
UNIT 4 ROLE OF DISTANCE TEACHERS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

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4.1 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

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

4.1 INTRODUCTION

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

—Ravi Ayyagari and Rampelli Satyanarayana, 2014

In this unit we are going to discuss the role of a teacher in the open and distance education system of today. Open and distance learning (here after; ODL) is a fertile land for innovation, experimentation and creativity, where the role of the teacher is central to the creation of knowledge in a knowledge society. Here, we shall make an attempt to explain what a teacher does in ODL system and how the teachers teach when there is no face-to-face teaching.

While studying this unit, you will recall that Distance Education is a paradigm shift from the conventional teaching-learning system. The conventional face-to-face education system is teacher centered whereas the open and distance education system is learner centered. In face-to-face system of education, the teacher interacts with and instructs the students directly whereas in the open and distance education system, the teacher facilitates self-directed learning from a distance. The teacher in distance education undertakes various multi-faceted activities. In this unit, the discussed functions of the teacher are illustrative in nature but not exhaustive. The learners are expected to add to this list of functions based on their own reflective practices and lateral thinking. While discussing the expected skills, it is assumed that a teacher in open and distance education system is an expert both in his/her own discipline and in the distance teaching techniques i.e. the teacher is a discipline expert and also a system expert. This unit also makes an attempt towards orientation of teachers for realizing teaching at distance as a professional activity. This involves designing a learning package or module, its development and delivery followed by evaluation of the created system and assessment of the learners. Here, designing of the learning package or module is an active-process, its development is a pro-active process, its delivery is process active and the evaluation of the system and assessment of the learners is a post-active process. These four active processes are connected to each other through chain linkages and cyclic relationships, and cannot be detached from one another. This unit presents an academic exercise towards understanding the related functions of a teacher in open and distance education. It also aims at orientation of teachers working in the entire gamut of open and distance education. Finally this unit encourages an active forum to debate issues with an open mind. Open learning invites debates, shared views, observations, and criticism if any, also from the learned readers to improve upon the ideas and understanding of ODL system. The ideas expressed in this unit are thus an attempt to share knowledge from different areas for making education seamless and borderless and creating an aware and vibrant knowledge society and role of teacher in the globalising era of knowledge.

4.2 NATURE, SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS OF A DISTANCE TEACHER

Garg and Parakh (2005) rightly observed that the role of a teacher in distance education system is considerably different from that of a teacher in the conventional system. A clear perception of this difference is very essential to understand the range of functions performed by teachers in distance education system. A distance education teacher is not just a scholar or specialist in her/his discipline. S/He has to be distance educator in the first place, while also being a subject specialist or an experienced professional. This change in the role should get reflected progressively in the qualifications, methods of recruitment and the professional development of the teacher in the distance education system.

4.2.1 Nature and Scope of a Teacher in ODL System

It is difficult to define the nature and scope of a teacher in open and distance education. Teachers in distance education perform complex activities both individually as well as in a team. It is said that in face- to-face education system, the excellence of the teacher is recognised, where as in the open and distance education the excellence of the team is recognised. The individual excellence of a teacher combined with the team excellence is imperative in open and distance education system. In this scenario, the ODL teachers perform a variety of activities related to academic, administrative, training functions and work individually and as a member of a team.

Interactivity is the hallmark of the teaching profession in distance education. As we have already stated, any kind of meaningful communication is education and if it is written or produced in multi media/multiple media, then it is called open and distance education. In the words of O'Neil (2006) learning involves two types of interaction: interaction with content and interaction with the other people. The many communication skills required in distance education scenario are similar to those needed for effective classroom teaching. However, a distance educator's role requires a paradigm shift in perceptions of instructional time and space. The most important role of a teacher in distance education is to model effective teaching through well-designed instructional content and appropriate communication medium. A teacher carries out a variety of functions as a subject or discipline expert besides undertaking pedagogical and academic activities. S/ he also undertakes various administrative functions. These functions have been discussed in detail in the sections below.

ODL is a fertile area for innovation, experimentation and creativity. The ODL teacher engages with learners at a distance through self-learning print and audio/ video materials, multimedia packages, radio and television broadcasts, interactive radio counselling, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, face-to-face counselling sessions at study centres, CD-ROMs, and Web-based content delivery. An ODL teacher is a full time employee of the Institution. The teacher is responsible for design, development, delivery of a variety of programmes and courses suitable for heterogeneous learners as per their needs. S/he has to consider the needs of society, markets and emerging techno-managerial learning requirements of the society. Teachers in distance education system perform a large variety of activities to cater to the needs of knowledge society; without any inhibition they gather knowledge from all the available sources to provide seamless education for all.

4.2.2 Broad Functions of a Teacher in ODL System

A teacher performs complex activities in the ODL setup. The teachers are expected to play multiple roles in open and distance education (Kanwar & Pillai, 2001):

- Course team coordination;
- Discipline coordination;
- Programme/Course coordination;
- Curriculum development and instructional design;
- Competence in preparing self-instructional material;
- Organizing and controlling delivery of programmes and services;
- Proficiency in the application of multi-media technologies;
- Tele-counselling

One major criticism against the ODL teachers is that they perform a generalist job rather than a specialist one. Secondly, they are alienated from their peer groups (other subject or discipline experts). It is also alleged that in comparison with their peer groups, they appear to be de-skilled. Another criticism is that “the faculty in the distance education is not highly motivated and have become a junk over the years” (Goutham, 2000). This criticism is not valid and cannot be used to compare a teacher in a distance education system with a teacher in a face-to-face education system. When compared with face-to-face education system, distance education should be viewed as a paradigm shift. In fact the ODL system has moved at a faster pace due to which its programme content and delivery is more contemporary than that of face-to-face education systems. Thus within the distance education system, we find many new developments such as e-learning, online learning and blended learning and so on. The operation of distance education system is all together different in its nature and scope. This criticism is actually superficial in nature and cannot stand the reality from an operational point of view in the emerging knowledge society. Teachers in open and distance education system require a unique set of skills. These teachers are multi-skilled and integrate their knowledge in a wide range of course and programme designs. They develop educational programmes with the help of a diverse media (audio, video, graphics, text, animation, etc.) and a variety of teaching methods. Distance education strategy also includes experimenting and developing innovative new ideas along with appropriate delivery strategies to take education to people and places hitherto unreached. Finally, it is also essential to undertake periodical course and system evaluation depending upon the learning objectives and requirements.

4.2.3 Academic Functions of a Teacher in ODL System

In conventional classroom settings, teachers decide upon the methods and media to use and vary the methods and strategies according to the learner's needs. In open and distance learning the issue of ‘how to teach’ has to follow the service of instructional design very critically. Learning materials have to be prepared in advance and media to support these materials are pre-selected. The distance teacher performs many academic functions some of these are listed below:

- **Curriculum Development Coordinator:** The teacher acts as a curriculum designer and developer, evolving an appropriate delivery strategy. Moreover, the teacher is as instructional designer, and also an assessor and evaluator of learners, course, programme and the entire learning system.
- **Self-directed Learning Design:** This involves competence in preparing self-directed learning materials in their specific discipline.
- **Course Writer:** This function includes writing of units or modules for one's own discipline in Distance Education methodology.
- **Media Facilitator:** This function involves appropriate use of audio/ video, radio, Television, teleconferencing. The teacher also acts as an agent of virtual education or e-learning. This function requires proficiency in the application of multi-media technologies.
- **Course Editor:** The teacher in a distance education system also performs the function of language and content editor.
- **Counselling:** The teacher also provides Pre-entry and Post-entry counselling to the learners through face-to-face mode and through interactive media. Basic course related information is provided to the student through programme guide, prospectus, newsletters and e-mails and course websites. The teachers also carry out induction programmes (through face-to-face and teleconferencing) both at the Study centres and the Regional centres.

- **Guide:** The teacher guides, aids, advices and helps the distance learners by providing comments (or tutor comments) in their assignments. S/he thus helps to improve upon the learners' academic performance at a distance.
- **Trainer:** The teacher is involved in a number of capacity building activities such as orientation programmes, trainings and workshops designed to meet the curriculum requirements and the changing paradigm of various disciplines as well as open and distance teaching learning techniques at a distance.
- **Counsellor:** Various learning related and other problems of the isolated learners of distance education are addressed by the academic counsellor available at the study centres.
- **Promotional Activities:** This includes all activities aimed at promoting open and distance education in order to provide quality education for all.
- **Consultant:** A teacher in open and distance education system is also a trainer and a consultant for the distance educators of the future and other institutions interested in providing distance learning programmes.
- **Evaluator:** This function involves tasks such as setting of examination papers, checking of answer scripts, and performing the duty of an observer during examination.
- **Programme Evaluator:** This includes activities such as reviewing the distance education programmes on offer, providing feedback and modifying the existing programmes and finding the gaps between promises and performances.

4.2.4 Administrative Functions of a Teacher in ODL System

In an ODL system, proper coordination between the different units/centres/divisions is a must for the successful functioning of the entire system. Here both academic and administrative issues have equal significance. In case of learning material, the emphasis is always on achieving high quality standards as the material developed is open to praise and criticism by society at large. In addition to preparing instructional materials for the distance learners, the distance education teachers have to constantly monitor both administrative and academic activities. This is quite in contrast to the activities undertaken by the teachers in the face-to-face system. Hence, the teachers working for ODL have to further as full-time teachers in their institution/university. As such the administrative tasks performed by the teacher in distance education scenario can be summarised as follows:

- organisation of programme/course meetings with unit writers, editors, media, evaluators and so on
- production of Materials which involves proof readings,
- monitoring of admissions to review learner enrolment and retention.
- marketing and promotion of programmes for greater enrolments.
- verification of bills
- management of course budgets
- managements of records related to programmes.

As liaisoning with course delivery personnel is very important in ODL system, a teacher in open and distance education system also has to perform a liaisoning role. The academic staff involved in the course or programme delivery plays a

pivotal role in promoting programmes and courses made available through ODL in and around at the regional and local spheres particularly in the competitive educational market environment.

Check Your Progress 1

*Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.
b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.*

What is the difference between a face-to-face teacher and an open and distance teacher?

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4.3 BROAD TRAITS OF A DISTANCE TEACHER

As has been stated earlier, the distance teacher is involved in complex activities and multiple tasks, which are both of academic and an administrative nature. According to Garg and Parakh (2005) a distance educator has to undertake multifarious activities, which require inter-personal communication and organizational skills, apart from proactive attitude towards change. The following traits are most essential in a distance teacher:

- Flexible mindset to work with different people.
- Passion for distance education.
- Good intrapersonal skills.
- Desire for constant updating of knowledge as a knowledge worker.
- Respectful for opinion and knowledge of others.
- Positive attitude for change.
- Able to work in a team.
- Usage of media and technology for supporting isolated learners learning.
- Flexible, accessible, and equitable are not preaching tools but are essential practicing tools of a teacher in ODL.
- Sound knowledge of the discipline and distance teaching techniques are a must.
- Excellent command over language, good communication and intra-personal skills.
- Familiarity with copyright /Intellectual Property Right (IPR) provisions.

- Knowledge of copy editing, proof reading and other skills required in preparation and production of quality instructional materials.
- Effective public relations skills are required as one has to deal with a variety of experts, course writers, editors, presenters and instructional designers.
- Ability to identify and gather knowledge and information from a wide range of sources, people and places.
- Sharing of knowledge and experience with others and respecting others views in collaborative and team efforts.
- Have critical reflections and can celebrate his/her awareness without favour and fear.
- S/he have concerned for culture, its retainment, market relevance to produce and able to convert knowledge into techno-managerial platform.
- *Passion* for distance education and a personality trait such as *Courage* to express issues with an open mind for learning.
- Willingness to work in a team with integrity irrespective of one's own framework and values.
- Willingness to be always *active* (as in Design Process) *proactive* (as in Development Process), process active (as in Delivery Process) and post active (as in Assessment and Evaluations Process).
- Desire to be a knowledge worker for a knowledge society. To put it in other words as Shameless learning for seamless education.
- Attitude for societal concerns, knowledge of market relevance and sound awareness of techno-managerial aspects of education.
- Realisation that the job at hand is to be undertaken as "*Karma*". Karma alone is an expression or manifestation of Dharma.
- All the functionaries in open and distance education, including the part time and full time teachers, are called counsellors. The theory of open and distance education lays immense emphasis on three traits for the counsellors in the ODL system.

4.3.1 Concept of WAGE and its Explanation

The counsellors should have an attitude of WAGE. Let us discuss the meaning of WAGE:

W: Warmth: A feeling

A: Acceptance: Accept the learners as they are without high expectations.

G: Genuine: in presenting the issues and integrity in exhibiting body of Knowledge.

E: Empathy: It is contrary to sympathy. Ability to understand and share the feeling of someone else as it is one's our.

4.4 CONCERNS OF A TEACHER IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance educators must conduct learning transactions mindful of the burden of physical separation and technological requirements, as well as the perennial challenge of presenting content to stimulate learning. (Schulte, 2010) Therefore,

the competencies and commitment of a teacher are equally significant issues. Here, competencies refer to the necessary skills of a teacher whereas commitment is related to the concern for institutional growth and development. As discussed, the mind set plays an important role in any institutional development activities.

The distance-learning teacher is the common thread throughout the distance learning process. She must be certified for the appropriate grade level, is knowledgeable in her subject area, and is trained in effective distance education strategies (O'Neil, 2006). With regard to concerns, the teachers working for open and distance education need to have the capability and interest to generate the relevant ideas which can be translated into courses or programmes, within appropriate models of curriculum design, manipulating the available technologies to impart knowledge and distance. The market utility of the proposed courses or programmes should also be considered. Hence, a teacher should have social concern as well as skills to interpret market feasibility and to manage technology for teaching learning at a distance.

Now let us discuss the changing role of a teacher and his concerns in the globalization era.

- The distance teacher for the 21st century has to be a specialized professional equipped with multiple skills and qualities. S/he needs to build up a career in distance education (Dhanarajan, 1996).
- S/he has to be both specialist and a generalist, i.e., specialist in his/her own discipline and have generalist skills in the system of distance education.
- S/he should be a self-learner competent enough to use all the available media and methods to improve upon or add to his/her existing body of knowledge.
- S/he has to have reading skills to increase the present dimensions of one's own discipline and have an idea of the expectations from a distance learner.
- Since a teacher in distance education has to undertake the task of writing, hence possessing writing skills is an important factor in distance teaching profession. Writing is both a skill and an art which needs to be developed for reducing the distance between teacher and learner.
- S/he has to develop editorial skills, where s/he can use economy of words and expression. Editing is an art for imparting education to heterogeneous learners.
- S/he needs to work with a wide variety of people in a team and associate with different types of people within and outside the organization. This requires increased tolerance of different views, an ability to acknowledge other people's excellence and good team building skills, while maintaining the institutional goals and self dignity at the same time.
- S/he should always aim at meaningful growth and development of both the individual and the institution. It has to be remembered that concern for the institution ultimately leads to individual growth.
- S/he should have clarity about the job market in order to design and develop suitable courses for divergent learners keeping in view liberalization, privatization and globalization and its influence, effects and limitations on a developing country like India.
- S/he must have strong conviction and a flexible personality to work with a variety of people. In addition to being accessible to people and places, there should be respect for isolated learners and a strong commitment to educational equality.

- S/he should be willing to share knowledge and experiences with others and have respect for others' views, experiences and self.
- S/he should be a good trainer and should be willing to develop trainees as future trainers.
- Training is perceived as capacity building activity, capacity building activity is capacity sharing activity and capacity sharing activity is caring activity to be taken up with love, faith, affection and confidence in the training and trainers.

Finally, most important factor is that the ODL teacher's job starts and ends with the care and concern for the needs of isolated distance learners.

4.4.1 Concerns of Teacher in the Globalising Era

Placing the concern for a teacher is difficult task. It is more in the open and distance education. Society is undergoing in an aggressive transformation in all spears of life. Primary objective of a teacher to transact curriculum based on its instructional design strategy in face to face education system, it is self directed learning design at Open and Distance Learning Institution. Various learning designs are evolving in the globalizing era of education. We have been witnessing online blended models of educational designs at ODL and also at face to face educational system in the changing times. As we have discussed that the change is the only constant factor in all walks of life where education and teacher's role is also not exceptional. If we keenly observe the historical transformation of society and its values, we found heavy paradigm shift in each phase of history. Here we are making an attempt to explore models to understand concerns of a teacher in each historical phase namely; ancient phase is a cultural society where the teacher is a cultural agent of society, the concerns of a teacher is cultural transformation of values from one generation to next generation. This phase considered to be a cultural society where the role of teacher is to maintain retain and propagate the values of society, in this phase the teacher considered to be cultural agent of the society, the teacher is considered to be the *Cultural Teacher*. The 2nd phase, it is considered to be *corporate teacher* stage where education fulfills not only values of society but also the market needs, this phase can be considered as corporate phase. The role of teacher is to fulfill the corporate requirement and the teacher is considered to be a *Corporate Teacher*. The 3rd phase particularly in the 21st century globalising era, after ICT interventions and explorations the educational skills demands transformation of knowledge and skills into a techno-managerial activity. It is other wise called techno-managerial phase (Silicon Phase). The role of teacher is not only retaining the values of society, producing skills for a market and above all transforming all the knowledge and skills into techno-managerial activity this we witness with a aggressive knowledge liberation (that is open education resources or in the form of Massive Open Online Courses MOOCS. This education movement made knowledge everywhere and anywhere). Here the role of teacher is equated with a *Silicon Teacher*. Let us deliberate these cultural, corporate and silicon teachers role in detail.

4.4.2 Cultural Teacher

In the ancient society education is only concern with the society values and retain them for future generations, in such society, the concern for education is cultural transformation of values from one generation to next generation. In this phase the role of education is to fulfill the requirements of cultural society and the role of a teacher is cultural agent of the society, otherwise one can call him as cultural teacher. The Institutional arrangement is *Gurukula Sistem* of Education or the *Madarsa* system for the Musilim community and *Church* as a central point

of education. Here the education was not accessible to all. Education for all is not in their agenda, the society was functionally divided to produce a product for social requirement. The education aimed at privileged few elites of the society.

4.4.3 Corporate Teacher

The medieval age is considered as the age of reason. This was possible with the renaissance. Renaissance gave a birth to new man with new reason. This reason subsequently paved the way for industrial revolution in the 19th century. This age insisted education for all. Particularly after industrial revolution, the society has undergone a shift that education is not only maintain and retain its values but also aimed at skills to produce productive forces, this can be the capitalist feature of the society. In this phase the role of education is to fulfill the requirements of cultural society as well as market needs by producing commodities for the market. The Institutional arrangement is in mixed mode such as centres of excellence institution as well as private public institutions flourished for the people. The role of a teacher is not only cultural transmission and also an instrument to raise productive forces. This phase aimed at not only knowledge but also producing skills to boost a production process. These processes saturated by 19 century industrial revolution. The concern for education for a teacher is to maintain and retain cultural values and also boost the productive process. The role of teacher considered to be an agent of producing the skills for market. The teacher considered to be a corporate teacher.

4.4.4 Silicon Teacher

This is another development with the intervention of Interactive Communication Technologies (ICT). The word Silicon denotes “Techno-managerial Learning/ activity”. Here in this context the teachers concern is not only to maintain the values of the society and increase the productive forces and above all transforming all the skills into techno-managerial activity. It is more so converting all these into techno-managerial learning syndrome. Today knowledge is seamless, accessible and emphasis on self-learning. All these possible only with the techno-managerial learning, otherwise one can call it silicon phase. Here the teacher’s role is to retain the values/culture, corporate needs and above all, converting every thing in to techno-managerial learning. There is no institutional arrangement arrangements in this learning phase, it is seamless, accessible and provide equity to all the people of the globe. This phase made knowledge as seamless and borderless.

4.4.5 Summing of the Models

As we have discussed three models of teachers in each historical phase, which make us to understand the concerns of education and teacher. In the 20th century particularly in globalizing era, the education is an instrument for socio-economic change by integrating societal values, market requirement and also techno-managerial needs to access needs of the people and productive process. The technology is a necessary evil in its own context. It is a necessary because it can make knowledge flexible, accessible and create equity in the social distribution process. It is evil when technology is used unsocial activities. In the 21st century the teacher needs to have cultural values for the society, skills for marketing and boosting the productive process and also converting them into techno-managerial needs. A blended approach of all i.e. social values, market needs and techno-managerial skills must be aimed at. It is appropriate to quote Peter Ducker said that the educated people are knowledge workers for the knowledge society in the 21st century. The concern for education needs to meaningfully blended with Interactive Communication Technologies (ICT) and Indian Culture and Tradition (ICT). These needs and concerns are to be explored by modern teachers.

Check Your Progress 2

*Notes: a) Space is given below for your answers.
b) Check your answers with those given at the end of the unit.*

i) Describe the concept WAGE?

ii) Explain the trends in the globalisation era in Education?

iii) Define cultural teacher in one or two lines?

iv) Define corporate teacher in one or two lines?

v) Define silicon teacher in one or two lines?

4.5 ORIENTATION OF TEACHERS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

4.5.1 Gamut of Open and Distance Education

We have already discussed the gamut of open and distance education in MDE-411; Let us recall the figure given below which explains the gamut of open and distance education.

Gamut of Open & Distance in Educational System

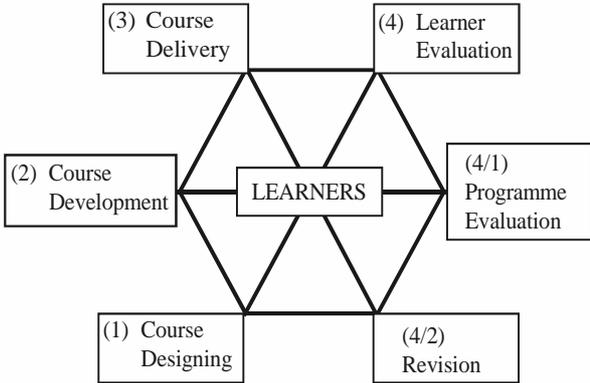


Fig. 4.1: Gamut of Open and Distance Education

Source: Rampelli Satyanarayana, 2004, Handbook 9 student support services and open learning STRIDE

The gamut of open and distance education is explained in the above figure as course design, development, evolving an appropriate strategy for delivery or its transactional strategies, undertaking learners /course evaluation/programme evaluation and finally periodical undertaking of revision of course/programme. These are the major activities of open and distance education.

All the above activities have cyclic relations and chaining linkages, which cannot be detached from one another. The overall emphasis and importance is given only to the learners in all ODL activities. Hence it is said that the gamut of open and distance education is the gamut of its learners and their support services. The same gamut we shall correlate to the orientation of teachers in the open and distance education in the next section.

4.5.2 ODL Teacher's Orientation: A Model to Discuss and Deliberate

In general, *teaching* has evolved from *vocation* to *occupation* to *profession*. Very little has been said about the orientations of the teacher/people in an educational organization. Here, we are making an attempt to explain a model on the basis of one given by G. Narayana, Industrial Advisor, Gujarat & Maharashtra and visiting Professor of IIT, Ahmedabad, in his writing titled "Noble Leader; A Journey Through Dhammapada". This model is a modest attempt aimed at understanding the orientation of people working for the knowledge society. This model is also applicable/ relevant/nearly suitable/befitting to the tasks of a teacher in open and distance education system. Its focus is on the moral and ethical basis rather than the theoretical basis. Here an effort is made towards a neutral orientation irrespective of the ideological/values orientations of teachers. This model can be viable for all the teachers, including those from the open and distance education system. The concepts expressed here are active, pro-active, process-active and post-active (Narayana, 2001). Let us debate on these issues in context of their relevance and applicability. These concepts are being used here to denote the work/job of a teacher in an Open and Distance Education system.

Orientation	Stages of activity	Nature of activity	Required Justification
Active process	Designing stage	Generating ideas stage	Needs assessment and justification
Pro-active process	Development stage	Translating ideas into action	Using proper media and methods
Process active process	Delivery stage	Evolving the appropriate delivery strategies	Identifying delivery channels
Post-active process	Evaluation stage	Learner's evaluation & programme/course/ system's evaluation	For awarding degrees & obtaining feedback for system

Summary of the above table:

Active process is a designs stage process. Pro-active process is a development stage process and involves translation of design into development. Process-active is a delivery stage process and is mainly concerned with evolving an appropriate delivery strategy. Post-active process involves assessing promises and performance of an educational product and its value. It also includes evaluation of learners to award degrees. All these processes have chaining linkages to each other and therefore, one cannot be detached from another.

i) **Active process**

Active process is the initiation of the process of generating an idea. It is the designing/stage to develop a programme or a course. It involves the planning process which means “thinking before doing”. All aspects of the designing social relevant products are debated during this stage. The active process is also a stage for inclusion, sharing of views with peers, thinkers, experts and others for designing the product for achievement of intended learning objectives. During this process learning experiences of many heterogeneous groups are accommodated so that a balanced relevant programme may be given shape. The role of teacher is central to this exercise as teachers have to implement this programme.

ii) **Pro-active process**

Pro-active process is translating ideas into development. This is a stage for translating ideas into a final product or a package. Development of curriculum is considered a pro-active process. It implies evolving a process of making a product. The work is undertaken by a team of experts by following planned outcomes in the curriculum development process. It is a process where humans, material, media, and method are integrated. This approach is appropriate and desirable to ensure that the ultimate user i.e. the learner is benefited and empowered. It views the entire value of the end product against the designed objectives. Various media and methods are adopted at this stage to suit designed instructional strategy of a particular Programme/course. It involves a scientific approach to develop a programme or a course.

iii) **Process active process**

Process active process is evolving appropriate strategies for delivery of programme or course. This is the process of translating product objectives to the end users and involves the delivery stage of a course/programme. In face-to-face education scenario, this is reflected by the classroom teaching-learning process, whereas in the open and distance learning situation, it is called ‘learners support system’. Learner support system comprises all those activities which have concern for empowering isolated distance learner those are broadly pre-entry counseling (before taking admission into ODL system), post entry counseling (about the institution and teaching learning methodology), to clear the doubts in the self learning material face to face counseling sessions and through news letters the information and knowledge is given to learners to pursue further studies through ODL system. The objective here is to reach different places, people with the support of various media and methodology such as print, audio, video radio, interactive radio, teleconferencing /video conferencing and educational satellites. The objective of using various media is to reduce the distance between the learner and institution. The role of teacher is multiple and multifaceted one in which s/he has to use blended learning strategies for knowledge delivery mechanism and have skills to handle various media to educate masses/millions. Such initiatives in teaching-learning process require total re-orientation of the teaching learning methodologies either in face-to-face situation or in learning at distance. The teacher is required to have a sound knowledge base and also have sensitivity towards knowledge level of the learners/students. While teaching, the teacher has no limitations except learning levels (age and experience levels) of the learners. The aid, advice and help that the learner receives from the distance education institution helps the learner to evolve as an independent learner.

iv) **Post-active process**

Post-active process is assessment or evaluation to provide feedback on the promises and performance of programmes/course/system and learner’s evaluation for awarding degrees. This activity is carried out for two purposes – i) firstly,

for evaluating the learner's learning outcome for award of the degree, and ii) secondly, for evaluating the programme/ course/ system to get feedback to reform and review it. It also helps to evaluate the process in terms of its design, development and transactional strategy. This involves overall judging of the value of an idea, product and its process. An attempt is also made to gauge the learner's satisfaction and his/her systematic performance levels. It is a research and development process by which the system gathers feedback to undertake a review of the entire gamut of design, development and transaction. It provides feedback for undertaking revision of curriculum; this may be done by undertaking the base line research with baseline data to meet the institution's vision and mission statement. This process reduces/minimizes the gaps between promises and performance and thus helps to improve the system.

4.5.3 Summing Up the Model

While inducting the people into the open and distance education system, professional tasks such as designing, developing and evolving appropriate instructional material and delivery strategies, and its assessment and evaluation are extremely crucial. Appropriate professional skills are required to carry out these critical tasks. The skills are imported with rigorous training strategy right from bottom-up to top-down. In this kind of process, the newly joined teachers learn and acquire the required functional traits during their training period. They need to work at the study centres and regional centres to interface with learners and their problems so that they are able to better design and develop course. Such training also enables to make them aware about the grassroots realities in open and distance education. In the initial period, they also need to be familiar with the printing technology to overcome any difficulty in production of quality materials.

Check Your Progress 3

Notes: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Write one line explanation to active, pro-active, process active and post-active.

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4.6 GUIDELINES FOR A TEACHER IN OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Distance Education Council (former DEC) presently it is called Distance Education Bureau (DEB) has laid down a normative framework of work norms for the teaching staff/academics of the open and distance education system. These also include guidelines for developing flexible work norms on par with the UGC work norms for teachers. However, there is a strong need for developing separate work norms for other categories of academic staff, who are working at delivery mechanism, planning co-ordination, research and other areas in the open and distance educational system.

According to Distance Education Council (former DEC), the nature of teaching work in open universities is, in its essence, quite similar to the teaching work in other institutions of higher learning. The specific job requirements of teachers in the Open University System however have relatively larger operational

components. Within the parameters of higher education in general, the key elements of teaching work in Open Universities may be listed as below:

- Generation, Dissemination and Advancement of Knowledge i.e. planning and designing of the Programmes/Courses;
- Development of learning Material (Print, Multi-media);
- Adaption/translation/transliteration of Learning Materials-Maintenance and Revision of Course /Programmes;
- Design, Establishing and Monitoring Student Support Services;
- Evaluation and Related work;
- Coordination and Administration;
- Research – Systemic and Discipline Based; and
- Extension of Education (DEC-2000,p.3).

Further DEC Guidelines also lay emphasis on the work load issues. It mentions that the work load of a teacher can be determined on the basis of the principal activities or a cluster of activities performed in the Open University system. The time needed for each activity can similarly be worked out on the basis of average working hours to be spent on each activity. According to DEC...

- The teacher shall annually spend 1200 working hours (on an average).
- The work load of every teacher shall be forty hours a week.
- Every teacher would be available in the university for academic work and for other works of the university on an average of five hours on each working day.

The above classification of work load appropriates into 8 credits per year which is equal to 30 study hours for distance learners.

The guidelines also specify that every teachers shall perform the core function pertaining to the discipline i.e. dissemination and advancement of knowledge as decided collectively by all the members of the discipline/unit/divisions etc. as the case may be. Further, the document mentions that “Examination related work should also be treated as an integral part of teacher work and due weightage may be given to this workload in the overall work plan (DEC, 2000, p.4). The examination work includes paper setting, moderation of papers, elevator of the answer scripts, and authentication of final examination results and to maintain the quality assurance, the teachers are periodically required to undertake examination centres visits/inspections.

In the spheres of monitoring, it is mentioned in the DEC Guidelines that “Monitoring is to be viewed as a mechanism to see implementation of work plan. This mechanism should be participative and institutional accountability should be integrated with the monitoring scheme”.

Some of the measures recommended are as follows:

- Work plans, at different levels, may serve as bench mark for reviewing the progress of all the components units of Schools/Centre etc.
- A consultative mechanism involving all teachers at the level of the discipline shall help in the proper execution of the plan.
- For this purpose the discipline coordinator should organise meetings and coordinate the preparation of the work plan.

- Periodic reviews of the work plan should be undertaken to identify bottlenecks and obstacles in the execution of the work plan.
- A mechanism to review shortcomings in infrastructural facilities and make the necessary adjustments at the operation level may be created
- It is expected that the University shall provide adequate additional human resources in situations where the work load of a discipline/division exceeds the quantum as per the work norms.
- It is also expected that the University shall make available adequate infrastructural support needed by the disciplines for completing their annual work plans. (DEC-2000 p.5)

Note: The above guidelines are mere suggestive in its nature.

Check Your Progress 4

Notes: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

What are the guide lines given to the work norms of Distance Education Council (DEC)?

i)

ii)

iii)

iv)

4.7 CAUTION: EMERGING MARKET APPROACH TO EDUCATION

The theoretical debate in distance education right from Occto Peters evolve that distance education is more a service in the market economy. In a market economy, the role of education has transformed greatly with commodification of education. The market approach to education insists on viewing its learners as customers or service seekers. Whether one agrees or not, education is fast becoming a commodity. For a teacher this implies rendering of effective and efficient services to the learners. Learner are almost like a ‘customer’ in market economy i.e. if s/he is not satisfied with the services of an educational institution, there are many vendors who are competing for providing effective, efficient and quality education. Hence, it is not the product that is important, on contrary, it is the “after sales service” which is the important and determining factor, where providing effective services to its learners denotes the quality in a competitive era. In a market approach to education emphasis is on service to the learners, and in ODL system the entire focus is on the isolated learners, hence it is said that *the gamut of open and distance education is the gamut of learner’s support service*. In the market approach to education, the programmes an educational institution designs and develops is not always important but its delivery strategies are very important. This is called “After sales service”.

Let us briefly define, relate and understand globalization and emerging educational technologies. Globalization is a process of interaction and international integration of products, ideas and other aspects of culture. Albrow (1990) defines globalization as all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society. Globalization is

an inevitable process and is also a necessary evil. One cannot afford to avoid this process. The implications of globalization in the words of Daniel (2003) are

“Globalization unites the world, as its name implies, but it also divides the world. Those who disapprove of globalization stress the increasing disparities of wealth that it brings, both between countries and within countries. Even those who believe that globalization is a force for good, worry about some of the gaps that it is creating within humankind. Changing technology is the main force behind globalization and the gap we call the digital divide is of popular concern”.

These global transformations have a strong influence on the overall educational scenario. In this new high-tech global economy people need to develop new skills, new experiences and gain knowledge. Education is becoming a lifelong learning and training process providing easy access to knowledge that can be applied in competitive markets. The larger purpose for education in globalised world is to prepare the individual to work in a borderless economy and live in a global society (Tandon, 2005). Technology has made it possible to disseminate, share and exchange knowledge on a global scale thus transforming lives in a significant manner. The role of teachers is also changing in this new borderless knowledge society. The teachers need to adapt themselves to this new world order and gain new skills to cater to the changing learning needs of the society.

4.8 LET US SUM UP

“The process of convergence between distance education and conventional education is becoming faster and the convergence will continue to be necessarily fast in the future” (Panda *et al*, 2005).

We have agreed that open distance education is a paradigm shift when it is compared with face to face education. It is often difficult, for people who are out of ODL system to understand the role of a teacher in open and distance education. It is so because the culturally induced face-to-face teaching and learning bias is heavy in the mindset of people. For them teaching learning means the process that takes place is within the four walls of the classroom rather than through open learning. It take little gestation period to understand and accept the meaning of open and distance learning. Here in this context, teacher needs to be convinced that distance teaching learning is a method and open learning is a philosophy. Further, the teachers play a significant role in producing socially relevant, market wise feasible and techno-managerial learning products which are fittest to the purpose and relevance. Partly this mission has been achieved by the open and distance learning institutions in the country, still the teacher has to make uncompromising efforts to travel the long journey to achieve teaching learning excellence in open and distance education system. Hence, it is always believed that quality or excellence is always a journey but not a destination in the knowledge era and especially in today’s globalised knowledge era. U.K. Open University has built its image of excellence at par with Oxford University. In India we often witnessed that many people use open and distance educational resources, unfortunately very few acknowledge the source. These issues are mostly related to mindset of the educators and policy makers. However, ODL institutions and its teachers are knowledge workers of the knowledge institution for the knowledge society. In spite and despite these divergent views, teaching profession is a service profession. Let us all work for education as a service and pave a way for fulfilling the mission 2020 to realize India’s dreams through education.

“*Open learning is a state of mind rather than method with particular characteristics*” (Jack, 1988; Rowntree, 1992).

4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- Face-to-face is a teacher-centred education
- Open and distance education is learner-centred education
- Open and Distance Education is paradigm shift in education.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) WAGE: is abbreviated trait of a distance teacher and counsellor.
- W - Warmth (a feeling/a sense of felling)
- A - Acceptance (without having higher expectation or receiving the learner's as they are)
- G – Genuine – be a natural (both for known and unknown things/issue)
- E – Empathy – It is contrary to sympathy – ability to understand and share the feelings of someone else.
- ii) Globalising is a trend or a process which reduces the gap between nation state in imparting education
- iii) Cultural teacher is traditional teacher who believes transmission of values from one generation to another generation.
- iv) corporate teacher who aims at education as means of productive course besides cultural requirement of the society
- v) Silicon teacher is one who is equipped with skills to handle education technology for teacher learning process.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Active is designing process
- 2) Pro-active is translating design into development process
- 3) Process –active is evolving an appropriate delivery/transactional Strategies
- 4) Post-active is assessment (for course, programme or system) and evaluation Process forwarding degree to learners)

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) To assess teachers in open and distance education
- 2) To create working norms at par with UGC face-to-face teachers in terms of work load.
- 3) To evolve monitoring system of work
- 4) They are merely guideline not mandatory in status.

4.10 REFERENCES

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4.11 GLOSSARY

- Multiple media : Various Media such as Audio, Video, Radio, CD, internet and ICT uses
- Gamut : The complete range or scope of something
- Active : Engaged in action
- Cultural : The behaviours and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic
- Corporate : Aiming at skill for productions process
- Silicon : Techno-managerial

