

**STUDY GUIDE ON**  
**THE CONCEPTS AND METHODS**  
**OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**M. A. (EDUCATION)**

**CODE NO. 842**

**UNITS 1-9**



**DISTANCE & NON-FORMAL EDUCATION DEPTT.**  
**ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY**  
**ISLAMABAD**

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It may be pointed out for general information of all whose work has been quoted in the course that the Allama Iqbal Open University is a non-commercial educational institution which provides educational facilities to the underprivileged remote rural areas through its distance education approach.

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*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*  
*Dean*  
*Faculty of Education*  
*25th September, 1998*



Chairman

Dr. Muhammad Rashid

Members

1. Professor Laeeq Ahmad Khan,  
Consultant, Prime Minister's  
Literacy Commission, Islamabad.
2. Dr. Prof. Mrs. Munawar Mirza,  
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NARC, Chak Shahzad.
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Consultant, Teacher Education Project  
Curriculum Wing, Ministry of Education,  
H-9, Islamabad.
5. Dr. Muhammad Rashid,  
Dean, Faculty of Education,  
A.I.O.U., Islamabad.
6. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Ch.  
Consultant, Teacher Education Project  
Curriculum Wing, Ministry of Education,  
H-9, Islamabad.
7. Mr. Muhammad Javed Iqbal,  
Assistant Professor,  
Distance & Non-Formal Education  
Department, A.I.O.U.,  
Islamabad.

8. Mr. S.M. Shahid  
Assistant Professor  
Distance & Non-Formal Education  
Department, A.I.O.U.,  
Islamabad.
9. Mr. M. Asif Rajput  
Lecturer  
Distance & Non-Formal Education  
Department, A.I.O.U.,  
Islamabad.
10. Mr. Liaqat Ali Goraha  
Lecturer  
Distance & Non-Formal Education  
Department, A.I.O.U.,  
Islamabad.
11. Malik Muhammad Manzoor  
Lecturer  
Faculty of Education  
A.I.O.U., Islamabad.

Course Development Coordinator    Dr. Muhammad Rashid

Editor   Mrs. Shahida Shah

Reviewer    Prof. Khadim Ali Hashmi

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Course Coordinator    Dr. Muhammad Rashid

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## **OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE**

Hopefully, on completion of the course, the student will be able to:-

1. explain the concept, nature and scope of distance education;
2. identify the need of distance education as an alternative to formal system;
3. discuss the theories of Distance Education;
4. specify the Distance Education methods to learning.
5. explain the need assessment in the system of distance education;
6. specify the organisational principles of distance education;
7. discuss the planning process of distance education;
8. plan a distance education system'
9. critically examine the institutional framework of distance education;
10. state the design of administration of distance education;
11. identify the equipment in the centre of distance education.
12. explain the foundation, structure and purpose of eastern institutes particularly the Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad;
13. discuss the organisation and management system of Allama Iqbal Open University;
14. evaluate the effectiveness of distance education in Pakistan;
15. identify the role of western-institutes particularly United Kingdom Open University (UKOU) in education;

16. discuss the organisational structure and decision-making of UKOU;
17. pinpoint the administrative difference between eastern institutions of distance education;
18. explain the general characteristics of the distance education universities.
19. plan a test for assessing the student performance;
20. explain the preliminary considerations for the construction of tests;
21. differentiate between different types of tests (subjective and objective);
22. discuss the importance of marking of student assignments;
23. identify the important steps in marking the student assignments;
24. appreciate the monitoring of assignments.
25. specify the potential role of radio in distance education;
26. compare the advantages and disadvantages of the use of radio and T.V. in distance education;
27. explain the role of educational T.V.;
28. appreciate the role and three broad types of characteristics of T.V. in distance education;
29. identify the role of T.V. in particular mental skills;
30. discuss the broad classification of non-broadcast media;
31. evaluate the effective role of non-broadcast media in distance education.
32. discuss the following basic elements of learning style:
  - a) environmental elements
  - b) Emotional elements
  - c) Sociological elements
  - d) physical elements

33. identify the diagnosing learning style;
34. explain the two-way communication between students and tutors;
35. specify students problems in student support system;
36. plan and organise a tutorial service;
37. evaluate the role of a tutor in student support system;
38. discuss the important hints on how to aid the process of learning;
39. explain the learning style instrument.
40. explain the responsibilities of writers for distance education.
41. discuss various stages of writing for distance education.
42. identify the different roles of course development coordinator (developer) as developer, implementer and evaluator of the course.
43. appreciate the role of reviewer in the course production process.
44. specify the role of material designer,
45. evaluate of role of editors
46. identify the financial problems in distance education.
47. specify practical suggestions for reducing early student drop-out rates.
48. discuss the organisational constraints in distance education.
49. evaluate the postal problems and suggest some possible solutions.
50. explain the communication problems between tutor and student.
51. list the printing problems in the system of distance education.

52. describe the nature of evaluation.
53. appreciate the importance of evaluation.
54. differentiate different types of evaluation.
55. discuss the process of student evaluation.
56. explain formative evaluation and summative evaluation.
57. discuss different processes and evaluation strategies in system of distance education.

**UNIT NO. 1**

**INTRODUCTION TO DISTANCE**  
**EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The term "distance education" is used to describe various forms of study at all levels. One of the main characteristics is that there is not a continuous and immediate supervision by the tutors, but there is planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organization. It is an educational process in which a significant proportion of teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner. This means that an intermediary is always used in the contact between tutor and student. The question may be raised why not supply you with text books? Distance education uses one or more media; the correspondence lesson, the sound cassette or tape lessons by radio or television. If, however, we are trying to prepare a package of materials which will teach effectively, then we are forced to think about the structure of the content and the structure of the media. Experience has proved that the most appropriate kind of structure is quite different from that of a text book. Whereas the function of most text books is to present the author's view, the function of distance learning materials is to stimulate you to such activities which enable you to learn.

The usefulness of distance education can be considered in the light of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of study objectives. In the cognitive domain, which is concerned with the acquisition of intellectual knowledge the effectiveness of distance education is rarely challenged. Skills like surgery or the capacity to handle dangerous chemicals and machinery which come under psychomotor objectives cannot be covered themselves by distance study especially in the developing countries but other skills like drawing, typewriting, can be studied successfully. In certain technical subjects, the use of laboratory kits has proved to be successful. In the affective domain, it would seem to be evident that non-continuous communication has less power to influence you than face to face meetings. The effectiveness of distance education in the affective domain has been acquired, however, though on somewhat uncertain grounds.

In Pakistan, Allama Iqbal Open University was established at Islamabad in June 1974, after the passing of the People's Open University Act by the National Assembly of Pakistan. In 1977, its name was changed to the Allama Iqbal Open University. The University is modelled on the lines of the UK Open University. There were two main reasons for its establishment. It is firstly, the embodiment of belief that an effective, high quality programme of education can be carried out to all parts of the country through new media; and secondly of a certainty that there are a lot of people who need more education which the existing system cannot provide.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the material, you will be able to:

1. explain the concept, nature and scope of distance education;
2. identify the need of distance education as an alternative to formal system;
3. discuss the theories of Distance Education;
4. specify the Distance Education methods to learning.

## 1.3 THE CONCEPT AND SCOPE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

The term distance education (Harris 1977, p.14) includes:

...any planned and regular educational provision where there is distance between teacher (or instructor or educator) on the one hand and student (or learner or receptive audience) on the other hand.<sup>1</sup>

According to Dodds (1978, p.246):

...this method/system provides education/courses by correspondence, broadcasting and occasional face to face learning.<sup>2</sup>

According to Parraton (1978, p.7) distance teaching means:

...an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner. In practice, distance teaching usually involves a combination of media. The more effective programmes seem to benefit from linking broadcasts and print with some kind of face-to-face study.<sup>3</sup>

Moore (1975, p.5) called it 'telemathic' (distance teaching and noted that distance teaching embraces:

...all those teaching methods in which, because of the physical separateness of the learners and teachers, the interactive as well as pre-active phase of teaching is conducted through print, mechanical or electronic devices.<sup>4</sup>

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Harris, W.J.A. (1977) A Handbook on Distance Education, Manchester, Manchester Monographs.

Dodds, T. (1978) "Distance Teaching Alternatives in Education and for Development", in Budd, L. and J. Roby Kidd eds.: Adult Learning: A Design for Action, Oxford, Pergamon Press.

<sup>1</sup> Perraton, Helary ed. Distance Teaching for Formal System: What projects will tell us about costs and effect? Washington DC, The World Bank.

<sup>4</sup> Moore, M.G. (1975): Cognitive Style and Telemathic (distance), ICCE Newsletter 5,4.

The term distance teaching then is not universally understood to have the same meaning. Thus George Hartung (1966, p.98) has defined correspondence instruction as "...teaching at a distance -- without gestures".<sup>5</sup> This is somewhat limited definition, since it implies a one-way traffic that is from teacher to student. It is inadequate, since there is a need of definition that will take into account the reactions of the students, on the one hand, and the possibility of using a variety of media, on the other.

The definition of correspondence education provided by Peters (1965, p.7) goes one step further in establishing the scope and means that can be used in correspondence education. He defined it as:

...any instruction by means of which a distance between teacher and student is bridged. To this end, apart from letters also other media can be utilized, such as radio, tapes, recorders and films.<sup>6</sup>

It seems from this definition that correspondence education, more or less, can be treated as a sector of distance teaching, because it involves a two-way communication between the teacher and a student. Holmberg (1977, p.9) also considered correspondence education as distance teaching, he stated:

...correspondence education is nowadays often a synonym of distance education, used of multi-media programmes as well as courses based on the printed and written word only.<sup>7</sup>

Holmberg (1981, p.11) broadened his view of distance teaching to being wider than correspondence study alone. Thus, correspondence study is a part of education "at distance". It can be argued that it is an essential part of most forms (though not all) of the wider field of distance teaching.

From the above definitions it appears that the term distance teaching covers the various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous, immediate supervision of tutors present with their students in lecture rooms. All levels of study then benefit from the planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organization. By this method, the ideas and information of experts can be channelled to the many across vast distances. Such education includes the use of newspapers, pamphlets, magazines, books, radio, television, film and the postal services.

<sup>5</sup> Hartung, George (1966): Brandenburg memorial Essays 111, USA, University of Wisconsin.

<sup>6</sup> Peters (1965): Der Fernunterricht, Berlin Weinheim.

<sup>7</sup> Holmberg, B. (1977): Distance Education. "A Survey and Bibliography, New York, Kogan.

The most recent development in providing educational services outside the walls of the university in the U.K. is the Open University using the distance teaching approach. Instruction is carried on in the Open University by a variety of teaching and learning systems, all of them borrowed from such time honoured approaches as correspondence study, weekly radio and television broadcasts. There are, in addition, face-to-face conferences at local Open university study centres.<sup>8</sup>

In order to fully comprehend the concept, nature and scope of distance education, please read the following book:

In order to fully comprehend the concept, nature and scope of distance education, please read the following book:

Rashid, M. (1998)	Distance Education: Concept and Methods. 2nd ed. Islamabad. N.B.F. pp.1-13.	1-1
David, Sewart, Desmond Keegan and Borje Holmberg ed. (1983)	Distance Education: International Perspectives, New York, Croom Helm, pp.1-15.	1-2

#### 1.4 Rationale of Distance Education - Philosophical, Psychological and Sociological basis

People need education to acquire a broad base of knowledge, attitudes, values and skills on which they can build, in later life, even if they do not receive further formal instruction. Such education provides people with the potential to learn, to respond to new opportunities, to adjust to social and cultural and social activities. The demand for formal education has increased drastically throughout the world. This is due, on the one hand, to the development of literacy and the greater opportunity for leisure, and on the other, the rapid advances in technology.

Moreover, increasing numbers of adults in developing countries wish to gain paper qualification, and remedy their previous educational deficiencies, others want to improve their basic living skills. There remain others who wish to

<sup>8</sup> Holmberg, B. (1981) Status and Trends of Distance Education, New York, Kogan Page, Ltd

become more proficient technically and become more skilled in the basic methods of their own special craft, trade and industry.

In Pakistan, there are thousands of individuals who have had to terminate their studies, due to economic reasons, after completing certain level of education.

After firmly establishing themselves in the labour market they are often desirous of improving their academic achievements and skills by working for higher diplomas and degrees. The formal system of education usually shuts its doors on such individuals. This discourages effort at self improvement, blocks the way to promotion and progress, and creates a sense of despair.

Even, the personal cost of higher education is quite high, especially when account is taken of the foregone earnings during the period of learning and the high drop-out rates. This implies that higher education cannot reach the whole population unless opportunities are provided for learning while earning. Moreover, the principles of competition and excellence require that educational institutions should not enjoy unlimited monopoly and power if they are to face squarely the challenges of present times. In these circumstances, education cannot become a continuing life-long process so that it remains on the formal plane alone or a closed circuit or a preserver of the elite.

However, the tremendous development in communication, physically between places as well as for exchanging information, in turn have meant that a re-appraisal of the traditional methods of education has become necessary and desirable. These technological developments relating to the field of education have inspired developing countries to search for alternative methods of education which can reach the masses cheaply. This has influenced the development of distance education which can offer some of these possibilities.

In order to comprehend the need for distance education, please read the below mentioned reference:

Rashid M. (1992)	Staff Development Handbook. Islamabad, AIOU. pp.12-17	1-3
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Likewise, David R. Evans (1981) has also highlighted the need for distance education. He used the term non-formal educational synonymous with distance education in his below mentioned book which is worth reading.



David R. Evans (1981)	The Planning of Non-formal Education, Paris, Unesco, pp.11-16.	1-4
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### 1.5 Theories of Distance Education

Distance education has been used to bring education, through print, radio or television, to thousands and thousands who would never get to school or college. At present, there is no accepted theory for distance education. Wedemeyer (1974, p.9) has argued:

"It is unfortunately true that the failure of correspondence study to develop a theory related to the mainstream of educational thought and practice has seriously handicapped the development and recognition of this field."<sup>9</sup>

However, if one has to build a house of theory for distance education, its architecture will depend very much on existing philosophies of education, and theories of communication or diffusion and it will not be constructed from brand-new components. Before stating a possible theory of distance education with all the limitations, it is important to mention the theories of learning.

A learning theory is a systematic integrated outlook in regard to the nature of the process whereby people relate to their environment in such a way as to enhance their ability to use both themselves and their environment more effectively. Everyone who teaches or professes to teach has a theory of learning.

Learning describes the entire activities, practices and reflections through which everybody becomes what he is at the different levels of his responsibility. It is very dynamic concept of education. Everybody knows that an adequate performance in some professional techniques is only to be achieved after a long training in the various skills that lead to mastery of the activity concerned. Nobody becomes a skilled equestrian by watching horse races, nor a pianist by going to concerts. Being a sportsman, musician or technician requires qualifications which express a mode of being, characterised by the acquisition of a variety of abilities and competencies. This statement, irrefutable in these particular cases, is also of universal value in non-formal education. What it implies is, human activity, even in those areas where it is not generally recognised. Thus the notion of knowledge consisting of accumulation of a certain amount of

Wedemeyer, C.A. (1974): Characteristics of Open learning systems, Washington: National Association of Educational Broadcasts.

information is replaced, in accordance with the thinking of epistemologists, by one which defines knowledge as perceptions of the world, as variable and specific as there are individual minds and particular situations.

You are aware that learning occurs throughout the whole range of human activity. With reference to the topic, question arises; what is meant by theories of learning? There are two parts of the question i.e. Theory and Learning. "Kingsley and Garry (1957, p.82) maintain that:

"The word 'theory' conveys a sense of intangibility which is forbidding to some students. To others, theory is associated with a sense of impracticality and unrealism which prompts negative initial reaction. Yet nearly everyone whether teacher, parent, employer, or college student has and believes his own theory of learning even though he may not have stated it in so many words."<sup>10</sup>

In simple terms a theory is a comprehensive, coherent, and internally consistent system of ideas about a set of phenomena.

As far as the term learning is concerned, Crow and Crow (1963, p.1) define:

"Learning involves change. It is concerned with the acquisition of habits, knowledge, and attitudes. It enables the individual to make both persons and social adjustments. Since the concept of change is inherent in the concept of learning, any change in behaviour implies that learning is taking place or has taken place, learning that occurs during the process of change can be referred to as the 'learning process'."<sup>11</sup>

William A. Hillix (1977) while discussing the theories of learning, pointed out opinions of different philosophers and scholars like Thorndike, Ivan Petrovich Pavlov, Gestalt Psychologists, Edwien R. Guthrie, Clark L. Hull, Tolman, E.C. and B.F. Skinner. The author also discussed the usual interaction between an organism and its environments. Much emphasis was given on three S's: Selection, Superstition and Shaping.

Gagne (1965, p.5) observes:

"Learning is a change in human disposition or capability which can be retained, and which is not simply ascribable to the process of growth."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Kingsley, H.L. The Nature and Conditions of Learning, and Garry, R. (1957): 2nd ed., New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Englewood Cliffs.

<sup>11</sup> Crow, L.D. and Crow, A. eds: Readings in Human Learning, New York, McKay.

<sup>12</sup> Gagne, R.M. (1977): The Conditions of Learning, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston

the topics to be covered, are sent to the unit writer with the assignment letter. These units are thoroughly scrutinised and edited by the distance education institutions to give them proper shape and they make necessary additions, changes etc. where-ever necessary. Then the units are sent to the press or are cyclostyled. Some units are written by the teachers of Open University also. In some open universities the teaching departments also help in vetting the courses/units to ensure that they are of good quality. At the post-graduate level the units are printed under the names of the unit-writers. In both cases the copyright of the package of reference material to the students in order to supplement the instruction contained in the course. These include extracts from various books, journals etc. and suggesting relevant reading material. The students are also assigned topics for projects on different authors or books etc.

Some units carry a few examination type questions which the student is required to answer and return for evaluation. Open universities also provide study notes, glossary of new terms where necessary and self-check objective type questions to enable the students to test their comprehension. A key to the answers is also provided.

The courses are generally sent to the students in regular despatches, about once a month, in order to sustain their interest and regular study habits. On an average a student receives 18 lessons from each subject of study.

Some universities take pain to revise their units every year in the light of students' feed-back and to ensure that the contents of the course are up-to-date. Occasionally some courses are got reviewed from outside experts and if necessary revised or re-written completely. In the case of changes in syllabus also, the courses have to be re-written.

#### Evaluation and correction of response sheets

In order to ensure a regular feedback from the student and to assess the progress he is making with his course, every student is required to submit his responses to the questions given in each unit. As per guidelines laid down by the university, a student is required to return response-sheets suitably spread over different subjects of his study, during each academic year. However, no

Rashid, M. (1990) also discussed a comprehensive idea after thorough research about the theory of distance education. He highlighted the theories of autonomy and independence in distance education which advocate individualisation of study. He also considered the theory of distance education on the basis of principles of industrialisation. Moreover, the theory of interaction and communication, guided distance conversation, continuity of concern, interaction and independence and the integrated mode were discussed.

In order to fully comprehend the idea and details of theories of learning, please read the books referred to below:

Rashid M. (1998)	Distance Education: Concepts and Methods, 2nd ed. Islamabad, N.B.F. pp.35-55	1-5
Desmond Keegan (1986)	The Foundations of Distance Education. pp.57-111	1-6

#### 1.6 Components of Distance Education

It is admitted fact that distance education is a combination of the effective use of mass media such as radio, television, printed material, audio visual aids, study centres and course tutors. The components or the pattern of imparting instructions are as under:

##### Preparation of course material

The course material or the lessons which constitute the mainstream of distance education and are crucial to the success of correspondence programmes are in most cases written by experienced teachers drawn from different universities and colleges on payment of suitable remuneration. Every institute is supposed to have Committee of Courses on the basis of qualifications, experience and reputation of Professors, Associate Professor and lecturers working in different universities and colleges in the region. The number of lessons and breakdown of topics for lessons is also discussed and decided by the course team. The Chairman, in consultation with the course coordinator of subject assigns unit writing work to teachers included in the panel. Broad general instructions regarding the style and format of units, as also detailed specific instructions for

The students' response-sheets are carefully corrected and evaluated by the teachers and sent back to students with detailed comments and suggestions for improvement. Some universities send model answers also in cases where the student's answer is below the mark. A proper record of marks awarded by the teacher is maintained in a register so as to keep track of the student's progress.

Submission of the response-sheets, projects and test papers etc. give the distance education courses students good practice in tackling questions and help them in preparing for the final examination. It also establishes a useful rapport between the teachers and the pupil. The writing of these response-sheets and their regular evaluation throughout the academic session gives the distance education courses students an edge over the students in regular colleges and universities.

##### Personal contact programmes

As per recommendations of the various committees and guidelines laid down by the university, most of the distance education universities organise Personal Contact programme for their students in order to supplement instructions imparted through the printed materials.

These programmes provide a good opportunity to the students to come in close personal contact with their teachers. Apart from the intensive classroom teaching imparted at these programmes. These students get a chance to sort out their individual difficulties and problems. The university organises these programmes at a number of stations, depending upon the concentration of students in different areas. The duration of personal contact thus provided to the students is generally 12-15 days. The percentage of students who attend these programmes varies from 30 to 50 per cent.

The common reason due to which a large percentage of students are unable to attend these programmes are (a) difficulty in getting leave from the employer; (b) difficulty in getting rail/bus travel concessions; (c) family commitments or hard circumstances; (d) financial hardship; (e) non-availability of board and lodging facilities.



At the post-graduate level it is compulsory for the students to attend one Orientation workshop for 2-3 days and two workshops of 10 days each during the academic year.

### Radio

Radio constitutes another important aspect of distance education which gives the students the satisfaction of listening to their teachers. These radio talks can go a long way in supplementing and reinforcing the instruction imparted through the courses. Apart from the need for greater radio support to the programmes of distance education, efforts need to be made to provide necessary training to teachers for writing interesting and meaningful radio scripts. Our Directorate took the initiative in this direction by organizing two seminars on the writing of radio scripts with the help of the concerned department chairman. These seminars have made some concrete recommendations to make those programmes more useful e.g. need for greater publicity of the broadcasts programmes, extension of talks so as to make them a daily feature, supplemental nature of talks to reinforce instruction imparted through the lessons, compiling of brochure of instructions for the talkers, replay of tapes at workshops, periodical seminars and workshops for teachers, participation of students in the talks/discussions, mailing of synopsis of talks to the students and undertaking of an impact study of the programme of radio broadcasts.

### Other audio visual aids

Except for the limited radio support as mentioned above and occasional use of the tape recorder, the distance education courses in Pakistan hardly use any other audio-visual aids or communication media to reinforce and supplement instruction imparted through the printed lessons and personal contact programme.

### Library facilities

The Allama Iqbal Open University has an independent library within their premises for the benefit of their students. To ensure that the library is within the easy reach of the students. The open university has set up Library Centres at a number of other places also. Book Banks have also been established by some of the institutes to enable needy students to draw text books on long loan.

learning process.

- Q.4 What do you understand by the term "concept of distance education". Explain.
- Q.5 Offer a workable definition of distance education after examining at least four definitions of distance education.
- Q.6 Write short notes on the following:
- Nature of distance education
  - Three S's (i.e. Selection, Superstition and Shaping)
  - The condition of learning
- Q.7 How do you consider distance education in the presence of rapidly expanding alternative learning opportunities? Discuss.
- Q.8 Why we need distance education? Explain in the light of observation given by David. R. Evans (1981) in respect of Non-formal Education.
- Q.9 Discuss the theories of learning. Which theory do you consider more suitable for the situation of Pakistan.
- Q.10 Critically examine the term theories of distance education.
- Q.11 Discuss the components of Distance Education as given by Rashid (1998).
- Q.12 "The print material is the backbone of any distance education programme. without it the system can be regarded as handicapped." Discuss the statement.
- Q.13 Write a note on:
- Distance tutor
  - Audio Visual aids
  - Role of T.V.

For further details, please read the below referred book.

Rashid M. (1998)	Distance Education: Concepts and Methods, 2nd ed. Islamabad, N.B.F. pp.57-73	1-7
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### 1.7 Activities

1. Please prepare a chart indicating the possible components of distance education and display the chart in your study room.
2. Please discuss the theories of distance education with any educationist of your area and prepare a report of the outcome of your discussion.
3. Write down at the space below at least four crucial points for the need of distance education in Pakistan.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### 1.8 Exercise

Hopefully, you have read the materials of Unit No.1, now please answer the following questions:

- Q.1 "The word correspondence is felt to be associated exclusively with the written word, whereas usually audio recordings and often radio, T.V., telephone communication and other media nowadays supplement the written word in what is here called distance education". Discuss.
- Q.2 Describe the characteristics of distance education.
- Q.3 Critically examine the relationship of distance education to teaching

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**UNIT NO. 2**

**PLANNING AND FINANCING OF**  
**DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*

THE JOURNAL OF THE  
ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE



## 2.1 Introduction

The area of research for educational planning that has been relatively neglected, however, is distance education that is the array of learning activities going on outside formal schools and universities. These include educational programmes designed for adults to encourage national development. To some extent, research on formal education itself has revealed the significance of distance education learning processes. For example, efficient performance in specific occupations requires differing propositions not only of formal education but also of specialised training and experience. The contribution to such long-term educational process by the formal system on the one hand, and by programmes of distance education, on the other, needs to be more closely examined, new priorities may well emerge.

However, investment in distance education is a substitute for, or an extension of, investment in conventional system. Thus, certain problems in the use of resources and of curriculum within formal education cannot be adequately dealt with unless there is a more systematic understanding of objectives, the content, as well as the costs and returns, of distance education.

Research on distance education is particularly vital for educational planning in the developing countries like Pakistan. Here rising population against background of low average economic productivity, poor general health, ineffective communication, often marked ethnic differences, present special problems. Distance education arrangements have often arisen in piecemeal fashion to meet special circumstances. Since developing countries have scarce resources of finance and of teaching and administrative abilities, research is urgently required which can lead to improved balances among public of private investments in education and all kinds, geared to national objectives for development.

Coming to the administration of distance education, there are three basic processes which administration must carry out. These include: the production of the teaching material, its distribution to the students, and the correction of written or practical work of the students. How these processes are organised and administered will depend on the resources used. In establishing distance education, the first task for the administration is to survey the local resources, in order to make the best educational and most economical use of services already available which can contribute to the provision of distance teaching.

Each service of distance education will need, in accordance with the kind of students, its aims to serve and the conditions in which it must serve them. It further needs to develop its own method of administering the three processes of producing the teaching material, distributing it to students and arranging for the correction of their institutional framework, centres and equipments while discussing the topic of organisation and management of distance education.

## 2.2 Objectives

After reading the material of this unit, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. explain the need assessment in the system of distance education;
2. specify the organisational principles of distance education;
3. discuss the planning process of distance education;
4. plan a distance education system
5. explain budgeting for distance education; and
6. analyse the cost-benefit of distance education.

## 2.3 Planning of Distance Education

Most organized formal education is carried out in classrooms with an individual teacher, in person, imparting knowledge and skills to a group of students or pupil. The education imparted by such traditional means can be excellent, but depends on the availability of funds to provide experienced and well-trained teachers at appropriate teacher-pupil ratios in appropriately equipped buildings. However, the large scale use of traditional institutions can pose problems, and indeed, for certain needs, may not be either the best or even a possible option. Distance education is then an alternative path towards the solution of educational problems.

What do we mean by distance education, and what are its advantages? Kaye (1979, PP.104-105) characterizes distance education system as having a combination of a relatively dispersed student population and a minimal reliance on face-to-face teaching (or a significant change in its role). These two principal characteristics are associated with one or more of the following features.

- i) Concerning students: a degree of independence on the part of the learner as to the timing and location of study activities; and an enlargement of educational opportunities to groups previously unable to take advantage of traditional forces of education.



- ii) Concerning learning materials and methods: a tendency to adopt a modular or credit structure within the curriculum; the use of a variety of media in combination with each other (print, radio, T.V. face-to-face teaching); and the provision of learning materials designed for independent study, sometimes segmented by some face-to-face tuition in a role supporting the other media.
- iii) Concerning logistics: centralization of production, with decentralization of learning.
- iv) Concerning economics: high initial start-up costs, but lower variable costs per student, giving the potential for significantly lower average costs per student provided the student population is big enough.

It is these features which make distance education an attractive alternative. Rumble, G (1986, P.102) listed a number of situations in which distance education is an appropriate alternative to traditional means. The fact that learning is at a distance means that new target groups can be reached; distance education thus democratizes education by reaching new groups who were previously inaccessible. The method stands outside particular educational objectives in the sense that it can be used at different educational levels (for example, for functional education, specialized training, or university level education). Because it is relatively time-free, in the sense that students can in many cases study when it suits them, it can meet the needs of those who are working, and thus provides a means to life-long education. Finally, there are economic incentives for adopting distance teaching. The formal educational system is very expensive on manpower. It is argued that by using a centralized production facility to design and produce high quality distance learning materials for largely independent study by students, savings can be achieved. This argument must be treated with care. Design of high quality material suitable for independent study is more expensive in terms of staff time per hour of student learning time, than is the case with conventional face-to-face teaching. Also, the initial cost of production and distribution or transmission facilities can be very high, and certainly much higher than is the case for traditional systems. However, the variable teaching cost is almost always lower given the reduction in emphasis on face-to-face teaching in almost all systems, so that economics of scale are potential achievable provided that the target population is big enough.

These kinds of major considerations lie behind decision usually taken at governmental level, to establish distance education institutions. Kaye (1979, P.105) discusses distance education in ACP countries and identifies four major categories of aims and target groups. The first is functional education often aimed at dispersed rural population - as in Niger and Senegal through video clubs. The second is at secondary school level, as in Mauritius (College of the Air). The third is in in-service teacher training, as in the Ivory Coast (through the newspaper *Praternite Matin*) and in Kenya (University of Nairobi Correspondence Course Unit). And the fourth is at university level as in Nigeria (Correspondence and Open Studies Unit of the University of Lagos).

Rumble, G (1986) spoke that there was diversity in the principles and practices of distance education:

- i) in the goals and objectives which institutions were trying to attain;
- ii) in the methodologies and media-mix employed;
- iii) in the operationalizing of systems.

A first stage in planning, stated Rumble, (1986) was the definition of goals of the institution, relating these to needs. The U.K. Open University has initially concentrated on under-graduate studies, offering general degrees with the aim of widening opportunities for access to higher education. This strategy had ensured its academic respectability. More recently the Open University had entered the field of continuing education, and was providing courses aimed at community needs.

Rumble (1986) has mentioned in this connection several examples of institutions in developing countries. The Allama Iqbal Open University in Pakistan, apart from its academic programmes, had courses aimed at the rural masses in, for example, chicken farming and vegetable growing. The Universidad Nacional Abierta of Venezuela concentrated on professional degree studies aimed at meeting the manpower needs of the nation, as defined in the fifth national plan. Goals, however, are frequently stated in generalized terms. Planners and evaluators generally want goals to be characterized as objectives. Many persons, however, welcome vague objectives because success or failure cannot then be measured.

Rumble's view was that academic programmes need to be specified in detail in relation to each target group. The implications of objectives need to be

modelled, the models taking into account, the range of strategic choices that are available in, for example, the choice of media, the use of other agencies which might undertake particular tasks on behalf of the distance education institutions (such as the production of broadcasts or the printing of texts).

The availability of resources (buildings, equipment, staff and time) have to be considered. Trained staff may not be available in the first place, and once trained they might be lost because the institutions could not afford commercial salaries. This had occurred in Latin American ITV systems. The requisite skills may not be available in the country, and foreign agencies might have to be used. Thus Costa Rica's Universidad Estatal a Distancia sent its textual materials to Spain to revise the texts on film.

"Time" too was mentioned a resource, not merely in the sense of design and production of materials but also in terms of the implementation of a project. Thus, projects could be initiated as pilot projects, and they might never proceed beyond that stage; or they could take an incremental approach, with gradual growth allowing for modification in the light of experience; or they could be established on a large scale from the start. This last option was favoured in high technology projects where early achievement of economics of scale were felt to be important.

In the evaluation of strategic choices, academic, operational and economic factors all played their part. None could predominate. All were interrelated. Once decisions on strategy had been made, operational plans could be drawn up. These might cover project implementation, and here two key dates were important:-

- i) The publication of the prospectus,\* which had to give basic information to students on course, methods of study, fees and so on;
- ii) The start of teaching, when not only had materials to be ready, but distribution systems functioning and the tutorial system (if used) are ready to work.

A second type of operational plan was the course calendar, which specified when major events would occur in the student's study (e.g. examinations, submission dates for assignments, dates of broadcasts, etc.) but which might also suggest when particular materials might be studied. Discussion at the end of the

address classified the "pacing" nature of such calendars. The intention was to guide the student as to the rate of progress he might need to follow if he was to relate broadcasts (if on open air transmission and hence transmitted at fixed times) to textual materials (assuming there was integration of media), and be adequately prepared for formal examinations. The course calendar, once established, would determine distribution and production schedules themselves related to an assessment of production rates.

Once operational plans were established, they might be tested in a pilot project, or modelled. It is important that one of these two happens, if not both, in order to assess operational and economic capabilities. An important element of such models is student number forecasting. Thus in the Open University modelling of student numbers on higher level courses had led to a very significant revision of tutorial policy.

The economic features of distance education were well known, being characterized by high fixed costs and low variable costs, as compared with conventional systems. The higher the technology, the higher the fixed costs. However, the low variable costs per student meant that at a certain point the number of students would enable significant economies of scale to be effected. Particular economies of scale could be effected by television and radio. On the other hand, language laboratories, computer-based teaching, and films gave little or no economies of scale.

Rumble (1986) pointed out that the choice of media depends in part on the geographical area to be covered, and in part on the audience size. Thus, television is always too costly when catering to a small number of students. As a general rule the "little" media (using inexpensive equipment such as slide projectors, tape recorders, radio, etc.) offered greater advantage than the "big" media (television, computer instruction) when small audiences were concerned. As an example of orders of magnitude, generally speaking fixed costs were much higher for television than for radio (of the order of 10:1), but costs could, however, be modified if existing facilities were used at marginal cost.

In this connection it seems worthwhile to refer to comparative studies concerning the effective learning result in the use of television and radio. Generally speaking one can say that television is very attractive to the student, but on the other hand the learning results seem not to differ significantly. Therefore, the question is important especially for poor countries - it is necessary to think



about using - as Mr. Rumble called it - "big media".

In Rumble's (1986) opinion planners needed to consider not merely the cost of a project, but who would bear it. Some systems charged students for materials, as well as charging fees. The total direct costs to students, added to indirect costs (e.g. student travel) should not be so high as to discourage target population of students from applying - otherwise the whole point of a project would be lost.

There is evidence, when direct comparison between conventional and distance teaching institutions has been made, that not only distance teaching (given sufficient student numbers) is a cheaper way of education persons, but also as effective (that is, the learning gains of students in distance education projects can be as high as those in similar conventional projects). But the achievement of economies of scale was not necessarily the prime objective, though it was important in many projects. Distance teaching could, be widening access to education, accomplish tasks which conventional systems could not do, and in very many cases this was what was worthwhile.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Rumble, Greville (1986)	<u>The Planning and Management of Distance Education</u> , London, Croom Helm, PP.141-155.	2-1
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## 2.4 Budgeting of Distance Education

Distance education economy is of a special nature from several points of view. The goods and services supplied by the institution consist partly of educational material, e.g. course units/material, study guides, the tutorials and media support. For the student, the price of goods and services is summed up in the course fee.

What budget policy should the institution follow if these activities are to be profitable? The conditions of the market determine the price the student is able and willing to pay. On this basis the framework for costs involved in the production of material stock-keeping and marketing must be constructed. In addition, such a matter as the student's completion of his studies must be taken into consideration. Moreover, each type of costs such as common costs, prime

costs results and total calculation should be kept in mind.

Typical costs incurred in the development, production and presentation of distance taught courses are classified into three different phases such as development phase, production phase and presentation phase were discussed by Rumble, G. (1986). Please read his below-referred book for further comprehension of budget of distance education.

Greville Rumble (1986)	<u>The Planning and Management of Distance Education</u> , London, Croom Helm. pp.155-160.	2-2
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Rumble, Michael Neil (1981) discussed in detail, the budgetary and resource forecasting in their below-mentioned article. The topics such as classification of costs, direct and indirect costs in ETV organisation, staff costs and the derivation of cost functions, dimensions of cost analysis and developing a model of budgetary purposes were discussed. Please read for further comprehension.

Rumble, G. Michael Neil and Alan Tout (1981)	"Budgetary and Resource Fore-casting" in Anthony Kaye and Greville Rumble, ed. (1981): <u>Distance Teaching for Higher and Adult Education</u> , London, Croom Helm. pp.235-270.	2-3
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## 2.5 Cost-effectiveness of distance education

The major advantage of distance education is in its relative cheapness. Formal education being institutionalised, needs a cadre of professionally-trained full-time teachers and has long cycles of general education which add to its operating costs. Distance education being capable of mobilising resources from a variety of sources, using building and facilities that are not used in the evening and employing part-time tutors cuts down on its cost. It is basically for this reason, that the developing countries can mobilise support for a sizeable enlargement of education for all, provided that the political climate is favourable and the leaders and people are strongly determined to build a better life.

Costs in education can be defined as the expenditure on public and the opportunity cost of that expenditure. In the case of distance education, it is

important to distinguish between financial costs and economic costs. Financial costs are only those in budgetary accounts while real economic costs include the opportunity costs. A distinction is also important between cost effectiveness and cost benefit. The term 'cost-benefit analysis' as stated by Woodhall (1970, p.12) implies:

"...a systematic comparison of the magnitude of the costs and benefits of some form of investment over a period of time, as it measures the external productivity."<sup>1</sup>

Cost effectiveness refers to the cost incurred in a stated educational activity and it measures the corresponding immediate educational output through measuring the internal efficiency of the activity. Costs by themselves do not determine how efficient a programme is, it is only when seen in relation to results that cost-comparisons can be made. In the case of non-formal projects, one has to view them from cost-effective and cost-benefit perspectives. A programme may cost very little but if it has imparted little learning then it is expensive in terms of its opportunity cost. On the other hand a programme may be very inexpensive but if its output is of high quality then it could be termed as a worthwhile project. Coombs and Ahmed (1974, p.184) stated that:

"...there is little virtue in low costs as such; what counts is a high ratio of desired results to costs."<sup>2</sup>

Cost-benefit and cost-effective analysis are important in costing distance education in order to enable planners to make diagnosis that will help both planning and evaluation. On the whole, distance education, being flexible, and adaptable has advantages over formal education otherwise distance education can become a costly undertaking.

<sup>1</sup> Woodhall, M. (1970) "Cost-benefit analysis in educational Planning, No.13, Paris/Unesco, p.12

<sup>2</sup> Coombs and Ahmed (1974) *Attacking Rural Poverty: How Non-formal Education Can Help?* London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, P.184.

In order to comprehend the cost-benefit of distance education, please read the below-mentioned reference.

Desmond Keegan, (1986)	<u>The Foundation of Distance Education</u> , London, Croom Helm. PP.215-241.	2-4
Rashid, M. (1998)	Distance Education. <u>Concepts and Methods</u> , Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.13-15	2-5

## 2.6 Activities

1. When working with planning of distance education, what principles of planning distance education you would think about? List below.

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2. While working with the staff of the institution how will you behave? Please list below:

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## 2.7 Exercise

Hopefully, you have studied the unit, now please answer the following questions:

- Q. 1 Explain the basic principles of planning for distance education.
- Q. 2 Discuss the significance of need assessment in the system of distance education.
- Q. 3 Critically examine the cost-benefit of distance education.
- Q. 4 How would you plan a distance education system? Explain.
- Q. 5 Discuss the planning process from mission to strategic plan. Give examples in support of your discussion.
- Q. 6 In order to make the distance education system more profitable, what budget policy should the Open University follow? Discuss.
- Q. 7 Write short notes on:
  - a. Operational plans and budgets.
  - d. How to meet students' needs.
  - c. Planning process.

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**UNIT NO.3**

**MODELS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*



### 3.1 Introduction

Distance education is of particular relevance to developed and developing countries as it provides an economically viable and academically sound alternative channel of imparting education at all levels. There was a time when the traditional methods of "imparting education and training in the classroom could meet the public demand in the developing countries particularly as higher education then was the monopoly of the elite and the prosperous section of society."

However, with the passage of time and awakening among the masses and their urge for democratisation, the conventional educational institutions could not satisfy the aspirations of thousands of new learners in the developing countries. This posed a serious problem for the governments in these countries because they could not possibly ignore the legitimate demand of the people for educational facilities. At the same time they could not afford to go on opening more and more educational institutions to meet that demand. The only way out of this dilemma for these countries was to find some alternative system which could provide education to the constantly increasing number of new learners without putting much strain on their limited resources and at the same time without diluting the academic standards. It was felt that the alternative system should be such as may, in addition to extending educational facilities, help in equalising educational opportunities for all sections of society and be within their easy reach.

The policy-makers, planners, administrators and educationists in most of these countries engaged themselves in serious thinking and consultations among themselves and with expertise from other countries. Distance education which has been in vogue in a number of developed countries of the world for a long time attracted the attention of the policy-makers and educationists in most of the developing countries. It was essential that distance education could be the most effective alternative to the conventional system of imparting education. Of course, no model from another country could be adopted in toto. Such variations and modification had to be made to suit the peculiar conditions in each country. However, basically, the distance education method is more or less the same all over.

As is usual with every new system, distance education in most of the developing countries had some teaching troubles, and in some countries these troubles are still there. Most of these troubles were caused by resistance from the traditionalists in the universities partly due to their inborn urge to cling to the

7. explain the general characteristics of the distance education organizations of Thailand (STOU) and China.

### 3.3 Pakistani institutions (reference of AIOU)

The idea of establishing an open university was first conceived during the discussion which led to the formulation of the new Education Policy in 1972. The Education Policy (1972) stated that:

Open universities are being used in several countries to provide education and training to people who cannot leave their homes and jobs for full-time studies. A People's Open University will, therefore, be established to provide part-time educational facilities through correspondence courses, tutorials, seminars, workshops, laboratories, television radio broadcasts, and other mass communication media.<sup>1</sup>

The university was established at Islamabad in June 1974, after the passing of the People's Open University Act by the National Assembly of Pakistan. In 1977, its name was changed to the Allama Iqbal Open University by the President of Pakistan. The university is modelled on the lines of the UK Open University. There were two main reasons for its establishment. Zakí (1975a) stated that:

It is firstly, the embodiment of a belief that an effective, high quality programmes of education can be carried out to all parts of the country through new media; and secondly, of a certainty that there are a lot of people who need more education which the existing system cannot provide to them.<sup>2</sup>

The Allama Iqbal Open University differs fundamentally from conventional universities and institutions as it breaks away from traditions. The main objectives of the university are to provide facilities for raising the educational standards of the masses, who cannot leave their homes and jobs. It aims also to provide facilities for the training of teachers and for instruction in the branches of learning, technology or the vocations, and to make provision for research and for the advancement and the appropriate dissemination of knowledge. It holds examinations and awards degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions to students in the conventional manner. It also aims



conventional system and partly due to the lack of proper awareness of the innovative system of distance education. Lack of conviction and boldness on the part of policy-makers and educational administrators also stood in the way of development of distance education. Consequently in some of the developing countries, the distance education system has been developed only as an extension of the traditional courses. However, some countries have tried to tap the potentialities of distance education in providing interdisciplinary, vocational and job-oriented courses. This is a meaningful direction which needs serious thought as it could help in making education relevant to the needs of our societies.

There are eastern and western models of distance education in the world. Among, the important eastern institutes are Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan; University of New England, Eastern Australia; Indira Gandhi National Open University, India; Sukhothai thammathirat Open University, Thailand and Open University Sri Lanka. However, with reference to this unit, effort has been made to highlight the Allama Iqbal Open University as eastern institute and the UKOU as western institute.

### 3.2 Objectives

After study the material, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. explain the foundation, structure and purpose of eastern institutes of distance education particularly the Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad;
2. discuss the organisation and management system of Allama Iqbal Open University;
3. evaluate the effectiveness of distance education in Pakistan;
4. identify the role of western distance education organizations particularly United Kingdom Open University (UKOU) in education;
5. discuss the organisational structure and decision-making process of UKOU;
6. state the administrative difference between eastern and western institutions of distance education;

institutions because shortage in the latter makes learning and training difficult on a wider scale.

For details in respect of the functions, purpose and structure of Allama Iqbal Open University - an institution for promoting distance education in Pakistan, please read the below-referred material.

Alec Fleming (1982)	"The Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan", in Greville Rumble and Keith Harry, ed. (1982): The Distance Teaching Universities, London, Croom Helm. pp.122-146	3-1
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### 3.4 Other institutions

#### a. Thailand

Thailand is a developing country with a population of 50,000,000. The majority of the population live in rural areas with hill - tribes located in the north and border dwellers in the east, north-east and the south of the country. Three main geological regions cover most of Thailand's 198,455 square miles area. The folded mountains in the north, the Khorat uplift in the east, and the Chao Phraya depression, comprising much of the central plains. In addition, the maritime south-east and the long, slender peninsula in the south-west constitute separate physical regions. The monsoon climate prevailing across most of the country has a distinct influence on the land.

The Thai government has put great stress on the provision of education to the masses at large because it was considered as a means to foster national unity. The goals of Thai education provide:

....Thai individual, schooling has been a major revenue of social mobility. Reflecting the education reform movement in 1974, in the 1977 National Education Scheme, the goals of education were further broadened to include the relationship between education, life and society. In addition to regular academic skills in the old curriculum, the new scheme placed



education through distance education, radio correspondence programmes and educational TV programmes. Much of role is being played by Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University. The university's tends are life long education, improvement of the quality of the Thai citizenry, and expanding educational opportunities for those with secondary school diplomas. Its approach is correspondence, radio, television and other devices which enable participants to study independently. The university offers eight major subjects: Liberal Arts, Education, Management, Law Economics, Hygiene, Home Economics, Agriculture and Cooperatives, with plans to increase the number of major subjects. The headquarter of the University is in Bangkok.

Iam Chaya-Nagam (1987) discussed the background, present education system, role of Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, educational broadcasting and issues involved in the use of distance education for imparting education and training. His below-referred paper is worth reading. Please read for further comprehension.

Iam Chaya-Nagam (1987)	"Distance Education in Thailand". Asian Development Bank: <u>Distance Education in Asia and Pacific</u> , Vol II. Manila, Asian Development Bank. PP.291-370	3-2
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#### b. China

The first T.V. Universities were established in Beijing, Shanghai, Sheny and other principal cities in the country in the early sixties. These universities aimed at meeting the demand for adult students to improve their education. In addition to tuition through television, written teaching materials were also provided. Students specializing in science and the Chinese language studied for four and a half years and physics students studied for five years.

These universities were suspended for ten years on account of 'Cultural Revolution' in 1966. The work was resumed in 1976. The year 1979 was a landmark in the history of China, when the Central Radio and Television University (CRTV) was established in Beijing. At present it is one of the largest distance education universities in the world with over a million students on its rolls. Since 1979, twenty eight regional TVU's have been set up in provinces, municipalities and regions forming a national network of higher education through radio and television.

CRTVU consists of an organizational structure at four different levels: The Central University, 28 Radio and Television Universities in the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions, over 550 branch schools and over 20,000 'grass roots' classes run by factories, mines, shops etc. at the lowest level. The CRTV is an institution of higher education under the joint leadership of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Broadcasting. The rest of the system is controlled and financed by provincial and district governments.

In every city in China, there are at least three T.V. Channels: national, provincial and municipal. All the three levels coordinate their teaching programmes.

The CRTV University controls the educational and administrative work of provincial TV Universities which in turn control their branch schools. It is also responsible for the production and transmission of major teaching programmes. It also distributes teaching materials including textbooks and audio cassettes. Since its establishment it has offered about 150 courses in mechanics, electronics mathematics, physics, chemistry, economics, architecture, law, journalism, library service, archives management, secretariat training and the Chinese language.

The T.V. University courses are multi-media, consisting of radio, television and printed materials. The proportion of TV programmes for science and engineering courses is greater whereas radio is the main medium for social science courses. Face-to-face tuition is organized in the TV classes run by work units. Laboratory work in science and engineering courses is carried on in conventional universities or research institutes during public and other holidays or in the evenings.

According to 1985 statistics, the number of staff working at all level was 23,000 including 11,732 full-time tutors. There were 30,000 part-time tutors invited from other universities and research institutions.

Full-time students are given time off work and continue to receive their full salary and other welfare benefits. After completion of the course, they receive the same degree and the same salary as conventional college students.

Of those specializing in science and engineering, workers and teachers form the majority, totalling approximately 90 per cent. Every year, students are

admitted on the basis of a nationwide written examination. One out of five students is selected. All students are employed at the time of admission. The drop-out ratio is 31 per cent.

Cost: One third of the cost can be saved to produce TVU graduate who studies full time and continues to receive full salary.

#### Problems faced by TV Universities in China:

1. There is a general shortage of staff.
2. Administrative staff generally lacks knowledge of the modern administrative techniques necessary for distance education.
3. Teaching materials adopted are mainly those used in the classroom of conventional University.
4. The TV Universities have not yet set up their own studios.
5. Transmission time is not sufficient.
6. Vast countryside and remote border areas are still not covered by television.
7. There is a great paucity of research in distance education.

A loan for the expansion of the programme is available from the World Bank. By 1990, it was expected that the number of students studying through the distance education medium will reach 2 million, two out of five university students will have been enrolled in TVU. Under the new programme the CRTVU, will have its own satellite through which it can relay programmes more easily to all parts of China.

However, for further details please read the below referred book.

Robert McCormick (1982)	The Central Broadcasting and Television University, In Greville Rumble & Keith Harry, eds 1982) <u>The Distance Teaching Universities</u> , London, Croom Helm, PP.54-71.	3-3
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### 3.5 Western institutions

Distance education like all forms of education is more developed in the industrialised world. It uses range from primary through tertiary education and in the different areas of non-formal education. Countries like Sweden have used distance education for decades to provide formal education to children in scattered homesteads where it was not economical to establish a school. Distance education has also been used in providing education and training over a wide range of technical, and professional skills in the socialist countries, helping transforming their education beyond recognition.

The development of distance education in the British Open University and other institutions throughout the world are examples of opening up what was the privilege of the selected few to the masses. This has enabled many thousands who otherwise would not have been able to pursue higher education to do so. With reference to the western institutes, we have confined to our discussion the British Open University (UKOU) only.

The open type university is an institution of continuing education designed for ease of access and extending facilities of formal education to a wider group of people who have missed the initial opportunity, or to whom no such opportunity was offered. In other words, the university opens its doors to anyone who has the capacity to follow its courses. The concept was first put forward by the former British Premier Mr. Harold Wilson while in the opposition, in a political speech in Glasgow in 1963 to establish a 'university of the air'. The idea was to establish an institution within the existing university system with their close collaboration and cooperation. The suggestion had even been made to award the external degrees of the University of London to its students, thus keeping within the framework of the current pattern of development. The institution finally emerged through the planning and advisory committee in 1967 as Open University which was declared an independent university awarding its own degrees but making use of the facilities of the existing universities. This institution, unique in several respects, added another dimension to the changes that were taking place in the university system.

The idea of its openness was expressed by the first Chancellor of the Open University, the late Lord Crowther, when he received the Royal charter in 1969. he stated that:

...the Open University would be open not only as to entry, but as to place (no campus), as to method (the use of any communication medium that

promoted its educational purposes) and as to ideas (in that it would be conceived not only with necessary skills experience, but with all that human understanding can encompass). (Mackenzie, et.al., 1975, p.16).

In 1974, the report of the National Association of Educational Broadcasts identified the essential characteristics of open learning systems. Mackenzie (1975, p.16) summarised these as:

- a) The system must guide a student by eliciting, interpreting and analysing goals at the beginning point and throughout the students' contact with the programme of instruction.
- b) The system must formulate learning objectives in such a way that they serve as the basis for making decisions in instructional design, including evaluation, and in such a way that they will be fully known to be accepted by or modification by students.
- c) The system must facilitate the participation of learners without imposing traditional academic entry requirements, without the pursuit of an academic degree or other certification as the exclusive award.
- d) To provide the flexibility required to satisfy a variety of individual needs the system should make it operationally possible to employ sound television, film and print as options for mediating learning experiences.
- e) The system should use testing and evaluation principally to diagnose and analyse the extent which specified learning objectives have been accomplished. In other words, the system should be competence-based.
- f) The system must be able to accommodate distance between the instructional staff resources and the learner, employing the distance as a positive element in the developing of independence in learning.

The open university concept has been extended still further in the United States of America by individual universities as well as the associations of universities. The University without Walls (UWW) is an association of a number of universities and colleges experimenting with a host of learning experiences such as course work, internship, projects, independent study without prescribed curricula or strict time schedules for completing their degree programmes. The



University of Mid-America (UMA) is a major regional experiment in open learning by a consortium of nine universities in the mid-west. The national University Extension Association comprising of public and private institutions offer extension and continuing education programmes extending the resources of the universities to meet the needs of an increasingly complex society.

However, limiting this study only to the UKOU model, it is necessary to read the details of UKOU. Keith Harry (1982) highlights the origins, programmes of activity, media and methods, course design and production, student support service, assessment and examination and the organisational structure and decision-making of the UKOU in the below-referred books.

Keith Harry (1982)	"The Open University, United Kingdom", in Greville Rumble and Keith Harry, ed. (1982): <u>The Distance Teaching Universities</u> , London, Croom Helm, pp.167-186	3-4
Greville Rumble (1992)	'The Universidad Nacional Abierta, Venezuela' In Greville Rumble & Keith Harry eds. (1992) <u>The Distance Teaching Universities</u> , London, Croom Helm, PP.187-203	3-5

### 3.6 Administrative difference between the different eastern institutions

As you are aware different types of organisations and administrative set-ups have been highlighted by writers of distance education. Oster (1965) has analysed the organisation and administration of distance study institutes with many differentiated courses in a very informative way.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, Erdos, R. (1975) has discussed a model for distance study institutions particularly in the developing countries. She has further elaborated her theoretical basis in the form of a system presentation.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the organisation of small private correspondence schools was looked into by Saxe (1965).<sup>5</sup> The administrative problems of smaller

<sup>3</sup> Oster, L. (1965) "Problems concerning the office organisation of a large correspondence school", CEC Yearbook, Leiden, CEC, pp.70-80.

<sup>4</sup> Erdos, R.F. (1975) Establishing an institution teaching by correspondence, Paris, Unesco.

<sup>5</sup> Saxe, A.F. (1965) "The administration of a small correspondence school", CEC Yearbook 1965, Leiden, CEC, pp.89-98.



organisations are, in fact, rather different from those of large organisations. For example, in some of the institutions of eastern countries, the recording of students achievement is in the hands of the tutors, who also look after considerable parts of the counselling activities.

However, the organisational and administrative aspects of distance Education in the eastern countries naturally vary with the cultural and sociological contexts in which distance study is made available. According to Holmberg, B. (1981: 102), it is the task of the administrative organisation to bring about:

- i) Correct, competent and courteous treatment of all letters, correct delivery of instructional material, information circulars, etc. and proper reception of students calling in person or on the telephone.
- ii) Short turn-around time for assignments submitted in writing, on audio-tape and other media and for letters applying for information and advice, containing questions, requests, complaints, etc.
- iii) Practical provision for the educational use of the telephone, the computer and other aids included in the working methods.
- iv) Accurate, easily available registration of data.
- v) Checking on student's progress and procedures for reminders to those who fall behind or seem to be in danger of dropping out.
- vi) Facilities (when needed) for supplementary teaching (telephone tuition, oral refresher courses, laboratory instruction, etc.).
- vii) General efficiency in all the above activities at reasonable cost.

All the above steps mentioned by Holmberg (1981) are essential in the affective running of distance study institutions. Such type of organisation and administration varies in the eastern institutions of distance study. If we look at the profile of eastern and western distance-education university we will find administrative differences especially between the eastern institutes. For details please read the below-referred book:

Garrison, D.R. (1988)	<u>Understanding Distance Education, A Framework for the Future</u> , London, Routhledge, PP.114-121.	3-6
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### 3.7 Activities

1. Please draw two diagrams indicating the Distance Education system in Thailand and China.
2. Please prepare a comparative chart of course production process at Allama Iqbal Open University and STOU of Thailand.
3. List below the main differences between the administrative set-up of AIOU and STOU.

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### 3.8 Exercise

Hopefully, you have studied the unit, now please answer the following questions.

- Q. 1 Discuss the circumstances under which the Allama Iqbal Open University was established in Pakistan.
- Q. 2 Explain the foundation, structure and purpose of Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad.
- Q. 3 The Allama Iqbal Open University is imparting education and training to the masses at large quite successfully. Discuss.

- Q. 4 Critically examine the course production process of Allama Iqbal Open University.
- Q. 5 Write short note on:
- i) Student-support services (AIOU)
  - ii) Finance and economic effectiveness of AIOU.
  - iii) Media and methods (UKOU)
  - iv) Assessment and examination (UKOU)
  - v) Plans for expansion of TV Universities in China.
- Q. 6 Discuss the role of UKOU in higher education.
- Q. 7 Explain the organizational structure and decision-making of UKOU.
- Q. 8 "There are administrative differences between eastern institutes of distance education, particularly the AIOU, STOU (Thailand and China)". Discuss.
- Q. 9 What difference you feel in the student-support services of eastern and western institutes of distance education UKOU and AIOU only?. Discuss.
- Q. 10 Critically examine the multi-media approach of T.V. universities of China.
- Q. 11 Discuss the problems faced by T.V. Universities in China.
- Q. 12 Discuss the role of T.V. Universities of China.

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**UNIT NO. 4**

**DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING**  
**OF ASSIGNMENTS IN**  
**DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*



#### 4.1 Introduction

"Precepta pauca, exercitatio multa", the famous Latin maxim, being the principle of education is true today as it was first propounded. The fewer the precepts and the more the exercises the better. No one can learn by mere listening to or looking at principles. One must actually attempt to do something if one is to learn to do it at all. No one can claim any competence in driving a car by simply reading a book on learning 'How to Drive'. If he is to drive a car at all, he must learn by actually driving one. Learning is by doing and not by mere looking. This is why questions, exercises and tests are all important learning experiences.

Exercises are even more important in distance education where the means of communication, at least in many developing countries, is through the written word, the correspondence lecture. Oral questions are impossible in this situation because of the absence of any response and feedback. Written questions can be used, but because of the physical distance between the teacher and the student there is no immediate feedback and this has an adverse effect on the interest of the student. A 'question-and-answer session' is almost non-existent in what I would like to call the formal type of distance education known as correspondence study.

While on this subject of the need for assignment and activity in distance education is a magic word, it is by no means a panacea. Activity for its own sake is just as bad as too much activity or too little activity. Furthermore, for activity and assignment to be useful and to be appreciated by the student it must be meaningful, that is, student must see the need for it. Student activities and assignments are necessary because they help the student to learn, and to test himself what and how much he has learnt.

However, exercises, assignments and tests play a very important part for the effective running of distance education programme. In distance education, no less than in classroom teaching, exercises are the most effective stimuli for the conversion of passive reception into active learning.

An instructor should throughout the lecture use such motivating devices as putting questions or placing problems at the beginning of each course, at the beginning of a lesson or just before the exercise itself. It need not be emphasised too strongly that good exercises must not be just media for reinforcing the things learned. They must be aids to the self-development of the individual in a broader sense. They must help the individual to acquire the faculty of learning in a

To conclude, it is stressed that assignments/exercises/ monitoring and other activities depend on the academic staff who develop the distance's materials and tutor's mode of evaluation or what he expects his pupils to achieve, on the lesson, on the student himself in terms of what he can or cannot do and on such factors as home environment and the degree of fluency in the medium of instruction.

Effort has been made in this unit to highlight all the important aspects of developing and monitoring of assignments: "How a tutor should mark the assignments. How a course coordinator should monitor the assignments," etc.

#### 4.2 Objectives

After studying the unit, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. plan a test for assessing the student performance;
2. explain the preliminary considerations for the construction of tests;
3. differentiate between different types of tests (subjective and objective);
4. discuss the importance of marking of student assignments;
5. identify the important steps in marking the student assignments;
6. appreciate the monitoring of assignments.

#### 4.3 Types of tests

The measurement devices which provide the bulk of the evaluative information available to the teacher are the tests which he himself constructs. It can be argued that these tests not only provide more information than other devices but they also are potentially-capable of providing more accurate (valid and

changing world. Tests are used to give the student and instructor evidence of the student's level of performance, and should intimate both communication and didactic correspondence. In distance education, tests must also check the effectiveness of the lesson itself and the degree of preparedness for final examination.

When arranging questions, exercises or tests for distance education courses, one faces a far more difficult problem than in an oral situation. This is because there is no immediate feedback between the teacher and the student within a series of lessons. The questions and answers are independent of each other. The long lapse between question and answer reply, assignment and correction, and lack of quick interaction, are in fact the greatest limitation in student activity in distance education. By employing all modern methods of the psychology of learning to guide the students carefully and to evolve their latent potentialities, and by careful correction, comment and evaluation for the student's assignments, activity can be enhanced. It is not enough for the teacher to recognise that a student has made a mistake or has not understood or mastered the lesson. It is his principle duty to find out the reasons. Therefore, the correction of initial lessons play an important if not a decisive role as the teacher can ascertain from them whether the student's personal capacities are adequate to satisfy the standard of the course he is following.

In order to activate motives of learning among students, it is very important to influence the attitude of students to learning process and this is why the receipt of good marks has such a positive effect on students. However, it must be pointed out that sometimes even negative effects can evoke a real desire to learn. One of the strongest motivational factors that a tutor of distance education should take advantage of is the desire and commenting student's work realistically and meaningfully, the tutor can transform the initial readiness to learn into a delight to learn.

On the other hand, the tutor must avoid trying to evoke delight in learning in the student, by unrealistically inciting the anticipation of success. If the student experiences a failure instead of the provided or anticipated success, it will create a temporary distaste for learning. As the student's self-esteem deteriorates, his attitude towards the learning process and the degree of his activity will be adversely affected. Therefore, in order to obtain lasting results direct motivation is better than indirect motivation.

Since teacher-made tests are designed to measure achievement of objectives in a limited and specific instructional sequence, it is essential that the objectives be well-specified before one begins to construct the test. A properly stated objective consists of two elements: a description of the behaviour, to be exhibited by one, who has achieved the objective, and, an indication of the content to which the behaviour is applied.

Test items may be classified as either essay or objective. Essay items are so named because of the task which they require of the student. He must produce in his own words a written response ranging in length from a sentence or two to several pages. The length depends on the task set by the item and the grade level at which the item is used. Ordinarily the response is characterised by some degree of correctness rarely it is either wholly correct or completely incorrect.

On the other hand, the objective item gets its name primarily from the manner in which the response is scored. In answering most types of objective items the student must select one of the limited number of possible answers provided in the item itself. His/her answer is then considered to be either right or wrong. There is no subjectivity involved in the scoring operation.

The choice of the type of items to be used in the test depends primarily on the objectives the test is to measure. In general, a given test should be made up of either essay or objective items but not of both types. The primary reason is that the type of item determines to some extent how the student prepares for the test. Furthermore, the response time required for essay and objective items differs greatly and a well-constructed test including both types of items cannot usually be administered in a single class period.

Likewise, the nature of the task which the essay item poses for the student, determines the purposes for which the item is most appropriately utilised. Since the student is required to organise his ideas and to respond in his own words, the essay item should be used to measure his ability to do those things. It should be used to measure the student's ability to draw together existing separate and possibly quite diverse ideas and principles, so that they form an integrated whole.



All these kinds of behaviours can be measured more accurately and efficiently by means of objective items.

If objective test items are carefully prepared and properly used, they provide the best possible means of measuring achievement of most of the instructional objectives in the teaching-learning process. As indicated earlier, essay items are essential for measuring organisational ability, certain kinds of creative ability, and skill in verbal expression. However, for measurement of factual knowledge, understanding, comprehension of concepts, principles and generalisations and for measurement of the ability to apply such knowledge and understanding in unique problem situations, a properly-constructed objective item has no peer.

Good objective items are difficult to construct. There is no generally applicable and easily learned procedure for doing the job well. Writing good objective items requires skill which can be acquired only through the intelligent application of a few general principles and a great deal of experience. Contrary to general opinion among teachers it is a difficult task requiring considerable time and care. The reward for such is in the case of scoring and in the level of validity and reliability of results.

There are a number of different types of items which typically appear in objective tests. The most common types are short-answer or completion, true-false, multiple-choice, matching and open-ended items. Effort has been made in this sub-section of the unit to highlight the construction of tests. For further details, please read the below-mentioned book.

Azhar Rizvi	Classroom Testing in Theory and Practice. Karachi, Tower Book Agency, pp.27-71	4-1
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#### 4.4 Test Construction

The constructing of a test is not an easy task. It requires very specific skills which few people realize. There are a number of steps you need to follow when you are constructing a test. The importance of these are to:

1. determine the purpose of the course
2. define the objectives.

##### e. Set a standard of performance

The standard of performance you set for an examination will depend to a large extent on the nature of your subject, the purpose of the test you are constructing and what students will be expected to do after the course. Consider the questions like, will the students be required to demonstrate their knowledge, or will they have to apply what they know? what degree of mastery will you expect of students?

##### f. Select the test items to be used

There are two broad groups of item types you can choose from:

- i) Supply type items, where students are expected to supply you with the desired response, eg. essay type, short-answer.
- ii) Selection type, where student select the correct response from a number of given alternatives, eg. multiple-choice, alternate choice.

##### g. Write the test items

Writing of test items demands a lot of careful attention to detail and analysis. You try to do this by yourself. Also, draw on the expertise and experience of other people in the same subject area as yourself. For your convenience and to help you do a quick check, a summary of the types of points you should refer to are shown below:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Does it ask for a specific behaviour?	_____	_____
2. Is the task to be performed clearly defined?	_____	_____
3. Is the item free of irrelevant material?	_____	_____
4. Have you made sure that any one item will not provide answer	_____	_____

3. make a content outline.
4. prepare a table of specification
5. set a standard of performance
6. select the test items to be used.
7. write test items.
8. assemble the test items.
9. provide for test interpretation.

Many people think that test construction merely involves just to sit down, thinking up a few items and writing them down. lot more than this is involved. Let us discuss in detail the above mentioned nine points in turn in order to comprehend the test construction.

**a. Determine the purpose of the test**

Before you begin preparing any test you should know exactly what you want to test for. What is the purpose of your test? Will your test is formative or summative, criterion referenced or normative referenced, mastery orientated or achievement orientated, and for grading or for feedback?

**b. Define the objectives**

Now you know why you will be testing your students the next step is to decide what you will be testing them on. The information for this will be found from the objectives for your course which you will have already listed in the syllabus and unit outlines for the course. It will be impossible for you to test the achievement of every objective for end of subject examinations, so you must be selective.

**c. Make a content outline**

The content refers to the subject matter in the course. You should make a list of the main content areas for your course.

**d. Prepare a table of specification**

Preparing the table of specification is one of the most important steps in planning and preparing a test. It is a two dimensional grid with content areas on the vertical exist and the learning outcomes (i.e. knowledge, comprehension and application) on the horizontal axis.

6. Are all items written in a positive form? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Have enough items been written adequately? Sample of the learning outcomes to be measured? \_\_\_\_\_

**h. Assemble the test item**

Writing the test items certainly is not the last step in constructing a test either. Assembling them is also an important part of the total process. Assembling test items refers to the laying out and typing of the test in its final form.

**i. Provide for test interpretation**

There is no point to bother about all the previously mentioned steps if you do not bother to evaluate how efficient and effective the test has been, both in terms of learning outcomes and student performance.

#### 4.5 Marking of assignments

The essence of correspondence education is effective personal dialogue between tutor and student. According to Pereira, E. (1978):

"The student's most important contact with the college is through the lessons which he submits from time to time and the queries that he may be prompted to make...The tutor should correct the student's work as he would wish his own work to be corrected."<sup>1</sup>

The submission of the first answer-script to the tutor is the first dialogue between distant student and his tutor. The typical student submits his first lesson with a good deal of enthusiasm. His first attempt at dialogue with his tutor should be reciprocated in the same manner.

Each day, the tutor may be correcting first answers from several different students. But each answer must be an individual communication to an individual student. The tutor should make a serious effort to know each student, his level of understanding, his previous knowledge of the subject, his interests, his



weaknesses, his strengths so that the tutor-student relationship can lead to positive interaction.

Dialogue takes place as the tutor responds to the student's paper in a variety of ways. Corrections alone are not enough. Reasons 'why' must be given. Questions may be asked to stimulate thinking and additional facts or ideas be provided. Dialogue can also be stimulated by the use of Allama Iqbal Open University's tutor's guide and student guide.

The student guide is sent to each student alongwith his first mailing of correspondence materials. Although it is generally assumed that students taking distance education courses are entitled to write their respective course coordinator or tutor. The tutor's objective (as he reads a paper or assignment) is to maintain marking standards and to motivate his student at the same time. he should welcome new students and make tactful and encouraging remarks. If the tutor has previous marks of the same student, he should use those marks as basis for comments on the assignment now being corrected. Such remarks should;

"I am pleased to see that you are doing much better this time in organising your paragraphs."

In order to fully-comprehended the idea of marking assignments and assessment of student performance, please read the below-mentioned books:

Gronlund, Norman E. (1977)	<u>Constructing Achievement Tests</u> , Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentice Hall, PP.18-33.	4-2
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Roger Lewis (1981)	How to tutor in an open-learning scheme, Self-study Version, London, CET, pp.22-57	4-3
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#### 4.6 Monitoring of assignments

All the corrected papers/assignments are monitored by the course coordinators of distance-education institution in order to make the assessment procedure more effective. Particularly, in the case of beginning tutor, all his work

is needed to be monitored. Any slackening of quality in marking or slowness in returning papers or queries should be dealt by the course coordinator or the regional director. Both of them in case of any problem should write to the tutor requesting him to take greater care and more individual attention. This usually keeps the tutor alert. Once the proper work ethics has been instilled in the tutor, a high standard of correction and services can be maintained. There must be a tutor evaluation-sheet or proforma to illustrate precisely how the tutor's work will be evaluated.

However, there are certain tasks for the tutor:

- i) to control and correct;
- ii) to explain and guide;
- iii) to encourage and support;
- iv) to evaluate.

Control, correction and evaluation are tasks that first of all demand subject knowledge. It should be ensured that all the tutors must have this knowledge. It should also be ensured that the tutors must be aware of how to explain, guide, encourage and support the students. These tasks are not so much based on subject knowledge as on the ability to feel and understand the learning problems and deficiencies of the individual students.

In order to give good correspondence tuition, there is need to investigate the problem faced by the students, many of the students stressed the importance of comments which really explain what is wrong in the student's solutions. They normally asked for more thorough comments from the tutor. Hence, there is need to take special care about the student's need/desire while monitoring of the assignments.

Roger Lewis (1984) gave a comprehensive idea about choosing of tutors, their marking and monitoring of the assignments. Please read the below mentioned book for further comprehension.

Roger Lewis (1984)	<u>How to Tutor and support Learners</u> , London, Council for Educational Technology, pp.61-72	4-4
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#### 4.7 Activities

1. Prepare a list of the type of tests mentioned in the book of Abdul Hayy Alawi.

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2. Discuss the importance of marking student assignments with any of the educationist of your area and prepare a report of the outcome of your discussion.

3. Please prepare a workable plan for the monitoring of tutors of Allama Iqbal Open University pertaining to any course of your choice and list below its important features.

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4. List below the tasks of tutor for marking the assignments.

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5. Please state the purpose of the examination for your course in the space below.

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6. Please consider the test you are preparing. What levels of knowledge, comprehension and understanding are needed by your students?

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#### 4.8 Exercise

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions.

- Q. 1 How do you plan a test? Discuss.
- Q. 2 Critically examine the preliminary consideration for the construction of tests.
- Q. 3 Discuss the different types of tests.

Q. 4 Write a short note on:

- i) Essay-type test.
- ii) Short answer test.
- iii) Open-ended test.
- iv) True-false items test.
- v) Assignment assessment procedure.

Q. 5 What is the importance of multiple-choice test in the assessment process of student evaluation?

Q. 6 What are the main principles of marking of student assignments?

Q. 7 How can student performance be assessed? Explain.

Q. 8 Discuss the monitoring of student assignment procedure in the system of distance education.

Q. 9 How will you construct a test? Discuss cares to be taken while constructing a test.

#### 4.9 Bibliography

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9. Samuel L. How to Tutor, New York, Arlington House. Blumenfeld:



**UNIT NO. 5**

**ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN  
DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*



## 5.1 Introduction

Most people in the developing countries live in villages and are typically isolated because of illiteracy and lack of adequate transport facilities. A major task of the governments of developing countries is to stem the flow of people from the rural to the urban areas. This can be accomplished, in part, by encouraging small rural and urban enterprises such as small cottage industries and other activities related to agriculture. However, to achieve such objectives, efficient and effective rural development is one of the most pressing needs of the developing countries.

Wilbur Schramm ed. (1949, p.3) commented on the growth of the media:

"The importance of the printed matter development in the fifteenth century is that the balance was swung from the long centuries of spoken, first hand communication toward visual, second hand communication on a large scale. The importance of this development in the nineteenth century is that some of the limits were taken of communication. It was extended over the heads of specially privileged and specially able to masses who had need of it. And the importance of recent electronic development is that the balance of communication channels is again swung back to spoken and first-hand communication although to a fantastically large audience.<sup>1</sup>

In reviewing the research into the effectiveness of media (both Radio and TV) as a teaching medium, it is necessary to return Schramm's conclusion that learning depends on how a medium is used rather than which medium is used. The research further shows that learning can take place as effectively, on courses taught by media (Radio & TV) as on courses taught by other means (the usual comparison is with face-to-face and media have been found effective for task involving information transmission, problems solving, and generating ideas. However, tasks such as getting to know some one, or persuasion, or negotiation are affected by the medium through which they are done.

Anyhow, both radio and television, generally, are regarded as one-way to communications media. They have helped to bring superior teaching to large number of students who might otherwise have only had mediocre instruction. They also freed teachers from routine, repetitive lecturing and enabled them to plan stimulating and inspiring group and individual instruction. It must be

<sup>1</sup> Wilbur Schramm, ed. Mass Communication Urbana: University of Illinois Press, (p.3)

pointed out, however, that they have at times been used insufficiently and inefficiently and also that a medium is not better than the teacher who uses it. The use of television, radio and non-broadcast media in teaching, have necessitated certain modifications in the roles of professional personnel in classrooms. These changes will be discussed in this unit as were considered first radio, then television and non-broadcast media and the use of these media for instruction.

## 5.2 Objectives

After studying the material, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. specify the potential role of radio in distance education;
2. compare the advantages and disadvantages of the use of radio and T.V. in distance education;
3. explain the role of educational T.V.;
4. appreciate the role and three broad types of characteristics of T.V. in distance education;
5. identify the role of T.V. in particular mental skills;
6. discuss the broad classification of non-broadcast media;
7. evaluate the effective role of non-broadcast media in distance education.

## 5.3 Role of Radio

Radio was introduced into some schools in the developed world as an instructional medium early in the 1920s. Its appearance created a great deal of interest but education did not seem to be ready for it and it did not become the effective instructional medium it might have been. Teachers failed to recognize fully its potential and too often it was used as a substitute for, rather than supplement teaching. Today, partly due to the advent of educational technology and its new devices, teachers are more cognizant of the contribution that the radio can make to improve instruction. Consequently, the study of many subjects, such as English literature, social studies, and music appreciation, is being enriched by the use of radio as a supplemental medium.

However, radio is economically attractive for instructional purposes for several reasons. First, radio transmission, the cost of education provided in a classroom setting. Second, radio instruction is non-rival. One listener's use of instructional radio does not limit the instruction of another. This is in contrast to a class-room situation where the number of people, able to participate in radio instruction, some-time, they may be limited by the total classroom space available.

Thirdly, in a country with a large area characterized by geographic features which isolate a portion of the populace, or in countries with a widely dispersed population, it is sometimes not feasible to provide formal schooling in rural areas.

The benefits of providing a formal educational system simply do not outweigh the enormous costs.

Finally, in some subsistence economics, rural families are either unwilling or unable to send their children to school, especially where this involves time apart from normal work activities. Instructional radio provides a compromise solution which does not require the rural family to fore-go time in the field. These are the potential benefits of instructional radio as viewed from the perspective of those concerned with the costs of providing education to rural persons. They fail to take into account the effectiveness of radio when the individual is solely responsible for his or her own education.

The critics of instructional radio emphasize the remoteness of the source of learning from the people. Particularly in countries with diverse population or with several cultural traditions, instructional radio emanating from central source may not be effective in motivating learning. Instruction may have to be translated into regional dialects, made applicable to the unique conditions of the group receiving the instruction or reinforced differently for different groups. In this setting, single source of instruction may be ineffectual in meeting its basic programme goals. Distance education institution of the developing world are normally providing instruction through radio broadcasts in regional dialects. However, it is a cheaper medium of instruction than the T.V.

In order to comprehend the role of radio, please read the below referred book,

Bates, A.B. (1984)	<u>The Role of Technology in Distance Education</u> , London, Croom Helm. pp.89-98	5-1
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## 5.4 Role of Television

Many advantages of instructional T.V. can only be fully realized by complete coordination of the instructional process by the television producer-director, the television teacher, and the professional teachers in the schools. Many teachers in today's schools recognize the value and uniqueness of television instruction. Perhaps its greatest value is found in the fact that highly qualified teachers using the best teaching materials can reach students in many different schools or places.

As an instructional medium, it is the best known approach to the problem of over-crowded classrooms and offers a means where by the effectiveness of a competent teacher can be extended to reach an unlimited number of students. It may be open circuit, closed circuit or the new closed circuit broadcast (a special technique used on larger campuses). There are technical terms, which are meaningful only to a few readers, but the significant factors are that open circuit permits viewers other than the schools's to benefit from the instruction, whereas closed circuit keeps the presentation within a closed circuit of the school system itself. Live television permits the lesson to be presented to many students in many classrooms simultaneously. Video tapes are television presentations that are recorded on tapes so that they may be used many times. They extend the advantages of live television even further by permitting repeated showing of the lesson at different times as well as simultaneously.

Television instruction is primarily a one-way communication medium. Partly because of this characteristic, the proponents of this medium have sometimes been unduly criticized. In many classrooms across the country, a simple electronic device is being used to convert the audio part of live closed circuit television so that two-way communication is possible between the television teachers in the studio and the students in any classroom receiving the instruction. During instruction, whenever a student wishes to speak to the teacher, he presses a buzzer or key which alerts the teacher in the studio. The teacher, then, opens the two-way communication system and carries on conversation with the student during the live television production. The video part of the television instruction remains a one-way medium; hence, television teaching continues to be regarded as a one-way medium particularly in the situation like Pakistan.

The one-way presentation of instruction that is the mark of television teaching is only the beginning of the teaching-learning process. When properly



used, the viewing of a lesson is only one part of the student's learning experience. As it is a one-way communication and students may appear unreceptive while quietly viewing a lesson, television instruction has sometimes been severely criticized. A silent viewer may be unreceptive and disinterested, but this cannot be known for sure until testing takes place. There is little doubt that a silent viewer is likely to learn more than the active viewer of the lesson. There are many effective ways by which the learning that takes place can be measured. One very simple and effective way is to give a test immediately after a televised lesson.

In order to teach most effectively with television, the instruction must be accompanied by:

- i) pre-viewing activities
- ii) activities feasible during the viewing, and
- iii) post-viewing or follow-up activities

A teacher or lecturer should plan and provide for these learning experiences at the time he selects and schedules televised instruction for his students.

One thing is certain in this new field of teaching. A good classroom teacher is not necessarily a good television teacher. To portray and reflect great interest in a subject while looking into a camera lens is very difficult thing for most teachers to do. Teaching with some response from students is quite different from teaching in a studio atmosphere. Exact timing of a lesson may also have a restrictive effect on a teacher, for he has been accustomed to the five and ten minute margin of time in the average school situation. The art of successful television teaching is a difficult one and one which requires no small degree of innate talent for the task.

Bates T.W. (1982) discussed the role and characteristics of television and some implications for distance learning. While writing, the author highlighted the broad types of characteristics of T.V. and its potential role in developing certain skills. Please read the below referred book for further comprehension.

Bates, A.W. (1987)	'Learning from Television' In Mary Thorpe and David Grugeon, eds. (1987) <u>Open Learning for Adults</u> , London Longman Open Learning pp.163-174	5-2
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## 5.5 Techniques of Script Writing for Radio

There is no substitute for quality in instructional programme, especially through radio where there is no direct face-to-face contact between the speaker and his audience. The script must deal with the immediate and authentic needs of the audience and provide practical solutions to problems that listeners can understand and implement in their daily activities.

Radio broadcasts can be presented in a variety of ways. The techniques used should foster the ethnicity and culture of the audience while presenting something new. The most effective technique is a combined presentation of news, a documentary, and an interview - all focusing on specific topic.<sup>2</sup> Other techniques, in descending order of effectiveness, include; dramatization which informally depicts members of the target population in their daily activities; interviews and dialogues; recorded discussion between students and tutors; and last, though most convenient in terms of time and presentation, lectures.

As mentioned earlier that the well written script for radio and television can play an effective role in providing information to the potential students of distance education system. In writing a script for radio, television and non-broadcast media, there are certain standard steps for a writer to follow.

The following steps were identified for writing script for radio television and non-broadcast media during the Unesco workshop (1986) held at Islamabad. These steps<sup>3</sup> include:

- i) An objective is set up in more specific, behavioural terms telling what the listener is expected to accomplish, after listening and viewing the programme.
- ii) Analysis of the content and specification of the theme and sub-themes for the programme which cover text.
- iii) Selection of a format which is most suitable for presentation of the content of the programme is the subsequent step.

<sup>2</sup> Everett, Rogers & Daniel Solomon, (1972)

Radio Forums for Development East Lansing, Michigan State University Deptt. of Communication, p.39

<sup>3</sup> Unesco Regional

Office for Education in Asia and Pacific, (1986) Content Materials workshop on the Development, use and Evaluation of Broadcast Materials, Bangkok, ROEAP, p.614.

- iv) A plot line and the length of the programme is specified, depending on the idea, content and the need to make the programme "tell a story" in a given specified time.
- v) A programme lay out is written, identifying shot numbers, as a list of segments and sub-themes (and durations) for each segment are created.
- vi) A final draft is written and approved. The script is neatly typed, the content and format checked, and then everything is ready to go.

For details of drafting of a script for radio programme, please read the below referred book.

Elwyn Evans (1977)	Radio: A guide to broadcasting techniques, London, Barrie and Jenkins Ltd, pp.23-35	5-3
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## 5.6 Script Writing for Non-Broadcast Media

The techniques of script writing for non-broadcast media are almost the same as the scripting for television. For example to make a "slide documentary", "transparencies documentary" or "flip chart documentary", there is need to relate the visual according to the audio. First of all the objectives of the programme must be written. In case of marking various types of transparencies, the following principles<sup>4</sup> should be adopted.

- i) Half inch space should be left on all sides of the transparency.
- ii) All transparencies should be in sequential order.
- iii) While making diagrams, moving diagrams should be made.
- iv) Colours used should be good looking.
- v) Where necessary, models can be made.

<sup>4</sup> Rashid, M. (1985) Distance Education Workshops, Islamabad AIOU, p.44.

Rashid M. (1985) further highlighted various steps<sup>5</sup> of making the tape-slide programme which include:

- i) Objectives of the tape-slide programme.
- ii) Target population to be kept in mind while writing the script and making the programme.
- iii) Writing script for the programme.
- iv) Arranging slides according to the script.
- v) Recording of the programme.
- vi) Pulsing and suitable music.

Anyhow, care should be taken while writing the script for tape-radio programme. The script must include brief summary of the content at the end. The pacing of the slides should be accurate. Visual and audio must be relevant.

The script writing for T.V. is almost same except few cares to be taken while preparing slide documentary, transparencies, prints and hand-outs film-strips and teaching with tape. The below referred books provide such information. Please read for further comprehension.

J. Gradam Jones (1972)	Teaching with Tape, London, The Focal Press, pp.22-41	5-4
Michael J. Langford (1973)	Visual Aids and Photography in Education, London, The Focal press, pp.159-195,	5-5

<sup>5</sup> Rashid, M. (1985) Distance Education Workshops, Islamabad AIOU, p.45.

**5.7 Activities**

1. List below the variety of non-broadcast media used in the secondary schools of Pakistan:

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2. List below the advantages of educational television in teaching:

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3. List below the disadvantages of radio in the system of distance education:

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## 5.8 Exercise

- Q. 1 Discuss the role of radio among alternatives for formal education.
- Q. 2 Critically examine the effectiveness of radio in the teaching learning process.
- Q. 3 Radio and television broadcasts may be major sources of knowledge for home-based students with direct teaching or supplementary techniques in distance education. Discuss.
- Q. 4 Suppose you are a teacher, select and justify the media you intend to use for your teaching.
- Q. 5 Critically examine the teaching functions that are unique to television.
- Q. 6 Discuss the role of T.V. in distance education.
- Q. 7 What is meant by the word 'media'?
- Q. 8 Which non-broadcast media are used for learning? Explain.
- Q. 9 Write short notes on:
- i) Library and Media
  - ii) General Audio-Visual Characteristics of T.V.
  - iii) Radio among alternative technologies.
- Q. 10 Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the role of radio and non-broadcast media in distance education.
- Q. 11 What do you understand by the terms, 'mass media' and 'non-broadcast media'? Explain.
- Q. 12 Why do we need scripts before recording of any radio programme? Discuss.
- Q. 13 'A listener can't tell what's coming next. If he's put off by a feeble opening, the odds are that he won't give the rest of the broadcast a chance: he'll switch off right away'. Discuss the statement with reference to radio.



- Q. 14 "Take care to ration your facts. Never try to pack in as many as you could in an article of the same length". Discuss the radio script in keeping up the interest of audience.
- Q. 15 Critically examine the writing skills for television.
- Q. 16 Discuss the problems involved in the teaching through television.
- Q. 17 What format of television programme do you recommend more suitable and why? Give reasons.

## 5.9 Bibliography

1. Bates, A. B. (1984) The Role of Technology in Distance Education, London, Croom-Helm.
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8. Jamison, Dean T. & Emile G. McAnany (1987) Radio for Education and Development London, Sage publications.
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11. Page, C.E. (1971) Technical Aids to Teaching in Higher Education, Guildford, Society for Research into Higher Education.
12. Regional Office for Education in Asia & the Pacific (ROEAP) (1986) Radio and Television in Distance Education, Unit 1, Bangkok.
13. - do - Content Materials Workshop on the Development use and evaluation of broadcast materials, Bangkok.
14. Wilbur Schramm, ed., Mass Communication Urbana, University of Illinois Press.



**UNIT NO. 6**

**STUDENT SUPPORT IN  
DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*





## 6.1 Introduction

Distance education is widely accepted in the developing countries. New institutions are being created whose sole responsibility is providing education through distance education. Institutions which previously took no interest in this form of education are entering the field. Those which are recognised providers are seeking to increase their share of the market. Distance education materials in print are being supplemented and complemented by audio and video programmes. Even telephone tutorials are being used. Counselling and advising procedures are being extended and refined. Regional networks of study centres are being established.

According to Peters, (1973) some have seen distance education as an industrialised form of teaching arising out of new techniques perfected in the twentieth century. Others, while not denying the importance of new technologies have seen in teaching at a distance, a remedy for the rapidly escalating costs of conventional teaching, a labour intensive enterprise for which distance teaching offers a potentially cost effective alternative. The possibility of supplementing or even replacing conventional teaching by distance education has had wide appeal.

Despite technological changes, the basis of distance education has always been the printed word. The twentieth century, however, has seen new technological use, in some instances quite extensively. Both radio and television open circuit broadcasts have been supplemented by audio and video replay devices which reduce time and place restrictions and have often proved useful adjuncts to the printed word. The telephone in some developing countries added the possibility of immediate interaction that had been lacking in distance education. In some instances the telephone has been developed extensively as a teaching medium (Turok, 1977)<sup>1</sup> but its cost and technological development to date have stood in the way of more extensive use.

Referring to the Open University system, Sewart (1975)<sup>2</sup> notes that the conventional tutorial has been replaced by the use of television, radio and written correspondence; directed reading has been replaced by specially designed course units; and the study centre has become a base for student interaction. There is one

<sup>1</sup> Turok, B.(1977) "Telephone: a passing fancy or a genuine innovation? Teaching at a Distance". no.8

<sup>2</sup> Sewart, D.(1975) "Some observations on the formation of study groups, Teaching at a Distance". no.2

other significant, and more important change in distance education, which should be pointed out here. The increasing emphasis on the student learning at a distance, rather than the institution teaching at a distance, because of this, individual support services have become an integral part of an effective distance education system.

Effort has been made in this unit to highlight the student support system, its scope and process and some experiences of student support system.

## **6.2 Objectives**

After studying the unit, you will be able to:

1. discuss the following basic elements of learning style:
  - a) environmental elements
  - b) Emotional elements
  - c) Sociological elements
  - d) physical elements
2. identify the diagnosing learning style;
3. explain the two-way communication between students and tutors;
4. specify students problems in student support system;
5. plan and organise a tutorial service;
6. evaluate the role of a tutor in student support system;
7. discuss the important hints on how to aid the process of learning;
8. explain the learning style instrument.

## **6.3 The nature of student support**

Student support services enable the student to enter into meaningful dialogue with their tutors. These support services especially in U.K. are mainly used to cater to the needs of individual student. They are given adequate importance in China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippine. According to them

even audio-tapes, video-tapes, a good library, satellite tutorials form part of the support services.

The student support services relate to areas like general study-skills support, special subject support and general counselling services. To undertake these activities, an efficient administrative structure should be developed and standardized.

Main functions of the student support service would be:

1. To solve learning difficulties of the learners.
2. To provide feedback to the learners, regarding assignments, practicals, etc.
3. To establish cognitive support with the learners.
4. To organise instruction which will correspond to the pace of learning of the learner.
5. To organise activities leading to the environment of personality.
6. To identify and foster desirable personality traits.
7. To prepare tests and evaluate learners.
8. To organise remedial teaching.

#### Various support services

1. Personal Contact Programmes (PCP)
2. Response Sheet Assignments (RSA)
3. Regional Centres
4. Study Centres
5. Library Services
6. Counselling Services
7. Mobile Unit
8. Extension Services
9. Use of Media

Rashid M. (1998)	<u>Student Support Services in Distance Education</u> , Islamabad, National Book Foundation, pp.1-12	6-1
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#### 6.4 Study skills

Distance education instruction requires that the student is able to study on his own. Most educators assume that their students know how to study, but the technique of studying is a skill and like all skills it must be acquired through practice. In conventional classroom teaching the student is usually not given any specific training in study techniques. Whatever he may pick up on the methods of study is incidental and often even accidental. His time is planned for him. the course content is structured by the teacher, who explains and elaborates on the text-books to be studied. Generally, the teacher draws attention to important words and sentences and orders them to be underlined. Anything the student has not understood can be repeated in a different way.

Both the teaching and counselling staff of the distance education institution are able to replace the conventional teachers in all respects, but nevertheless the student needs help in the form of elementary training in study skills. He has to be advised on how to use his time and when to study, shown how to develop habits that will assist him in his studies, taught how to extract relevant information from verbal or non-verbal material quickly and correctly. He may also be given an opportunity of increasing his reading speed. However, the student must plan his study properly which is regarded as one of the study skills necessary for distance student. It can to a certain extent be done for the students individually either by the course coordinator or the tutor.

In order to comprehend the organisation of your study skills, please ready the below referred book.

Rashid M. (1998)	<u>Student Support Services in Distance Education</u> , Islamabad, National Book Foundation, pp.93-98	6-2
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## 6.5 Tutorial

Opportunities for personal contact in a distance education course are limited. But meeting students now and then in a classroom situation in cities where there is a concentration of student is an effective way of bridging the gulf between teacher and learner. Face to face lessons help to pull students out of the support they fall into. During or immediately after a contact programme, the frequency of student assignments increases and the quality of answers also improve. But in a country like Pakistan, having large rural population, contact programmes cannot be held for all the students. Study centres at various places help us meet some of the student needs. A tutor is assigned a group of students and they meet twice a month. Or a member of the teaching faculty in a nearby college, on part time basis, takes charge of a group of students at place where there are not many students. There is no dearth of such places. The place where tutorials are held is called study centre.

The functions of the study centres are to:

- a) encourage group activities such as discussions and paper readings. Students are informed in advance about the topics to be discussed. The teacher acts as moderator; the students do most of the talking.
- b) invite students to come with their problems arising from the study material they have received.

Such facilities, again, are available to students residing in or near the place where the distance education institution or the regional office has its headquarters or in cities where distance education institutions can seek help from local colleges. Students in remote areas still remain unattended or un-privileged. For such situation, one sort of mobile team which could travel to distant places, can prove to be beneficial for the remote students. Some places could be visited just as the course begins - this would provide orientation. The remaining places could be scheduled at various times during the year.

In order to fully comprehend the idea of tutorial or two-way communication in the system of distance education, please read the below referred materials:

Rashid, M. (1998)	<u>Distance Education: Concepts and Methods</u> , Islamabad, AIOU, pp.71-73	6-3
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## 6.6 Library services

An independent, well equipped and efficiently run library is an asset for any distance education programme. This should be obvious. The library should have not only the text and reference books, but it should also be well-equipped with journals, and if possible Xeroxing or duplicating machines.

Apart from remaining open to students at all hours of the day, the library should extend facilities to students at a distance in the following ways:

- i) Provide lists of relevant books to the students and others involved in the system of distance education, so that they know what books to ask for. Issue lists of new books. The duplicating or Xeroxing section should copy material from journals and books which must remain in the library.
- ii) Open sub-branches of the main library in places where student concentration is appreciable. The local colleges as well as a correspondence unit could be of utmost help. Further, in other public libraries, the corner of distance education materials may be provided for the benefit of students and public at large.
- iii) Send library personnel with the basic reference and textbooks to the students working or living in remote and undeveloped areas. Even a fortnight's exposure to such reading material can make a student more active than he has been.
- iv) Establish book banks for students who want to borrow extra books. This would encourage the willing student and, perhaps, motivate the less willing.

In order to fully comprehend the role of library service or local media resource centres in distance education, please read the below referred material which will provide a good idea about media resource centres, libraries and challenges for media resource centres of distance education.

Rashid M. (1998)	<u>Student Support Services in Distance Education</u> , Islamabad, National Book Foundation, pp.109-117	6-4
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### 6.7 Student support services

With new media of education followed by modern units teaching unconventionally, distance education no longer remains a print-mail correspondence education. In developing economies, however, distance education is nothing more than correspondence education due to financial and managerial constraints. While the techniques are still in infant stages, the deterioration of education has given new dimension to the role of distance education. Most of the contiguous teaching units are unable to organise group tutorials and as such the personal motivation and social interaction benefit of contiguous teaching is fast disappearing. With acute shortage of funds and space, the classrooms are too crowded to enable personal contact. Under the circumstances, precisely written lessons are far superior to situational lectures. Obviously, properly planned and efficiently administered distance education course should prove educationally more fruitful than the course through contiguous methods in developing regions under the existing environment. This all can be effective if the student support system is efficient.

The main aim of the support services is to promote education through self-learning tutorials with the help of reading material and mass media. The importance of face to face teaching in the tutorial sessions cannot be ignored.

However, student support services is the provision of assistance to meet student's needs. It provides advice on study skills, career choice, accommodation, part-time employment, personal and interpersonal development, medical matters, scholarship, financial difficulties, among other things. These services exist to address needs or problems which students may have, in order to allow them to concentrate more fully on their studies. The student support services are, however, likely to be the first point of contact for a wide range of student problems, some of which will be dealt with directly and others of which will require referral to other agencies. The student support services claim to have an 'Open door' approach. To be effective, such services undertaken by phone or letter require specific skill development. Special provision for the particular needs for external student must be considered when establishing a service, or extending the range of one already catering for internal students is very different from that of external students at the same institutions.

Staff appointed for student services for external students, need to have an affinity with their client population, which is usually older, married, employed and remote. After working hours services are essential for these students. Through

repeated encounters with students who share particular problems, students support services can alert institutions to improve their support systems. Better bookshop facilities, occasional child care or peer group networks may result.

John Daniel et al (1983) and Rudolf Schwarz (1983) have critically examined the "Interaction and independence" and "the consultation in the process of distance education" in their below referred material, which is worth reading for comprehending the student support services.

Vivien E. Hodgson, Sarah J. Mann & Robin Snell, eds. (1994)	<u>Beyond Distance-teaching Towards Open Learning</u> , London, Open University Press. pp.99-108	6-5
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## 6.8 Activities

1. Suppose you are a tutor. If a student contacts you or you know he is trying to contact you. What emotional responses would you like to have? It would include:

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2. When working with the students, you would like to spend your time behaving in the following way:

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3. While working with the students, which adjectives would you will use to describe them. Please list the objectives below:

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4. Draw a diagram indicating the main principles to be kept in mind for library services.

5. Please list below the important steps of study skills to be adopted for effective study:

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## 6.9 Exercise

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions:

- Q.1 How will you organise your study? Discuss in the light of principles quoted by Rowntree, D. (1976).
- Q.2 Explain the conditions under which experiences are effectively perceived.
- Q.3 Write short notes on:
- a) Face-to-face sessions
  - b) Two-way communication (Non-contiguous)
  - c) Counselling and general student support
  - d) Study centres
  - e) Correspondence tuition
- Q.4 Critically examine tutorial teaching in the system of Distance Education.
- Q.5 Discuss the interactive activities in student support services.
- Q.6 Critically examine the nature of student support in Distance Education.
- Q.7 How does a library play effective role in the study process of the distance learner? Discuss.
- Q.8 Explain the ways of meeting students needs in the system of Distance Education.
- Q.9 Discuss the latest developments in the student support system.

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**PERSONNEL IN THE SYSTEM OF**  
**DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*





## 7.1 Introduction

All countries of the world consider uplift and education as the most basic requirement for economic development which necessitates the participation by men and women, young and old and rural and urban population. However full participation by the population cannot be achieved unless individuals have acquired the required skill and knowledge. All this will depend, on the educational system which in turn, is a reflection on the state of development of the country.

Any institution imparting education and training through its distance education approach, which is quite distinct formal system needs special type of trained staff. Such staff like writers, course development coordinators, reviewers, designers and editors, have to prepare distance education materials including text guides, assignments and Radio/T.V. supports in a manner, that they are largely self explanatory.

There are three major stages of course development. The first stage is the creative. The creator of distance education materials is the course development coordinator (developer). Then comes the writer who has a vast background and demonstrated experience in his field of expertise. In writing a course, he reads all pertinent literature, and does other related research activities. (I am assuming that the course for development has already been approved by the committee of courses, faculty board, Academic Planning Committee, Research and Education Technology committee and finally from the Academic Council). The written course is then sent to the editing cell after going through course team discussions and observations. After designing task and editing, the course is sent for printing which is the second stage, called, 'production'. Line drawings and other illustrations are done by designers.

The third stage is the printing. After printing, the course is normally mailed to the students alongwith the allied materials like study guide, assignments and schedule for tutorial and Radio/T.V. support.

All these stages are important and the quality of course can only be maintained if all the personnel involved in the course development process should realise their responsibilities and work hard. In order to run the Distance Education programme effectively, hardworking and efficient staff is required.

revision of the courses.

For further detail, please read the below referred book:

Michael S. Parer, ed. (1993)	Development, Design and Distance Education, Victoria, Monash University, pp.201-205	7-1
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## 7.4 Course coordinator

Course coordinator has to perform various duties in the system of distance education such as:

1. Course developer
2. Course implementor
3. Evaluator

### a. Role as Course developer

The course coordinator normally conceives the outline of the course after discussing the outline with the concerned chairman of the department and his colleagues in the Faculty. After approval of the competent authority, he has to arrange meeting of the Committee of Courses. Normally, the Chairman of the concerned department acts as Chairman of the Course Team. The Committee of Courses comprises four external experts alongwith the internal members of the department. The outline developed by the course coordinator is presented in the meeting of the Committee of Courses where every unit and its sections/sub-sections are discussed minutely. The suggestions of the Committee of Courses are incorporated by the course coordinator after the meeting.

Then, the outline duly approved by the Committee of Courses is taken to the Faculty Board, where the Dean normally chairs the meeting and all faculty members alongwith external members participate. The outline is presented and discussed unit by unit in the meeting.

After incorporating the suggestions/improvements in the outlines, if approved it is presented for further approval of Research and

In this unit, effort has been made to highlight the responsibilities of all the personnel involved in the system. Such personnel are writers, developers, reviewers, designers and editors.

## 7.2 Objectives

After studying the unit, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. explain the responsibilities of writers for distance education.
2. discuss various stages of writing for distance education.
3. identify the different roles of course development coordinator (developer) as developer, implementer and evaluator of the course.
4. appreciate the role of reviewer in the course production process.
5. specify the role of material designer.
6. evaluate the role of editor.

## 7.3 Course Team Chairman

The role of course team Chairman is very significant in the system of distance education. Normally, the Chairman of the department is Chairman of the Course Team. It is not an easy job. Any course which is conceived by the Coordinator or by the Chairman of the concerned department has to be discussed in the course team meeting. According to Rashid, M. (1998), the course team should be expert in the related areas otherwise the desired goals can not be achieved. Any information provided to the students must be based on facts and this can be done by the galaxy of experts.

After approval of the outline from the course team and finally from the Committee of Courses, the writing process starts. During the writing process, the course team Chairman has to ensure the quality of the written material. He has to coordinate with all course team members.

However, the course team Chairman is responsible for timely development of the outlines, their approval from the statutory bodies till printing, launching and

which are attended by external members and the heads of all the academic departments of the University. Not only the academic aspects of the proposed course outline is discussed in the meeting but the media support is taken well care of also. In both the meetings, the Chairman of the concerned department presents the outlines for approval. The meetings are chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.

Finally the suggestions and improvement proposed by Academic Planning and Course Production Committee and Research and Educational Technology Committee are incorporated by the course coordinator and then taken to Academic Council, the supreme body on academic matter for its final approval. The outline is discussed in the Academic Council and finally approved.

After approval of the Academic Council the course coordinator identifies the names of course developers/writers and gets approval of the competent authority for writing of the course. Then, he sends all the units to the course writers alongwith instructions on how to write unit in the format of distance education. He has to coordinate all the matters related to the writing of the course.

After receiving back all the units from the course writers, the coordinator has to convene a meeting of the course team for its comments/suggestions. He has to consolidate all the units and sends to the editor through Dean and Directorate of Academic Planning and Course Production.

Course Coordinator has to coordinate with the editor of the course. He has to clarify any objection raised by the editor for the betterment of the course and to finalise it for its printing. After receiving the manuscript from the editor, he has to incorporate all the suggestions given by editor. Afterwards, he has to send the manuscript of course to the Print Manager for its printing.

When the manuscript is composed by the Print Manager, he has to check the proofs and to ensure that no spelling mistakes, content matter and vague language is left out. Furthermore, he has to check the press copy according to the original manuscript of the course and give O.K. signal for final printing. Not only this, he has to O.K. the printed material for mailing after its printing.

the course on time. He has to ensure that schedule for course offering, preparation of assignments for students and tutors and preparation of other materials be ready before the mailing of the course.

The course coordinator has to revise the course after four semesters of its launching. He has to suggest the name of reviewers from the panel approved by the Committee of Courses. Coordination of the revision work, coordination with the editors, designers, Institute of Educational Technology for media support, Print Manager, Director Admission and Mailing, Controller of Examinations, Directorate of Regional Services are the major responsibilities of course coordinator.

Sometimes the course coordinator and programme coordinator are different. In such cases, the course coordinator has to coordinate with the programme coordinator and to settle the issues on time.

#### **c. Role as an Evaluator**

The course coordinator has to evaluate the course and check its effectiveness. He has to develop questionnaires for evaluation of the course. He has to tabulate and interpret the data collected through questionnaires in order to check the effectiveness of the programme in general and particularly the course.

On the basis of evaluation, he has to suggest some measures to overcome the problems involved in the course. Furthermore, he has to prepare a list of students who have completed the course particularly at M.Phil and Ph.D. level.

Apart from the above, there are some other roles which a Coordinator has to perform especially; conducting of workshops at the end of each course of Post-graduate level, delivering lectures in the workshops, developing assignments for the students, monitoring of tutor assignments, and to attend. He has to reply the students queries during and even after. Finally, it can be said that the coordinator is the back bone of distance education system.

### **7.5 Writers**

In distance education there is great variation in the tasks undertaken by authors. Writers need to clarify what is expected of them and where their responsibilities end. What must the writer produce? A draft to be revised later by



an editor and a designer? A final proofed copy with layout instructions for compositions? A master including layout and graphics? while in large institution like Allama Iqbal Open University writing is usually a specialist role, many correspondence teachers see lesson or unit writing as involving all the above tasks.

The writer of distance education materials must possess.

- i) knowledge of the subject matter.
- ii) ability to write text suitable for distance education.
- iii) willingness to work with others.
- iv) acceptance of the fact that their work may have to be altered.
- v) knowledge about the students.
- vi) readiness to adhere to deadlines and other constraints.

Those preparing to write must be aware of the demands the task will make on their time and must balance this with existing commitments. They may also need to call on other professionals to supplement their skills in design, editing and use of other media.

Moreover, the writers must know in advance how much work is required for each section of the text. Being member of the course team, he must be aware of the overall direction and emphasis in the course. The length of the written material will depend on the nature of the subject area and the use of other media. So before starting to write, the length and number of pages must be determined.

When the text length is determined, divide this between the various sections, parts or topics in the course. Once these decisions have been made, they must be adhered to by all the writers involved. Educational writers, enthusiastic about their subject, find planning the length of their text one of the most difficult tasks. In general, they tend to write too much, forgetting the overall amount and upsetting the balance between sections. However, the writing task should be completed within the stipulated time as agreed with the developer (coordinator) of the course.

For further details in respect of writer's role in writing correspondence courses, please read the below referred book.

Michael S. Parce ed. (1993)	<u>Development, Design and Distance Education</u> , Victoria Monash University, pp.141-148	7-2
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## 7.6 Developers

A course developer has to play a vital role in the system of distance education. He has to play many roles in launching of a course or programme. First of all, he has to conceive and plan the course outline keeping in view the needs of the target population. When the outline is conceived, then he has to discuss the outline with colleagues and subject experts in the institution.

After incorporating the suggestions, he finalises and identifies the names of course team members. Afterwards, he presents the outline in the meeting of Committee of Courses in which internal and external subject specialists are normally invited. Some are permanent members whereas others are coopted for the meeting. The outline then is critically discussed in the other statutory bodies or referred back for improvement. Having incorporated the views of the committee of courses, the course outline is discussed in the meeting of Faculty Board and consequently approval is also taken by the Academic Planning committee, Research and Educational Technology committee and finally from the Academic Council.

After approval of the Academic Council, the course units are distributed amongst the experts for writing purpose. These experts are normally members of the course team previously identified on the basis of subject speciality. It is the duty of the course development coordinator (developer) to pursue the writers for completion of the course on time. He normally provides instructions on how to write material in distance education format. It is his responsibility to accept the unit for the writer or refer him back for further improvements/corrections according to his suggestion.

On receiving back all the units from writers, he calls the course team meeting for reviewing the units. After reviewing and discussing the improvements etc. in the course necessary editing has to be done. Then he finally

reads the edited units and sends for the purpose of printing. Before printing the course units, he finally reads the proofs and gives his O.K. for printing.

Michael S. Paver ed. (1993)	Development, Design and Distance Education, Victoria, Monash University, pp.181-185	7-3
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## 7.7 Reviewers

In earlier unit entitled "Programme development in distance education", it was pointed out that the ever-present nature of evaluation in the preparation of course materials, simply, they should be under constant scrutiny.

- i) The very fact that distance education materials are printed means that they are permanent and public in a way that a lesson in a class or lecture room never is. They must therefore attain a high standard in both content and presentation.
- ii) Since direct contact between teacher and student is limited, the course notes must contain in themselves the answers to potential student questions, complete explanations of the content, and absolutely clear instructions about assignments.

Distance education materials need careful reviewing to meet these standards.

The mechanics of the review process will vary in accordance with the approach taken to course development. Whatever approach is adopted, there must be some mechanism for consideration for essential review questions. The working arrangement will determine whether it is the concern of an editor, a course team chairman, a course development coordinator, the whole course team, or a writer working alone. Whoever assumes responsibility, what remains constant, is the need for critical reflection. Initially, concerns may be focussed on very general matters, such as the purposes of the course, the adequacy of what is proposed as an educational response and the intended structure of this response. There will be questions of overall coherence and sequence to be addressed and the outline of what the course will contain may alter several times, before it is fixed.



However, the reviewer needs draft material and comments on everything from style of language, the nature of activities, overlap between different writers work, emphasis in content and to the organisation of material. Far from seeing this as a curb on academic autonomy, it is valued as a useful sounding board for ideas, a check on irrelevance or inadequate explanation and an insurance against omissions. Occasionally, after this process, the course development coordinator incorporates all the recommendations and suggestions, before handing over the units to the editor and preparation for printing. sometimes, external reviewers are invited by the university to review the course or units. These are subject experts, usually with experience in distance education, who can comment on the suitability of material for its intended audience.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Rence Erdos (1967)	<u>Teaching by Correspondence,</u> Longman, Unesco, pp.26-29	7-4
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## 7.8 Designers

The tricks of the trade are now coming out because they get very tired in reading. There is an instant visual brain response to seeing a book filled with nothing but print and so obviously effort is made to break up the print and to provide in those breaks, material which is ultra-relevant. Such material can draw upon non-verbal aspects of the course. The pictures selected for material are those which will have both high impact, and suitability for reproduction. However, question arises, which one can see the role of intuition in designing materials for distance education. Is it important?

Yes, it is important that someone has some intuition. For example, a careful and experienced designer who is designing a page can lay it out, hold it at a distance, make a few alterations and say, 'Aha that's just right', that looks like good design. Perhaps the majority of teachers can recognise good design when they see it, so the intuitive aspect of the process is to look at what other people are doing to aid and to try to come to the best decision as to which looks the best and which will work the best and most teachers have a fair intuitive input at that stage.

As far as the differences between a good and bad course designer of the distance education is concerned, first of all, a good designer has the capacity to

draw upon large amount of experience. That's probably the first criterion. Secondly, even a bad designer can be encouraged to produce good material in a short space of time. However, the authors need to know what the final product is going to look like. They need to show it around, they need to see the final product in their minds eye to give them the encouragement they need to keep going. It is a very difficult and a very demanding task as the designer has to make illustrations, diagrams, maps, figures and finally the layout of the unit in a good looking and perfect way.

Michael S. Parer ed. (1993)	<u>Development, Design and Distance Education</u> , Victoria, Monash University, pp.57-76	7-5
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## 7.9 Editors

With the move towards high quality, print materials have come to a recognition of the importance of the editor's role. Whereas editing is sometimes seen as merely cosmetic, a final touching up process, it should be dynamic, influencing all stages of preparation and production. The final touch-up may be too late.

A good editor will, with others, review materials from their earliest stages as course outlines. An editor need not be a subject specialist, but will be employed primarily because of expertise in the presentation of written materials and an understanding of distance education and its constraints. The editor's experience may enable an early suggestion to a writer that re-ordering the presentation would make explanation clearer, or that a specific aspect of the topic is not well treated through lengthy written explanation and requires some other communication medium.

To a writer's final draft, the editor may need to make minor grammatical and stylistic changes. When writing is unclear or too impersonal, paragraphs too complex or vocabulary too difficult, the editor tries to keep them to a minimum. This is the responsibility of writer and there is little sense in making massive changes just because the editor would have expressed things differently. Stylistic changes should be made when they seem likely to assist the reader's understanding; e.g. reducing the number of words in sentences, since research suggests that an average sentence length of 15-20 words is optimal for readily

When several writers have contributed, the editor may make minor stylistic alternations to achieve a more uniform presentation. It is important, though, not to destroy completely the personal touches of style of individual authors; the sense to read peoples presenting ideas is one of the factors that adds interest for the student. Some writers naturally write in continuous prose, others in point form. Skilful editing can blend these two styles to a harmonious presentation which uses each when its effect will be greatest.

Rashid M. (1991)	Staff Development Handbook, Islamabad, AIOU, pp.281-295	7-6
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Some writers may have exceeded word limits. Editing involves more than simply cutting out pieces or condensing sections that are too long. An editor too, needs a well-developed sense of style, so that altered passages still flow smoothly and carry the argument clearly. One of the greatest dangers in editing back is that the argument becomes too compressed. It may still make good sense to both writer and editor who are familiar with the subject and have worked with the draft through many stages.

### 7.10 Activities

1. List below the important steps to be taken care off by the unit writers.

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2. Draw a figure indicating the functions/responsibilities of Course Development Coordinator in the course development process.

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3. Write below the main functions of the editors necessary for editing of distance education materials.

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4. Discuss the responsibilities and qualifications of reviewers with any educationist of your area and prepare a report of the outcome of your discussion.

5. Outline a plan for designer who is supposed to design illustrations, maps, diagrams and figures in a course of your choice.

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### 7.11 Exercise

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions.

- Q. 1 "The writer should be expert in the related area, otherwise the desired objectives of effective learning could not be achieved". Discuss.
- Q. 2 Explain the characteristics of the coordinator with reference to his role as developer, implementer and evaluator.
- Q. 3 Reviewer is the backbone in the course production process of distance education. Discuss.
- Q. 4 What are the responsibilities of material designer and what effect does he have in production of a course? Explain.
- Q. 5 The material cannot be completed without an editor. To what extent do you agree with the statement?
- Q. 6 Explain the overall role of personnel involved in the system of distance education.
- Q. 7 Discuss the responsibilities of a course development coordinator as course developer.
- Q. 8 Write a short note on:
  - i) Course team
  - ii) Committee of Courses
  - iii) The Role of Academic Council

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**ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN**  
**DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*



## 8.1 Introduction

Distance education courses offered by the Allama Iqbal Open University in Pakistan are with a view of the wide flexibility and adaptability of the system. The national policy on education in Pakistan recognises that unless both formal and non-formal methods of education are used, it would not be possible to move towards the equalisation of educational opportunity.

Several considerations have led to the wide acceptance and sustained growth of distance education in Pakistan. First, it is recognised that education is a key factor in economic development and social change. Second, in recent years there has been such an increased demand for higher education which cannot be met without developing alternative strategies providing for time and space adjustments. Third, the personal cost of higher education is quite high, especially when account is taken of the foregone earnings during the period of learning and the high drop-out rates.

Distance education courses have to develop a high degree of competitive efficiency and resilience in order to meet these challenges. One has to recognise that it is the national policy on education to have alternative strategies for the acquisition of knowledge. As one of these alternatives, distance education must learn to stand on its own legs without any external help.

The main problem faced by the University relates to the maintenance of standards. Other problems like financing, communication, organisation of postal services and printing of the books are also there in the university. Some experts are of the opinion that lessons in a number of subjects have been written sloppily. It is also alleged that students' assignments are not evaluated, corrected and returned to students on time. There are many places where no study centres are available for personal contact programme. Ironically, these inadequacies are not due to lack of funds.

In fact, the following factors have to be taken into consideration in bringing about improvements in the standards of distance education programme.

- i) There should be adequate preparation prior to the introduction of distance education courses in relation to the syllabus and its units, methodology and preparation of instructional materials.

- ii) There should be coordination between the different departments/institutes of AIOU in such areas as preparation of instructional materials, radio and T.V. broadcasting, conduct of contact programmes and establishment of study centres.
- iii) Measures should be adopted for the effective utilisation of financial resources.
- iv) Sufficient funds should be provided to the distance education institution so that it can function effectively.
- v) The postal services and communication should be made reliable.
- vi) Printing of course books should be ensured.
- vii) Library facilities should be provided to all the model study centres throughout the country.

Effort has been made to highlight such problems and their possible solutions in the unit.

## 8.2 Objectives

After studying the unit, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. identify the financial problems in distance education.
2. specify practical suggestions for reducing early student drop-out rates.
3. discuss the organisational constraints in distance education.
4. evaluate the postal problems and suggest some possible solutions.
5. explain the communication problems between tutor and student.
6. list the printing problems in the system of distance education.

### 8.3 Financing Problem

Financing of distance education is a problem of great significance the cost of distance education programmes vary enormously from one programme to another. However, there are many cost-saving possibilities in comparison to those of formal education and that there is virtue not in low costs per set, but only when low cost is as low as possible while keeping programme effectiveness high. The main issue concerning resources are how to get more of them from both formal and unconventional sources and how best to deploy whatever resources are available to distance education as a whole.

In order to fully comprehend the financial problem involved in the use of distance education, please read the below referred material.

Holmberg, B. (1981)	<u>Status and Trends of Distance Education,</u> London, Kogan Page, pp.119-123	8-1
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### 8.4 Organisational Problem

Distance education owes its existence to the economic and social impracticability of providing opportunities for education for all those who are required or who wish to learn. Whereas required learning is generally quite restricted in range. On the one hand, the community philosophy is, that each person should be assisted to expand his personal potential to its limits, and on the other, there is the cost benefit question to satisfy, because the community's financial resources have to be budgeted and shared with other services.

It has been shown that in distance education products learning (as measured by examination results) at least equal to that produced by formal education. There are also figures available to show that distance education at primary and secondary school levels is less expensive in recurrent costs than formal education. The first matter with important educational implications is that standard lesson instructions, materials, tests, assignments for each course are sent to each student in that course. These, then, should be very carefully and skillfully prepared, tested and money and skill invested in those assignments, should not cause them to be continued in use without revision, long after it is known or suspected that revision is advisable.

The second matter is that of the teachers who operate in distance education. They need to believe in this type of education and to be selected on the basis that their abilities and personalities make them fully effective in this system. The important aspects are suitable accommodation for the teachers working in this area, supervision and on-the-job guidance the teachers are given, and the specific training of staff for this work.

Though, some aspects have impact on lesson construction and on the effectiveness of the whole system, however, it is not proposed to look at mechanics of the in-flow, recording, controlling and out-flow of lesson notes and students. With the saving in capital costs in school buildings and amenities, and the servicing costs on these as well as saving in the running costs.

However, the list of organisational problems is quite long. For detail, please read the below referred material in which the authors have highlighted organisational problems and problem of hierarchical management in distance education.

Anthony Kay & Greville Rumble ed. (1981)	Distance Teaching for Higher and Adult Education, London, Croom Helm. pp.186-199	8-2
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### 8.5 Postal Services

Postal services play an important role in the system of distance education. Unfortunately, these postal services might be slow and unreliable, and there is every likelihood that correspondence units are at times despatched to the wrong person. Since the students enrolled with AIOU are scattered all over the country and a sizeable number may enroll from semi-urban or from the far-flung rural areas, great care has to be taken to ensure that the delivery of the correspondence units to all the students takes place on time.

For overcoming of the postal services problems, Rashid, M. (1982) gave some suggestions to improve the university postal services.

Rashid, M. (1982)	Distance Teaching as a Vehicle of Non- formal Education in in-service Primary teacher training in Pakistan Wales, Ph.D. Thesis, pp.315-17	8-3
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## 8.6 Communication

"Communication refers to the processes by which human beings send and receive messages in such a way that a close approximation is achieved between the message as sent and the message as understood by the receiver"<sup>1</sup>

The communication is of three types-listening, observing and reading. Communication in distance education system is to a considerable extent carried on through language-spoken and written, while the latter two play a relatively greater role.

Good teaching is more than mere communication. It is not enough if the student merely repeats the same word as conveyed to him. The teacher's concern is that the student should understand the text at ease. True learning has occurred only when the act of communication has succeeded in making permanent and meaningful addition to the student's communication skills. The communication in distance education should not be one sided but requires inter communication between student and teacher/tutor. There must be reaction and interaction with constant reciprocal feedback. The system of distance education cannot function properly if the communication system in distance education fail. For this purpose, the tutor should know several things about communication. The purpose of communication is not dictating tutor's ideas on the student, but, developing communication skills in students is the basic concern of the distance institution. Hence, the tutor must provide ways and means of developing and improving the skills.

Barriers to communication, arise not only from diversity of purpose, but also due to unclear encoding and selection of a wrong medium. Communication may fail in certain circumstances, as in the following:

- i) When facts to be presented, are based on different socio-economic backgrounds.
- ii) When facts are based on alien time dimension and space dimension.

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<sup>1</sup> Colin Mares (1966) Communication, London, The English Universities Press Ltd. p.20

Some barriers to communication were further discussed by Harris in the below referred book which is worth reading.

Harris, N.D.C. (1979)	Preparing Educational materials, London Croom Helm, pp.14s-22	8-4
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### 8.7 Printing

Fast printing of study materials is highly important in the system of distance education. In case of any difficulty in printing from outside market, the institution first, must have its own printing press with qualified technicians. It will help avoid the delay in printing the materials. Secondly the institution must have contract with private well established printers/publishers in Pakistan for printing correspondence material, which helps the institution to have good quality of printing, at cheap competitive rates.

On the other hand, shortage of paper, which publishers often complain of, could be avoided by giving the printing contract only to a well established printing.

For details of the publishing of correspondence materials, please read the below mentioned book.

Hugh Burkhardt, Rosemary Fraser & others (1982)	Design and Development of programmes as teaching materials. Leicester, Council for Educational Technology, pp.72-75.	8-5
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### 8.8 Other Problems

There are certain other problems like drop-out etc, faced by the distance education. Such type of problems have been identified by David Robert (1984), which are worth reading.

Please read as indicated in the below referred journal.

John Twining ed. (1982)	Open Learning for Technicians, UK, Stanley Thorns (Publishers) Ltd. pp.203-207.	8-6
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## 8.9 Activities

1. List below the suggestions for the improvement of two-way communication in distance education.

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2. Prepare a diagram indicating the organisational problems in the system of distance education.

3. Please suggest below three alternative arrangements for postal services in Pakistan:

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4. List below the expected problems of printing faced by any institution of distance education.

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**8.10 Exercise**

Hopefully, you have studied the unit, now please answer the following questions:

- Q. 1 What do you understand by the term Cost-performance Dynamics? Discuss.
- Q. 2 What suggestions you can offer for reducing early dropout rates? Discuss.
- Q. 3 Critically examine the financial problems faced by any distance education institutions and give suggestions to overcome such problems.
- Q. 4 What are the hierarchical management problems in distance education universities? Explain.
- Q. 5 "A weakness of distance education system, which is critically dependent on the establishment of good working relations between authors and academic producers, was that it did not at first enable authorsto meet the curriculum designers"? Discuss.
- Q. 6 Critically examine the postal services problems in a distance education institution and suggest some possible solutions.
- Q. 7 Write a short note on:
  - i) Material production
  - ii) Integrated Study Centres
  - iii) Interaction and independence
- Q. 8 Discuss the two-way communication in the system of distance education.
- Q. 9 "The lecturer's communication problem is partly associated with the variations in student learning patterns". Discuss.
- Q. 10 With reference to communication, please explain the variety of classifications of learning patterns which exist in the system of distance education.
- Q. 11 Discuss the problems involved in the publishing process, in distance education.

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**EVALUATION IN  
DISTANCE EDUCATION**

*By*

*Dr. Muhammad Rashid*



## 9.1 Introduction

Man constantly seeks to improve himself and his environment. In our daily activities, we are all involved in planning and evaluation in one way or another, in carrying out different activities and programmes, in trying to know how well we have done etc. If our performance was below expectation, some improvement for future programme is necessary so that we can improve and do better. Similarly, in carrying out a project a method of measuring project effort, efficiency, and effectiveness has to be designed in order to get a good appraisal of the project. All these things can be taken care of by evaluation.

There is no one dogmatic definition of term "evaluation". Different authors have given it different meanings. However, for the purpose of this unit, evaluation is defined, as a process of measuring the success or failure of an activity of programme in the light of the planned objectives'. In other words, evaluation provides facts for providing information on the achievement of programme requisites and goal related to efforts, effectiveness and efficiency.

The evaluation of programme efforts entail a description of the type and quantity of programme activities. Evaluation of programme effectiveness is concerned with an analysis of whether or not the intended results have been achieved as a result of the programme efforts. While the evaluation of programme efficiency, is devoted to determine the relative costs of achieving these results.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, in evaluation, it is not enough to look at the degree of success itself, it is also important to look at the strategies used in the process of the whole undertaking. Evaluation also questions the relevance of the project, challenges all aspects of the project designs and measures the progress towards the overall objectives. Therefore, evaluation is a continuous process which starts from research planning to the administering of the programme. Further, evaluation exposes the mistakes made and the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the programme. It throws some light on how to implement future plans by correcting mistakes made by changing the strategies and evading impediments so as to realise greater success. Evaluation, therefore, helps in minimising wastage of manpower, efforts, time and money.

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<sup>1</sup> Tonny Tripodi (1971) - Social Programme Evaluation, Illinors, Peacock Publishers. pp.21-22

According to Gooler (1979) 'evaluation is the determination of the worth of a programme. It also serves as a policy guide and further determines the extent to which objectives have been met.<sup>2</sup> The distance university should therefore, have a clearly stated mission and rationale on the basis of which specific objectives are developed. There should be standards set on the basis of which the fulfilment of objectives can be judged.

Evaluation can be pre-programmed, and formative while the educational programme is still going on. It can be "summative", which means that it is undertaken after the distance teaching programme has been completed.

However, effort has been made in this unit to explain the meaning of evaluation, its types and its strategies.

## 9.2 Objectives

After studying the unit, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. describe the nature of evaluation.
2. appreciate the importance of evaluation.
3. differentiate different types of evaluation.
4. discuss the process of student evaluation.
5. explain formative evaluation and summative evaluation.
6. discuss different processes and evaluation strategies in system of distance education.

## 9.3 Student evaluation

The student evaluation tells the student whether he has interacted with a course more or less successfully than his fellows. In this respect it obviously encourages competition and as Bloom, Hastings and Madaus (1971) point out: "It is recognized that competition may be a spur to such a student who views others

<sup>2</sup> Gooler, Dennis D.  
(1979)

"Evaluating Distance Education Programmes", Canadian Journal  
of University Continuing Education, Vol. VI, No.1, Summer 1970.

in competitive terms, but much of learning and development may be destroyed by primary emphasis on competition".<sup>3</sup>

In distance study, of course, competition is not a problem. Indeed, many students miss the opportunity to compare their progress with that of others on the course. Moreover, in evaluating one of the "Tele-universities' distance study courses, the students were asked specifically if they were interested in knowing the average mark of the 2000 students enrolled. Seventy per cent replied affirmatively (Bloom. et al (1971)).<sup>4</sup> Despite this interest in how others are faring, it is very important, and particularly so in distance education, for the individual to know how, he is progressing relative to the content and objectives of the course itself. Much of this diagnosis can be done without outside help. Evidence shows, that the self-assessment questions which are a feature of many correspondence courses are very popular with students.

Self-assessment questions obviously give results that are content referenced, since by their very nature, they exclude comparison with other students. However, a good self assessment question should not only indicate to the student whether he has mastered the content which the question covers but also, in the event that this mastery is less than total; show him what he has failed to understand and what to do about it.

For details of assessment students, the essential functions of course evaluation, bases of evaluation and of course the methods of evaluation, please read the below referred book written by Holmberg B (1981).

Chander, N. Jose, (1991)	Management of Distance Education, New Delhi, Sterling Publishers, Private Limited, pp.73-77	9-1
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<sup>3</sup> Bloom, Benjamin S. Hasting T. thomas, Madaus, George F. (1971) Handbook of Formative and Summative Education of Student Learning, New York, McGraw Hill.

<sup>4</sup> Bloom, B.S. Hasting J.T. and Madaus G.F. (1971) op cit.

## 9.4 Types of Evaluation

The available literature identifies three types of evaluations namely pre-evaluation, formative (continuous) evaluation and summative evaluation. Pre-evaluation is undertaken before programme/project implementation. It may take the form of a baseline survey or detailed questionnaire designed to identify the priorities and potential of a particular area. During this phase the evaluation instruments and the manpower are determined. Also, it is the time when evaluator gets all the details of the project from the project planner and organizers, so as to get the goals of the project. The evaluator here decides on the training programme for the manpower, during the evaluation period. This is very important phase as it gives light on the future implementation of the programme. Failure to achieve relevant data at this stage leads to collapse of the programme to be implemented.

### a. Formative evaluation

On the other hand, formative evaluation occurs continually during the implementation stage. It calls for constant follow-up of whatever is done and is a proper machinery for communication and coordination.

Since the major aim of formative evaluation is to improve the educational programme, the collection of data on the achievement of any objective should be undertaken as soon as possible after the commencement of the programme. The results of such assessment should be feedback immediately to those concerned. If the results show that the stated objectives are being achieved, the programme can continue along the lines already adopted. If the results reveal of the contrary, then steps should be taken to change the programme in a direction that subsequent evaluation will reveal to be more appropriate for the achievement of the stated objectives. Only a continuous evaluation procedure of this kind can ensure that the objectives will be achieved. In short, formative evaluation can be linked to an act of looking into mirror right from the beginning of cutting ones hair. A person who does so, is committed to mission or objective or making oneself look nice. Looking into the mirror all the time gives such a person chance to make necessary corrections as the process proceeds and this guarantees achievement of the objective a nice look.

Rashid, M. (1991)	Staff Development Handbook. Islamabad, AIOU, pp.329-331	9-2
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In order to further comprehend the formative evaluation. Please read the below referred book. These referred pages will also highlight summative evaluation which is discussed in b.

Holmberg, Borje (1981)	Status and Trends of Distance Education London, Kogan Page, pp.111-113	9-3
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#### b. Summative Evaluation

Summative evaluation comes at the end of the programme or at the end of programme's phase. The main aim of such evaluation is to assess the final outcome by relating it to the original intentions and discovering how it varied with the differing circumstances in which it had been produced. In short, this kind of evaluation aims at determining the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its stated objectives. It further determines its contribution to the achievement for sectoral or national planning targets and development goals, and the self-sustaining character of the changes resulting from programme.

From the above para, it can be said that summative evaluation has little direct use to the project itself, but it can be very useful in throwing some light on the future projects. Not only is it rarely possible with such evaluation, to make sound judgements or conclusions about any improvement that may have taken place since the projects inception but no opportunity is provided to affect a change if the summative evaluation demonstrates that particular programme objectives have not been achieved.

This type of evaluation can also be linked to an act of looking into a mirror after one has completed cutting his hair. The mirror image will only reflect how good or bad one has cut his hair. The person in this case will have no chance of correcting the mistakes done in the cutting. The character in this case is non-committed person. For the whole idea of cutting one's hair is to make oneself look nice and therefore, if this person in question was committed to the objective of looking nice, he should have been interested in making sure that he will end up with nice looking hair style, right from the time he begins the cutting.

#### 9.6 Exercise

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions.

- Q. 1 What do you understand by the nature of evaluation? Explain.
- Q. 2 Discuss the importance of evaluation in the system of distance education.
- Q. 3 Discuss the terms of formative evaluation and summative evaluation. Give examples in support of your answer.
- Q. 4 Critically examine student evaluation in distance education.
- Q. 5 Discuss different strategies of evaluation and give examples in support of your answer.
- Q. 6 Write a short note on:
  - i) Bases of evaluation
  - ii) Illuminative evaluation
  - iii) Information processing
  - iv) Evaluation instruments
- Q. 7 Critically examine the essential functions of course evaluation.
- Q. 8 Discuss the methods of evaluation.
- Q. 9 How you will evaluate the process of learning? Discuss.
- Q. 10 Discuss the potential role of media in evaluation.
- Q. 11 "Evaluation is the activity of examining and judging value, quality, significance, quantity or condition". Discuss.

## 9.5 Activities

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