"शिक्षा मानव को बन्धनों से मुक्त करती है और आज के युग में तो यह लोकतंत्र की भावना का आधार भी है। जन्म तथा अन्य कारणों से उत्पन्न जाति एवं वर्गीकरण के विषय में के दूर करते हुए मानुष को इन सबसे ऊपर उठाती है।"

- इंदिरा गांधी

"Education is a liberating force, and in our age it is also a democratising force, cutting across the barriers of caste and class, smoothing out inequalities imposed by birth and other circumstances."

- Indira Gandhi
Block 3

MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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BLOCK 3  MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

This is the third block of this course and three units comprise it. In the previous block the discussion focused on the production of self learning materials for delivery through various media. You have thus been acquainted with the managerial functions involved in the production of courseware in ODL institutions. In this block the focus will be upon two other closely related functions of ODL institutions viz. teaching and learning and evaluation. Apart from these two activities, the related support services provided to distant learners have also been discussed. The need and mechanisms for supporting distant learners through customized services provided by ODL institutions have been highlighted. The last unit acquaints you with the profile of four actual ODL institutions. Although this unit is not specifically about student support services but it has been placed towards end of the course so that you can relate the concept and philosophy of ODL, the major functions carried out in an ODL institution with the profile of the ODL institutions.

Unit 8: Management of Teaching-Learning System: This unit includes deliberation on the term 'management' in the perspective of distance education institutions and there are also discussions on the management of teaching-learning system in ODL institutions and student support service provided to facilitate learning.

Unit 9: Management of Evaluation System- In this unit the focus is on the management of evaluation in ODL institutions. You will get an idea of the concept of evaluation and then through discussions on issues related to it, you will understand how management of evaluation in a distance learning setup is carried out.

Unit 10: Case Studies: In this Unit we present information on some ODL Universities of India and abroad. The studies included in this Unit basically aim to acquaint you with a few ODL institutions and their functioning by presenting to you the profile of these institutions as cases so that you may relate the content in the previous units to the realities existing in ODL institutions.
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UNIT 8 MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING-LEARNING SYSTEM

Structure

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8.1 INTRODUCTION

A body offering education in a face to face manner or through distance mode is usually referred to as an institution and not organization, a term popularly used in the Management parlance. Although like an organization an educational institution too comprises an organized group of people who share common goals but its aim of providing service without the motive to earn profit makes it different. Schools, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions are set up mainly for a social cause. However, an institution like an organization needs to be managed. A distance education institution has several functions but the main among them are registration of students (admission), course development and delivery, teaching, evaluation, etc. In the third unit we have discussed admission of students in NIOS and IGNOU, in the fifth and sixth about course development and in the ninth unit about the management of evaluation. In this unit we shall focus on the management of the teaching-learning system in a distance education institution.

Although the courses on management, of this programme have familiarized you with the concept of management, in this unit we shall initiate our discussions with brief deliberations on the term ‘management’ in the context of distance education and then discuss the management of teaching-learning system. We would also like to tell you at this point that management of teaching-learning system is incomplete without the management of student support services, which are provided by a distance education institution to support learners and thus facilitate teaching and learning at a distance. We have discussed it in this unit.
8.2 OBJECTIVES

Following a study of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the concept of management
- identify the major management functions;
- classify the critical areas in managing an educational institutions;
- discuss the major aspects comprising the process of educational management; and
- explain the issues involved in managing the teaching-learning system.

8.3 MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

Management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected goals (Koontz & Weirich, 2005). When expanded, this definition depicts the following features:

- As managers, people carry out the management functions viz. planning, organizing, leading and controlling;
- Management applies to all kinds of organizations;
- It applies to the managers at all levels of organizations;
- For an educational institution, management aims to attain the goals while enhancing effectiveness (capable of producing the intended result) and efficiency (having high ratio of output to input and thereby involving minimum wastage. Simply stated it means greater output attained through lower inputs).

As discussed earlier, in an educational institution, management ideally should not merely aim to earn profits but make the institution effective and efficient. To judge whether the management has been able to make an institution effective and efficient, we need to consider the outputs. However, an educational institution may not have tangible outputs that can be assessed. For e.g. universities providing higher educations generate and disseminate knowledge and thus providing service to the society. But knowledge is intangible. However, an educational institution, especially one that provides distance education may be considered as effective and efficient if students are satisfied during the course of their study, benefited in terms of placement, get scope for higher/further education, and so on following the successful completion of the educational programme in which they have enrolled. Thus the educational programmes offered are cost effective and the institution attains its goals. This is the whole idea of managing an institution, including its teaching-learning system.

Management involves a systems approach (see unit 4). A systems approach considers an educational institution as a system. The inputs like teaching, educational resources are inputs that are processed to get the outputs. The outputs (as discussed for a distance education institution) are evaluated and as per the feedback the inputs and the processing activities may be revised. This goes on in a cyclical manner as depicted in the following flow chart.
Source: Adapted from Koontz & Weihrich (2005), Tata McGraw Hill

We see in the figure 1 that Systems Approach may be involved in the management of instructions in an educational institution and this is also true for distance education institutions. Systems approach is an operational planning concept, borrowed from the field of engineering. It involves the processing of inputs to give outputs and following continuous feedback on the output, modifies itself to fulfill the goals set and thereby serve the target in a better way. Technically, a system may be comparable to interacting or independent components that work in a coordinated manner forming a unified whole. The systems approach to instruction in general includes the following steps (Das, 2009):
- an analysis of the existing situation,
- setting up goals to achieve the desired situation,
- defining mechanisms to evaluate the achievement of goals,
- generating alternative solutions to achieve the goals,
- choosing the best possible solution through cost-benefit analysis, and detailing the design of the system,
- outlining the monitoring mechanisms for the system, and
- working out the solution.

Management is a comprehensive term, which can be analyzed into its constituent functions. Various authors have stated different activities as constituents of management. We will discuss some of the major ones - planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. Each of these functions has been discussed in brief in the subsequent subsections.

### 8.3.1 Planning

What is planning? Planning is the first step towards reaching the goals. It is done basically to identify the goals of an institution and form a blueprint for attaining them. Planning can be for short term as well as for long term goals. According to the famous authors of management principles, Kootz and O'Donnell, “planning is deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who is to do it. It bridges the gap from where we are to where we want to go. It makes it possible for things to occur which would not otherwise happen.” Planning is thus the function that determines in advance what should be done. It consists of selecting the enterprise objectives and in the light of the objectives and policies, programmes, procedures and other means of achieving the objectives are determined. It is thus looking ahead and preparing for the future.

#### Steps in Planning

The following are the steps which are normally used in the planning process but it is advisable that the viability of the possible course of action be studied in each case. The steps are as follows:

- Understanding the objectives (vision) of the institution
- Understanding the environment (external and internal) and determining the needs in terms of the objectives, opportunities (in terms of resources) and constraints
- Identifying the alternatives of attaining the objectives
- Evaluating the alternatives
- Decision making as to the best course of action
- Formulating the plans
- Budgeting according to the plan selected
- Coordination of long term and short term goals

Planning also involves forecasting. The need for resources (human and material) is to be forecast and the time required is also to be estimated and accordingly strategies are to be formulated. Determining action paths are crucial to planning as they help in implementing the plan. The action paths involve programmes and budgets, allocation of responsibilities, time frame and the like. Therefore planning forms the basis of any management function and is important as it provides direction.

In a distance education institution the entire system of teaching and learning need to be planned. The steps mentioned above may be adopted. Planning begins with revisiting the goals and the vision of the institution. We then determine what type of
courses are to be taught, who will be the learners, who will develop the courses, what will be the media, what would be the fees, how the course would be delivered and other relevant issues are considered. The alternatives as to these options are evaluated and those that are cost effective but lead to quality are selected. A plan is thus formulated. Budget preparation is done to get an idea of the financial resources available and those required. In the fifth, and seventh units we have discussed how planning of educational programmes is done for various media through survey to determine the target group and its needs, preparation of concept paper and other activities, necessary for developing instructional materials.

8.3.2 Organizing

People working in an organization or institution, intending to achieve some goals must have definite roles to play. These roles need to be well defined and structured if they are meant for attaining definite purpose or objective. Organizing, thus is that function of managing that involves establishing an intentional structure of roles for the employees. It is intended to collect and configure resources (including human resources) in order to implement plans. It assigns roles depending on the expertise of the people. For example a teacher of distance education will develop a programme in this area and one for educational technology will be assigned the responsibilities of a programme in this field. Thus it defines and groups the roles to be performed, defining and delegating responsibility and working out mechanisms to evaluate the work done in terms of the objectives to be attained.

In any distance education institution the following activities are to be performed for organization.

- Identification of activities like carrying out need survey for a programme, developing courses for various media, getting course content edited, etc.
- Departmentally locating the activities such as to planning division the task of need survey, coordination of courses to faculty of concerned departments, editing to editors identified by faculty involved and so on.
- Delegating responsibility to the concerned staff
- Co-ordination between authority and responsibility centers to evaluate progress and quality of the activities.

8.3.3 Staffing

Staffing is closely linked with organizing and includes manpower planning, recruiting, selecting, training, appraising and maintaining the individuals (employees) in the organization.

Features of staffing

- Staffing helps management in recruiting, selecting and training employees who are capable.
- Staffing is concerned with identifying the work-force requirement and then accordingly recruiting the human resources. Institutions also train staff and maintain favorable working environment.
- Staffing promotes the employer-employee relationship.

Staffing has to be closely linked to organizing so as to set up the intentional structures of roles and positions. Appropriate staffing in an organization leads to higher productivity and the efficiency of an organization. For instance if a distance education institution plans to offer teacher education programmes, it will have to recruit faculty capable of educating teachers, orient them to the functioning of the distance education institution, train them from time to time for their capacity building and maintain a healthy
relationship between the employer and the employee.

In distance education institutions staffing is done at two levels. The first is for teaching and non-teaching activities of the ODL institution and second is a cadre of functionaries who provide support to students directly. This category includes the academic counselors. Although enrolment in distance education is high but it may be counterbalanced by high rates of attrition. One of the measures adopted to prevent this is to strengthen the support system for distant learners, which is extended by academic counselors who have been trained intensively for their role by the ODL institution. Academic counselors are academically qualified and usually attached to conventional system of education viz. teachers of colleges, universities or other staff with the necessary expertise.

8.3.4 Leading

Leading is one of the most important functions of management. According to Koonitz & Weihrich (2005) leading is defined as the process of influencing people so that they will contribute to organization and group goals. The management guru, P.F. Drucker points out that leaders are the basic but one of the most scarce resources of any organization. All types of organizations business and industry, government and military, universities and hospitals recognize the importance of the leadership function.

The main functions of a leader are:

- To gain the commitment and co-operation of his/her team;
- To get the group into action to achieve the agreed upon goals; and
- To make the best use of the skills, energies and talents of team members.

A leader is one who can give a sense of vision and direction to the group, not just to one individual at a time, but to all members. A leader should possess the following qualities:

- Decisiveness
- Integrity
- Enthusiasm
- Imagination and creativity
- Willingness to work hard
- Analytical mind
- Understanding others
- Ability to spot opportunities
- Ability to meet unpleasant situations
- Ability to adapt himself/herself quickly to change
- Willingness to take risks.
- Courage
- Willpower
- Initiative
- Knowledge of the job
- Knowledge of self
- Capability of dealing with people

There can be many more qualities which a leader must acquire or possess.

Decision making is important in educational institutions. Good decisions are always based on adequate information and its analysis and involve sound judgment. Decisions
are better if experts in the field are involved. Participative decisions are better as they involve collective thinking. Decisions regarding an activity must be accompanied by plans of delegating the work, communication and monitoring the activity.

Leading is the process of influencing people so that they can contribute to the attainment of organizational goals. In distance education institutions too, those involved directly or indirectly in teaching, supporting staff, and others concerned need to be motivated enough. Leaders need to understand that the responsibilities and nature of work of distant teachers are unique. The leaders of the organization hence need to provide proper working conditions, scope for professional development, autonomy in functioning, support -moral and material (like infrastructure needed) as and when required and above all understand the need for a motivated workforce.

In distance education institutions, leaders first of all need an understanding of ODL systems. They have to understand the uniqueness of ODL institutions. This is the reason why we have devoted one entire block to develop an understanding of ODL system. They also need an understanding of the principles of management, which they may apply to ODL institutions.

8.3.5 Controlling

The managerial function of controlling is the assessment and correction of performance if needed in order to make sure that the institution’s objectives are accomplished by implementing the plan developed. A basic control process has the following three steps:

- Establishing standards
- Measuring performance based on these standards
- Correcting variations from deviations.

Controlling is perceived to be a simple feedback system. It is done on the basis of the plan adopted. It is a process of checking actual performance against the standards or plans. It guides managers in monitoring the activities to determine whether they conform to plans (including the budget, which is also a fiscal plan), whether there is effective and efficient utilization of resources of the institution, and above all whether they would lead to accomplishment of goals. A properly designed control mechanism helps in maintaining the standards of an institution by assessing the deviation of actual performance from the standard performance, identifying the causes of such deviations and helping in taking corrective measures.

In a distance education institution, control is exerted on a continuous basis. You have read in the fifth and sixth units, that teams of experts and statutory bodies of the institution are involved at various stages of production of instructional materials and that there are periodic revisions of the courseware developed. There is also monitoring of study centers, which are the points of delivery of academic programmes to assure quality.

Check Your Progress 1

Answer the following questions:

1. Explain the term -management.
2. Why is it necessary to plan?
8.4 MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING-LEARNING SYSTEM

The previous section was about management. This section will provide you with an overview of management of teaching and learning, which are the main activities of an educational institution. Every activity revolves around teaching and learning. In this section we shall discuss in brief the management of educational institutions.

8.4.1 Institutional Management for Teaching and Learning

Educational institutions including those providing distance education come under service providing organizations and are quite different from the profit making organizations in many ways, some of which are as follows:

- Teaching and learning form the primary objective of educational institutions.
- Teaching is not just the linear transmission of information from teacher to taught. It involves the development of a strong relationship between the teachers and the learners with the aims to develop the personality of learners with emphasis on self-reliance and the ability to develop an attitude for decision making.
- Learning is a continuous process and learning in an educational institution is quite different in the sense that it is inclined with the basic need of gaining a certification in a particular subject which further helps an individual to use it in managing his/her life. The outcome of learning is often judged through examinations, and failure could lead to unwanted consequences.
- A specified curriculum is another aspect. Managing a curriculum is important as it needs updating based on the latest trends and facts in the education system.
- Environmental changes (Macro as well as Micro), especially technological and societal changes, increased accountability and not the least, the growing erosion of the professional authority of the academic, have all significant consequences for the management of the educational institution.

From the institutional perspective, managing the system involves:

- Determining and defining the primary task;
- Managing the information flow across the boundary;
- Ensuring the availability of resources to plan the primary task; and
- Monitoring the performance of the primary task to ensure that it relates to the wider system and to the environment.

These steps constitute management and have been discussed earlier in the unit.

Mission and goals

The mission statements explain the role that an ODL institution plays in the society. It also helps people understand the goals they want to achieve and how they are to be achieved. It is futuristic, it is directional, and is a philosophic statement of the purpose of an institution. The purpose is the goal of the institution and it is the functional target. Goals determine the mission statement, which spells out the nature of educational programmes, the target group, the measures adopted for ensuring retention of those enrolled, the facilities to be provided to learners, and the like. This vision gets transformed into an institutional mission when the people involved come together for a common purpose, agree or accept the meaning of the work they have to do together. In other words, mission in a shared purpose that motivates people and engages in action for something beyond their own immediate self-interest. In ODL institutions teaching and learning are the most important activities and carrying them out efficiently is the aim.
It is important that the vision and goals address the needs of the society and the students; the mission can be translated into programmes and activities; and that together the vision and the mission reflect the traditions and culture of the institution.

**Governance**

Traditionally, educational institutions are perceived to be self-governing institutions. There are several reasons for this tradition. Firstly, an educational institution is not an organization that develops a product, markets it and turns a profit. Secondly, it serves a social purpose, affecting the lives of all people in several ways. Thirdly, teaching is essentially a solitary activity and the teacher enjoys substantial autonomy in the conduct of his/her work. All these features are reflected in the structure of management of the educational institution. The decision making bodies of the institution have the freedom to decide what to teach and how, in determining the programmes, prescribing curricula, setting the entry and exit standards of students, and the methods of assessing those standards, engagement of personnel (teachers and other staff), mobilization and deployment of resources for teaching and learning, creation and maintenance of infrastructure for teaching and learning, etc. This is also true for an ODL institution.

**8.4.2 Academic Management**

The basic function of an educational institution, including an ODL institution is teaching and learning. To perform these functions, it is necessary to have the programmes and courses for study, design and develop the curricula for them, establish the instructional system as well as its methods and practices and set out the learning outcomes which can be assessed and certified. All these functions are performed by the teachers of the ODL institution with the help of the non teaching staff.

- **Programmes and Curricula**

  The academic programmes offered by any ODL institution are developed in consonance with its mission and goals which we have discussed earlier. In determining the programmes, the following considerations will have to be kept in view:

  - At the higher education level, there is a greater flexibility and substantial autonomy. Each university determines its programmes and their contents and so is the case for distance education institutions. However, while maintaining this autonomy the guidelines of the Distance Education Council are kept in view by distance education institutions.

  - There usually is a well-establish process in place for designing and developing the curricula and for their review and revision. The faculty, the Boards of Studies, and the Academic Council provide the mechanisms for this function. These statutory bodies comprise mainly teachers from within the institution as well as external experts. The important point is that decisions on these matters are taken collectively and are never left to individuals in the institution.

  - Peer review and feedback from employers should preferably be a part of this process so that the curriculum of any programme is in sync with the social demands and employment needs.

The important features from the management’s perspective are as follows:

- The content, structure, flexibilities in combinations of content, etc., for every programme should be clearly spelt out;

- The instructional processes should be laid down in as much detail as possible; and

- The assessment system should be explained clearly and in detail.

It should be remembered that any student who enrolls in any programme in any institution relies on these details before s/he commits herself/himself to pay the fees.
and spends her/his time in study. These are therefore the material premises on which the learning contract between the student and the institution is concluded. You may study the brochure of any programme of IGNOU to understand this better.

- **Student support services**

The standard of an ODL institution depends a lot on the support services provided by that particular institution. We shall discuss it later in this unit.

- **Linkage and interface**

The most significant linkage that education has to maintain is with the community and other organized systems in society. At the primary education level, the school management has to involve the local communities in the matter of maintenance of school facilities, school improvement, enrolment and retention of children and even the management of the school itself. At the higher levels, these linkages become more extensive and complex and involve industries, and other sectors of the society.

An ODL institution needs to develop linkages with many other institutions for delivering educational programmes. For example, study centers, programme study centers (for professional programmes), tele-learning centers are established in educational institutions that offer education in the face to face manner. The teachers and administrators of these institutions work as part time staff for delivering the programmes of the ODL institution. Industries, hospitals, and other such organizations are also chosen as study centers/programme study centers if the practical component of the programme delivered by the ODL institution demands it.

### 8.4.3 Administration

Administration concerns with the functions and systems supporting the organization and all communications amongst its parts. Historically, the concept of administration is associated with the exercise of power and authority by governments’ laws, rules and regulations. In an educational institution, it is this component which interprets and administers all laws (which include rules, regulations, and procedures) and exercises control over the administration of personnel and finance. The administrators of distance education institutions today need several competencies to meet the challenges facing ODL like high rates of attrition, providing student support services efficiently, maintaining quality of instructional material, timely evaluation and certification of huge number of students, facilitating professional development of staff and so on. This requires an in-depth understanding of theories of distance education, its concept and nature, ability to manage change, be change agents, develop socially relevant programmes and so on.

- **Human Resource Management**

Human Resource Management deals with managing people who run the organization. It is the levels of the efficiency and commitment of these people which makes for the progress of an institution in teaching and learning. In an educational institution, there are two distinct categories of staff: teachers who perform the academic functions, and the administrative staff who performs the functions supporting teaching. Both these categories are important for the institution. Hence, there should be a well-articulated personnel policy for all categories of staff so that personnel needs are assessed, there is timely recruitment, orientation and capacity building of those recruited, etc.

Orientation and capacity building of staff of ODL may be in various areas, some of which are as follows:

- Educational aspects- teaching strategies and learning, evaluation, curriculum, using media for teaching, etc.
• Instructional design for developing courseware
• Distance education-systemic issues: about ODL, about the institution, distance learners, self learning materials, learner support, etc.
• Adult learning
• Communication skills
• Budgeting
• Use of Information and Communication Technology
• Collaboration and networking

**Infrastructure management**

The physical infrastructure of an institution is a major component that contributes to its performance. The important elements that constitute this infrastructure are land and buildings, laboratories and library, equipment and furniture, health centers, hostels and guest houses, and so on. With the increasing applications of technology in office automation, and audio-visual support to instructional process, the installation and maintenance of the technological infrastructure have assumed considerable significance. In distance education, procurement, maintenance and optimal use of technology are important for teaching and learning through multiple media. In IGNOU and in many other institutions, there are electronic media production centers that need to be managed efficiently if multiple media approach is to be adopted for delivering instructions.

**Financial management**

Traditionally, education has been in the domain of the governments. The nature and type of institutions offering education got diversified, and so did the sources of their funding. Even so, the major provider of funds for education in most societies continues to be their governments although private institutions are now increasing in number. Now educational institutions are urged to be self sufficient and generate revenue for carrying out teaching-learning activities. Hence, **cost effective educational programmes** are needed. Educational programmes that will attract higher enrolment are needed for the financial well being of the institution. Those programmes that draw huge enrolment need to be identified, nurtured and strengthened through proper monitoring of its implementation, revision and so on.

**8.5 MANAGEMENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION**

In distance education, management of teaching and learning requires planning. The programmes to be offered are planned. This is followed by the designing and development of curriculum about which you have already read in the 5th and 6th units. There is a need to monitor various operations related to teaching and learning such as the production and distribution of self learning materials and ensuring their quality. There is also the need to manage the delivery system as delivery of learning materials as well as a variety of support services to learner is a critical need in distance education.

As the learners are at a distance from the educational institution and teachers, it is necessary that learning materials and support services are delivered on time. Only if the courseware, prepared by the institution reaches the learners on time, can teaching-learning process be effective. Therefore, distance education universities establish a network of centres. These centres are the contact points and their number depends upon the student enrolment and the vastness of the area to be covered. For instance in the third unit you have read about the network of Regional and Study Centres of IGNOU and NIOS. It is to be seen that students can avail the following facilities through these centres:
- The centres are capable of providing a learning environment;
- The centers are accessible to learners within a reasonable time and distance;
- Qualified tutors/counsellors are available for guiding learners;
- The centers should remain open on holidays and at time beyond the normal working hours;
- The centers should be adequately staffed;
- The centers should have library and audio video CDs and the infrastructure needed to play them and access teleconferencing programmes;
- Laboratories, computers for students if the programmes demand these facilities;

In order to monitor all these operations related to teaching and learning, distance education institution may use Management Information System (MIS). MIS may be designed taking into account many factors like the following:

- Programme planning and scheduling
- Monitoring of programme development
- Progress of printing
- Progress of audio-video production
- Assignment preparation and despatch and uploading on the institution’s website
- Material despatch schedule
- Staff recruitment and training schedule
- Examination schedule

For the smooth operation of all these recurrent activities, institutions may create a calendar(s), which is then the basis for monitoring the timeliness of the activities (ES-314 IGNOU).

Management of teaching-learning will remain incomplete if feedback is not collected from experts, students, and other stakeholders about the teaching process and the content delivered. In the beginning of the unit we have discussed the systems approach. The feedback collected will help to improve the inputs. Hence educational programmes are evaluated during their development through formative evaluation and following their development through summative evaluation. Formative evaluation does not measure the outcome of a programme or a project but is very useful in identifying the major or minor bottlenecks in a programme and the aspects that need to be improved before delivery. Unlike formative evaluation, in summative evaluation the data are collected after the programme has been implemented. It follows the transaction of the curriculum for evaluating outcomes of learning and also of the programme offered.

### 8.5.1 Managing Learner Support Services

Student Support Services (SSS) complement and supplement the instructions provided. The range of services that institutions normally provide can be briefly summarized as follows:

- Provision of reliable, accurate and comprehensive information about the institution itself. Presently many institutes have their websites which provide complete information about the institute and the services they offer.
- Information about facilities provided by the institutions to its students in their learning pursuit such as schedules of classroom lectures, library and laboratory work, tutorials, examination schedules, etc.
- Information about the programmes provided through brochures, programme guides, etc.
• Financial support in the form of scholarships, loans or part-time employment.
• Career counseling and guidance including placement.

The provision of these services and their management can both be an opportunity and a challenge to the institution. A great deal of student satisfaction will depend upon the adequacy of some of these services and their quality.

Management of teaching learning process in ODL includes the management of an effective system of Student Support Services (SSS). SSS are crucial for helping students to successfully enrol and complete the educational programme. Distant learners often struggle to cope with the demands of learning at a distance. They are isolated from the institution, teachers and peers and also have social and career commitments. Hence they need support for their studies. Research in distance education indicates that student support services, including individual tutoring and counselling by tutors &/counsellors specialised in the content and distance education and also in counselling have considerable impact in increasing learner satisfaction, learning outcomes and thereby enhance retention. Therefore managers of ODL institutions have to plan, organise, control, coordinate and carry out other activities necessary for managing the support system.

Support to learners is provided at various stages:

**Pre-enrolment:** counselling to help in selecting an appropriate educational programme and enrolling in it.

**During course of study:** for academic and administrative problems faced, through tutoring and counseling during weekends at study centres, in accessing library service and audio-visual programmes, in preparing for examination, in managing personal problems like time management.

**Post study period:** for further study/placement

**Supporting learners through study centers**

ODL institutions have a network of Regional Centers and each Regional Center has several study centers/ programme study centers under it. The study centers are the delivery points of educational programmes. At these centers academic counselors, who in institutions like IGNOU perform the dual role of tutoring and counseling help students to overcome their academic and other problems. Students may be unable to understand some portions of the Self learning material. There could also be hard spots in the study material that need additional support in the form of further explanations, examples, and other learning experiences. Learners may also experience difficulties with practical activities, projects, dissertation, etc. Academic counselors help learners in these matters.

Managers need to see that these academic counselors are oriented for their function. Orientation programmes should prepare these functionaries for roles demanding systemic knowledge (knowledge of ODL and the institution), counseling skills, ability to use technology like computer, audio and video technologies for counseling, ability to develop tutoring strategies and the like. Managers also need to ensure that these centers are well staffed and have the necessary facilities like library, laboratory, audiovisual aids, teleconferencing facilities and are using these facilities for distance learners. The study centers must also have working hours and working days that suit distant learners. SSS provided at NIOS and IGNOU have been discussed in the 3rd unit of this course.

**Activity**

Attend academic counseling for this course and observe how it is managed.
Online support to learners

The website of the ODL institution is an important source of information about the institution and its activities. It has to be seen that there is adequate information on all relevant issues but the website does not have a cluttered look. The information should be readily available and most important is that it should be updated on a regular basis. The information on academic programmes, the contact details of the School, Study Center, Regional Center and faculty concerned will help the prospective learner/those enrolled to establish contact. Students may be encouraged to seek information online over the Internet, telephone and other means. There may also be discussion forums, blogs, etc. for online group interaction. Online academic resources and library services may be provided to students through the website.

Supporting learners through printed documents

Managers of ODL need to see that for every programme launched the corresponding information and support are available through printed documents like brochures, manuals, study guides, programme guides, prospectus and so on. These documents inform prospective learners in deciding the programme in which they would enroll. Information on eligibility conditions, duration of the programme (maximum and minimum), fees, dates for filling up admission and examination forms, programme and course structure, evaluation system, objectives of the programme, medium of study, list of study centers, etc. are provided. Handbooks, study guides can help those enrolled in utilizing the study materials, preparing for workshops, personal contact programmes, carrying out dissertations, projects and so on.

Students’ success is the success of the institution and for these apart from the quality of the learning materials the support provided by the ODL institution is vital. Hence, Student Support Services are provided by distance education institution to support learners and thus facilitate teaching and learning at a distance. At IGNOU while every Regional Centre and Study Centre, provides support to the learners, a Centre has been created at IGNOU Headquarters dedicated solely for the purpose of providing learner support in the form of attending to their queries, grievances and providing them with suitable guidance and counseling (see unit 3).

Activity

1. Visit IGNOU’s website and read the information given in ‘Student Service Centre’. Study the kind of service it provides.

2. Visit IGNOU’s website. Go to the students’ zone and study the admission cycles, facilities for downloading assignments, TEE question papers of previous years and other facilities for students.

Check Your Progress 2

Answer the following questions:

1. Explain the importance of human resource management for teaching and learning.

2. Mention any two essential features of a study center.

8.6 SUMMARY

Management is a set of activities like planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling. These activities comprise the management of any organization, be it profit making or non profit making like educational institutions, including institutions imparting distance education. In this unit we have discussed various management functions and
how they can be applied to distance education institutions. The systems approach
flow chart gives you a broad idea as to how the management functions are applicable
to the University system and also to distance education institutions. In the later part
we have discussed the management of the teaching learning process of educational
institutions through deliberations on management of the academic and supporting
services. Towards the end we have discussed the need for managing SSS as supporting
distant learners to learn is required. We have also listed the approaches to student
support services.

8.7 UNIT END ACTIVITIES

1. Choose an educational institution and find the information about the institute’s
   mission statement and goals.
2. Interview teachers of a distance education institution to determine how it manages
   the development of educational programmes.
3. Visit a study center of IGNOU and find out whether it fulfills the requirements
   listed in the section 8.5.1.

8.8 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING


http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organizing
http://www.managementsudyguide.com/organizing_function.htm

IGNOU study material. ES-314: management of Distance education. Block 1:
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New Delhi. Section 8.4 has been adapted from ES-314: Management of Distance
education. Block 1: Educational Systems Management. Unit3: Managing Educational
Institutions, IGNOU (2009).

IGNOU study material. MES-013 Learning, Learner and Development, Block-1

IGNOU study material. MES-013 Learning, Learner and Development, Block-1

IGNOU study material. MES-013 Learning, Learner and Development, Block-1

IGNOU study material. MES-013 Learning, Learner and Development, Block-1

IGNOU study material. CTE-5 Teaching English Secondary School (School of
Humanities) Block 4; unit 4: Helping the learner to be autonomous. IGNOU, New
Delhi.

IGNOU study material. ES-335 Teacher and School, SOE. Block 2; units 6 & 7; Roles
of a teacher & teacher development. IGNOU, New Delhi.
8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your Progress 1

1. Management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected goals.
2. Planning is the first step towards reaching the goals. It is done basically to identify the goals of an institution and form a blueprint for attaining them.

Check your Progress 2

1. It is the levels of the efficiency and commitment of these people which makes for the progress of an institution in teaching and learning.
2. Qualified tutors/counsellors are available for guiding learners; the centers should have library and facilities for using self learning material in audio/video media.
UNIT 9 MANAGEMENT OF EVALUATION SYSTEM

Structure
9.1 Introduction
9.2 Objectives
9.3 Concept of Evaluation
  9.3.1 Evaluation in an Educational Program
  9.3.2 Formative and Summative Evaluation
9.4 Management of Evaluation in Distance Education
9.5 Continuous Assessment System in Distance Education
9.6 Summary
9.7 Unit End Activities
9.8 References and Suggested Reading
9.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit we have discussed the concept of management and the management of teaching and learning in distance education. In this unit we shall discuss the management of evaluation. Evaluation plays a very important role in assessing the outcomes of learning in any educational programme. It is necessary for determining the extent to which the educational goals are achieved. In the absence of evaluation there is no information basing on which the effectiveness of inputs and their processing may be judged (see systems approach unit, 8). The purpose of evaluation is thus basically to ascertain whether the learners have attained the desired levels of capability which the educational programme set out to achieve. This helps to improve the process of teaching and learning through appropriate remedial actions. Besides evaluation of learning, evaluation of educational programmes is also important in ODL institutions but in this unit we shall restrict the discussions to evaluation of learning. In this unit you will get an idea of the concept of evaluation and then through discussions on issues related to it, you will understand how management of evaluation in a distance learning setup is carried out.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- explain the concept of evaluation;
- describe the various approaches to evaluation;
- distinguish between formative and summative evaluation;
- describe the importance of continuous assessment in distance education;
- identify the functions of assignments in the context of distance education;
- describe various criteria for evaluating a distance education programme; and
- design a monitoring system for a distance learning system.
9.3 CONCEPT OF EVALUATION

The term evaluation can be used in two different situations:

- Evaluation in an educational programme (EIEP)
- Evaluation of an educational programme (EOEP)

EIEP explains the product of education, i.e. the quality of education achieved. It deals with the attainment of specific learning objectives and the wider educational goals. EOEP is concerned with the effectiveness of the educational programmes. It is a more comprehensive concept. The role of educational planners, administrators rather than teachers is crucial for EOEP. In fact EIEP is included in EOEP and can serve the purpose of EOEP.

As you know teaching and learning are goal-oriented activities. Goals are wider in scope and comprise the more specific objectives. Evaluation is a process of decision making that helps us to decide as to where we actually stand in relation to the objectives that we had set. Evaluation and measurement are sometimes considered synonymous but there are differences in them in scope and purpose. Evaluation has a wider scope and involves value judgment on the basis of the results of assessments or measurements. Thus decision making through evaluation is not done arbitrarily but through a systematic procedure of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data about the abilities and attainments of learner and the efficacy of the educational programme. The process of evaluation involves assessment, which is judging the extent of achievement and is carried out through the more specific process of measurement that involves the use of a measure like grade, marks, specific remark/comment, etc. to quantify achievement. Measurement is often carried out through tests and other tools. A test is a device to measure some given characteristics in an individual. A test can be of many types, for example - teacher made tests, standardized tests, project work, assignments, etc. A test consists of a uniform set of tasks to be performed by all members of a group at a scheduled time usually with prior notice. Other tools for collecting data could be interviews, observations, rating scales, etc. The data collected is analysed to reach conclusions necessary for evaluation. Hence evaluation is a more inclusive and comprehensive term than measurement. For example, Neha scored 35 marks out of 100 in English, is an act of measurement. Neha has failed to learn and that she needs remedial lessons is the decision taken following evaluation. Let us go through another example. For a programme that is meant to develop skills in repairing electronic goods, it is found that 98% of the students passing out remain unemployed (measurement). The practical component of the programme is assessed to be weak as there is little scope for hands-on training. It is decided that it needs strengthening (judgment i.e. evaluation).

Three components of evaluation, at whichever stage it occurs are, data collection, analysis and interpretation. Evaluation as a planned activity is also open to public review and this is also true for evaluation in distance education.

Thorpe (1993) defines evaluation as “the collection, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a programme of education and training, as part of a recognized process of judging its effectiveness, its efficiency and any other outcomes it may have”. This is also true for evaluation in distance education. Evaluation in distance education and otherwise also may be broad when it determines the extent to which the programme goals are achieved. It can also be focused on a narrow aspect of some issue.

9.3.1 Evaluation in an Educational Program (EIEP)

Traditionally evaluation was considered only as a tool to measure the attainment of learning outcomes after completing a course of study. In the modern concept education is considered as a tri-polar process, where evaluation is inter-related to the other two components, i.e. learning experiences and educational objectives.
The success of an educational programme depends on all these three components. Based on the results of evaluation the other two components can be suitably modified to achieve better outcomes. Hence, evaluation needs to be a continuous and comprehensive process. Even the evaluation process can be reviewed and modified if it does not lead to correct decisions. For example if the tools used for data collection are not reliable or valid, then the process of evaluation itself will have to be corrected.

In any educational programme, evaluation procedures are involved at all the three stages, with different functions at each stage. At the initial stage, the purpose of evaluation is to assess the learner’s pre-entry level behaviour, so that the learning experiences may be suitably organized for the learner. At the middle stage evaluation procedures could be used to ascertain the learner’s progress through the course and also the pace of learning. At the terminal stage, it would determine the attainment of set goals and to grade the learner’s overall achievement.

Practitioners should be involved in the process of evaluation and the results should be applied to improve practice. Evaluation carried out by professionals may have high standards but they being removed from ground realities, may not match the requirements of the practitioners in the field. Moreover feedback from such evaluation may be delayed thus delaying decisions. Thorpe (1993) stresses that when practitioners carry out evaluation, they can apply the findings directly and take instant corrective steps. This however requires that the goals of evaluation are clearly identified and stated explicitly. Proper procedures for collecting and recording findings are also needed as evaluation as a planned activity is open to public review. Evaluation process and its findings are therefore to be recorded and the results are to be documented for students and for future use of the university in taking decisions.

### 9.3.2 Formative and Summative Evaluation

Evaluation may be summative or formative. The former is carried out following the completion of an educational programme while the latter during the course of study.

Formative evaluation of learning is carried out at the developmental stage of a learning activity, while instruction is still being imparted. It aims to provide an ongoing diagnosis of deficiencies in learning and through direct and immediate feedback overcome the shortcomings. It is a continuous process and is an integral part of teaching. There are many ways to integrate it in teaching. In ODL, during academic counseling this can be done. But it is especially done through assignments. Formative assessment produce non-threatening results unlike summative evaluation.

Another type of evaluation is the summative evaluation. It assesses the impact of instruction or an educational programme on learners following the imparting of instructions. It assesses whether the learning outcomes match the instructional objectives and if not how much gap is there in between and the reasons for it. The term end examinations (TEE) are summative evaluation. The abilities and competencies following teaching-learning process are judged. The results are usually reported as awards in the form of scores, grades, remarks on report cards. Grade sheets and the like.
9.4 MANAGEMENT OF EVALUATION IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Let us now understand evaluation in the context of distance education and how evaluation can be managed. Evaluation of learning is an integral part of teaching. Also, educational programmes offered need to be evaluated. We shall first discuss evaluation of learners.

As discussed in the previous unit management would necessarily compromise certain functions like planning, organizing, etc. First of all the nature of evaluation has to be planned. The evaluation mechanism in terms of assignments, Term End Examination, project, dissertation, etc. needs to be planned for each programme. The dates for submission of project, assignment, entrance examination, term end examination, question paper setting, moderation, declaration of results, etc. need to be scheduled. Panels of paper setters and evaluators need to be finalized. The logistics of holding examination, assessment of answer scripts also need to be planned. The details pertaining to issuance of mark sheets and Certificates are also important. In universities functions related to evaluation are delegated to a separate centers/division for organizing all these activities. In IGNOU the Students Evaluation Division carries out all these tasks. The Schools are assigned the tasks of setting question papers and getting them moderated, preparing lists of evaluators and paper setters. These are the generalities of evaluation but we also need to analyze them for the specificities and manage them.

Freeman (1997) describes four aspects of assessment which affect their management. These characteristics are provided in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Assessment characteristics and Management of Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Some possible designs choices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Assessment format</td>
<td>For example</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assessed Tutor Marked Assignments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Computer administered tests</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Closed book examinations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Open book examinations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Portfolio based assessments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Negotiated assessments where the format is designed in mutual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>agreement by the tutors and learners</td>
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<tr>
<td>When the test may be taken</td>
<td>For example</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• On demand</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• At fixed times determined by the organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>How frequently the assessment may be taken</td>
<td>For example</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Once only</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limited number of times</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• As many times as learner wishes (for eg. driving test)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The size of chunk that has to be taken</td>
<td>For example</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learners have to do all the assessment on one occasion</td>
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<td>• Learners can take each part when they are ready</td>
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<td>• Learner can reappear / retake the exam only for the failed</td>
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</table>

[Source: Managing Open Systems, Freeman, R. (1997)]
Some possible designs choices
The assessment format, for example are: Assessed Tutor Marked Assignments, Computer administered tests, Closed book examinations, Open book examinations, Portfolio based assessments, Negotiated assessments where the format is designed in mutual agreement by the tutors and learners

When the test may be taken, For example, On demand, At fixed times determined by the organization

How frequently the assessment may be taken For example, Once only, Limited number of times, As many times as learner wishes (for eg. driving test)

The size of chunk that has to be taken For example, Learners have to do all the assessment on one occasion, Learners can take each part when they are ready, Learner can reappear / retake the exam only for the failed parts

Freeman (1997) enlists certain other criteria that need to be considered and planned for effective management of assessment systems. Some of these are:
- Providing clear assessment criteria to both learners and tutors particularly in assignments (tutor marked) and the examinations. Learners need them while answering questions and tutors need to assess learner responses.
- Marking guidelines to be provided to tutors in addition to the assessment criteria (if required).
- Time schedule to be prepared for assignment submission.

Morgan and O'Reily (1999) have expressed a commonly held notion of ODL practitioners being accustomed to writing and producing a lot of study material. Even in the case of online learning systems, the emphasis is on shaping the learning environments. In both cases, the importance of learners' assessment systems is largely overlooked. It is necessary that assessment tasks are closely aligned to the self-learning materials.

Six key qualities of open and distance assessments are drawn out by Morgan and O'Reily (1999). These six characteristics, applicable to ODL assessment systems are:

i) A clear rationale and consistent pedagogical approach: The purpose of evaluation should be clear and explicit from the very outset, i.e. what is to be assessed and why. The elements of openness or flexibility that are to be incorporated into the evaluation system like not having to clear all courses in one go, should be decided.

Assessment tasks should be such that learners are not expected to simply reproduce the textual material. Rather it should ensure that learners construct meaning and are then subjected to self-directed assessments.

ii) Explicit values, aims, criteria and standards: The criteria for evaluation must be clearly communicated to the learners. Most of the times, as in the traditional systems, learners have no clue about the assessment tasks and their rationale. The learners must know the values on which the assessment tasks are based and judgments made about their performance. Such knowledge will enable learners to approach learning tasks with a different orientation - they will understand learning as an integral part of learning instead of performing the tasks in a ritualistic manner, just for the sake of being graded.

iii) Authentic and holistic tasks: enable learners to involve themselves with 'real life' issues and problems in their own places - home or workplace. This is an open-ended approach to assessment, where judgments can be made about the attainment of higher order abilities and skills, i.e. analytical skills, application and problem solving. However, objective assessment of such activities does become difficult and reliability of such tasks is often questioned. A holistic
assessments is suggested by adopting integrated and meaningful assessment techniques, especially in the ODL context. For example, case studies, surveys, i.e., field-based work as project work can be undertaken by students.

iv) A facilitative degree of structure: Most of the learners are conditioned to a teacher-centric system. Competencies for information retrieval, framing goals, critical thinking, self-management, and self-evaluation have to be developed. It is desirable to work out a balance between a 'structured' and 'self-directed' learning format in the ODL system. An 'optimally helpful' design must be evolved. Learners will be enabled to negotiate learning and assessment tasks as they progress, in contrast to "pre-packaged course materials" which leave little scope for knowledge construction and meaning making by individual learners.

v) Sufficient and timely formative assessment: Formative assessment tasks must be interspersed in the instructional programme, enabling a source of dialogue for the learners. In text questions and unit end activities can be interwoven.

Managing computer-based online assessments

Many innovative techniques have evolved in traditional and open and distance learning. Still, assessment methodologies have remained the same and are still confined to written examinations. There are inherent constraints in innovations, like the heterogeneity of learner backgrounds, geographic dispersal which impinge on the logistics of organizing assessment in ODL, coupled with lack of resources and limited professional skills, in many cases. However, we need to be aware of the advantages of computer-based assessment and opportunities provided through online assessments.

According to Freeman (1997), computer-based assessments have the following advantages:

- No staff time required at the point of delivery.
- Learners can take the test as per their readiness.
- Provide a mechanism to ensure that no two learners take the same test (computer can vary the test).
- Computer programming can be done to remove the ineffective questions and monitor number of responses.
- Marks entered automatically, updated in their records and also sent to their tutors.
- Provision for immediate feedback to learners.
- Learners can take the test any number of times, as per the design of the test.

Computer-managed assessments are of three types:

- **Online assessment test**: Learners interact directly with the computer (possibly over a telephone line) and the test is marked by the computer.
- **Online submission tests**: The tests are submitted by learners on the computer, but tutors mark the work off-screen.
- **Tests without computer contact**: There is no immediate link of the learner with the computer. The learners perform the tasks on computer-readable forms for e.g., OMR sheets. These are then processed by the computer. This system is used by IGNOU in its entrance tests held for admission to its B.Ed. and MBA programmes. As compared to traditional systems, online assessments have the possibility of more sophisticated questions. For example, learners could be shown a "Simulation" or "video-clip" of a problem - traffic situation, environment degradation etc. Learners' answers to such tasks will be a measure of their ability to tackle different variables (Freeman, 1997).
Disadvantages of online assessment techniques

Online assessment does present a range of new and exciting opportunity, but we need to exercise caution in shifting to online assessment. Morgan and O’Reilly (1999) highlight some issues that may be considered while making strategic decisions in this context. These are:

- **Access**: Learners in remote areas and geographically difficult terrain may not have access to even a desktop computer, let alone an internet facility. Due thought must be given to learners in such conditions. This is because it goes contrary to the mandate of ODL practitioners, whose objective is to reach the hitherto deprived of the opportunity of education whether due to social, physical or geographical disadvantage.

- **Learning needs and styles**: The institution’s preparedness and also the learners’ competence, confidence and willingness are to be considered.

- **Technological failures**: To avoid incidences of technological failures leading to disruption of examinations, pilot runs and other precautions may be necessary.

Supporting learners in evaluation related matters

In view of the personal and social commitments of distant learners and above all their isolation, a student support services (SSS) are needed. We have spelt this out in the previous unit. Even in matters of evaluation, students are supported in various ways by ODL institutions. We shall discuss some of these.

**On demand examination**: Instead of holding evaluation at fixed timing at the end of a term, learners will have the flexibility to appear at it as and when they are ready for it. This will make the system of examination independent of a time frame and will help learners to take examinations as per their convenience. A question bank helps in instant generation of question paper. At National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) on demand examination is being conducted at the Head Quarters and at all the Regional Centres in some subjects. IGNOU too is getting ready for on demand examination.

**Online examination**: Some ODL institutions hold online examination so that learners can take exams from their place of convenience. We have discussed it in the previous subsection.

**Flexibility to clear courses**: A learner may clear one/more courses in one go. The courses successfully completed will not have to be repeated in the next TEE.

**Online display of grades/marks**: This is available against the enrolment number submitted by a learner.

**Online availability of previous years question papers**: This helps learners in getting an idea of the format of question papers, its pattern and other relevant aspects.

**Counseling for preparation for TEE**: This is provided by academic counselors at study centers. Guidance for preparing for TEE and taking examination is given by academic counselors.

**Facility to apply online for examination**: This is possible by filling up and submitting form online. Learners can also download Hall tickets from the institution’s website prior to the Term End Examination. These facilities are available at IGNOU.

Managers of ODL institutions will have to put in efforts to see that all these mechanisms are in place provided the institution has the necessary resources.

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Check Your Progress 1

Answer the following questions:

1. Define Evaluation
2. Describe two advantages of the practitioner approach to evaluation.
9.5 CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT SYSTEM IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

We have discussed in this unit the concept of formative evaluation, which basically involves process of continuous assessment. In this section we shall discuss it in details. Distance learners experience isolation since they are self-instructional learners. According to Rowntree (1989), "It is important to remember that self-instructional learners are working on their own. One may not know until it is too late how one’s learning is being affected by assessment demands. Hence, assessment needs to be thought out more carefully, and spelled out more explicitly than is usually the case with face-to-face teaching". The usefulness of continuous assessment over one point term end examination has been highlighted in guidelines for continuous Internal Evaluation (UGC, 1982) and in the Monograph on Internal Assessment for Universities (AIU, 1984): "Continuous Assessment has many advantages both for the teacher as well as for the learners. It serves to update the teachers’ judgments about their students and provides an idea of the progress of their achievement. It enables students to understand their strengths and weaknesses; thereby contributing to effective learning. Moreover, it 'encourages students to apply themselves assiduously to their studies throughout the year instead of concentrating their efforts towards the end of the term or session'. This will result in better long-term retention of knowledge as proved through several research studies (Deshmukh, 2006).

Continuous assessment can be through various modes like self-assessment, which is the most commonly used tool for formative evaluation of the distance learner. It is done with the help of in-text questions, in the self-learning print material. It does not carry any weight towards the final assessment but helps the learners to assess their progress through the content. Assignments-Tutor marked (TMAs) and Computer marked (CMAs) also help in continuous assessment. TMAs are assessed by the academic counselors. The CMA consists of multiple choice questions that can be delivered through various electronic modes. Workbooks may be used for assessment of some practical components of a programme as is used for eg. in certain Health Science, Nutrition and Computer Programmes of IGNOU.

Continuous assessment assumes greater significance in an open-distance learning system because of the very fact that distance learners are isolated from fellow students and instructors, deprives them of environmental stimuli, which can contribute to and guide their learning (Deshmukh, 1997; Howard, 1985; Sageder, 1988). Continuous assessment components serve as the source of feedback to the distance learners.

Tools for Continuous Assessment: Assignments

Assignments serve an important pedagogic function in open and distance learning. They break the learners’ feeling of isolation, reinforce learning. Submission of written assignments by the distance learners to their tutors/counselors reinforce learning as they initiate the two-way didactic communication between tutor and learners. They initiate dialogue/pedagogical interactions. According to Thorpe (1987) assignment is the single most important mechanism for prompting and for pacing the individual’s study and offers the only vehicle available to all students for feedback and dialogue with a tutor about their individual progress.

Just providing feedback to distance learners is not enough. The quality of feedback given has a crucial impact on their experiences as distance learners (Deshmukh, 2003). Some important dimensions of feedback are: (a) content of feedback, (b) the degree to which it is personalized, (c) the timing or immediacy of feedback and, (d) its regularity’ (Deshmukh, 2006). Simply assigning mark or letter grade to the answer does not constitute good feedback for the distance learners (Store & Armstrong, 1981). Rowntree (1989) aptly remarks, 'Feedback from assessment only begins to be useful
when it includes verbal comments’ Koul (1987) has argued that feedback in the form of written comments must not hamper the motivation of the distance learner the comments should be well thought out, deliberate palatable, precise and pedagogically purposeful (Deshmukh, 2006). Therefore, managers need to train the evaluators in providing feedback. Research findings indicate that submission of assignments is appreciated by students only when they are received back, properly commented on and in time, which should in no case exceed three weeks (Thorpe, 1987; Rathore, 1993; Singh, 1995). This still poses a major challenge to the distance educators.

You may read the case of IGNOU to understand the evaluation system it has adopted.

**Student Assessment at IGNOU**

At Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) Student Evaluation Division (SED) is responsible for managing evaluation and award of Certificates/Degrees/ Diplomas. Evaluation of learning is carried out by SED in coordination with the various Schools of Studies, Institutes, Centers and other units of the University that are engaged in imparting instructions. Apart from assignments and performance in Term End Examinations (TEE), projects, practical and other assessable activities, that are integral to certain programmes, are also evaluated.

**Entrance Exam**

SED also holds entrance exams for admission to programmes like MBA and B.Ed. Admission in these programmes is on the basis of performance in the Entrance Test conducted at examination centres spread all over the country, twice a year in February and August. For appearing in the entrance test a candidate has to fill up Application Form for Entrance Test which is provided in/with the Student Handbook and Prospectus. The form is to be submitted at the University Headquarter within the stipulated dates.

**Assessment of assignments**

Assessment of assignments and feedback on the assignment responses make the system of evaluation continuous. Assignment has 25%—30% weight while TEE has 70%—75% weight. SED receives grades/marks awarded for the Tutor Marked Assignments for all the programmes from the Study Centres and Computer Marked Assignments directly from the students and processes them.

**Term End Examination**

The University conducts TEE twice a year in the months of June and December every year. Students are allowed to appear in TEE subject to the condition that registration for the courses in which they wish to appear is valid, maximum time allowed to complete the programme is not over, the minimum stipulated time period for the programme has been completed and the required number of assignment(s), if any, have been submitted by the due date.

For TEE, SED prepares an eligibility chart of batches of students taking the examination. It dispatches exam forms to Study Centres and Regional Centres and receives the filled in forms. It also gets the question papers, set by the Schools of Studies/ institutes, etc. printed and dispatches question paper and other examination related material to all the centres where TEE is to be held.

TEE fee of Rs.50/- per course is required to be paid through Bank Draft in favour of IGNOU payable at Delhi by students taking the exam. The examination forms are available at all the Study Centres and Regional Centres. Students can also submit online examination form through IGNOU’s website -www.ignou.ac.in. IGNOU issues Examination Hall Ticket to the student’s about two weeks before the commencement of TEE. However, it can also be downloaded from the University’s website. In case any student does not receive the Hall Ticket s/he can download it from IGNOU’s website.
Normally a study centre is also an examination centre. However, a student is required to fill the exam centre code in the examination form. In case any student wishes to take examination at a particular centre, the code of the chosen centre has to be filled up as examination centre code. If, examination centre chosen by a student has not been not activated for a particular programme, the university will allot another examination centre under the same Region.

SED receives the answer scripts from examination centers following TEE and organizes assessment of these by evaluators empanelled by the University. The result is then compiled and grade cards printed for each student. SED also organises Convocation every year to confer degrees/diplomas to the successful candidates.

At IGNOU scoring is done by awarding marks in some programmes and by awarding grades in some programmes. For all the programmes of the School of Education, the practice is to award grades on a five point scale (A-E). The interpretation of grades is done in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Point grade range</th>
<th>Percentage equivalent</th>
<th>Qualitative value</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.50 and above</td>
<td>80% and above</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.50-4.49</td>
<td>60% to 79.9%</td>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.50-3.49</td>
<td>50% to 59.9%</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.50-2.49</td>
<td>40% to 49.9%</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0.0-1.49</td>
<td>Below 40%</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.6 SUMMARY

In this unit you were introduced to the basic concept of evaluation in general and the various assessment and evaluation procedures specific to distance education system in particular. The various approaches to management of evaluation systems were discussed, which could be adopted by distance education system depending on the objective. A few criteria for assessment of ODL systems were also discussed. The difference between formative and summative evaluation was explained. These evaluation mechanisms should be inbuilt into the distance education system, for improvement and modifications to achieve the desired goals. The importance of feedback, especially through continuous assessment, for distance learners was discussed. Assignments as a component of distance education serve the dual purpose of assessment and teaching distance learners. The pedagogic significance of assignments and their feedback function was explained. Tutor comments in assignments are the means of communication in distance education and the role of tutor comments and their significance for distance educators have been highlighted.

### 9.7 UNIT END ACTIVITIES

- Discuss some methods that can be employed for assessment of learners in an ODL system. List the constraints that you are likely to encounter in the process and give the measures you will adopt to overcome them.
- Prepare guidelines for academic counselors which they must follow in the evaluation of assignments done by distance learners.

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9.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your Progress 1

1. Evaluation is the collection, analysis and interpretation of information about any/all aspects of an educational programme or about learning outcomes for judging its effectiveness and efficiency.

2. Practitioners should be involved in the process of evaluation as they can apply the results to improve practice.

Check your Progress 2

1. Feedback is important for distance learners because:

   (i). It provides motivation/reinforcement
   (ii). It guides them through their process of learning
   (iii). It helps them to pace their learning during the course.

2. Breaks learners’ isolation and initiate dialogue;

3. Summative evaluation occurs at the end of a programme to assess whether the desired goals of learning/programme were achieved or not. For example the Term-end Examinations conducted at the end after completion of the programme. Formative evaluation is carried out during the course of study.
UNIT 10  CASE STUDIES

Structure

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10.2 Objectives
10.3 Athabasca University, Canada
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10.9 References and Suggested Reading
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10.1 INTRODUCTION

In this Unit we shall present case studies of some ODL Universities of India and abroad. Case studies link theory with practice. Moreover, case studies help us to gain intensive information on the issues dealt with earlier. Therefore the studies included in this Unit aim to acquaint you with a few ODL institutions and their functioning. Although a case study of an ODL system is expected to include huge volume of information collected through an in-depth and critical study of all the constituent components and processes, the scope of this Unit and the course restricts us from reporting such extensive studies. We have therefore limited the studies to reporting the status quo of some of the major aspects of the ODL institutions selected. For this reason, we may
say that although the title of this unit claims the inclusion of case studies, we are actually presenting in this Unit information collected and compiled on the selected Universities. The content included is of descriptive nature and data has been collected through analysis of relevant web-based documents. The first ODL University taken up in this Unit is the Athabasca University of Canada. Thereafter you will find information on an Asian Open University, Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). Subsequently case study of two Indian Open Universities has been provided— the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) and the Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU).

Each case has been presented along certain dimensions namely—profile of the Open University; the objectives; the organizational structure, discussed in terms of faculties, departments and centers; the academic programmes offered and the major services provided by the University. This will help you in getting a comparative view on these dimensions of the Universities discussed.

### 10.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- analyze the organizational structure and the functions of an Open University;
- compare the features and functions among the Open Universities; and
- examine the commonalities and differences among the OUs.

### 10.3 ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY, CANADA

In this section we shall provide information on Athabasca University

#### 10.3.1 Profile

The Athabasca University was established in 1970 in Athabasca, Alberta, Canada. It specializes in the delivery of distance education courses and programs. It was established by Order in Council of the Government of Alberta on June 25, 1970. Originally it was conceived as a traditional campus-based institution but later in 1972, it became an open, distance university. It is a publicly funded University and reports to the government through the Minister of Advanced Education. The headquarters of the University is in Athabasca and the other campuses are located throughout Alberta. It has Satellite centers located in Calgary and Edmonton. The University is governed by a Governing Council, and an Academic Council. The Governing Council is authorized to grant the degrees. The University is accredited with the United States by the Commission on Higher Education.

Athabasca University has students enrolled from around the world. It has programs which use modern communication technology for continuing education. The University also has on-line study programs and has a special dedicated website for these programmes. It has a strong component of student services comprising a variety of facilities and support mechanisms to support the students of this university.

#### 10.3.2 Objectives of the University

The University was set up with the objectives of the removal of barriers that restrict access to and success in university-level study and to augment equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide. The University’s approach to post secondary is based on four key principles: excellence, openness, flexibility and innovation.

- **Excellence**: The University is dedicated to achieving the highest standards in teaching, research, scholarship and student service.
- **Openness:** The University is committed to the mission of guaranteeing access to post-secondary learning to all who have the ability and desire.

- **Flexibility:** The University’s flexible learning model adapts to learner needs, putting them in the driver’s seat. The learner can enroll in most programs and register for most courses at any time of the year and work at their own pace, studying at home, at work or other places convenient to them.

- **Innovation:** The University continues to adopt and develop new, learner-centered learning models and technology-based alternatives to traditional, classroom-based instructional channels and contexts. The University applies technology to make learning accessible.

What do the objectives convey? We find that equity and flexibility have been aimed at while emphasizing the need for quality in the education provided.

### 10.3.3 Faculties and Centres of Athabasca University

This university offers several graduate and undergraduate programmes through its several faculties and centers. There are five academic faculties, which are as follows:

- **Faculty of Business:** It offers Undergraduate Courses and Programs that range from single courses. In 2009, this center launched Canada’s first online Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) program that has been designed to develop highly qualified management talent.

- **Faculty of Health Disciplines:** It has a Centre for Nursing and Health Studies and a Graduate Centre for Applied Psychology, which offers graduate education in counseling and applied psychology.

- **Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences:** It has several centers such as Centre for Language & Literature, Centre for Psychology, Centre for Integrated Studies, Centre for Global & Social Analysis, Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge & Research, etc.

- **Faculty of Science and Technology:** School of Computing & Information Systems.

- **Faculty of Graduate Studies:** It has several graduate programmes in Arts, Business, Counselling, distance Education, Health and Information systems.

In addition to these there are also certain other Centers, which are the following:

- Centre for Distance Education.
- Centre for Learning Accreditation.
- Centre for Learning Design and Development. (formerly Educational Media Development)
- Research Centre.

#### Activity

Prepare a list of centers of Athabasca University and those of IGNOU (available at IGNOU’s website-www.ignou.ac.in). Compare the lists for the nature of activities carried out. You may visit the websites of these universities for this activity.

### 10.3.4 Programmes of Athabasca University

This university offers more than 750 courses in a wide range of subjects. These courses have been designed for studying online, at a distance, or in a classroom. Thus the learner may continue his/her education without sacrificing his/her personal, family, career, or other commitments. The course delivery system allows for self paced learning but there is provision of strong support system for learners. Programmes offered by Athabasca University are of two types: Undergraduate Programmes and Post Graduate programs. Undergraduate Programmes include the following programmes:
Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Commerce
Bachelor of General Studies
Bachelor of Health Administration
Bachelor of Human Administration and Labour Relations
Bachelor of Management
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Professional Arts
Bachelor of Science
Certificate of Completion
University Certificate
University Diploma

Post Graduate Programmes includes several programmes in the following areas:
Arts - with programmes like Master of Arts - Integrated Studies, Post-Baccalaureate Diploma: Heritage Resource Management, etc.
Business - with programmes like Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), etc.
Counseling - with programmes like Master of Counselling, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate: Counseling, etc.
Distance Education - with programmes like Doctor of Education in Distance Education Master of Distance Education, etc.
Health - with programmes like Master of Health Studies, Master of Nursing, etc.
Information Systems - with the programme Master of Science, Information Systems.

Research

From the list of graduate and undergraduate level programmes, it is clear that the university is engaged in teaching a wide range of disciplines. But this university is not only committed to teaching but is also engaged in research related activities. It strives for excellence in research and scholarship. Through the discovery, dissemination and transfer of new knowledge and the engagement of students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, the university integrates research with teaching, thereby enriching the curriculum and enabling creative teaching and promoting innovation and new knowledge generation.

10.3.5 Services of Athabasca University

Services of this university are comprehensive and comprise the following:
Access for Students with Disabilities (ASD)
Advising Services
Counseling Services
Centre for Learning Design and Development (Formerly Educational Media Development)
Financial Services
Learning Services - Collaborations
Learning Services - Tutorial
Library Services
Learner Support Services of Athabasca University

Athabasca University has a robust system of learner support services. It helps learners to budget time, stay motivated, and complete academic requirements. Learner Support Services help learners through different stages - from the initial inquiry through to the successful completion of the program in which they have enrolled. It offers various services, viz. Counseling services, advising services, access to students with disabilities, etc.

The Counseling services aim to help learners to clarify educational and career goals, choose an educational plan following self-assessment, develop study and time management skills, identify and overcome barriers to learning, balance studies, family and career related demands.

Advising Services help in developing programme plans, select suitable courses, in matters related to credit transfer, in understanding policies and procedures of the university, help in student finance plans.

Access to Student with Disabilities (ASD) supports students with either a temporary or permanent disability or medical condition through various means such as by providing academic accommodations, arranging learning support services, gaining access to and training for assistive technology, obtaining alternative format for course materials, etc.

Source: <http://www2.athabascau.ca/index.php>

10.4 OPEN UNIVERSITY SRI LANKA (OUSL), SRI LANKA

Now let us get an idea of the structure and functions of the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL).

10.4.1 Profile

OUSL is the National Open University of Sri Lanka. Its academic programs enable students to combine theoretical study with meaningful real-world learning experiences. The OUSL Main Campus is located in Colombo in Nawala. The Chancellor is the Head of this University. The Vice Chancellor is the head of administration of the University.

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) offers programmes of study leading to certificate, diploma, degree, postgraduate diploma and postgraduate degree through the distance mode. The University was set up by the Government of Sri Lanka under the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978, for the purpose of providing higher educational opportunities to working adults - providing them the road to success, surpassing age, vocation, gender, race, ethnicity and religion. Thus the University aimed to bring about professional development and life long learning opportunities for those in-service.

In line with the concept of “Openness”, the University caters to a heterogeneous population of people scattered over the Sri Lankan island and helps them to pursue higher education, at their own time and pace. The university policy on admission enables prospective learners to register at the lowest ‘Level’ with even mere basic
literacy and ascend to the postgraduate level. This university is thus a “University without walls” and promotes equitable and inclusive social growth.

OUSL has been functioning through a dynamic network of regional and study centers, and knowledge is imparted through multiple media (see unit 7). Furthermore, learners need not disrupt their work, family, social and other commitments to pursue their studies, as they can study from the specially designed self-instructional materials. These materials have an embedded teacher and thus function as “Tutor in Print”.

10.4.2 Objectives of the University

The Open University of Sri Lanka aims to provide higher educational opportunities to working adults, in other words, providing them the road to success, surpassing age, vocation, gender, race, ethnicity and religion. The vision of OUSL is to be the premier ODL institution in South Asia through excellence, efficiency and equity in learning, research, scholarship.

10.4.3 Faculties, Departments and Centers of OUSL

OUSL has the following Faculties:

**Education:** This faculty was established in 2003. It aims to be a leader in the advancement of knowledge and professional practice in education as a fundamental human endeavor through open and distance learning in Sri Lanka and in the region. This faculty has three Departments: Department of Secondary & Tertiary Education, Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education and Department of Special Needs Education. It offers a number of programmes pitched at various levels viz. Certificate, Diploma, Degree or a Post Graduate Diploma /Degree.

**Engineering Technology:** This faculty has several departments like Civil Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Textile and Apparel Technology, Agricultural and Plantation Engineering, and Mathematics & Philosophy of Engineering.

**Humanities & Social Science:** This faculty has several departments like that for Management Studies, Social Studies, Legal Studies and Language Studies.

**Natural Sciences:** This faculty was established in 1987. Today it has six Departments - Botany, Chemistry, Health Sciences, Math & Computer Science, Physics and Zoology.

**Divisions**

OUSL has the following divisions:

**Library Services:** This division aims to be the leading provider of information and library resources for empowerment of open and distance learners and establishing a knowledge culture. In order to fulfill this vision, its mission is to ensure 24 hour access to information required by the Distance Learners and Educators.

**Regional Educational Services:** The Regional Educational Services of the OUSL provide services required by the Faculties of the University and mainly functions to implement their academic programmes. There are four Regional Centres, seventeen Study Centres and six Teaching Centres spread throughout the country. Laboratory facilities are available in the Regional Centres and most of Study Centres are equipped with audio and video facilities and mini libraries. Elementary Computer Laboratories are established in Regional Centres as well as some of the Study Centers.

**Educational Technology:** Due to the importance of audio-visual materials for effective teaching, especially in distance education, the original audio-visual unit of the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) was expanded to a full-fledged Educational Technology Division (ET) with the technical assistance from Japan in 1993. Since then the ET division has been engaged in the production of instructional audio-visual materials.
Staff Development Centre: This is meant for the professional development of the university staff.

Information Technology: This division is responsible for maintenance of the integrity and security of the university network, student database, maintenance of the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure for and provision of web pages, email, training of the staff on usage of IT, maintenance, upkeep and upgrading of all IT equipment in OUSL, etc.

Career Guidance Unit: This division aims to help learners passing out to be socially responsive, efficient members of the future work-force with necessary knowledge, skills and motivation to compete in the job market. Its mission is to provide Career Guidance so as to bridge the skill gap and to bring about well rounded development of learners so that they can meet the present day workforce requirements.

**10.4.4 Programmes of OUSL**

OUSL offers several academic programmes. These programmes are all need based and are at various levels from Certificate to Post Graduate level. They are as follows:

- Certificate in Pre-school Education Programme
- Advanced Certificate in Pre-school Education Programme
- Diploma in Early Childhood & Primary Education Programme
- Bachelor of Education (Natural Sciences)
- Post Graduate Diploma in Education
- Master of Education
- Master of Arts in Teacher Education
- Master of Arts in Teacher Education (International)
- Master of Philosophy in Education
- Doctor of Philosophy in Education
- Post Graduate Diploma in Distance Education
- Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist
- Inclusive Education (Course offered as a component of the PGDE programme)
- Post Graduate Diploma in Special Needs Education
- The Foundation Programme of Study for Technology
- Diploma in Technology (Engineering) and Bachelor of Technology (Engineering)
- Programmes of study
- BIS degree Programme on Industrial studies
- Diploma Programme in Industrial studies
- Postgraduate Diploma in Technology
- Master of Technology
- Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management (ESBM)
- Bachelor of Management Studies (BMS)
- Commonwealth Executive Master of Business/Public Administration Programmes (CEMBA/CEMPA)
- Certificate Programme in Social Sciences
- Advanced Certificate Programme in Social Sciences
Management of Student Support Services

Diploma Programme in Social Sciences
Bachelors Degree in Social Sciences
Master of Arts Degree in Development Studies and Public Policy
Commonwealth Diploma in Youth in Development Work
Certificate in Tourism and Hotel Operations
Advanced Certificate in Tourism Operations
Bachelor of Laws (LLB)

English Studies
BA in English Language & English Language Teaching
Diploma in English
Advanced Certificate in English

Language Courses

English
Certificate in Professional English
Certificate in Basic English
Sinhala for MA in Teacher Education
Sinhala Language Course
Tamil for MA in Teacher Education - Tamil Language Course
Beginner’s Course in Tamil
Korean Language Course

English for Academic Purposes
English for Legal Studies
English for Management
English for Science and B.Ed Courses
English for Technology
English for Social Sciences
English for the B.A. in Social Sciences
English for Nursing

The list of programmes makes it clear that OUSL is offering academic programmes in different areas, many of which will facilitate professional development of the takers.

10.4.5 Services of OUSL

OUSL offers a variety of services to its learners. Some of these are as follows:

- Computer Reservation
- LMS: OU-Moodle
- LMS: Virtual Class
- Examination Results

It is apparent that with the help of IT, learners can access many of the services and resources of the university. There is also provision for online learning and virtual classrooms and for efficient learning management services through Moodle.

Source: [http://www.ou.ac.lk/](http://www.ou.ac.lk/)
OUSL provides student support through the Regional Educational Services with several Study Centres and Teaching Centres spread throughout the country. It also supports learners with its Library services and other relevant services.

Check Your Progress 1
Answer the following questions:
1. What are the striking characteristics of the courses/programmes offered by Athabasca University and OUSL?
2. What are the common features of OUSL and Athabasca University as far as their aims are concerned?

10.5 DR. BHIM RAO AMBEDKAR OPEN UNIVERSITY (BRAOU)

In this section we shall focus upon a State Open University of India, Dr.Bhim Rao Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU).

10.5.1 Profile

BRAOU, formerly known as Andhra Pradesh Open University, is located in the city of Hyderabad. With a wide network of 206 study centers spread throughout the state of Andhra Pradesh, the University has for its motto “Education at Your Doorstep”. The University, the first of its kind in India was brought into being through an act of Andhra Pradesh State Legislature in August, 1982. The establishment of this University, the first of its kind in India, heralded an era of affirmative action on the part of the Government for providing opportunities of higher education to all sections of society and catering to the changing individual and social needs. The university attempts to equalize access to Higher Education.

BRAOU follows a multi-media teaching-learning approach which broadly comprises self-learning print material, supported by audio, video lessons and regular broadcast of lessons through All India Radio. From November, 1999 the University started Telecast of Video lessons through Doordarshan Regional Channel. On Sundays the University has Interactive Teleconferencing on the Regional Channel of Doordarshan. In 1983, the University started functioning with a learner enrolment of only 6,321 and 22 Study Centres. Since then there has been a steady growth in intake and an increase in the number of Study Centres. In 2001 the number of Study Centres increased to 137. Now the total number of study centers has increased to about 200. The enrolment has also been growing at a steady rate.

In keeping with the principles of an open university, BRAOU is flexible in terms of admission, choice of programs, duration, teaching methods, evaluation procedures, etc. Thus it offers an alternative channel to those who missed the opportunities for higher education. The University caters specially to women, working people and those who want to improve their academic qualifications and professional skills. The University lays special focus on socially disadvantaged and geographically isolated people who never had access to higher education earlier.

The University during the last two decades, has brought legitimacy to the Open Learning system by maintaining:
- Quality of the learning materials
- Wide network of delivery systems
- Validity of testing and evaluation processes and
• Equivalence of content and form of its programs.

The University has carved a niche for itself in the field of open learning by
• Providing access to a large number of heterogeneous learners cutting across the differences in age, gender, location and choice of courses
• Innovatively designing the undergraduate curriculum as Foundation Courses, Core courses and Application-oriented courses
• Creating a wide network of learner support systems
• Reaching out to the unreached through multiple media including broadcast and telecast modes
• Enhancing the interactivity of instruction through live phone-in and teleconferencing
• Offering courses in three mediums of instruction - English, Telugu and Urdu
• Giving hands on training in laboratory practice for Science and Technology Courses
• Widening access to Research, Post graduate, Post graduate Diploma, Undergraduate, Certificate and professional programs through the distance mode.

The University campus has in addition to the Administrative, Student Support Services, Academic and AVPRC (Audio Visual Production and Research Center) buildings, an extensive plaza, a Conference Hall, an Auditorium, etc. The KU-Band earth station is also located in the University campus. The campus has scope for application of new technologies in distance education and for inter-linking of its local areas through Local Area Network (LAN) and Campus and Study Centres through Wide Area Network (WAN). The State Bank of Hyderabad has a branch of the campus.

10.5.2 Objectives of the University

The following are the main objectives of the University:
• To provide educational opportunities to those students who could not take advantage of conventional institutions of higher learning.
• To provide equality of educational opportunities for higher education through distance mode for a large segment of the population, including those in employment, women (including housewives) and adults who wish to upgrade their education or acquire knowledge and studies in various fields.
• To provide flexibility with regard to eligibility for enrolment, age of entry, choice of Programs, methods of learning, conduct of examinations and operation of the programs.
• To provide programs complementary to those of the existing Universities in the State in the field of higher learning so as to maintain the highest standards at par with the best Universities in the country.
• To promote integration within the State through its policies and programs.
• To offer degree Programs and non-degree certificate Programs for the benefit of the working population in various fields and for the benefit of those who wish to enrich their lives by studying subjects of cultural and aesthetic values.
• To make provision for research and for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge.
• To serve as a source of continuing education, consultancy and to provide equal access to knowledge and higher education.

10.5.3 Faculties, Departments and Centers of BRAOU

The University has an Organizational structure comprising Directorates, Branches and Special Cells. There are five Directorates -
In addition to the above, there are Special Cells, Branches and Units to support the functioning of the University. They are:

- Computer Centre
- Examination Branch
- Public Relations Branch
- Development Cell
- Women’s Development and Extension Centre
- SC/ST Cell
- Engineering Branch
- Administration
- Finance
- Library

There is also the Examination Branch, which is an important wing of the University administration. It is headed by the Controller of Examinations. The University conducts “Eligibility Test” for admission into Under Graduate Programs, in the beginning of the Academic Year, for the benefit of the non-formal students who have completed 18 years of age. This test is conducted all over the State in more than 200 examination centers and every year about 70,000 to 80,000 students appear for Eligibility Test. In addition to conducting examinations for Under Graduate Programmes, the University conducts examinations for 18 more programmes leading to Masters Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates.

BRAOU has several faculties. The faculties in turn comprise departments. The faculties are as follows:

**FACULTY OF ARTS**
Department of English & Foreign Languages
Department of Telugu Studies
Department of Hindi
Department of Urdu

**FACULTY OF COMMERCE**
Department of Business Management
Department of Commerce

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**
Department of Education

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE**
Department of Mathematics
Department of Physics
Department of Chemistry
Department of Geology
Department of Botany
Department of Zoology

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
Department of Economics
Department of Public Administration
Department of History
Department of Sociology
Department of Library and Information Sciences
Department of Public Relations
Department of Psychology

10.5.4 Programmes of BRAOU

BROU has several academic programmes at various levels. There are three main Under Graduate degree programmes - Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) and Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.). At the post graduate level there are about 20 programmes like Master of Arts (History), Master of Arts (Economics), Master of Arts (Political Science), Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), Master of Education (M.Ed.), Master’s Degree in Business Administration (MBA), MBA (Health Care Management) in collaboration with Apollo Hospitals Educational Research Foundation (AHERF) Hyderabad, etc.

BRAOU also offers several Diploma and Certificate level programmes such as Bachelor Degree in Library & Information Science (BLISc.), Bachelor Degree in Public Relations (BPR), P.G. Diploma in Marketing Management (PGDMM), P.G. Diploma in Business Finance (PGDBF), Certificate Program in Food & Nutrition (CPFN), Motor Insurance Fire Insurance, Medical Insurance, Life Insurance & Pension Planning, etc.

Academic Research Programs are also offered. They are - M.Phil. in Development Studies in subjects like Commerce, Geography, Sociology and many others; Ph.D. in Development Studies, Commerce, etc.; Ph.D. in Open Distance Education.

10.5.5 Services of BRAOU

The University has established a wide network of Regional Centers and Study Centers, spread over the length and breadth of the State, to provide support services to the learners. The support services provided at Regional Centers and Study Centers include the following:

- Administrative services,
- Information services,
- Tutorial and counseling services,
- Library services, etc.

There are 200 Study Centers, of which seven are exclusively for women. The University is offering services for Post Graduate programmes at 19 Study Centers. Two Study Centers are located in Central Prisons to cater to the educational needs of the prisoners. All the Regional Centers/Study Centers located in District Headquarters are provided with facilities for receiving satellite communications. In due course of time, this facility will be extended to more centers making them multi-media learning centers.

Source: http://www.braou.ac.in/
At the BRAOU, the Student Services Branch provides support services to its learners. The Director of this branch is assisted by the Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors and part time coordinators. Scheduling of regular contact and counseling sessions, facilitating the listening and viewing of audio and video lessons, arranging summer and winter schools, counseling the learners on general matters and providing library facilities are some of the major functions provided by the Branch (http://www.braou.ac.in/studentservices.htm).

10.6 YASHWANTRAO CHAVAN MAHARASHTRA OPEN UNIVERSITY (YCMOU)

As in the previous section, in this section also we shall focus on another State Open university of India- Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU).

10.6.1 Profile

The YCMOU was established in July 1989 by Act XX- (1989) of the Maharashtra State Legislature. The YCMOU has tried to evolve a simple, well-demarcated organisational structure that provides for operational efficiency, productivity, quality and accountability. The University Act describes a minimum organisational structure and leaves good scope for evolving innovative formal structure and non-formal practices, suited to an Open University system. It is appropriate to the functions of the University. It allows efficient and cost-effective decision making, quicker implementation and it is a good mechanism for accountability and change. It is operationally efficient and it is better for productivity and quality of the programme.

The Governor of the State of Maharashtra is the Chancellor of the University. The Vice-Chancellor functions as the Chief Executive Officer. The Vice-Chancellor is assisted by Directors of the school, the Registrar and the Finance officer. They together form the core team. The Board of Management (BOM) is the principal executive body of this university. The Academic Council (AC) is the principal academic body and the Planning Board (PB) is principal planning body. Finance Committee (FC) is the principal body to make the financial recommendations to the Board of Management, whereas School Councils are the bodies to make academic and other recommendations in respect of their schools.

The YCMOU has been recognized under section 12 (B) of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956. It is a member of various prestigious associations and bodies like the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU), Commonwealth of Learning (COL), etc. The main aim of the YCMOU is to become a Mass Varsity and to make available to the common man, educational programmes that are of practical use in his/her day-to-day life and those that provide better prospects for the future. The University offers several offline programmes and has also embarked on a number of innovative online initiatives. The YCMOU has its headquarters at Nashik and provides support to its learners through study centres, which are spread all over the State of Maharashtra. This university takes all precautions, at all stages right from ‘Curriculum Design’ to ‘Examination’, to ensure that the standards and quality of, education and examinations are preserved.

The university has an impressive infrastructure with a Main Administrative Building, Academic Building, Examination Building, Audio Video Center and Print Production Center, Ware House, Faculty Building and other buildings and arrangements. There is an Audio Visual Centre, which produces syllabus- based audio video programmes for the entire range of university programmes offered by the eight academic schools, ranging from certificate to post graduate and research programmes. The Center also
renders its technological support for the various university functions and events and EDUSAT VLC (Virtual Learning Centres) network. This Center is equipped with modern audio and video programme production equipment set up.

About 54 different academic programmes and 204 different courses (subjects) are offered through this university. Every year, about one lakh new students are registered for various programmes, while total number of registered students on the roll is about 4 lakh. About 8 regional centres and 1400 study centres provide various academic and student support services to these students, distributed all over the state of Maharashtra. About 4300 counselors impart academic instructions in 3 major languages, which include English, Hindi, and Marathi. Massive size of this education system is clearly indicated by these figures. To cope with the rapid increase in numbers, the university had begun to rely on computerization and automation to maintain the efficiency and quality of the programs and services to students.

10.6.2 Objectives of the University

YCMOU’s vision is to become a mass university to facilitate ‘education for all’. Its mission is to strive towards developing an Innovative, Flexible and Open system of education through the technical, vocational, professional and liberal educational programmes, application of modern communication technologies and adoption of the distance education methodology.

10.6.3 Schools and Divisions of YCMOU

A school is an academic unit of the University, primarily entrusted with the design and development of academic programmes. The instructional material that is developed by the School consists of both print as well as non-print material in the form of audios, videos, and radio/TV instruction, satellite-based transmissions, CDs, Virtual Classroom Modules, etc. There are eight academic schools presently in operation in the university, each being headed by a Director and consisting of academic faculty as well as administrative personnel. The eight Schools of YCMOU are: Agricultural Science, Commerce and Management, Computer Science, Continuing Education, Education, Health Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science and Technology. Each School has a specific focus and clientele. For instance, the School of Continuing Education targeted the urban unemployed, the School of Agricultural Sciences, has placed its emphasis on rural farmers. In contrast, the School of Education restricted its programs only to in-service teachers. The Schools of Computer Science (SCS) and of Science and Technology (SST) worked closely with industry partners and provided a range of diploma and certificate programs in Computing Applications as well as undergraduate and graduate programs in Electronics and Mechanical Engineering. YCMOU had its own production facilities for print and audio-visual materials (including television, radio, audio and video cassettes, and science kits) and has started using computer technologies in a number of its courses.

A ‘Division’ in this University is an operational unit consisting of sub-units called Centres and Sections. Each Division of the University works in close co-ordination with the different academic schools for providing high quality academic services to the students. YCMOU has the following divisions:

- Academic Services Division (ASD)
- Evaluation Division
- Student Service Division

There is also a

- Library and Resource Centre. Student services are handled by a specific division of the university. It monitors the services provided at the regional centers and
assists in student registration, the provision of student materials to the regional centers for distribution, and the development and implementation of test banks for ongoing course evaluations and final examinations.

10.6.4 Programmes of YCMOU

YCMOU offers programmes ranging from Ph.D. to that of Certificate level. Some of the programmes offered are as follows:

- Ph.D : Doctor of Philosophy
- M.Phil : Master of Philosophy
- M.A : Master of Arts
- M.Sc : Master of Science
- M.Com : Master of Commerce
- M.Arch : Master of Architecture
- M.B.A : Master of Business Administration
- M.Ed : Master of Education
- B.A : Bachelor of Arts
- B.B.A: Bachelor of Business Administration
- B.Sc : Bachelor of Science
- B.Com : Bachelor of Commerce
- B.Tech: Bachelor of Technology

The Research Programmes of the university are as follows:

- Ph.D (Communication)
- Ph.D (Educational Communication)
- Ph.D (Distance Education)
- Ph.D (Agricultural Communication)
- Ph.D (Agricultural Extension and Agricultural Development)
- M.Phil (Communication)
- M.Phil (Educational Communication)
- M.Phil (Distance Education)

Post-Graduate Programmes of the university include programmes like M.A (Communication), M.A (Educational Communication), M.A (Distance Education), M.Sc. (Bio-Informatics), M.B.A (Marketing), etc. Post-Graduate Diploma level and diploma level programmes are also offered. There are many programmes at these levels like Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Pedagogy, Diploma in Gandhian Thoughts (A residential Programme at Wardha), Diploma in Hospital and Health Care Management, and the like. Degree level (Graduation) Programmes offered are many in number such as B.A (General), B.A (Mass Communication and Journalism), B.B.A (Banking and Insurance), B.Ed., etc.

10.6.5 Services of YCMOU

The University has at present established 2646 Study Centers operated through 8 Regional centers for 164 programmes in whole Maharashtra through Marathi and English Medium. The study centers situated at various places of the state are normally Colleges or Technical Education Centres offering education through conventional mode. The infrastructure of these institutions is used by distance learners during study.
Satellite-based Education

A technological leap was taken with the launching of EduSat-based education, supported by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The university has established several Virtual Learning Centres (VLC) in the State, each having full-fledged two-way audio and video communication facilities. The students registered for specific programmes at the different VLCs attend lectures there as per a pre-determined schedule. The experts deliver their lectures from the main hub at the University Headquarters or from the specially created sub-studio at Pune. These live lecture sessions also provide scope for interaction with students located at various distant locations.

Video on Demand

A rather novel experiment was undertaken by the university when it achieved a conversion of the satellite-based lectures into a streaming video format on the web. YCMOU had recently launched this facility under its MPSC-UPSC Competitive Examination Guidance Programme. Initially 30 lectures under this programme each having a duration of two hours were made available on the 'net for the students. Registered students could view these lectures from any place where broadband connection was available. The Study Centers also arranged for group viewing of these lectures. Although this was a pilot run, in future, lectures/video programmes/audio programmes of different disciplines may also be made available on the 'net in the same manner.

Mobile Learning Centre

This innovative project of the university especially designed to carry education to the remote rural and tribal areas involves the construction of specially designed Mobile learning vans. The mobile van is a road transport vehicle equipped with computing and communications infrastructure. It has a seating capacity of 12 learners and has 6 computers installed i.e. 2 students per computer. Using multimedia projection system, a larger group of about 50 students can be given exposure to educational inputs, using the Mobile Van facilities. The on-board generator provides ensured power supply.

The mobile van also has the capability to provide education through the virtual mode. The virtual mode of education requires a Hub (transmitting station) and a set of mobile vans (receiving stations). The Hub is located at the University HQ from where educational content can be delivered. The Mobile vans are provided with a mechanism to receive the educational content and view it on the computer screen of the computers fitted in the mobile van.

The Student Services Division is one of the main divisions of the YCMOU. The main functions of the division are - disseminate Information; register students; select counsellors and help organize contact sessions for academic counseling; Supervise and monitor study centres, which are the delivery points of the programmes offered; counsel the students for their problems; Distribute instructional material and the like.

**Check Your Progress 2**

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the common feature of BRAOU and YCMOU as far as their vision is concerned?

2. Do you think BRAOU and YCMOU have become university for the masses? Justify.
10.7 SUMMARY

In this unit we have presented information as cases on four open universities. The first two universities are from abroad. They are the Athabasca University of Canada and the Open University of Sri Lanka of Asia. Thereafter we have presented information on two state open universities of India. Along with information on IGNOU and NIOS discussed in the third unit, the information given in this unit will help you in getting an overview of the structure and function of open university/institution systems.

All the universities discussed in this unit have a similar vision, i.e. to reach out to the masses and especially to those unreached, even though there may be some differences in the mission. The programmes offered also have similarities in that the courses /programmes are socially relevant and needed by the target groups for their occupational/professional development. The services offered indicate that all the open universities strongly feel that students need to be supported in their learning and accordingly provide student support services.

10.8 UNIT END ACTIVITIES

- Read about the Open universities of India and the world, apart from those discussed in this course. Discuss the commonalities and differences in the vision and mission of these universities.
- Compare the programmes offered by any State Open University of India with that offered by IGNOU. Determine the similarities and dissimilarities if any.

10.9 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING

'http://www2.athabascau.ca/index.php'
'http://www.ou.ac.lk/
'http://www.braou.ac.in/
'http://www.braou.ac.in/acaprg.htm
'http://www.braou.ac.in/faculty.html
'http://www.ycmou.com/lms/
'http://www.ou.ac.lk/

Websites retrieved on 27/8/10

10.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your Progress 1
1. They are relevant, need based and are meant for serving a wide section of the population.
2. They intend to democratize education, while maintaining quality

Check your progress 2
1. Reaching the unreached.
2. Yes. Rapidly growing student enrolment and number of study centers testify it.
Notes