academy and Coursera; online libraries and databases such as JSTOR and Google Scholar; e-books and e-journals from Project Gutenberg and DOAJ; interactive learning tools like PhET Interactive Simulations and Quizlet; multimedia content from YouTube Education and TED-Ed; online courses and MOOCs offered by platforms like edX and FutureLearn; and discussion forums and online communities where students and educators can interact and share knowledge.

ADVANTAGES OF COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES

1. Self-paced instruction: Learners can proceed at their own pace, receive immediate feedback, and review content as needed.
2. Incorporation of multimedia: Text, graphics, audio, and video can be easily integrated.
3. High interactivity: Computer technologies allow for embedded questions, interactions, and online collaboration.
4. Written record: Computer logs provide a written record of discussions and instructions.
5. Inexpensive: With internet access, participating in computer-based distance learning is relatively inexpensive.
6. Worldwide access: The internet reaches millions globally at a low cost.

Self-Check Exercise- 1

1. Which of the following is an advantage of email in distance education?

    a) Real-time communication

    b) Asynchronous instruction

c) High cost

d) Lack of written record

2. What is an example of synchronous technology in online collaboration?

    a) Email

    b) Instant messaging

    c) Bulletin boards

    d) Printed materials

3. Which computer technology allows for real-time communication and immediate feedback?

    a) Email

    b) Online chat and conferencing

    c) Web-based resources

    d) Bulletin boards

11.4 VIDEO TECHNOLOGIES AND ITS ADVANTAGES

Video technologies add visual content to distance education, enhancing the learning experience. These technologies include videotapes, DVDs, satellite videoconferencing, microwave television conferencing, cable and broadcast television, desktop videoconferencing, and internet videoconferencing.

Videotape and DVD

Videotape and DVD are traditional video technologies used in distance education to deliver instructional content. Videotapes, typically in VHS format, and DVDs are physical media formats that allow educators to record and distribute lectures, demonstrations, and panel presentations. These formats are particularly useful for providing visual and auditory learning experiences, enhancing the understanding of complex topics through visual aids and demonstrations. Videotapes have been widely used since the late 20th century, offering an affordable and accessible means of distributing educational content. However, they lack interactivity and can be cumbersome to distribute and store. DVDs, introduced later, offer higher storage capacity, better video quality, and durability compared to videotapes. They also provide features like menus and chapters, making it easier for students to navigate content. Both videotapes and DVDs are easy to use, requiring only a VCR or DVD player, which are common household devices. Despite the rise of digital and streaming technologies, videotapes and DVDs remain valuable in settings where internet access is limited or unreliable, ensuring that educational content can reach all students regardless of their technological capabilities.

Satellite Videoconferencing

Satellite Videoconferencing is a technology that facilitates live video communication between multiple locations using satellites, making it particularly valuable for educational purposes by connecting students and educators over long distances with high-quality video and audio. It involves the transmission of signals from an uplink ground station to a satellite, which then relays these signals to multiple downlink stations. The required equipment includes satellite transmitters, large parabolic antennas, receivers, and end-user devices like monitors, microphones, and cameras. This setup typically supports one-way video and two-way audio, ensuring clear communication for lectures and interactive discussions. Satellite videoconferencing covers vast geographical areas, reaching remote locations where other internet connections might be unreliable, and is highly reliable, although it is expensive and technically complex, with potential latency issues. Despite these challenges, it is widely used for virtual classrooms, guest lectures, and collaborative projects, offering a powerful tool for bridging geographical gaps in education.

Microwave Television Conferencing

Microwave Television Conferencing is a method of distance education that uses microwave radio frequencies to transmit video and audio signals between locations. This technology serves as a less expensive alternative to satellite videoconferencing, although it has a more limited range. For effective transmission, both the sending and receiving sites must be equipped with microwave transmission and reception equipment. Microwave television conferencing is particularly useful for connecting classrooms or educational centers within a relatively short geographic area. It offers real-time, synchronous communication, enabling interactive learning experiences that include live lectures, discussions, and visual demonstrations. The main advantage of microwave television conferencing is its cost-effectiveness compared to satellite systems, though it does require a clear line of sight between the transmission and reception points, which can limit its deployment in certain terrains or urban environments. Despite these limitations, microwave television conferencing remains a viable option for educational institutions looking to implement real-time video communication without the higher costs associated with satellite technology.

Cable and Broadcast Television

Cable and Broadcast Television in the context of distance education refers to the use of television networks to deliver instructional content to students. This method involves the transmission of one-way video content through cable TV systems or broadcast channels, which can reach a large audience simultaneously. For effective delivery, it requires a studio where the educational content is produced and recorded, as well as access to cable or broadcast channels for transmission. The primary advantage of this method is its ability to provide high-quality, visually engaging content to a broad audience, including those in remote areas where internet access might be limited.

Cable and broadcast television can be used to deliver a variety of educational materials, such as recorded lectures, demonstrations, panel discussions, and educational programs. Students can watch these programs live or record them for later viewing, allowing for flexibility in accessing the content. However, this method lacks

interactivity, as it is predominantly one-way communication from the instructor to the students. To address this, supplementary materials and assignments can be provided through other means, such as print or online resources.

Despite the rise of internet-based educational technologies, cable and broadcast television remain valuable tools in distance education, particularly in regions with limited internet infrastructure. They provide a reliable and accessible way to disseminate educational content to a wide audience, making quality education more inclusive and far-reaching.

Desktop Videoconferencing and Internet Videoconferencing

Desktop Videoconferencing and Internet Videoconferencing are crucial technologies in modern distance education, facilitating real-time, face-to-face communication between instructors and students despite geographical distances. These technologies require a computer, camera, microphone, and high-speed internet connection to enable effective interaction. Unlike traditional video formats such as videotapes and DVDs, desktop and internet videoconferencing allow for synchronous communication, meaning participants can engage in live discussions, ask questions, and receive immediate feedback. Well-known software like Skype, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams are commonly used for these purposes. These tools enhance the learning experience by incorporating visual and auditory elements, fostering a sense of presence and connection among participants. While these technologies are generally less expensive than satellite or microwave conferencing systems, they rely heavily on stable, high-speed internet connections to function effectively, which can be a limitation in areas with poor connectivity. Nonetheless, desktop and internet videoconferencing have become integral to distance education, offering a versatile, interactive platform that supports a wide range of educational activities.

ADVANTAGES OF VIDEO TECHNOLOGIES

Video technologies in distance education offer numerous advantages, enhancing both the teaching and learning experience. Here are some key benefits:

1. Enhanced Engagement

- **Visual and Auditory Learning**: Videos cater to both visual and auditory learners, making the content more accessible and engaging.
- **Interactive Elements**: Features like quizzes, polls, and interactive discussions can be integrated into video lessons to keep students engaged.

2. Flexibility and Convenience

- **Self-Paced Learning**: Students can watch lectures and complete assignments at their own pace, accommodating different learning speeds and schedules.
- **Accessibility**: Learners can access video content from anywhere with an internet connection, making education more inclusive.

3. Improved Retention and Comprehension

- **Multisensory Learning**: Combining visual and auditory elements can enhance comprehension and retention of information.
- **Replayability**: Students can rewatch videos to review and reinforce learning, which is particularly helpful for complex subjects.

4. Scalability

- **Large Audience Reach**: Video technologies enable institutions to reach a larger audience without the limitations of physical classroom sizes.
- **Cost-Effective**: Once created, video content can be used repeatedly, reducing the need for continuous live instruction.

5. Interactive and Collaborative Learning

- **Virtual Classrooms**: Video conferencing tools allow for real-time interaction, fostering a sense of community and collaboration among students.
- **Peer Interaction**: Discussion forums and group projects can be facilitated through video platforms, enhancing peer-to-peer learning.

6. Access to Diverse Resources

- **Expert Lectures**: Students can access lectures and courses from renowned experts and institutions worldwide.
- **Varied Content**: Videos can incorporate various types of content, such as interviews, documentaries, and animations, enriching the learning experience.

7. Assessment and Feedback

- **Immediate Feedback**: Interactive videos can provide instant feedback on quizzes and exercises, helping students understand their progress.
- **Performance Analytics**: Educators can track student engagement and performance through video analytics, allowing for targeted interventions.

8. Support for Special Needs

- **Captioning and Transcripts**: Videos can include captions and transcripts to support learners with hearing impairments.
- **Customizable Playback**: Features like adjustable playback speed and pause options can aid learners with different needs and preferences.

Self-Check Exercise-2

1. Which of the following is a common format for video delivery in distance education?

a) Email

b) Videotapes and DVDs

c) Online chat

d) Bulletin boards

2. What is a less expensive alternative to satellite videoconferencing?

a) Desktop videoconferencing

b) Microwave television conferencing

c) Email

d) Cable and broadcast television

3. Which technology requires high-speed internet for effective use in distance education?

a) Satellite videoconferencing

b) Cable and broadcast television

c) Desktop videoconferencing

d) Printed materials

11.5 SUMMARY

Distance education separates teacher and learner, utilizing telecommunication systems to deliver instructional materials. Many universities have successfully implemented this system. Effective distance education requires selecting appropriate media, including print, audio, and video. These media convey educational messages and achieve specific objectives.

11.6 GLOSSARY

Asynchronous Instruction: A form of education where learning does not occur in the same place or at the same time, allowing students to access materials and complete assignments on their own schedules.

Bulletin Boards: Online platforms that allow students and instructors to post messages, share information, and engage in discussions in a forum-like format.

Multimedia: The integration of various forms of media, such as text, audio, video, and graphics, into a single educational resource or presentation.

Podcasts: Digital audio or video files available for download or streaming, often used in education to deliver lectures and supplementary materials.

11.7 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

1. b) Asynchronous instruction
2. b) Instant messaging
3. b) Online chat and conferencing

Self-Check Exercise 2

1. b) Videotapes and DVDs
2. b) Microwave television conferencing
3. c) Desktop videoconferencing

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11.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions:

1. Discuss the role of email in distance education.
2. Explain the benefits and limitations of online collaboration tools in distance learning.
3. Describe how web-based resources can enhance the learning experience for distance education students.
4. Compare and contrast the use of videotapes and DVDs with internet videoconferencing in distance education.
5. Explain the significance of multimedia integration in computer-based distance education.

UNIT 12

LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES:

WHAT, WHY AND HOW -I

STRUCTURE

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

This unit will guide you through descriptions that will lead to clarification and understanding of the learner support services concept. The reasons for providing learners with support explain why distance education providers necessarily should make various provisions to learners in their academic programs. These support systems complement the learning activities, eventually assisting learners in acquiring coping skills to study effectively and efficiently. Learner support systems are major components of distance education (DE). Although support services are not compulsory for all learners, those who seek help from the institution in any form will be treated as support services. DE institutions offer support services to learners based on their demands, requirements, and necessity. They require support services to

understand the DE system and its various functions, starting with admission to certificate distribution. Support services often reduce learners' isolation from the DE institution and encourage lifelong learning.

12.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Define the concept of learner support services.
- Mention at least five general reasons for providing support to learners in distance education.
- Discuss different types of learner support services.

12.3 MEANING OF LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES

The learner support system in distance education can be defined as all activities beyond the production and delivery of course materials that assist in the progress of students in their studies (Simpson, 2000). These can include facilities, administrative assistance, supplementary reading materials and references, human interaction, advice, and moral support. Learner support can also be described as a 'support system' underpinning material and learning task provision, enabling individuals to make use of institutionalized provisions. Learner supporters act as 'intermediaries', speaking the language of the student/learner and interpreting the materials and procedures of complex bureaucratic organizations. It is akin to a service industry where the needs of customers are paramount.

Sewart (1993) described learner support services as a process requiring active participation from both the learner and the tutor/supporter. They can also be described as non-instructional activities provided by an ODL provider to support learner's education, such as catalogues, schedules, admissions, assessment and placement, registration, financial aid, scholarships, billing, degree requirements, grades, transcripts, student clubs, counseling, faculty office hours, tutoring, laboratories, and library resources.

Bailey (1987) adopted a guidance approach to explain learner support service functions, defining guidance as learner support that involves processes aimed at helping individuals become more self-reliant and able to manage their personal, educational, and vocational development.

The learner support system is crucial for DE institutions to provide because distance learners are often isolated and come from diverse backgrounds—economic, social, educational, and occupational. This support system ensures communication facilitation between students, academic staff, and administrators to cater to students' administrative needs.

Self-Check Exercise 1

1) Which of the following is NOT typically considered a learning support service?

    a) Tutoring
    b) Counseling
    c) Sports coaching
    d) Study skills workshops

2) What is a primary goal of academic advising as a learning support service?

    a) to assist students in planning their coursework and academic goals.
    b) to provide mental health support.
    c) to organize extracurricular activities.
    d) To manage student housing.

12.4 NEED FOR LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Support services are offered to learners for several reasons:

1. Those who join a distance education institution after a long gap in their academic studies.
2. Those who wish to complete a set of courses or a program while working, possibly in a distant location.
3. Those who transitioned from face-to-face educational institutions to DE institutions for higher studies.

Learner support services are necessary because learners are often unfamiliar with the full operations of DE institutions. Research and philosophical foundations in distance education indicate that distance learners, despite enjoying the freedom of self-study, face various barriers during their learning period that need to be addressed by the ODL institution. These barriers include:

- **Study-Related Barriers:** Difficulty in understanding the subject matter, lack of awareness about assignments, etc.
- **Time-Related Barriers:** Lack of time to attend contact classes or study due to other responsibilities.
- **Institutional Barriers:** Issues like non-receipt of books on time, lack of information regarding classes, assignments, exam dates, etc.
- **Personal Barriers:** Lack of encouragement and guidance from family, financial problems, psychological issues.

Given these barriers, it is the responsibility of the ODL institution to provide support for all students in their academic studies. Learner support is not about assisting only weak or problematic learners but is about rendering help to all learners. Learner support is a major concern in DE, being a crucial subsystem and a pervasive

component of educational processes, ensuring a learner-centered approach to education.

Self-Check Exercise 2

1) Why are learning support services essential in educational institutions?

a) To increase tuition fees
b) To provide additional income for faculty
c) To enhance students' academic success and learning experience
d) To reduce the number of classrooms

2) What is a primary benefit of tutoring as a learning support service?

a) To provide entertainment for students
b) To improve students' social skills
c) To enhance understanding of course materials and improve grades
d) To discourage students from seeking help

3) Which of the following is a key reason why study skills workshops are important for students?

a) To provide physical fitness activities
b) To teach effective study techniques and time management skills
c) To promote excessive socialization
d) To reduce the workload of faculty

12.5 SUMMARY

Learner support services in distance education (DE) encompass a variety of activities beyond the mere production and delivery of course materials. These services are essential to assist learners in progressing through their studies by providing academic, administrative, and moral support. DE institutions need to offer these support services to cater to the diverse and often isolated nature of distance learners, helping them overcome various study-related, time-related, institutional, and personal barriers. This support system is integral to ensuring effective communication, guidance, and assistance throughout the learners' educational journey, promoting a learner-centered approach to education.

12.6 GLOSSARY

- **Distance Education (DE)**: A mode of delivering education to students who are not physically present in a traditional classroom setting. Courses are conducted via mail, internet, video, or other media.

- **Learner Support Services**: Services provided to students in distance education to help them with their studies. This includes administrative assistance, academic support, counseling, library access, and more.
- **Academic Support**: Assistance related to the academic aspects of a student's education, such as tutoring, study materials, academic counseling, and help with coursework.
- **Non-Academic Support**: Services that help students manage the organizational and personal aspects of their education, including administrative services, counseling, and orientation programs.
- **Open and Distance Learning (ODL)**: An educational approach where learners are separated by time and space, and learning occurs through a variety of media and methods.

12.7 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

1. c) Sports coaching

2. a) To assist students in planning their coursework and academic goals.

Self-Check Exercise 2

1.c) To enhance students' academic success and learning experience

2.c) To enhance understanding of course materials and improve grades

3. b) To teach effective study techniques and time management skills

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12.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions :

1. Describe the concept of learner support services and explain its importance in distance education.

2. Discuss the various types of learner support services provided in distance education.
3. Explain the different types of barriers that distance learners might face and how learner support services can help overcome them.

4.Why is it necessary for DE institutions to offer non-instructional support services to learners?

UNIT 13

LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES:

WHAT, WHY AND HOW-II

STRUCTURE

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

Learning Support Systems (LSS) are vital components of distance education, providing crucial support to students beyond traditional teaching methods. LSS includes a range of services designed to assist learners in overcoming the unique challenges they face in distance learning environments. These services encompass

academic, administrative, and technological support, ensuring that students receive comprehensive assistance throughout their educational journey. The significance of LSS lies in its ability to enhance educational outcomes, promote student engagement, and improve retention rates by addressing the diverse needs of distance learners.

13.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- Define LSS in distance education, explore its historical evolution, and analyze its theoretical foundations.
- Discuss the importance of LSS in enhancing student engagement, academic success, and overall learning outcomes.
- Identify and classify components of LSS, including academic and administrative support services.
- Evaluate the role of LSS in addressing the diverse needs and challenges of distance learners.
- Apply knowledge of LSS to propose strategies for improving support systems in distance education contexts.

13.3 SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES

The meaning and scope of a Learning Support System (LSS) in the context of education, particularly in distance education, encompass a comprehensive array of services and resources designed to facilitate and enhance the learning experience of studeSnts. LSS goes beyond traditional teaching methods and focuses on supporting learners throughout their educational journey. This system includes academic and administrative support services aimed at addressing various barriers to learning, promoting engagement, and ensuring academic success. The scope of LSS ranges from providing instructional materials and resources to offering counseling, academic advisement, technical support, and opportunities for peer interaction, all tailored to meet the diverse needs of distance learners. LSS aims to foster a supportive learning environment that encourages self-directed learning and enables students to overcome challenges associated with geographical separation and individual learning styles.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

Learning support systems play a crucial role in distance education by providing essential tools and resources to facilitate effective learning experiences. Here are some key significances:

1. **Access to Resources**: They ensure learners have access to learning materials, such as textbooks, videos, and interactive content, regardless of their location.

2. **Interaction and Engagement**: These systems facilitate interaction between learners and instructors through forums, chat rooms, and video conferencing, fostering a sense of community and reducing isolation.
3. **Personalized Learning**: They often include adaptive learning technologies that cater to individual learning styles and paces, enhancing the effectiveness of education.
4. **Feedback and Assessment**: Learning support systems provide mechanisms for timely feedback on assignments and assessments, helping learners track their progress and improve their performance.
5. **Technical Support**: They offer technical assistance to learners who may encounter issues with accessing or using online platforms, ensuring smooth navigation of the digital learning environment.
6. **Collaboration and Group Work**: These systems enable collaborative projects and group discussions, promoting teamwork and peer learning among students.
7. **Continuous Improvement**: By tracking learner data and performance metrics, these systems help educational institutions continually improve their course offerings and instructional method.

Self-check exercise 1

1. Which of the following is NOT a primary function of Learner Support Services?

   a) Academic advising
   b) Financial planning
   c) Student counseling
   d) Faculty recruitment

2. Why are Learner Support Services important in distance education?

   a) They replace the need for in-person instruction.
   b) They enhance student engagement and retention.
   c) They reduce the cost of tuition.
   d) They increase the workload for teachers.

3. Which service is typically included under Learner Support Services?

   a) Curriculum design
   b) Technical support
   c) Classroom management
   d) Marketing and advertising

4. How do Learner Support Services contribute to student success?

   a) By ensuring students have access to necessary resources
   b) By limiting the number of courses students can take
   c) By focusing solsely on administrative tasks
   d) By reducing the overall academic standards

13.4 HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION OF LSS

The evolution of learner support systems in distance education has been marked by significant milestones that have transformed educational practices. Initially, support services in distance education were limited to basic correspondence courses. However, with advancements in technology and pedagogical approaches, LSS has evolved to include a wide range of services aimed at enhancing student experiences. The development of online learning environments, interactive platforms, and comprehensive support services has revolutionized distance education, making it more accessible and effective. Historical case studies highlight key developments in LSS, demonstrating their impact on student engagement and academic success.

Self-check exercise 2

1. What was the primary form of learner support in the earliest days of distance education?

a) Interactive online platforms
b) Basic correspondence courses
c) Comprehensive support services
d) Video lectures

2. How has technology impacted the evolution of Learner Support Services in distance education?

a) It has reduced the need for any learner support.
b) It has made LSS more complex and inaccessible.
c) It has enabled the development of a wide range of support services.
d) It has only benefited traditional classroom settings.

13.5 COMPONENTS OF LEARNING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Learning support systems comprise several key components that work together to support distance learners. Academic support services include tutoring, academic advising, and study skills development, helping students understand course material and improve their learning strategies. Administrative support services provide essential information on registration, examination procedures, and institutional policies. Technological support ensures students have access to online resources, technical troubleshooting, and digital learning platforms. Effective implementation of these components enhances student engagement, facilitates learning, and improves academic performance, as evidenced by various case studies.

Self-check Exercise 3

1. Which of the following is NOT included in academic support services for distance learners?

a) Tutoring
b) Academic advising
c) Study skills development
d) Examination procedures

2. What is the role of technological support in learning support systems

a) Providing tutoring services
b) Offering academic advising
c) Ensuring access to online resources and technical troubleshooting
d) Informing students about institutional policies

13.6 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF LSS

The effectiveness of learner support systems in distance education can be understood through various theoretical frameworks. Socio-constructivist theories emphasize the role of interaction and collaboration in learning, highlighting the importance of supportive environments that facilitate knowledge construction. Adult learning theories, such as andragogy, stress the principles of self-directed learning and the need for support systems that cater to adult learners' unique characteristics. Systems theory views LSS as a complex adaptive system, where various components interact to create a cohesive support network. These theoretical perspectives provide a foundation for understanding how LSS meets diverse learner needs and enhances educational outcomes.

Self check Exercise 4

1. What does "feedback" refer to in the context of Learning Support Services?

a) Providing guidance on personal issues
b) Techniques to enhance study skills
c) Information about learner performance
d) Access to library resources

2. Which support service focuses on improving time management and critical thinking?

a) Counseling
b) Orientation
c) Study skills
d) Peer support

13.7 SUMMARY

In summary, learner support systems are integral to distance education, providing essential services that address the diverse needs of learners. This chapter has

highlighted the significance of LSS in promoting student success, engagement, and retention. By defining the concept of LSS, exploring its historical evolution, and examining its components and types, we have established a comprehensive understanding of its role in distance education. The theoretical foundations discussed further reinforce the importance of LSS in creating effective learning environments that support student achievement.

13.8 GLOSSARY

- **Counseling:** Providing guidance and support to learners on personal, academic, and career-related issues.
- **Feedback:** Information provided to learners about their performance and progress to improve learning outcomes.
- **Study Skills:** Techniques and strategies that enhance learning effectiveness, including note-taking, time management, and critical

13.9 ANSWER TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISE

Self-check Exercise 1

1) d) Faculty recruitment

2) b) They enhance student engagement and retention.

3) b) Technical support

4) a) By ensuring students have access to necessary resources

Self-check Exercise 2

1) b) Basic correspondence courses
2) c) It has enabled the development of a wide range of support services.

Self-check Exercise 3

d) Examination procedures

c) Ensuring access to online resources and technical troubleshooting

Self-check Exercise 4

1.c) Information about learner performance

2. c) Study skills

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13.11 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions:

1. What are the key components of learner support systems in distance education?
2. Why are learner support services essential for distance learners?
3. Explain the historical evolution of learner support systems in distance education.
4. Differentiate between academic and non-academic support services.
5. Discuss the theoretical foundations that underpin learner support systems in distance education.

UNIT 14

LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES:

WHAT, WHY AND HOW-III

STRUCTURE

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

Learning Support Services (LSS) play a vital role in education, particularly in distance learning. These services extend beyond simply providing course materials—they offer essential support that helps students progress academically and improve their overall learning experience. This chapter discusses various types of support services available to learners and their significance in making distance education more effective.

LSS includes all forms of assistance that go beyond content delivery, helping students navigate their studies. These services range from facilities and administrative support to additional reading resources, personal interaction, guidance, and encouragement. They cover both academic and non-academic aspects, ensuring that learners receive the necessary support throughout their educational journey.

14.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the concept of learning support services.

- Identify the different types of support services.
- Explain the importance of learning support services in distance education.
- Meaning and Scope of Learning Support Services

14.3 TYPES OF LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Academic support services are directly related to the educational content and processes. They help students understand and engage with their course materials and develop the skills necessary for academic success. Academic support can be provided at various stages of a learner's journey:

- **Pre-Entry Stage** :-Before enrolling in a course, learners need guidance on course selection, entry requirements, application procedures, and information about the institution and its offerings. Pre-entry support helps prospective students make informed decisions about their education.

- **Entry to the Course**:- Once enrolled, students require support in understanding how to navigate their course materials, manage their study schedules, and complete assignments. Induction programs and detailed program guides are essential at this stage to help learners acclimate to the distance education environment.

- **During the Course**:- Throughout their studies, learners need ongoing academic support, such as feedback on assignments, tutoring, and access to study resources. Regular interaction with tutors and counselor helps students stay on track and address any academic challenges they encounter.

- **Examination Stage**:- As exams approach, students often seek guidance on revision strategies, exam preparation techniques, and the logistics of taking exams. Academic counselors play a crucial role in alleviating exam anxiety and ensuring students are well-prepared.

- **Post-Course Stage**:- After completing their courses, learners may need support in understanding their grades, exploring further educational opportunities, or navigating career paths. Post-course support ensures that students continue to benefit from their educational experience even after they have completed their studies.

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Non-academic support services address the administrative and logistical needs of learners, helping them manage their studies effectively. These services include:

- **Administrative Support** :-Administrative support provides learners with accurate and timely information about various aspects of their studies, such as enrollment procedures, examination schedules, and fee payments. Efficient administrative support is essential for maintaining smooth operations and ensuring student satisfaction.

- **Personal Support**:- Personal support addresses the emotional and psychological well-being of learners. This includes counseling services, stress management resources, and assistance with personal issues that may affect academic performance. Providing a supportive environment helps learners cope with the demands of distance education.

- **Communication and Networking Support**:- Effective communication and networking support help learners connect with their peers, tutors, and the institution. This fosters a sense of community and reduces the isolation often experienced in distance education. Online forums, social media groups, and peer tutoring programs are examples of such support.

- **Library and Information Services**:- Access to library resources, both physical and digital, is crucial for distance learners. Library services provide students with the materials they need for their studies and guidance on how to use these resources effectively. Virtual libraries and online databases are especially valuable for remote learners.

Self-check Exercise 1

1. Which stage of academic support involves providing guidance on course selection and entry requirements before enrolling in a course?

   a) Entry to the Course
   b) Pre-Entry Stage
   c) During the Course
   d) Post-Course Stage

2. Which non-academic support service addresses the emotional and psychological well-being of learners?

   a) Administrative Support
   b) Personal Support
   c) Communication and Networking Support
   d) Library and Information Services

14.4 IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

- **Enhancing Academic Performance:-** Learning support services play a vital role in enhancing students' academic performance by providing them with the resources and guidance they need to succeed. Academic support helps learners understand course materials, develop study skills, and achieve better grades.

- **Reducing Dropout Rates:-** One of the significant challenges in distance education is the high dropout rate. Learning support services help mitigate this issue by addressing the various barriers that learners face, such as academic difficulties, time management issues, and personal challenges. By offering comprehensive support, institutions can increase student retention and completion rates.

- **Promoting Lifelong Learning:-** Support services encourage learners to pursue lifelong learning by providing continuous guidance and resources. This is especially important in distance education, where learners often juggle multiple responsibilities and need flexible learning options.

- **Fostering a Sense of Community**:- Distance education can be isolating, but learning support services help create a sense of community among learners. By facilitating communication and interaction, these services ensure that students feel connected to their peers, tutors, and the institution, which enhances their overall learning experience.

- **Addressing Individual Needs**:- Every learner has unique needs and challenges. Learning support services offer personalized assistance that caters to individual requirements, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed. This individualized support is crucial for promoting equity and inclusion in distance education.

Self-check Exercise 2

1. Learner support services can be described as the _____ activities.
2. In _____ related barrier, there is a difficulty in understanding the subject matter.
3. What means getting parties to know more about each other, and understand each other better?

14.5 SUMMARY

Learning support services are essential components of distance education, providing academic and non-academic assistance that enhances students' learning experiences. By addressing the diverse needs of learners, these services help improve academic performance, reduce dropout rates, promote lifelong learning, foster a sense of community, and address individual needs. Institutions must prioritize the provision of high-quality support services to ensure the success and satisfaction of their students.

14.6 GLOSSARY

- **Academic Support**: Assistance provided to students to help them succeed academically, including tutoring, study skills workshops, and academic advising.
- **Administrative Support**: Services that help students navigate institutional processes, such as registration, financial aid, and course scheduling.
- **Learner Support System (LSS)**: Comprehensive services and resources provided to students to assist them in their learning journey.
- **Non-academic Support**: Services that address the personal and administrative needs of students, such as counseling, financial aid, and housing assistance.

14.7 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE

Self-check exercise 1

1. b) Pre-Entry Stage

2. b) Personal Support

Self-check exercise2

1. Non-instructional
2. Study.
3. Advocacy.

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14.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions :

1. How would you describe the term learner support services?

2. What are the support services required by a distance learner at the time of examination?

3. State three reasons why learners need support in an Open and Distance Learning?

UNIT-15
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES-I

STRUCTURE

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

Unlike traditional educational institutions and universities that require large campuses, Distance Education (DE) institutions can cater to a vast population without the need for extensive physical infrastructure. This is because DE learners enroll from different locations across the country and study independently, without attending regular in-person classes as in conventional education.

However, DE students still require support services to assist them in their academic journey. To provide these services, DE institutions establish Regional Centers and Study Centers in strategic locations. These centers offer academic and non-academic counseling, facilitate assignment submission, and provide feedback to help students enhance their learning.

Since distance learners come from diverse backgrounds and are spread across different regions, they can access support services through various modes based on their geographical, economic, and social circumstances. Institutions ensure that these services are flexible and accessible, allowing learners to choose the most convenient and effective way to receive assistance.

15.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Give short explanation of the term counselling in Open and Distance Learning
- Mention at least five reasons for giving assignment to learners in distance education
- List and explain at least five major types of tutor comments
- Enumerate at least five ways by which assignment can be used to encourage learning

15.3 COUNSELING

Face to face counselling/tutoring is another crucial aspect of the support system in Open and Distance Learning. Counselling in Open and Distance Learning can be described as a process of providing help by a knowledgeable staff to the learners. The help being giving can be academic, emotional or social in nature. It is certain that once the help is provided, there would be an improvement or relieve in the life of the help seeker. In Open and Distance Learning institution, learners would need the assistance of counsellors for different and various reasons, some of which can be personal-social, academic or information on health-related concerns. It behoves on the counsellor to ensure that he/she is well equipped to provide the needed assistance that is believed could facilitate learners' adjustment and acquisition of relevant copying skill during the course of their study. While a counsellor could render support services in all areas like, orientation, placement, information, assessment, referral, follow-up, record keeping, tutoring services are specifically tied to giving information and guidance to learners on issues that are academic in nature like course registration, how to study, when to submit assignment and how to prepare and pass in examinations.

Need for counseling support

There would be some learners who, during registration, will be confused either by the amount of information they already have, or by the lack of information in relevant and pertinent areas, or as a result of hindrances. Such learners even at this early stage need counseling. The support staff thus has to provide counseling during registration. Such counseling could be on a one-to-one basis, or in group. It could be by direct face to face or it could be mediated by other means, materials or modes. Counseling could be preventive or for purposes of curing certain existing socio-personal issues and concerns.

Counsellors' Qualities

Counsellors must develop and exhibit qualities suited to their role. Their function extends beyond simply giving advice or offering ready-made solutions. Instead, their primary task is to guide learners toward forming their own conclusions. Effective

counselling requires a high level of skill to ensure that personal opinions do not unduly influence the learner's decision-making process.

In open and distance learning (ODL) environments, tutors and other educational support staff often assume counselling responsibilities, even if they have not received formal training in this field. It is essential that all personnel involved in learner support, including administrative and clerical staff, have a basic awareness of counselling principles. Those whose roles explicitly involve counselling should be well-versed in its core principles. However, counselling can be challenging, as there is often a tendency to either offer no guidance at all—merely listening and sympathising—or to dictate solutions.

Simpson (1992) identifies six key attributes of an effective counsellor, summarized by the acronym 'WHALES':

- **Warmth** – Creating a welcoming and supportive environment.
- **Honesty** – Being truthful while maintaining sensitivity.
- **Acceptance** – Recognising and respecting the learner's perspective.
- **Listening** – Paying close attention to what the learner is saying.
- **Empathy** – Understanding and sharing the learner's feelings.
- **Structure** – Providing guidance in an organised and systematic manner.

Counselling Activities

Counselling can vary in its level of direction. The more responsibility a learner takes for their own understanding and decision-making, the more beneficial the counselling process becomes. In some cases, learners may only need basic information, while in others, they may require guidance if they are heading in an unproductive direction. Depending on the needs of the learner, the nature of the counselling session may shift between the following activities:

- **Telling** – Providing relevant and appropriate information.
- **Advising** – Suggesting possible approaches or courses of action.
- **Exploring** – Assisting learners in clarifying their concerns and identifying solutions.

Counselling Processes

Counselling follows a structured cycle consisting of five phases (Simpson, 1992):

- **Clarifying** – Identifying and understanding the learner's needs.
- **Checking** – Ensuring the counsellor has accurately grasped the learner's concerns.
- **Conceptualising** – Restating the learner's issues in the counsellor's own words for clarity.
- **Challenging** – Encouraging the learner to consider different perspectives or contradictions.
- **Consequent Action** – Agreeing on the next steps that both the counsellor and learner will take following the discussion.

Counselling Tasks

When interacting with learners, counsellors perform a range of essential tasks. These can be categorised into three primary functions, each with associated sub-tasks:

- **Selecting the Appropriate Mode of Interaction** – This involves choosing the best approach, whether it be:
  - Providing necessary information.
  - Advising learners on possible courses of action.
  - Helping learners explore their concerns and potential solutions.
- **Listening to the Learner** – This requires:
  - Actively listening and reflecting the learner's words to ensure understanding.
  - Using open-ended questions to encourage deeper discussion.
- **Structuring the Interaction** – This entails:
  - Clarifying any misunderstandings.
  - Confirming the accuracy of shared information.
  - Establishing agreed-upon actions for both the learner and counsellor to follow after the discussion.

Online Counselling

Technology has made it possible to provide counselling services remotely through platforms such as radio, the internet, intranet, and mobile communication. This approach is highly efficient and can be delivered synchronously (in real time) or asynchronously (with delayed responses).

While the basic principles of face-to-face counselling still apply in online settings, counsellors must ensure they maintain objectivity and remain non-judgmental when assisting learners. Providing thoughtful and unbiased guidance is essential for fostering an effective and supportive learning experience.

Self-check Exercise1

1) What is the primary purpose of counseling in Open and Distance Learning (ODL)?

a) Providing financial support to learners
b) Enhancing social activities among learners
c) Addressing academic, emotional, and social needs
d) Conducting research on educational trends

2) According to Simpson (1992), what are the attributes of an effective counselor?

a) Honesty, sympathy, warmth, empathy
b) Warmth, honesty, acceptance, listening, empathy, structure
c) Structure, warmth, financial acumen, sympathy
d) Acceptance, empathy, strictness, honesty

3) Which media is NOT commonly used for counseling in Open and Distance Learning?

a) Internet
b) Interactive video disk
c) Mobile devices
d) Regular mail

15.4 MEDIA OF COUNSELING

Counseling plays a vital role in helping learners quickly adapt to the educational system used by their respective universities. It provides guidance on selecting study areas, understanding various courses, vocational planning, and addressing personal concerns. Additionally, counseling services offer orientation to newly enrolled learners through different media, including radio and television broadcasts and newsletters. Telephone and mail-based guidance services are also available to assist learners with their academic progress.

In some cases, a single tutor may take on multiple roles, acting as a subject expert, advisor, and counselor. To support distance learners effectively, institutions have explored new ways of structuring the tutor's role, particularly during the initial study period. The primary focus is on enhancing the learner's experience by improving the quality of tutor-student interactions and promoting two-way communication.

Media Used by Distance Education Institutions for Counseling

Distance education (DE) institutions employ various technological tools to provide counseling services to learners, including:

- **Internet-based counseling**
- **Interactive video disk counseling**
- **Mobile device support**
- **Telephone counseling**

In today's technology-driven world, digital advancements have significantly influenced distance education. The internet has become a widely used tool for counseling, making it accessible to many learners. However, using internet-based services requires a basic setup, including a computer and an internet connection. With increasing affordability of computer components, many students prefer online counseling to stay updated on their academic activities. Several internet-based tools facilitate counseling for distance learners.

E-mail

Email serves as both a synchronous and asynchronous communication tool between learners and counselors. Unlike traditional postal communication, which involves long waiting periods, email allows learners to send their queries and receive prompt responses. It is especially beneficial for shy or introverted learners, enabling them to communicate comfortably in a private setting. Additionally, email is used for providing feedback on assignment submissions.

World Wide Web (WWW)

The internet provides a vast repository of educational resources. The World Wide Web enables learners to access study materials, program guides, slide presentations, and recorded lectures through platforms like YouTube. It is mainly used for one-to-many communication, where a single counselor can provide guidance to multiple learners. Students can also use this tool to post frequently asked questions and share updated information with their peers.

Online Discussion Forums

Online discussions allow learners to engage with counselors from different locations. Counselors can schedule interaction sessions in advance, allowing students to log in at a designated time to discuss their queries with peers and experts. The counselor acts as a moderator, ensuring productive discussions. This setup is similar to "chat rooms" on bulletin board systems, facilitating both one-to-one and one-to-many conversations.

Virtual Conferencing

Virtual conferencing enables real-time, many-to-many communication. Through this tool, multiple participants—including learners and counselors—can interact from different locations. A computer with an internet connection and an attached camera is required for participation. Once the setup is ready, participants appear on the screen, enabling face-to-face communication. Learners can engage in discussions, share opinions, and benefit from group interactions without physically attending sessions.

Distance learners can also use interactive video disks as a support tool. These disks contain preloaded information relevant to various academic and administrative procedures. By accessing these resources on a computer, learners can receive step-by-step guidance on topics such as assignment preparation.

Mobile Devices for Counseling

Mobile devices are another essential tool for learner support. Distance education institutions send important updates, notifications, and schedule changes via SMS or MMS to registered students. For instance, if a scheduled academic event is postponed, learners receive instant alerts on their mobile phones.

Telephone Counseling

Telephonic counseling remains a crucial support service for distance learners. Students can directly contact their counselors or academic advisors to resolve doubts

and seek immediate assistance. This service ensures a quick and direct line of communication between learners and educational institutions.

Broadcasting Facilities

Distance education institutions also provide academic support through broadcasting services, including:

- **Interactive radio counseling**
- **Teleconferencing**
- **Gyan Vani (Educational FM Radio)**
- **Gyan Darshan (Educational TV Channel)**

Interactive Radio Counseling

Interactive radio counseling was introduced in India through All India Radio (AIR) in May 1998 at Bhopal. During these sessions, subject experts answer learners' queries live from the AIR studio. Students can call designated numbers to participate in discussions, while other listeners benefit from the expert guidance being broadcast. This service fosters real-time interaction between counselors and students.

Teleconferencing

Teleconferencing is designed to provide academic support to learners across the country. Subject experts deliver lectures from a video studio at scheduled times, while students participate from their respective locations. Learners can watch the session on a television screen and interact with the experts via telephone.

Gyan Vani (Educational FM Radio Network)

Gyan Vani is an FM radio network dedicated to education in India. It provides academic support to learners who may be geographically distant from their institutions. Since radio is a widely accessible medium, students can listen to educational programs at their convenience, reinforcing their learning process.

Gyan Darshan (Educational TV Channel)

Launched on January 26, 2000, Gyan Darshan is an educational television channel catering to a diverse audience, including school children and adult learners. The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) serves as the nodal agency for this initiative, collaborating with various institutions. The channel broadcasts interactive lessons on multiple subjects such as mathematics, English, and computer science,

Distance education institutions employ a variety of media to provide academic and counseling support to learners. These resources—ranging from internet-based tools and mobile communication to radio and television broadcasts—enhance student engagement and accessibility. By leveraging technology and communication channels, distance education programs ensure that learners receive timely guidance, personalized support, and an enriching academic experience.

Self-check Exercise 2

1. What is the purpose of Gyan Darshan in the context of Open and Distance Learning?

a) Providing counseling through FM radio
b) Offering interactive video disk counseling
c) Broadcasting educational TV programs
d) Conducting teleconferencing sessions

2. What are the phases of the counseling process as described by Simpson (1992)?

a) Clarifying, checking, advising, conceptualizing, challenging
b) Clarifying, checking, conceptualizing, challenging, consequent action
c) Telling, advising, exploring, checking, challenging
d) Clarifying, exploring, consequent action, advising, checking

15.5 SUMMARY

Counseling plays a pivotal role in Open and Distance Learning (ODL), encompassing face-to-face and online interactions to support learners academically, emotionally, and socially. Effective counselors possess qualities like warmth, honesty, acceptance, listening skills, empathy, and structure. They engage in directive and non-directive approaches, guiding learners through phases such as clarification, conceptualization, and action planning. Media such as internet, interactive video disks, mobile devices, and telephones facilitate counseling, enhancing accessibility and effectiveness in ODL.

15.6 GLOSSARY

- **Counseling**: Providing assistance to learners, addressing academic, emotional, and social needs.
- **Directive Counseling**: Providing advice and guidance to learners on course of action.
- **Non-Directive Counseling**: Helping learners reach their own conclusions without imposing views.
- **Interactive Radio Counseling**: Broadcasting counseling sessions with learner interaction.
- **Teleconferencing**: Video presentations by subject experts with learner interaction.
- **Gyan Darshan**: Educational TV channel supporting distance learners.

15.7 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Self-check Exercise 1

1. c) Addressing academic, emotional, and social needs

2. b) Warmth, honesty, acceptance, listening, empathy, structure

3. d) Regular mail

Self-check Exercise 2

1. c) Broadcasting educational TV programs

2. b) Clarifying, checking, conceptualizing, challenging, consequent action

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15.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions:

1. What are the primary roles of counselors in Open and Distance Learning?
2. Discuss the qualities essential for effective counseling in ODL.
3. How do different media facilitate counseling in ODL? Provide examples.

UNIT- 16

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR LEARNER SUPPORT- II

STRUCTURE

16.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

Distance teaching institutions (DTIs) provide a unique educational approach, allowing students to learn remotely. Despite the many advantages of distance learning, such as flexibility and accessibility, it often faces criticism for lack of direct interaction between teachers and learners. Face-to-face sessions serve as a crucial component of DTIs by addressing this gap. These sessions include formal teaching, tutorials, seminars, and practical work, fostering teaching-learning interactivity and providing opportunities for social interactions. While they offer significant benefits, face-to-face sessions also present various organizational, managerial, and economic challenges. Additionally, assignments and effective tutor feedback play essential roles in maintaining student engagement and supporting their learning journey. This chapter explores the multifaceted aspects of face-to-face sessions and their impact on distance education, examining their benefits, challenges, and alternatives.

16.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance and benefits of face-to-face sessions in DTIs.
- Describe how face-to-face sessions reduce isolation in distance learning.
- List and discuss organizational challenges of face-to-face sessions.
- Analyze management issues in organizing face-to-face sessions.
- Discuss the economic implications of integrating face-to-face sessions in distance education.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of face-to-face sessions in enhancing learning.
- Examine the extent to which face-to-face sessions should be used in distance education.
- Explore alternatives to face-to-face sessions in distance teaching.

16.3 FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS

Face-to-face contact teaching is one of the student learning support services often provided by distance teaching institutions (DTIs). This involves formal meetings of teachers and learners for the purpose of teaching-learning interactivity which may

include formal teaching, tutorials, seminars, and group discussions, usually for remedial purposes, and practical or laboratory work. On some occasions, students may meet to take part in teleconferencing or teletutorials. During these contact sessions, students are also able to enjoy both group and individual social interactions. Thus, face-to-face contact sessions obviate one of the main criticisms that distance learning gives only instruction and not education. The contact sessions also mitigate the isolation syndrome of distance learning.

However, the premium placed on contact sessions varies between institutions. Practices indicate that this depends on three main factors: the size of the institution (student population), the organisational/ management structure, and the nature and types of courses being taught by the institution. These factors, to a great extent, determine the role assigned to and the reliance placed on contact sessions. The provision therefore varies from none at all to a strong component.

Some institutions do not provide for contact teaching at all because they believe that the students want to be left alone and provision for contact will infringe learner autonomy or the independence of the adult learner. This agrees with the view that the contact session is peripheral or is tantamount to 'watering down of the purity of distance teaching.

Most of the DTIs have contact sessions as either supplementary (optional) or complementary (compulsory). Others make attendance at contact sessions compulsory for selected courses only. When contact sessions are supplementary, no new topics are taught, while a few new topics may be taught when they are complementary.

Problems associated with contact sessions

Organisation

In order to achieve the set goals of inclusion of a face-to-face contact component into distance teaching, the sessions have to be properly organised. The need for this becomes essential if the contact sessions are held in the 'field' it the study centres. Classrooms must be secured; tutorial staff sought employed in adequate number and quality, tutorial meetings scheduled taking into consideration the peculiarities of the students, tutors, courses and the 'school'; instructional materials have to be procured. In the case of residential vacation/weekend schools, student accommodation must be secured as well as arrangements for welfare services. The students must be appropriately informed in advance so that they, on their own part, can make all necessary arrangements for permission to attend (if a worker), re-schedule some other regular activities, plan for family needs and find the money for fees (tuition, accommodation, etc.) and transportation. Furthermore, they have to readjust their emotions for meeting other students some of whom may not be social or economic equals.

The importance of proper organisation cannot be over-emphasised particularly if the facilities and services of other organisations and personnel are needed. The DTI may have to rely on the generous cooperation of other institutions or adhere to their demands as to payment of prescribed charges for various facilities and services needed. The DTI also has to accept and comply with local conditions and situations of the cooperating institutions to the extent that it cannot control theme. One other problem associated with tutorial centres in borrowed premises is the unwillingness of some of these institutions to provide further services for students of other institutions.

The smooth running of the contact session lies in efficient organisation, the complexity of which depends on the duration of the session and the number of students and staff involved. In essence, the longer the duration of contact sessions and the larger the number of students and staff to be provided for, the more complex and involved is the organisation. Whether the contact is for a brief or long duration, the organisation has to be completed long before the commencement of the session.

Management

The management of contact sessions by DTIs can be fraught with problems which are associated with the organisation of the sessions. Management of contact sessions involves staff selection and recruitment, supervision and coordination of all activities, and handling the reward and compensation systems. While the management of the contact sessions is handled rather centrally in small-size DTIs, it is being, decentralised in large ones. Thus the problems are more with the management of the field sessions in DTIs. While some DTIs give a free hand to the regional centres to completely manage the study centres, some others manage the field offices centrally. In sonic institutions, the field staff are full-time staff of the DTIs complemented by part-time staff drawn from the local area of the centre. Quite a number of other DTIs depend solely on part-time staff. Generally, while the regional offices handle the management issues, the study centres render academic and student advisory services and also provide the much needed direct contact of the students with the tutors. The DTIs thus have the responsibility for overall coordination and supervision of field activities. This can be a cumbersome responsibility especially in large DTIs operating over large-sized geographical areas or countries.

Effectiveness of contact sessions

It is a common belief that the best interactive support that can be provided to students is face-to-face tuition. This interaction is normally provided by tutors. However, the assessment of the overall contributions of contact sessions to distance learning has been a chequered one. Reports on attendance have been rather discouraging, especially when contact sessions play a supplementary role and attendance is optional.

During the contact session, some of the lecturers (tutors) do not attend their classes regularly, some go late to classes, while some have no time to prepare for their lessons because of some other personal engagement. In some classes, lecturers distribute handouts, without explaining them; while in some, lecturers dictate lecture notes without allowing for explanations on such notes.

Economically, it has been noted from various studies that the more face-to-face tuition built into a distance teaching system the higher the costs, and the nearer the costs come to that of a conventional institution where face-to-face is the major teaching medium. Suggestions have therefore been made to reduce the face-to-face component and also to increase student numbers.

Similarly, it has been argued that the organisation of contact sessions in vast countries, especially with sparse population spread may be non-viable and expensive.

Emerging issues

All these observations imply that a range of problems attenuates some of the contributions of face-to-face contact sessions to the effectiveness and efficiency of distance education. A number of questions thus arise:

- to what extent should face-to-face contact sessions form a component of the

instructional delivery strategies in distance education

- are there alternatives to contact sessions in distance teaching
- is the contact session really indispensable in distance education?

Each of these issues will be considered briefly below.

Extent of use of contact sessions

The usefulness of contact sessions as one of the teaching strategies in distance education has never been in doubt. However, the argument is: how much face-to-face contact should be put into distance learning. Essentially, it is necessary to remove or reduce the intensity of the prejudice of the 'traditionalists' that complete education can be had only through contact between teachers and learners. This prejudice militates against the undisputed recognition being sought by distance education. This issue has been extensively discussed by distance educators and others interested in education.

Keegan (1982) noted that one group of distance educators supports pure distance learning without contact sessions, while the other shares the traditional view that no true university education can take place without a meeting of minds which allows for academic socialisation. While one group argues for the independence and autonomy of the learner, the other group vouches for maintenance of traditional approaches to learning.

Further studies in the economics of distance education indicate that distance learning is relatively cheaper than conventional learning largely because of the total removal or substantial reduction of contact sessions. Hence, over the last decade, there have been experiments in various distance teaching institutions to diversify student learning support services with the object of cutting down on face-to-face contact sessions in order to make economic gains as well as to take advantage of developments in telecommunications. All the foregoing discussions have explored the need to examine implications of using contact sessions and the teletutorial options. Neither strategy is free from problems, rather, organisational, management and financial implications become more complex.

Self-check Exercise1

1. Which of the following is a primary benefit of face-to-face sessions in distance teaching institutions (DTIs)?

    a) Reducing travel expenses for students
    b) Enhancing social interactions and reducing isolation
    c) Lowering the need for instructional materials
    d) Increasing the autonomy of adult learners

2. What is one common organizational challenge associated with face-to-face sessions in DTIs?

a) Hiring permanent full-time staff only
b) Securing classrooms and tutorial staff
c) Decreasing the number of enrolled students
d) Reducing the amount of course materials

3. Why do some DTIs avoid providing face-to-face contact sessions?

a) To maintain the purity of distance teaching
b) To increase student enrollment
c) To enhance the social interactions among students
d) To lower the course fees

16.4 INTERACTION THROUGH ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment in an educational institution refers to task given to be carried out or undertaken by learners. The task can be inform of coursework, project or homework. Specifically in Open and Distance learning, examples of assignments is the tutor marked assignment which can take the form of homework or project.

Sometimes giving assignment can ensue while a learner is in the process of interacting with support service providers like the psychological/ academic counsellor or tutorial facilitator. The common purpose of giving out assignment to learners is to foster better understanding of a concept or task. Most of the time assignments are giving for the sake of assessment i.e. tutor marked assignment.

Assignments are also given for the following reasons:

- To provide quality learner support including guidance.
- To develop and manage essential feedback mechanisms which is characteristics of effective open and distance learning;
- To review, assess and provide feedback on assignments which are regularly submitted by students as part of the distance learning instructional package.
- To monitor distance learners' academic progress as at when necessary or due;
- To engage in creative and innovative roles and activities, which will develop and incorporate a range of requirements of particular courses on programmes and learning groups.

Tutorial Support

Tutors and learning materials play a crucial role in providing intellectual guidance and facilitating educational activities for learners.

- **Tutor Interaction:** Learners should be encouraged to engage with their tutors regularly through available communication channels. This interaction could involve discussing specific topics, planning for assignments, or reviewing

feedback on submitted work. Using visual symbols—such as a telephone icon for phone consultations or an envelope for written correspondence—can help guide learners on how to connect with their tutors effectively.

- **Assignment Submission and Evaluation:** Clear and precise instructions should be provided regarding assignment submission, including deadlines, required formats, submission procedures, and expected turnaround times for feedback. Research suggests that returning graded assignments within two weeks enhances student motivation and retention. Additionally, requiring an early assignment submission in a course increases the likelihood of course completion, as it helps learners establish a strong academic routine.
- **Grading Guidelines:** Learners should be informed about the grading criteria in their study materials, detailing how their assignments will be assessed and which aspects will receive the most emphasis. Tutors responsible for grading should ensure transparency by adhering to these criteria and providing constructive feedback. Effective feedback should be clear, well-structured, supportive, and encouraging, displaying key elements such as warmth, honesty, empathy, and organization. While tutors must objectively evaluate learner performance, their feedback should remain constructive and motivational, helping students improve and stay engaged in their studies.

Qualities of academic counselor/ facilitator on interaction through assignment

- The academic counselor/ facilitator should be genuinely interested in the art of distance teaching. He should be able to study and assess the teaching unit of the instructional material. He should be able to see from the point of view of the course writer.
- He/she should have clear orientation and understanding of the structure of the unit and thematic presentation. All these will ensure that the variance in the facilitation of learning at the various Study Centres is as minimal as possible.
- The academic counselor/ facilitator should possess the relevant skills to embark on interaction through assignment. Since wide discrepancies in the study skill of academic counselor/ facilitator can result in a wide range of interpretation of the unit, the necessary training should be provided to ensure consistency in interpretation as much as possible.
- The academic counselor/ facilitator should be able to discover weaknesses in the assignment response which is as a result of the weaknesses or defects of the assignment and/or the teaching unit. The academic counselor/ facilitator must be objective in his formation so that the learner benefits from the pedagogic advantage of discovering his/her assignment defects.
- Also, the academic counselor/ facilitator should consider the organizational aspect of the assignment response. He should pay attention to the beginning, the middle and the ending. The logic in the sequencing of points, the use of language; its correctness and clarity must be assessed. Again, the academic counselor/ facilitator must not be distracted by the language and style of a response despite poor or irrelevant content.
- Lastly, the academic counselor/ facilitator should be able to accurately and objectively grade the assignment response. The grading should reflect the

academic counselor/ facilitator ‘s comments on the response. The comments should:

- be motivating to the distance learner;
- break the walls of isolation surrounding the distance learner; and
- help the distance learner improve his learning through teaching type comments.

Tutor Comments on Assignments

The different types of tutor comments are explained below:

i. Harmful (HL) comment: Such comments are by themselves unpleasant. If anything, they make the learner hate the facilitator and, this may lead to loss of courage on the part of the learner. As a result, the barrier between the learner and the DE institution builds up, the channel of communication begins to narrow down and, the learner may eventually drop out. Examples of such comments are; ‘Horrible language…’, ‘You beat about the bush too much…’

ii. Hollow (HW) comments: There are certain comments that are just mere words. They may appear to have meaning but, the meanings are empty. Making meaning out of such comments is like trying to guess what message the writer wants to pass across. For instance, ‘Please go through the unit again…’, ‘You can do better than this’, ‘You have lots of irrelevant material in your submission’. One thing that is common to all these examples is that the writer has neither specified what the learner has done wrong nor what is expected of the learner.

iii. Misleading (MG) comments: This type of comments place the learner on the wrong track. The comment usually instructs the learner to carry out activities which have no purpose. For example a comment may read, ‘Please read the lesson once again and re-submit your assignment’. The learner will follow this instruction but without knowing what he can do to improve his assignment response.

iv. Null (NL) comments: Any comment which neither confirm nor question, illustrate nor explain, refute nor approve may be termed null comment. All types of ‘non-sentence’ remarks such as question marks, double check marks, underlining, side brackets or lines etc. constitute null comments. The only information passed across by these symbols is that the facilitator has gone through the assignment response. Though symbols with verbal definition may be used especially in situations where comments need to be repeated yet, it is pedagogically better to repeat such comments in sentences and not with symbols.

v. Negative (NE) comments: These are the type of comments that spell out to the learner what he has done wrong. They usually refute facts, concepts, explanations, illustrations, analyses etc. They may also go against the relevance of the content of a response, or the very approach to a given problem as presented by a learner. These are the most needed of all the different types of comments because without them the learner faces the danger of misguidance. Examples are: ‘Not clear, not to the point’, ‘You did not give a single illustration to buttress your point’, ‘Your explanation to question … is not adequate’ etc.

vi. Positive (PE) comments: These types of comments are meant to approve of the point of view of the learner. They indicate that he is on the right track. These comments help to encourage the learner to maintain and possibly improve on his performance.

Example of such comments are; ‘You have brilliantly explained the concept of distance teaching’, ‘Impressive, you speak my mind’ etc.

vii. Constructive (CE) comments: When a facilitator wishes to inform the learner of what he could have done to improve his performance, constructive comments are employed. Though such comments neither approve nor disapprove yet, they offer suggestions on how to solve a problem more brilliantly. As an example, a comment may go thus, ‘Always list out the point to be discussed when the question says list viii. Global (GL) comments: All the comments that have been discussed so far are usually written (in-line) close to the portion of the assignment response for which they are meant. Global comments encompass all the other in-line comments and summarize the overall performance of the learner. They may point out drawbacks such grammar, spelling, legibility etc. Also, they serve to explain the grade awarded to the learner. Global comments are not in-line, they are usually made on a separate sheet of paper.

ix. Personal (PL) comments: These are the means through which the isolation usually experienced by distance learners is broken. A Distance Teacher who wants to help learners on this basis by making use of personal comments must:

- have a very high degree of patience;
- be committed;
- know when and where a personal comment is needed; and
- possess the ability to blend academic comments, instructions and information into a closely knit whole.

Tutor comments are classified as given below:

- *Tutor comments*
- *Non-teaching comment*
- *Teaching comment*

Typical Process for Tutor-Marked Assignments

Tutor-marked assignments are a widely used method for formative assessment in open and distance learning programs. Generally, learners complete a portion of their coursework, draft an assignment based on that section, and submit it to their tutor for evaluation. The tutor reviews and grades the assignment, provides feedback, and then returns it to the learner. A record of the learner’s scores and sometimes the feedback is maintained by both the tutor and the institution’s administration, ensuring a documented record of the learner's academic progress.

How Assignments Help Learners Learn

Assignments play a crucial role in aiding distance learners in their academic journey by serving multiple purposes, including:

- Assessing learning progress based on course objectives.
- Verifying comprehension and coverage of course materials.
- Reinforcing successful learning outcomes.
- Identifying areas of weakness at an early stage.
- Allowing learners to apply newly acquired knowledge.
- Building a personal academic connection between the learner and tutor.

- Encouraging active participation in the learning process.
- Providing constructive feedback on performance.
- Highlighting learners' strengths and areas needing improvement.
- Offering remedial support where necessary.
- Promoting independent study and self-discipline.
- Serving as a motivation tool for gradual academic progress.
- Assisting tutors in planning effective face-to-face sessions.
- Enabling learners to demonstrate their understanding of new concepts.
- Helping learners prepare effectively for examinations.
- Directing learners toward areas that require additional focus.
- Facilitating ongoing communication between learners and tutors.
- Setting deadlines and intermediate learning milestones.
- Sustaining learners' commitment to their studies.
- Guiding learners in structuring their coursework effectively.
- Alerting tutors to any academic difficulties learners may be facing.
- Indicating to course developers which sections learners find challenging and may require additional support.

Feedback on Tutor-Marked Assignments

The effectiveness of tutor-marked assignments largely depends on the quality of feedback provided. Learners benefit significantly from detailed and constructive feedback rather than simply receiving a grade or a vague, unhelpful remark such as "You must improve." Well-articulated feedback helps learners understand their mistakes, build on their strengths, and enhance their academic performance.

Self-check Exercise -2

1. Which type of tutor comment is meant to approve and encourage the learner?

    a) Hollow (HW) comments
    b) Negative (NE) comments
    c) Positive (PE) comments
    d) Misleading (MG) comments

2. Which of the following is a key reason for giving assignments in distance learning?

    a) To decrease the workload of tutors
    b) To foster better understanding of a concept or task
    c) To replace face-to-face sessions entirely
    d) To limit student interactions

3. What is one benefit of tutor-marked assignments in distance learning?

    a) They eliminate the need for feedback

b) They provide a basis for regular dialogue between learner and tutor
c) They increase the cost of distance education
d) They reduce the need for electronic resources

16.5 SUMMARY

This chapter delves into the role and significance of face-to-face sessions in distance teaching institutions (DTIs), highlighting their benefits and challenges. These sessions facilitate teacher-learner interaction, reducing the isolation often associated with distance learning. Despite their advantages, face-to-face sessions pose organizational and management challenges, such as securing venues, hiring tutorial staff, and managing logistics. The chapter also discusses the economic implications of these sessions and explores alternatives like teletutorials. Furthermore, the chapter covers the importance of assignments in distance education, the qualities of effective tutor comments, and how tutor-marked assignments enhance learning by providing feedback and facilitating interaction between learners and tutors.

16.6 GLOSSARY

- **Distance Teaching Institutions (DTIs)**: Institutions that provide education primarily through distance learning methods.
- **Face-to-Face Sessions**: In-person meetings between teachers and learners for educational purposes.
- **Teleconferencing**: A method of communication where multiple participants in different locations interact via electronic means.
- **Teletutorials**: Tutorials conducted through telecommunications.
- **Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)**: Assignments marked by a tutor, providing feedback and assessment.

16.7 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Self-check exercise 1

1. b) Enhancing social interactions and reducing isolation

2. b) Securing classrooms and tutorial staffs

3. a) To maintain the purity of distance teaching

Self-check -exercise 2

1. c) Positive (PE) comments

2. b) To foster better understanding of a concept or task

3. b) They provide a basis for regular dialogue between learner and tutor

16.8 REFERENCES/SUGGESTIVE READINGS

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16.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions:

1. Explain the importance of face-to-face sessions in distance teaching institutions.
2. Discuss the organizational and management challenges associated with face-to-face sessions.
3. What are the economic implications of integrating face-to-face sessions in distance education?
4. Describe the role of tutor-marked assignments in promoting interaction in distance education.
5. Identify and explain different types of tutor comments on assignments.
6. What are some alternatives to face-to-face sessions in distance teaching?

UNIT-17

ISSUES OF COMMUNICATION IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

STRUCTURE

17.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learners

As communication moves through intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, mass, intercultural and contextual venues, there is greater opportunity to resolve challenges; yet at the same time, there is more complexity in the need for overcoming a greater diversity of barriers. With Internet-capable devices, communication methods have expanded and with that expansion, so has the opportunities for collaboration, access to resources, and context-aware problem solving. The more communication rich the environment, the greater the potential is to overcome all types of communication barriers to distance education; yet in some ways, too, greater levels of communication anxiety arise. If the communication method for a distance education course is broadcast television with no interaction among students, there is no opportunity for communication barriers involving cultural attitudes to arise in discussion among student participants.

17.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the different types of communication barriers in distance education.
- Identify the characteristics of cognitive, contextual, cultural, emotional, and language distances.
- Analyze the impact of physical, technical, and temporal barriers on distance learning.
- Explore the psychological and social challenges faced by students and instructors in online education.
- Examine cultural barriers and their influence on communication in distance education.
- Develop strategies to overcome communication obstacles in distance learning environments.

17.3 ISSUES IN COMMUNICATION IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance education is defined by Moore and Kearsley (2012) as “teaching and planned learning in which teaching normally occurs in a different place from learning, requiring communication through technologies as well as special institutional organization”. Following are some of the important types of barriers and some characteristics of them that directly or indirectly affect communication:

Cognitive distance (or epistemological or conceptual understanding) refers to how homogeneous students are among themselves, or between a student and teacher, with respect to conceptual understanding. The more cognitive distance there is, the more difficult it is for concept development through discussion .

Contextual distance is defined here as the difference in learning or problem solving between the abstract situation presented to the student versus that found in an authentic situation.

Cultural distance (including differences in ethnicity, class, age, gender or religion). Persons have patterns of thought, action, and values that are distinctive and that characterize members of a social group.

Emotional distance are personal feelings at the moment regarding the learning experience such as fear, mistrust, and suspicion.

language distance is expressed in the use of second or third languages for teaching or learning, accent, and the use of dialect, slang, jargon, colloquialisms, acronyms and abbreviation ***pedagogical distance*** involves teachers and students managing transactional distance (Moore, 1993) during the educational experiences.

Physical distance (i.e., geographical space) psychological distance referred to perceptions (subjective feelings) about the closeness or presence of another person when interacting with that person.

Social distance (degree of affinity, closeness, or support) refers to perceived differences in class and socio-economic status

Technical distance refers to differences in access to technology or technological capabilities across various people throughout the world. It may also refer to different individual competency with technology.

Temporal distance (i.e., time) The greater the grown of globalization in distance education, the more time zones that may and often are represented across the participants within a classroom .

The difficulties that hinder effective communication may begin with technical issues, but as telecommunication systems improve, many other types of communication obstacles are added. Keegan (1986) stated that a critical link in communication in distance education was missing, caused by the geographic separation between students and teachers. Keegan believed it was a responsibility of the educational institution to compensate for the communication barriers in order to reduce student dropout and help students to integrate their academic and social experiences with their education. As technology advances, the opportunities to overcome communication barriers improves, as does the naturally accompanying complexity and level of communication barriers that occur within the distance education system.

Physical, Technical, and Temporal Barriers

In the era of correspondence courses, the main challenges to distance education centered on lack of access to the instructor and lack of timely, two-way communication. Broadcast communication, with television or radio, helped to ameliorate the lack of access to instructors, but did nothing to increase two-way communication. Eventually, some two-way communication problems occurring within correspondence courses were ameliorated by using telephone service. In general, problems that revolved around low levels of interaction led to a lack of motivation and the lack of enthusiasm for learning, often causing students to drop out of the distance education course or program

Psychological Barriers

Along with the access and technical problems with the delivery systems themselves, there were perceptual issues that were especially acute due to the initial lack of skilled online teachers and the background characteristics of students. Often students reported feeling confused, anxious or frustrated and wanted quicker feedback from the teacher regarding course content, assignments or management of the online class. Too frequently these feelings were met with an instructor who did not perceive the intensity of the students' sense of frustration, or did not adequately resolve the problems if they were perceived in the first place. The distance education literature speaks of the degradation in interactions between students and teachers and among students (compared to in-person classrooms), and even of abusive behavior (i.e., flaming) that could become a problem as the perceived anonymity of online interaction became more widespread.

Another significant communication challenge addressed in the distance education literature involves the feelings of isolation felt by students. It took many designers and instructors quite a while to understand how to reduce these feelings through areas in the distance classroom where all students and instructors could share their opinions, ask questions, and generally create the sense of belonging to a group. As students became more practiced in online learning and communication, and instructors learned ways to promote a sense of community within the distance education environment, feelings of isolation among many students began to diminish, being replaced by

feelings of closeness and kinship. Instructors and designers still need to focus attention on designing an online/distance learning environment for student engagement, and to promote communication strategies that support online students learning.

Social, Interaction, and Collaboration Barriers

The change from an in-person, classroom venue to online communication is perceived by many students and instructors as a significant loss (of dedicated uninterrupted learning space), and the differences in how social interactions occur online versus in-person is of great concern. For instance, difficulties communicating with others in online classes can happened because of time zone variations, the absence of a sense of emotional connection with each other, or the lack of the kind of real-time feedback that happens in an in-person classroom. Still, many participants in online distance education find social interaction can be enhanced through technology-mediation. For most participants, in most cases, it is more difficult to create a similar sense of social presence and to avoid communication problems regarding social interactions online compared with doing so with the same participants in-person , usually because technologically-mediated delivery systems do not allow the same amount of social-context cues .

Cultural Barriers

As technologies used for distance education have advanced, often the participants' feelings of isolation and physical distance have decreased. At the same time, students from different locales and different cultures have increased, making communication and language barriers more of a problem . Learners define content and handle learning events differently depending upon such things as their beliefs, religion, ideas, local customs, and language.

To most people collaboration, discussion, and communication generally becomes more difficult with persons perceived as strangers, or instructors from one culture teaching learners from a different culture .

In diverse groups, language is probably the most recognizable cultural characteristic. Students express concern about lack of proficiency in English; for instance, fearing they will be misunderstood or misinterpreted, especially during collaborative work and. Yet, what learners of a second language need most are opportunities to actively use language as a communication tool.

Self-check Exercise -1

1) Which of the following is not a barrier that affects communication in distance education?

a) Cultural
b) Contextual
c) Cooperation
d) Cognitive

2) What is cognitive distance?

a) The difference in geographic locations of students
b) The difference in conceptual understanding among students
c) The difference in emotional feelings during learning
d) The difference in access to technology

3) Which term refers to personal feelings like fear, mistrust, and suspicion affecting the learning experience?

a) Social Distance
b) Emotional Distance
c) Cultural Distance
d) Technical Distance

4) Temporal distance in distance education is related to:

a) Geographic separation
b) Time zones
c) Technological access
d) Cultural differences

5) Which barrier is associated with the use of second or third languages in learning?
a) Physical Distance
b) Pedagogical Distance
c) Language Distance
d) Psychological Distance

17.4 SUMMARY

Implementing technology in distance education requires a positive attitude from both providers and receivers. Focusing on barriers can impede progress, while imaginative use of tools like television, audio-video materials, and computers can enhance education quality. E-learning and internet-based learning offer significant potential but require empirical studies to ensure pedagogical efficacy.

Distance education faces various communication barriers, including technical, psychological, social, and cultural challenges. As technology becomes more accessible and user-friendly, the complexity of these barriers increases. Understanding and addressing these obstacles can lead to more effective course design and implementation, ultimately improving the learning experience for all participants. Continuous research and collaboration among stakeholders are essential to overcome these challenges and bring education closer to learners in a meaningful way.

17.5 GLOSSARY

- **Cognitive Distance**: The difference in conceptual understanding among students or between students and teachers.
- **Contextual Distance**: The gap between abstract learning situations and real-world applications.
- **Cultural Distance**: Differences in ethnicity, class, age, gender, or religion affecting communication.
- **Emotional Distance**: Personal feelings like fear, mistrust, and suspicion impacting the learning experience.
- **Language Distance**: Barriers due to the use of second or third languages, accents, dialects, slang, and jargon.
- **Pedagogical Distance**: Management of transactional distance during educational experiences.

17.6 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE

Self-check exercise-1

1. c) Cooperation
2. b) The difference in conceptual understanding among students
3. b) Emotional Distance
4. b) Time zones

5.) Language Distance

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17.8 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions :

1. Explain the various types of communication barriers in distance education and provide examples for each.

2.Discuss the impact of technical and temporal barriers on the effectiveness of distance learning.

3. How do psychological and social challenges affect the experience of students and instructors in online education?

4. In what ways do cultural differences influence communication and collaboration in a distance education environment?

5.Suggest strategies that can be implemented to overcome communication obstacles in distance learning settings.

UNIT-18

APPLICATIONS OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

STRUCTURE

18.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

Communication technologies have revolutionized the landscape of distance education, enabling seamless interaction between learners and educators despite geographical barriers. From basic email systems to sophisticated online learning platforms, these technologies have facilitated real-time communication, collaborative learning, and efficient management of educational resources. This chapter explores the various applications of communication technologies in distance education, highlighting their impact on teaching and learning processes.

18.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the role and significance of communication technologies in distance education.
- Identify different types of communication technologies used in distance education.
- Explain how these technologies enhance teaching and learning experiences.
- Discuss the challenges and considerations in implementing communication technologies in distance education.
- Evaluate case studies demonstrating successful application of communication technologies in distance education.

18.3 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION, ITS ADVANTAGES, CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Types of communication technologies are:

a) Email and Instant Messaging

Email and instant messaging are fundamental tools for communication in distance education. They enable asynchronous communication, allowing learners and educators to interact at their convenience. These tools are used for announcements, submission of assignments, feedback, and one-on-one communication.

b) Learning Management Systems (LMS)

LMS platforms like Moodle, Blackboard, and Canvas integrate various communication tools, such as discussion forums, chat rooms, and announcement boards. They provide a centralized space for course management, content delivery, and student interaction, enhancing the overall learning experience.

c) Video Conferencing

Video conferencing tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet facilitate synchronous communication, simulating a classroom environment. They support live lectures, virtual office hours, and group discussions, making real-time interaction possible despite physical distances.

d) Social Media

Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are increasingly used in distance education to create learning communities. These platforms support informal

learning, peer interaction, and professional networking, fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration among learners.

e) Discussion Forums and Online Communities

Discussion forums and online communities provide spaces for learners to engage in topic-specific discussions, ask questions, and share resources. Platforms like Reddit, Quora, and specialized educational forums support collaborative learning and peer support.

f) Mobile Learning Technologies

Mobile apps and SMS services offer flexible and accessible learning opportunities. They enable learners to access educational content, receive notifications, and participate in discussions using their mobile devices, supporting learning on the go.

ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES ARE:-

a) Improved Accessibility and Flexibility

Communication technologies break down geographical barriers, making education accessible to learners worldwide. They offer flexible learning schedules, allowing students to learn at their own pace and convenience.

b) Increased Engagement and Interaction

Interactive tools like video conferencing and discussion forums promote active participation and engagement. They enable real-time feedback, collaborative projects, and interactive learning activities, enhancing the learning experience.

c) Enhanced Collaboration and Peer Learning

Communication technologies facilitate collaborative learning through group projects, peer reviews, and online discussions. They support the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills.

d) Efficient Management and Delivery of Content

LMS and other digital tools streamline the management and delivery of educational content. They provide a centralized platform for course materials, assessments, and communication, improving organizational efficiency and learner experience.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

a) Technical Issues and Digital Divide

Access to reliable internet and devices is a significant challenge in distance education. The digital divide can exacerbate inequalities, limiting access to communication technologies for some learners.

b) Maintaining Engagement and Motivation

Keeping learners engaged and motivated in an online environment can be challenging. Educators need to employ diverse and interactive teaching strategies to maintain interest and participation.

c) Privacy and Security Concerns

The use of digital communication tools raises concerns about data privacy and security. Institutions must implement robust policies and technologies to protect learners' personal information.

d) Training and Support for Educators

Effective use of communication technologies requires adequate training and support for educators. Institutions must invest in professional development to ensure educators can leverage these tools effectively.

Self -check Exercise 1

1. Which of the following is NOT a benefit of communication technologies in distance education?
    a) Improved accessibility
    b) Increased engagement
    c) Reduced need for technical support
    d) Enhanced collaboration
2. Which communication technology is primarily used for asynchronous communication?
    a) Video conferencing
    b) Email
    c) Social media
    d) Discussion forums
3. What is a significant challenge in implementing communication technologies in distance education?
    a) Increased face-to-face interaction
    b) Technical issues and digital divide
    c) Simplified content delivery
    d) Limited content availability

s18.4 SUMMARY

This chapter examines how communication technologies have revolutionized distance education by enhancing accessibility, interaction, and efficiency. Key technologies include email for asynchronous communication, learning management systems (LMS) like Moodle for integrated course management, video conferencing for real-time interaction, and social media for peer networking. Additionally, discussion forums and mobile learning technologies support collaborative learning and flexible access to resources. These tools collectively improve teaching and learning experiences by providing greater flexibility, fostering engagement, and streamlining educational processes, though challenges such as technical issues and the digital divide remain.

18.5 GLOSSARY

- **Asynchronous Communication**: A form of communication where interactions do not occur in real-time, allowing participants to respond at their own convenience. Examples include email, discussion forums, and recorded lectures.
- **Video Conferencing**: A technology that enables real-time audio and video communication over the internet, allowing for live lectures, meetings, and discussions. Tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet are commonly used.
- **Social media**: Online platforms that facilitate networking, communication, and information sharing among users. In education, social media can create learning communities and support informal learning. Examples include Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

18.6 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISE

Self check Exercise 1

1) c) Reduced need for technical support
2) b) Email
3) b) Technical issues and digital divide

18.7 REFERENCES/SUGGESTIVE READINGS

- "E-Learning and the Science of Instruction" by Ruth C. Clark and Richard E. Mayer
- "Distance Education: A Systems View of Online Learning" by Michael G. Moore and Greg Kearsley
- "The Online Learning Idea Book: Proven Ways to Enhance Technology-Based and Blended Learning" by Patti Shank

18.8 TERNIMAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions :

- Discuss the role of video conferencing tools in enhancing real-time interaction in distance education.
- How do learning management systems (LMS) integrate various communication technologies to support distance learners?

- Identify and explain the challenges associated with the implementation of communication technologies in distance education.
- Evaluate the impact of social media platforms on creating learning communities and supporting peer interaction in distance education.
- Discuss how mobile learning technologies can support flexible and accessible learning opportunities for distance learners.

UNIT -19
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA IN DISTANCE EDUCATION- I

STRUCTURE

19.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

Distance Education has evolved alongside advancements in communication technology, which serve as a foundation for this mode of learning. In this scenario, educators must recognize that technology will continue to play a pivotal role as an instructional tool. Therefore, they should adapt their teaching strategies, plan their lessons accordingly, and structure their instructional methods to facilitate the learning process effectively. By doing so, they can surpass expectations and enhance knowledge acquisition.The rapid progress of new technologies has brought significant changes to society and the workplace, offering new possibilities for teaching and learning. These advancements have expanded the scope of Distance Education by integrating traditional educational resources with Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). This shift encourages a broader and more dynamic approach to education that aligns with societal needs.Higher education institutions can leverage ICTs to adapt their curriculum and make learning materials more accessible, ultimately enhancing the flexibility of distance learning programs. Through these innovations,

Distance Education continues to evolve, providing learners with more opportunities to engage in education effectively.

19.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the role of media in distance education.
- Identify different types of media used in distance education.
- Compare traditional and digital media formats.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of various media formats.
- Establish criteria for selecting appropriate educational media.
- Apply media selection criteria to educational scenarios.
- Create engaging learning activities using different media.
- Develop methods to assess media impact on learning.
- Analyze media usage data to improve educational practices.
- Explain role of television, computer and satellite technology in distance learning.

19.3 TECHNOLOGY IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

The use of technology for processing and communicating information has existed for centuries, dating back to the invention of writing. However, the past five decades have seen an unprecedented surge in technological advancements, largely driven by the rise of digital electronics.

One of the most significant recent developments is the merging of technologies that handle information processing with those designed for communication. This integration is evident in the rise of the Internet, which allows computing systems in offices and educational institutions to connect seamlessly and interact with similar systems worldwide. As this technological integration deepens, the distinction between processing and communication tools becomes less noticeable. Eventually, users may no longer be concerned with whether the information they are accessing is stored on a local device or retrieved from a remote system, as accessibility takes precedence over location.

The importance of the use of the resources and technologies of the Internet in education is obvious today. It has been shown that the use of the Internet in the sphere of organization and management of education leads to the increase of education accessibility on a global scale, and may lead to the growth of economic efficiency of an educational institutions activity. All developed countries of the world have more or less extensive programmes of Internet development in the sphere of education. The overwhelming majority of developing countries, despite difficulties, problems and fears, seek as far as possible to take part in the formation of the global educational community. In doing so, the systematization and analysis of the experience of Internet usage in education becomes an urgent issue for each country and the global community as a whole.

Taking the huge scale of the Internet into account, the creation of mechanisms designed for effective navigation of the Internet, and the collection, analysis, exchange and distribution of information for the specific use of education acquires great

importance. However, despite the outstanding progress made in some countries in the creation of universal information retrieval systems and specialized information systems for education, neither set of systems taken separately can provide a complete service. It has usually been found that only 2 or 3 out of 20 current Internet-applications are used in most educational institutions. Further, this situation arises from a lack of information rather than a lack of finance.

Self-check Exercise1

1) What has been a vital recent development in the field of technology over the last 50 years?

a) The invention of the printing press
b) The convergence of technologies for information processing and communication
c) The development of analog electronics
d) The introduction of satellite communication

2) What is one of the major benefits of using the Internet in the organization and management of education?

a) Reduced costs of physical textbooks
b) Increased accessibility to education globally
c) Enhanced traditional face-to-face teaching methods
d) Decreased need for educational institutions

19.4 EDUCATIONAL MEDIA IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) utilizes a range of technologies, including audio, video, radio, tapes, television, video cassettes, teleconferencing, computers, the Internet, and the World Wide Web. The choice of these Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools varies across institutions, courses, programs, and learners. The integration of ICT in distance education has introduced new instructional methods, making the use of multimedia and technology-driven resources essential. ODL institutions must continuously explore innovative approaches to educate learners and keep them updated. The use of educational media in ODL enhances interaction between learners and educators, where instructors guide and facilitate learning by providing direct access to multiple information sources.

The role of media in ODL includes teleconferencing, self-learning modules, practical experiences, tutorials, phone-in support, and both academic and personal counseling. Television broadcasts and the use of audio-video cassettes have enabled learners to enhance their knowledge and skills without leaving their workplaces. As a globally recognized alternative to traditional education, distance learning has become a key solution for reaching learners in remote areas.

19.4.1 AUDIO AND VIDEO

Audio

Distance education relies on a multimedia approach to instruction. Among the various electronic media, radio is the most cost-effective and widely accessible, reaching a larger audience compared to other mediums. Radio serves multiple educational purposes, such as making learning engaging, enhancing vocabulary, improving concentration and listening skills, and boosting fluency and confidence in communication. It is used for both formal and non-formal education, with broadcasts designed to complement and enrich school curricula.

Audio Tapes

According to Rowntree (1994), audio materials in education serve several purposes:

- Providing an auditory learning resource.
- Bringing life to ideas introduced in the course.
- Helping learners develop and practice skills.
- Making learning more engaging and personal.
- Motivating and encouraging learners.
- Influencing learners' emotions and attitudes.
- Offering exposure to the voices of experts, users, clients, and peers.
- Adding variety to the learning experience.

Audio tapes address some of the limitations of live radio broadcasts. They offer learners flexibility in terms of time and place, allowing them to replay and review the material as needed. Radio and audio-based instruction have key advantages, including affordability, widespread accessibility, ease of production, direct instructional delivery, and broad learner engagement.

Video

Video facilitates interactive two-way communication, enabling learners to submit requests to a central database while engaging with video content. Video programs have gained popularity as an effective teaching tool. Compared to television broadcasts, video cassettes offer greater flexibility since learners can control the pace of their learning, choosing when and where to access the content. The ability to pause, replay, and review the material makes video cassettes particularly suitable for individualized learning.

Video programs are valuable in both distance learning and face-to-face classroom settings. Unlike television broadcasts, video cassettes can be accessed as needed, allowing for repetition, mastery learning, and integration with other media. This decentralized approach provides learners with control over their learning process. However, video cassettes also present certain challenges. Their use depends on the availability of playback equipment, which may not be accessible to all distance learners. Therefore, relying solely on video cassettes for instruction is not practical.

Recognizing both the potential and limitations of video-based instruction, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in New Delhi integrates video cassettes and broadcast technology to supplement printed course materials. Study centers provide audio-video cassette recorders for students who wish to access these programs. Group viewing sessions at study centers allow learners to engage in

discussions with academic counselors and peers, enhancing their understanding of the content. These sessions provide additional guidance and support, enabling learners to benefit from peer interaction as well as structured video content.

Some video programs are designed for individual use, with content divided into sections featuring interactive exercises. This format allows learners to manage their own learning process. Video materials are also more cost-effective compared to other audio-visual productions such as movies and theatrical plays.

Self-check Exercise-2

1. How does video content enhance learning in distance education?

a) By limiting access to course materials
b) By reducing student engagement
c) By providing visual demonstrations and simulations
d) By increasing textual information

2. What is the primary advantage of using audio lectures in distance education?

a) Limited accessibility for students
b) Increased engagement through auditory learning
c) Decreased clarity of content delivery
d) Higher cost of production

3. How does interactive video conferencing contribute to distance education?

a) By reducing student participation
b) By limiting access to educational resources
c) By enabling real-time communication and collaboration
d) By decreasing multimedia integration

19.4.2 TELEVISION

Television (TV)

Television enhances students' learning experiences by capturing their attention, facilitating knowledge assimilation, and encouraging the practical application of what they have learned. Although primarily used for entertainment, TV also serves as an effective educational tool. To maximize its potential as a teaching aid, TV programs must be visually engaging, interactive, and tailored to learners' needs.

Educational television is developed by experts, either as individuals or through institutions, to deliver subject-specific content. This system provides both formal instruction and non-formal education, bridging the gap between the classroom and the

home. As Wayne Loy describes it, educational television functions as the "electronic blackboard of the future," offering numerous benefits, including:

- Combining both visual and auditory learning experiences.
- Acting as an extension of radio broadcasting.
- Ensuring uniform communication across audiences.
- Serving as a versatile educational tool.
- Stimulating and reinforcing key concepts.
- Broadcasting live coverage of events.
- Providing a dynamic visual learning experience.
- Offering content for both education and leisure activities.

Role of Television in Distance Learning

Television has played a significant role in the expansion of new curriculum ideas, many of which remain influential even after their original projects have ended. It contributes to distance education in several ways:

- Enhancing the quality of education.
- Acting as a catalyst for new educational approaches.
- Expanding children's learning experiences.
- Introducing emotional and value-based education.
- Promoting equal access to educational opportunities.
- Improving efficiency and productivity in learning.
- Supporting instructional systems based on TV content.

Role of TV Programs

Educational television programs serve multiple functions, such as:

- Introducing lesson topics for teachers to expand upon.
- Providing supplementary background material for upcoming lessons.
- Offering key illustrations to stimulate classroom discussions and discovery.
- Reinforcing and reviewing previously covered topics.

Role of Teachers

Teachers play a crucial role in the effective use of educational television by:

- Planning and preparing TV-based instructional content.
- Overseeing the production of educational programs.
- Presenting the content in an engaging manner.
- Ensuring proper utilization of TV programs in the learning process.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of TV-based instruction.

Self- check Exercise 3

1) How does television support distance education?

a) By limiting access to educational content
b) By providing visual and auditory learning experiences
c) By reducing student engagement
d) By increasing travel requirements

2) What advantage does television offer in delivering educational content?

a) Limited audience reach
b) Enhanced interactivity with instructors
c) Visual demonstrations and real-life examples
d) Decreased clarity of content delivery

3) How does television contribute to asynchronous learning in distance education?

a) By requiring real-time participation
b) By restricting access to educational resources
c) By allowing students to view programs at their convenience
d) By decreasing visual content delivery

19.6 GLOSSARY

- **Digital Electronics**: The technology that uses discrete signals (often binary) for processing and transmitting information.
- **Integration**: Combining different technologies or systems to function together seamlessly.
- **Internet**: A global network of interconnected computers that communicate freely and share and exchange information.
- **Information Communication Technology (ICT)**: Technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications.
- **Open and Distance Learning (ODL)**: Educational systems where learners and instructors are separated by time and/or physical distance.

19.7 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Self-check exercise 1

1. b) The convergence of technologies for information processing and communication

2. b) Increased accessibility to education globally

Self-check exercise 2

1. c) By providing visual demonstrations and simulations
2. b) Increased engagement through auditory learning
3. c) By enabling real-time communication and collaboration

Self-check exercise 3

1. b) By providing visual and auditory learning experiences
2. c) Visual demonstrations and real-life examples
3. c) By allowing students to view programs at their convenience

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19.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions :

1) How has digital electronics influenced the evolution of distance education?
2) Compare and contrast the roles of radio and television in distance education.
3) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using video cassettes in distance learning programs.
4) Discuss the importance of multimedia in making distance learning interactive and engaging for learners.

UNIT-20

EDUCATIONAL MEDIA IN DISTANCE EDUCATION-II

STRUCTURE

20.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner,

In the digital age, technology has revolutionized the landscape of education, transforming how knowledge is accessed, shared, and disseminated. Key technologies such as computers, television, and satellite systems have played pivotal roles in enhancing educational experiences globally. These advancements have not only expanded access to learning but also enriched teaching methodologies, making education more interactive, engaging, and inclusive.

20.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the evolution and impact of computers, television, and satellite technology on education.
- Analyze how these technologies enhance access to learning opportunities globally.
- Evaluate the pedagogical innovations facilitated by computer, television, and satellite technology.
- Discuss the role of satellite technology in promoting global educational connectivity.
- Critically assess challenges and opportunities associated with integrating these technologies in education.

20.3 ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

20.3.1 COMPUTER

Computers were introduced in select Indian schools during 1984–85 as part of the national initiative called Computer Literacy and Studies in Schools (CLASS). This initiative had four key objectives:

- To provide students with a fundamental understanding of computers and their applications.
- To offer hands-on experience with computers.
- To familiarize students with the diverse applications of computers in various fields and their role as tools for information processing and control.
- To demystify computers, fostering ease and familiarity that can inspire creativity in developing applications relevant to students' surroundings.

In open and distance learning (ODL), computer networks serve as an effective medium for instant communication. They also promote interaction between learners and computers, learners and tutors, as well as among learners through networking. Different types of computers, from large databases to personal computers, can be interconnected via networks. Instruction through computers can take place using either remote or local networks.

- **Remote networks** involve communication between a central database and computers at various locations.
- **Local networks** facilitate connections within an institution’s campus.

Computers support both individualized and group-based learning, depending on the facilities available within the computer network. Distance learning institutions can utilize teleconferencing through computer networks, which offers greater communication flexibility compared to video conferencing. In distance education, conferencing can foster collaborative learning by connecting learner groups via local networks.

Computers have significantly transformed the ways in which we collect, process, store, and share information. While various storage devices can now hold vast amounts of information, the foundational invention that made these advancements possible is the computer.

Chacon (1992) categorizes the role of computers in distance education into three modes: **information processing, interaction, and communication.**

Information Processing

This mode follows the principle of **"learning by doing."** It relates to various cognitive skills, such as recalling information, organizing, performing calculations, recognizing relationships, and developing literacy skills. Computers function as tools for these tasks and can be used in distance education to support:

- Dissemination of information.
- Enhancement of language skills.
- Learning foreign languages.
- Development of procedural skills.
- Problem-solving abilities.
- Analytical thinking.
- Design-related skills.

Interaction

This mode follows the principle of **"self-directed learning."** It involves direct engagement between the learner and the computer, where interactive computing enables students to engage in dialogue with the system while receiving responses in different media formats. Through this approach, computers act as intelligent tutors. The instructional techniques in this mode include:

- Drill and practice exercises.
- Problem-solving activities.
- Procedural learning.
- Tutorials.
- Guided discovery learning.
- Decision-making exercises.

Communication

This mode follows the principle of **"learning from others."** It focuses on fostering communication among learners through computer networks, making it particularly useful for supporting remote students. Technologies such as **email and computer conferencing** are central to this approach. The communication mode serves several educational purposes, including:

- Improving verbal communication skills.
- Enhancing analysis and synthesis of textual information.
- Strengthening expression and articulation abilities.
- Providing motivational support to distant learners.

- Developing critical thinking and judgment skills.
- Encouraging collaborative problem-solving.
- Facilitating incidental learning opportunities.
- Acting as a substitute for direct experiences.
- Presenting abstract concepts in an understandable manner.

The communication mode provides a robust platform for collaborative learning, enabling distance learners to engage in meaningful discussions, share knowledge, and actively participate in the learning process.

Self- check Exercise-1

1. What is a primary advantage of using computers in distance education?
    a) Limited access to learning resources
    b) Increased flexibility in learning schedules
    c) Decreased interaction with instructors
    d) Higher cost of education
2. Which educational function is most enhanced by computer technology in distance education?
    a) One-way communication
    b) Teacher-centered instruction
    c) Collaborative learning
    d) Passive learning
3. How do computers contribute to personalized learning experiences in distance education?
    a) By limiting access to course materials
    b) By allowing customization of learning pace and content
    c) By restricting student interaction
    d) By increasing travel requirements

20.3.2 SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY

Communication satellites are typically positioned in a specific orbit around the Earth, making them appear stationary to ground-based transmitters and receivers. Currently, there are over a hundred such satellites in operation worldwide, with new ones being launched frequently. Satellite-based communication involves several key components: an **uplink**, which is a ground-based transmission station that sends signals to the satellite, and a **downlink**, which is a receiving dish that collects the transmitted signals and delivers them to a local station.

Satellite technology enhances the efficiency of telecommunication networks and strengthens the flow of information, which plays a significant role in advancing education. It is especially beneficial for students in remote locations who rely on distance learning. With limited academic resources, satellites can be leveraged to expand access to higher education, even for students residing in small, isolated regions.

For large countries, satellite communication serves as a cost-effective means to reach learners in distant and inaccessible areas. In regions with challenging geographical conditions, such as mountainous terrain, satellites often provide the only feasible solution for educational outreach. The primary advantage of satellite technology is its accessibility. Given that distance education programs often target vast and scattered populations, the costs involved in satellite-based transmission are justified. Satellite communication is relatively cost-efficient and allows for widespread educational access.

Satellites can be utilized in education in three key ways:

- **Broadcasting educational and developmental programs** to the general public.
- **Transmitting pre-recorded lessons** for students at different academic levels.
- **Live broadcasting of educational content** with interactive, two-way communication.

In the first two methods, television and radio are the primary mediums, whereas in the third approach, satellites work alongside two-way communication tools such as computers, teleconferencing, videotext, and telephone-based instruction.

Satellite-Supported Distance Education

The **EDUSAT** initiative has shown that satellite-based education can provide **two-way videoconferencing, real-time multimedia instruction, and on-demand video lessons**. It has fostered virtual communities where learners and educators share vast information resources available on the internet. Additionally, global "virtual libraries" have been established by linking university research databases, contributing to the creation of a comprehensive knowledge repository accessible to anyone with network connectivity (Jasola & Sharma, 2005).

As knowledge continues to expand at a rapid pace, it is crucial to cultivate motivated, skillful, lifelong learners. Students cannot merely absorb all necessary information during their formal education; instead, they need to develop the skills to seek and utilize resources throughout their lives. By actively engaging with one another, their instructors, and new ideas, learners acquire and interpret knowledge in a meaningful way. When students feel part of a learning community, they are more motivated to solve problems and succeed academically.

EDUSAT facilitates different types of interactions, categorized based on the primary communication format:

- **One-alone interaction**: Learners access digital resources such as online databases, electronic journals, software applications, and educational forums. These resources provide access to scholarly discussions, research papers, library catalogs, and other essential learning materials.
- **One-to-one interaction**: This involves direct communication between a learner and an instructor through mentorship programs, learning contracts, or correspondence study.

- **One-to-many interaction**: This category includes lectures, presentations, and skits, where a teacher delivers content to a broad audience without significant learner participation.
- **Many-to-many interaction**: This approach encourages active discussions and knowledge exchange among multiple participants through computer conferencing systems.

Bulletin Board System (BBS) in Education

Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) serve as valuable educational tools by creating online spaces where teachers and students worldwide can interact. These "virtual classrooms" enable students to collaborate on projects, share information, and engage in discussions with instructors. Various strategies, such as assignments, discussion prompts, and teamwork-based activities, can be implemented to enhance student interaction on BBS platforms.

EDUSAT-Based Distance Learning

Courses delivered through the EDUSAT network focus on a learner-centered educational model, where both teachers and students actively participate in the learning process. These programs help reduce the sense of isolation that distance learners often experience. To make the most of satellite-based education, teachers need proper training and support in utilizing digital learning platforms. They must also plan engaging online and offline activities to create a stimulating learning environment.

Since satellite-based education allows students to manage their study schedules, choose their level of interaction with instructors and peers, and take control of their learning, it offers flexibility and personalization. Additionally, EDUSAT courses not only fulfill immediate educational needs but also help students become more self-directed in their long-term learning.

With increasing internet access, web-based instruction is becoming a viable supplement to satellite-based learning. EDUSAT is designed to accommodate a diverse group of learners, ensuring that its technological framework remains suitable for a broad audience. Students from various cultural and social backgrounds bring unique perspectives to the learning experience, shaping the way they interact with satellite-based education.

Satellite communication, particularly through EDUSAT plays a crucial role in advancing distance education. By offering visual and interactive learning experiences, it enhances student engagement and understanding. Additionally, it allows learners to clarify their doubts in real-time during virtual sessions. The overarching goal of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education, through EduSat, is to provide quality education across all levels—from primary to higher education, technical training, and professional development—particularly benefiting underprivileged communities.

Self-check Exercise -2

1. What is a primary advantage of using satellite technology in distance education?

a) Limited coverage area
b) Increased access to remote regions
c) Higher cost of implementation
d) Lower bandwidth capacity

2. How does satellite technology contribute to real-time interaction in distance education?

a) By delaying communication signals
b) By limiting access to educational content
c) By facilitating live video conferencing
d) By reducing network reliability

3. What role does satellite technology play in overcoming infrastructure challenges in remote areas?

a) By increasing travel requirements
b) By decreasing educational access
c) By providing reliable internet connectivity
d) By limiting communication with instructors

20.3.3 INTERNET

The Internet swiftly entered the life of the humankind in the 20th century. It took us less than ten years to face the fact of its spreading all over the world, including the developing countries. It has become not only the hugest information resource in the world, but – what is even more important – the most rapid means of communication. People from different countries have got an opportunity to communicate with each other in quite a short time. In comparison with a snail-mail or even airmail, e-mail gets over distance and time, frontiers of the states with a lightning speed. Indian distance higher education is largely print-based with some audio-visual support for learners. Use of internet-based technologies in distance learning is still in its juvenile stage. Distance education, since its inception in India, has been subject to technological innovations. Whenever a new technology came up, it was tried in the field of distance education but always as an adjunct to print medium. The new distance learners of today demand accessibility to the most recent and up-to-date education free from the spatial and temporal constraints. These demands cannot be fulfilled without change in the *status quo* of distance education and assimilation of appropriate technologies at appropriate places in its *modus operandi*. The advent of internet technologies in the arena of distance education can bring about radical changes in the mode of delivery and reception of instructions and result in effective and efficient learning according to the preferences and reservations of the learners provided the internet technologies are used strategically and pragmatically.

The basic difference between regular and distance mode of learning is that in the latter the main obligation of learning is on individual learners since they get little chance of interaction with their tutors as well as their fellow learners. It is well established that the content and the social environment of the learners play important roles in facilitating learning. The learners learn best when the content as well as the social environment is learner friendly. It is important to discuss the role of both these in detail.

Role of content

When content is developed using internet resources, the text is somewhat less structured and contains a number of hyper links including video clips, audio clips and other relevant text based resources which the learners can access according to their needs and interest. Thus students do not have to follow the same path in learning as others. The entire course content is not a pre-produced package but a basic platform for the learners wherefrom they can move in a direction that suits their requirements. This is in favour of a majority of learners as they need not go to study centres or wait for postal delivery for their study materials. They can access up-to-date learning materials with added benefits of flexibility of time, place and pace in learning and get ample opportunities to actively involved in the learning process.

Role of social environment

An important feature of internet is that it takes interaction with the tutors and fellow learners outside the boundaries of classroom where the meeting times are limited. It has certain tools that can foster development of a virtual community of learners outside the real community. The students and teachers of a distance learning institution can interact with each other synchronously and asynchronously and discuss the course content and related doubts and difficulties. This is suitable even for the shy and introvert students who hesitate to participate in face-to-face discussions because of fear of peer ridicule and therefore fail to become a part of the learning community in spite of their physical presence. They get a chance to interact in these virtual communities due to gained anonymity and if they make some efforts in the beginning they may eventually transform themselves into active participants.

E-mails are very good means of one to one interaction with tutors and also for timely feedbacks which can be very effective for learners. Discussion boards and synchronous chats serve as excellent media where learners can speak and hear i.e., S*hare* with P*eers* E*lectronically* their A*cquired* K*nowledge* and H*ave* E*lectronic* A*ccess to* their R*esponses*. Not only this they can also discuss their tentative understandings, clear up misunderstandings and construct their meanings of the content. Thus there is a shift from repetitive to productive learning and results in individual students acquiring a sound knowledge base.

Thus it can be said that internet is a boon for distance learners as it provides them:

- Easy access to most recent study materials
- More flexibility of time, place and pace in learning
- More interaction with content, tutors and fellow learners on one to one basis as well as a community
- Opportunity for learners to control their learning

Considerations in Internet usage

The Internet seems to be a beneficial idea in distance education. However, mere use of technology is not sufficient. Before bringing internet in practice in distance learning there are certain issues which have to be taken under consideration:

- Is the Internet a better way to learn? Will learners learn more or faster using internet?
- Will it reach of the majority of the learners in terms of available courses, access and cost?

- Will organizational aims be achieved; these aims can be economic, political and social?
- What is the preferred mode of learning – independent study or tutor facilitated study – for the majority of the learners?
- Do learners possess the necessary technical skills, motivation, self-discipline, time management skills, ability to work alone, and ability solve technical problems needed to effectively use the Internet?
- Are the teachers trained and ready to adapt their teaching skills and pedagogy for Internet learning?

Technology should never override education or be used just to bring novelty in pedagogy. It has the power to improve the actual process of learning and reach students who, for a multitude of reasons, cannot attend on-campus classes. The number of learners served is growing much faster than on-campus learning programs.

The use of internet in most of the courses in India and even outside India is simply that the courses are digitalized, placed on the institution/university's website and downloaded by bonafide students. This is quite suitable for students who are set in a structured pattern of learning. They pick up the study material from internet, go through it, attend counseling sessions at the study centres according to their needs, complete exams and get degrees. It is similar to the conventional methods with a major difference; students can access the study materials from wherever they want. Distance learning is advantageous for learners whose schedule, work and family responsibilities do not permit them to attend classes on campus. Also higher education, whether by regular or distance mode, should operate beyond knowledge and understanding, it should be thought provoking and take students to higher levels of learning. Internet and associated technologies have the potential to bring about radical changes in the learning patterns of all types of learners, so efforts should be made to use internet technologies to produce the desired results.

Internet in distance higher education in India

In India, internet in education is a recent phenomenon. Until recently limited bandwidth and slow modems which hampered the delivery of sound, video and graphics, high cost of personal computers and internet connection, low awareness and technical skills in computer and internet operations had stood in the path of large scale internet usage in the field of education. However from time to time, initiatives have been taken in this direction especially in the field of distance learning but only as peripheral activities. With the upsurge in demand for a computer-skilled workforce in the market, inflow of information from all directions, coming of broadband and lowering of cost of personal computers, awareness has increased among the masses.

Guidelines in internet usage in distance education

For proper planning and implementation of internet technologies at different stages in distance higher education, certain guidelines proposed by different authors have to be considered.

Before starting any internet based course a sort of mental preparation of students is necessary. They should be oriented regarding what internet based learning is. The skills that are expected of them in the virtual learning environments should be

explained to them and interested but less confident students should be given a short training so that they will not feel intimidated anywhere. The roles of the students as well as the tutors in the learning environment should be clarified in the beginning itself. The students should be made aware of the internet based tools and other support available to them during the learning process.

Providing hyperlinks to various resources in the study content does not necessarily support learning. Learners may get lost in cyber space resulting in demotivation, overload, isolation and eventual attrition. Moreover, learners need structure in learning content. Absence of structure can frustrate them. The huge amount of information available on the internet should be streamed with easily accessible hyperlinks to provide purposeful and thematic access and sequence to relevant study materials.

Participation in online discussions requires learners to have typing skills. In the absence of non- verbal cues, small doubts and confusion may impede learning. The initiative of tutors is especially important in this context. They have to play the role of moderators and guide and intervene in the discussions wherever distractions and misconceptions occur. Precision and concision should always be maintained on the part of the tutors or instructors. Furthermore, the tutors have to see that the discussions are not dominated by only a few students.

Though such discussions are reflective, they are time consuming especially for employed learners. Such learners may not want to interact with fellow learners. They value their interaction with their tutors only. Keeping in mind the academic needs especially of such learners, the tutors should open a separate e-mail account for students' queries so that they are not mixed with other e-mails and get deleted by mistake. They should always reply to the students' queries as soon as possible and also provide them timely feedback on a one-to-one basis. A *Frequently Asked Questions* database should be prepared and continuously updated for all courses separately on the institution/university's website to avoid repetition of same queries and lighten the work load of tutors.

A very big challenge to internet based learning is the absence of physical existence, the facial and hand gestures which provide important cues to the meaning and feelings of others. This area of communication is very difficult to obtain in an online environment especially in the starting phases and requires a lot of patience on the parts of both tutors and learners and high level of academic and technical support services. If the concerned authorities think that just by providing services their duties are over, then this may result in disaster. It has to be ensured at all levels that the services are properly implemented and any omission and/or lack of response should be taken care of immediately.

Self-check Exercise3

1. What is a primary advantage of using the internet in distance education?

    a) Limited access to educational resources
    b) Increased interactivity and engagement
    c) Higher cost of online courses

d) Decreased flexibility in learning schedules

2. How does the internet facilitate asynchronous learning in distance education?

a) By requiring real-time participation
b) By restricting access to course materials
c) By allowing students to access lectures and resources at their convenience
d) By limiting communication with instructors

3. What role does the internet play in promoting global connectivity in distance education?

a) By reducing access to international educational content
b) By limiting access to online libraries
c) By enabling collaboration and communication among students worldwide
d) By increasing travel requirements for students

20.4 SUMMARY

Distance education has been significantly transformed by advancements in technology, particularly through the integration of satellite technology and the internet. Satellite technology enables global connectivity, facilitating real-time communication and content delivery to remote areas. Meanwhile, the internet enhances interactivity, accessibility, and multimedia learning experiences in online education. Together, these technologies have expanded educational access, improved learning outcomes, and fostered a more inclusive learning environment worldwide.

20.5 GLOSSARY

- **Distance Education:** Education provided remotely, typically through online platforms and virtual classrooms.
- **Satellite Technology:** Technology that enables communication through satellites orbiting the Earth, used for broadcasting educational content and providing internet access in remote locations.
- **Internet:** Global network connecting millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks, facilitating online learning through various digital resources and platforms.
- **Asynchronous Learning:** Learning that occurs without real-time interaction between instructors and students, allowing learners to access educational content at their convenience.
- **Synchronous Learning:** Real-time learning where instructors and students interact simultaneously through live sessions or video conferencing.

20.6 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Self- check Exercise-1

1. b) Increased flexibility in learning schedules

2. c) Collaborative learning

3. b) By allowing customization of learning pace and content

Self- check Exercise 2

1. b) Increased access to remote regions

2. c) By facilitating live video conferencing

3. c) By providing reliable internet connectivity

Self- check Exercise-3

1. b) Increased interactivity and engagement

2. c) By allowing students to access lectures and resources at their convenience

3. c) By enabling collaboration and communication among students worldwide

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20.8 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Dear learners, please check your progress by attempting the following questions:

1. How has satellite technology revolutionized access to education in remote areas?

2. Discuss the advantages of asynchronous learning facilitated by the internet in distance education.

3. What role does the internet play in promoting global connectivity and collaboration among distance learners?

4. Compare and contrast synchronous and asynchronous learning environments in online education.

5. What are the challenges associated with the digital divide in leveraging internet technologies for distance education?

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