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# UNIT 5 MANAGEMENT OF A PROVINCIAL OPEN UNIVERSITY: A CASE OF BRAOU

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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The success of the UK Open University captured the imagination of educationists and governments across the world. In fact, it inspired many similar experiments in both developed and developing countries. India too toyed with the idea of establishing an Open University. Though initiatives were made in the early 1970s to design an Open University system for India, it did not make much headway; in fact, India was not ready to launch the second generation distance education at that time.

India is a Union of States. Education was the exclusive responsibility of the states till 1976. With an amendment to the constitution that came into effect from January 1977, education became a joint responsibility of the Union and State governments

(this amendment transferred education from the State List to the Concurrent List). With this amendment of the constitution, it was possible for the Union government to establish universities on its own (the union government could not establish a university without the consent of the states till then). As India was rapidly expanding its higher education provision, the States have been establishing new universities and colleges. They were also exploring other options including the establishment of open universities.

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## **5.2 OBJECTIVES**

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After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the preparatory work involved in the establishment of a new open university;
- describe the structure of a new open university which is evolving;
- analyze the first set of academic programs developed and produced including the measures for ensuring the quality of the programs;
- identify the learner support systems that have to be organized; and
- examine the role of the electronic media and its use.

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## **5.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BRAOU**

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The establishment of the first open university in the country without any procedures to follow was a very important issue, which is dealt in this section.

### **5.3.1 Expert Committee and Legislation**

Andhra Pradesh, one of the biggest states in terms of geographical area and population, has one of the largest higher education systems in the country, in terms of the number of universities, colleges and enrollment. Its higher education provision has been increasing at a rate of over 5% annually. To respond to the ever increasing demand for higher education, one of the major universities in the state was considering the establishment of an Open Learning College, but the government of the state thought it was worthwhile to go ahead with the establishment of a dedicated open university instead of setting up a college as an adjunct of another university. The government appointed an Expert Committee to work out the details of the project for setting up an open university. The Committee submitted its report called “Towards an Open Learning System” in August 1982.

The government moved very swiftly indeed and went ahead with the legislation to establish the Andhra Pradesh Open University, the first of its kind in India. The speed with which the legislation was prepared and piloted in the state legislature and made into a law, all within a few weeks after the submission of the Report of the Expert Committee speaks volumes about the political will and commitment of the state government to the cause of higher education and about its conviction that open universities and distance education programs, if developed and organized properly, could meet the new demands for higher education provision in the state. Some years later, the Andhra Pradesh Open University (APOU) was renamed as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) after one of the tallest leaders of India’s freedom movement and the architect of the Indian constitution. In the following years, this pioneering initiative paved the way for the foundation of fourteen other open universities, one at the national level and thirteen at state level.

BRAOU’s foundation is rested on a number of principles which align with the

philosophy of distance education (Perraton, 2004):

- that residence was not an essential part of university education;
- that a variety of technologies should be used to teach and would together overcome the disadvantages of distance;
- that the distant elements of any course should be integrated with occasional face-to-face study;
- that students should receive individual support from tutors and counselors; and
- that the strength of these methods is justified to establish a university, awarding its own degrees, comparable with those of its conventional systems.

### **5.3.2 Objectives of the BRAOU**

The objectives of the university as set out in its Act of incorporation are:

- to provide educational opportunities to those who could not take advantage of institutions of higher learning;
- to provide equality of educational opportunities for higher education 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 through distance education;
- to provide flexibility with regard to eligibility for enrolment, age of entry, choice of courses, methods of learning, conduct of examinations and operation of the programs;
- to complement the programs of the existing universities in the state in the field of higher learning so as to maintain the highest standards on par with the best universities in the country;
- to promote integration within the state through its policies and programs;
- to offer degree courses and non-degree certificate courses 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 value;
- to make provision for research and for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge; and
- to serve as a source of continuing education, consultancy and to provide equal access to knowledge and higher education.

The establishment of BRAOU was a landmark in the history of distance education in India. It was the first Indian university dedicated to distance education; all its faculty and staff are exclusively engaged in distance education. The nature of their duties was completely different from those at a traditional university. It generated mixed feelings among the teachers of conventional colleges and universities. While some welcomed the novel institution, some others felt that teaching-learning was possible only through face-to-face interaction in a classroom. Skeptics and critics had to change their opinion as the university moved ahead and registered significant achievements and made substantial contributions to the cause of higher education in the state.

### **5.3.3 Organizational Structure of BRAOU**

As we said earlier, the functions of an open university are very different from those of a conventional university; it follows that its organizational structure has to be designed to meet its functional needs. As Keegan put it, *'in traditional education a teacher teaches; in distance education an institution teaches'*. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, writers such as Peters (1983), Perry (1976), Daniel and Smith (1979), and Snowden and Daniel (1980), argued that the administrative structures of conventional institutions were not suited to the

development and management needs of distance education. The view was that distance education system involved a number of quasi-industrial processes and that the best results would be obtained where the corporate culture encouraged adherence to production schedules, and where academic managers understood the very different cost structures that needed a different kind of budgeting teaching methods. There were strong arguments that the needs of part-time adult learners were served better through institutions teaching wholly at a distance. The marginalization of distance education students in Distance Education Centers of Indian conventional universities supports this view. These arguments were also bolstered by the success of the UKOU, which showed that a dedicated distance education system could deliver high quality teaching materials, responsive and effective student support and excellent administration and logistics.

Administrative structure of BRAOU is designed in such a way so as to perform the essential functions of a distance education system which are well stated by Rumble (1986):

- Curriculum planning;
- Material development, production, storage and delivery;
- Students' recruitment, admission and counseling;
- Organization of study facilities and support services;
- Tutoring, assessment and examination of students; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.

The organizational structure of BRAOU is given in Figure 1.

The Governor of Andhra Pradesh is the Chancellor of BRAOU, as is the case with all the Universities in the State. The Board of Management, Academic Senate, Planning and Monitoring Board and Finance Committee are the important authorities of the University. The Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Executive. Rector, Directors, Deans, Registrar, and Finance Officer are the main officers of the University. Divisions and Faculties are the main constituents of the University.

The University is empowered (Statute No.17 of the University Act) to have the following eight faculties:

- i. Arts
- ii. Science
- iii. Commerce
- iv. Law
- v. Education
- vi. Audio Visual Aids and Mass Media
- vii. Social Science
- viii. Technology

The University has so far set up five Faculties, i.e., Arts, Science, Commerce, Education and Social Science. The University can set up the other three Faculties with new Departments in future.

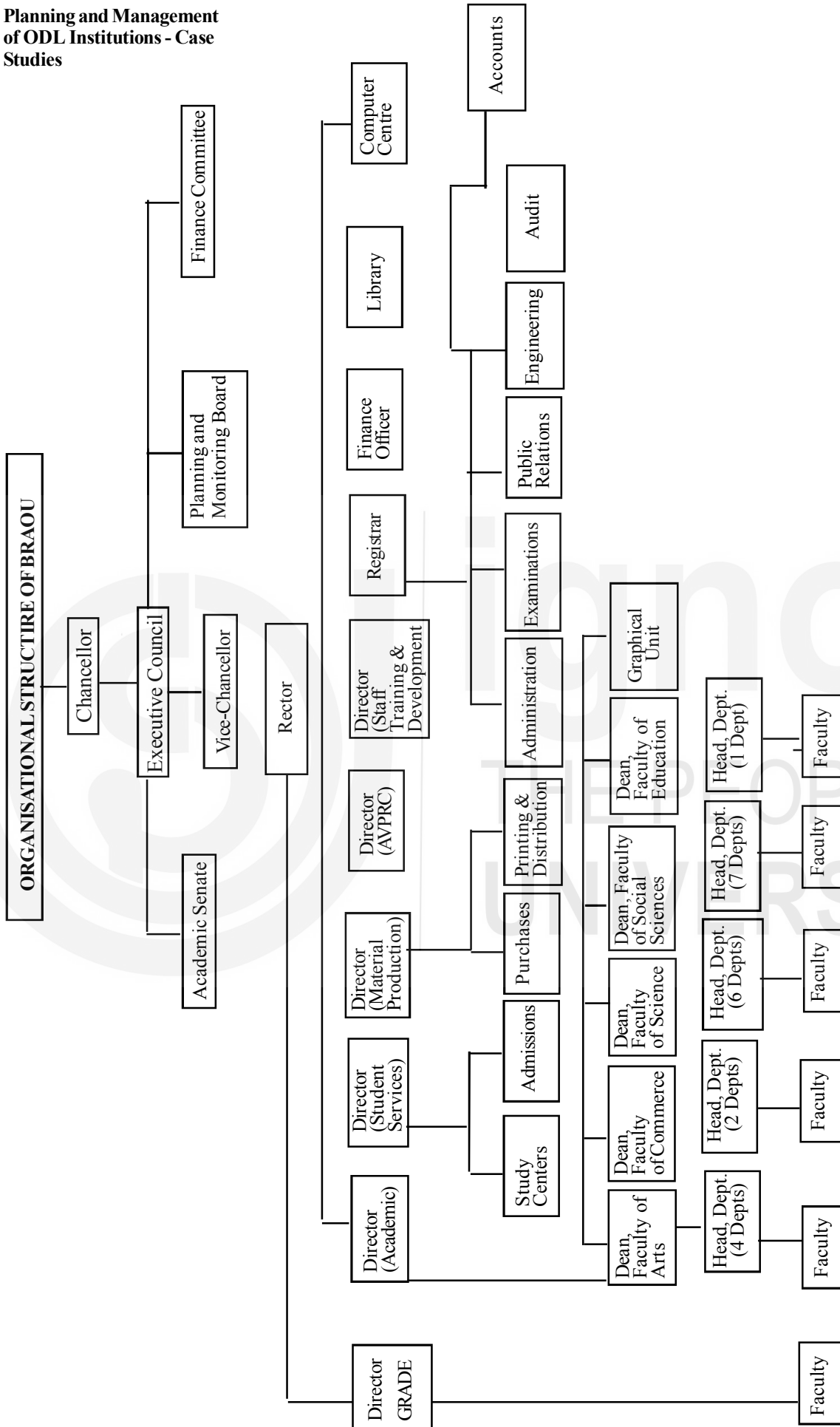


Figure 1: Organizational Structure of BRAOU

The organizational set up has not been significantly changed since beginning. Occasionally there have been demands by academics and administrative staff for certain modifications in the organizational pattern of the University because of the changing needs. In support of their demand some changes were made considering the observations and suggestions made by two committees – one in 1997 by V.C. Kulandaiswamy and the other in 1998 by C.R. Pillai, which examined the structure, systems and procedures of the University. Some of the observations of Kulandaiswamy and Pillai were:

- The Executive Council was the main executive body performing the administrative, financial and managerial functions and not any function which is purely academic.
- The powers and functions of the Planning and Monitoring Board were not explicit beyond what its name suggested. This body's composition was completely out of tune with its function.
- The academic authorities of the University have not been meeting regularly.
- Decentralization and delegation of powers were inadequate; financial and administrative powers vested in senior officers, even for decentralized operations, decision making was centralized.
- Financial management was highly centralized.
- Most faculties had no senior academics for providing leadership.
- There was no clarity on the role and responsibility of Regional Centers.
- No system for appraisal of performance and for rewarding good performance was in place.
- Observation of rules got precedence over results; approval processes were cumbersome.

**Check Your Progress 1**

**Note:** i) Space is given below for your answer.

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

a) What is the name of the Expert Committee Report?

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b) Which aspect facilitated the establishment of the university and how?  
(Answer in about 50 words)

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## 5.4 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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BRAOU offers a variety of academic programs. Starting with undergraduate courses, the university gradually extended them to other levels. The ongoing programs include Research Degrees, Master's programs, Professional programs, Bachelor's programs, Diploma programs and Certificate programs.

### 5.4.1 Course Planning and Development

In planning and launching the courses, the University considered the following factors:

- expected demand;
- economic viability;
- academic rigour;
- possible gains for students;
- professional and job orientation;
- innovation;
- possible use by other institutions partly or fully in the same language/medium or local language;
- parity of standards with comparable programs elsewhere in the State; and
- social benefit.

### 5.4.2 Course Preparation

Course preparation comprises course planning and course development. Course planning includes:

- assessment of needs;
- defining objectives;
- analysis of resources and limitations;
- selection criteria from alternatives;
- developmental trials;
- evaluation/assessment; and
- feedback.

The second stage is the process of course preparation. Each Open University follows its own method. Normally one of the following five models is adopted to develop a distance course.

- Content specialist model
- Content specialist and editor model
- Content specialist and transformation model
- Instructional design model
- Course team model

BRAOU combines content specialist and editor model and course team model for development of courses. The faculty, media producers and external subject specialists together constitute a course development team. Though it has many features borrowed from the UKOU, it is not the same course team model evolved by the UKOU. In the initial stages, the BRAOU did not constitute full-fledged course teams, and over the years the same practice continued. Most Open Universities adopted some variation of the UKOU model mainly because they all started with some ready-to-use course materials obtained from other universities, and later initiated their own methods of design and development of courses. As BRAOU was the first open university in India, its initial programs used materials mainly in print developed and produced by its own faculty. Over a period of time, it evolved the current methods of course development in which, as mentioned earlier, the faculty, media experts and external subject specialists are involved.

Designing a distance course is a team effort; the size of the team may be small or large. Open Universities use the team approach to course design and the UKOU provides the best known example of this model. The course team of the UKOU has academic counselors, education technologists, technicians, librarians and accountants as members. Each course is designed and produced by a team that might consist of as many as 20 or more people, in which every member is a specialist. This approach provides greater wealth of knowledge and experience in the course team since it has representatives of different technologies and media and encourages the use of multiple media (Moore and Kearsley, 2005). The course team approach, however, is expensive and involves a lengthy development period.

#### **5.4.3 BRAOU Practices for Design and Development of Academic Programs**

The important academic practices which contributed to the success of academic programs in BRAOU are:

- Well defined program development process;
- Appropriate course structure and relevant curriculum;
- Self-learning print materials developed by course teams constituted by the University;
- Restricted intake in professional programs;
- Recruitment and retention of academics with high level of expertise in distance learning and also in their own subject area;
- Regular face-to-face counseling sessions organized at the study centers;
- Compulsory component of lab-based practicals;
- Appropriate teaching-learning strategies and successful delivery of courses to students depending on their learning preferences and needs by using electronic media; and
- Maintaining the level of exit performance and academic standards, which are equivalent to those of conventional universities.



### 5.4.4 Program Development Processes

All activities relating to academic program development are governed by well defined procedures, the main purpose of which is to ensure academic regulations and standards. The content and instructional standards of academic programs of BRAOU are equal to those of conventional universities.

The persons responsible for the quality of course material are Members of Subject Expert Committees, Course Editor, Course Writers, the Internal Faculty Members, the External Course Assessors and Course Coordinators. Faculty Boards of Studies and the Academic Senate are the Statutory Bodies which play a vital role in the quality assurance process.

The program/course development model of BRAOU is given in Figure 2.

The steps involved in program/course development are as follows:

- i. The faculty, with the help of concerned Subject Expert Committee, prepares Program Structure and Syllabus, which lays down the aims and objectives and identifies the potential demand as well as the target groups for the programs. The Subject Expert Committee provides advice on program design, selection of courses to be included and strategies on delivery and assessment of individual courses.
- ii. The Program Structure and Syllabus is presented to the Board of Studies of the Faculty, which considers the proposal and approves it with modifications wherever necessary.
- iii. The approved Program Structure and Syllabus are placed before the Academic Senate for approval.
- iv. Where the Senate has endorsed the Program Structure and Syllabus, the Faculty identifies the Course Team for each course, which consists of four or five Senior Academics from other Universities to develop course material in the self-learning format.

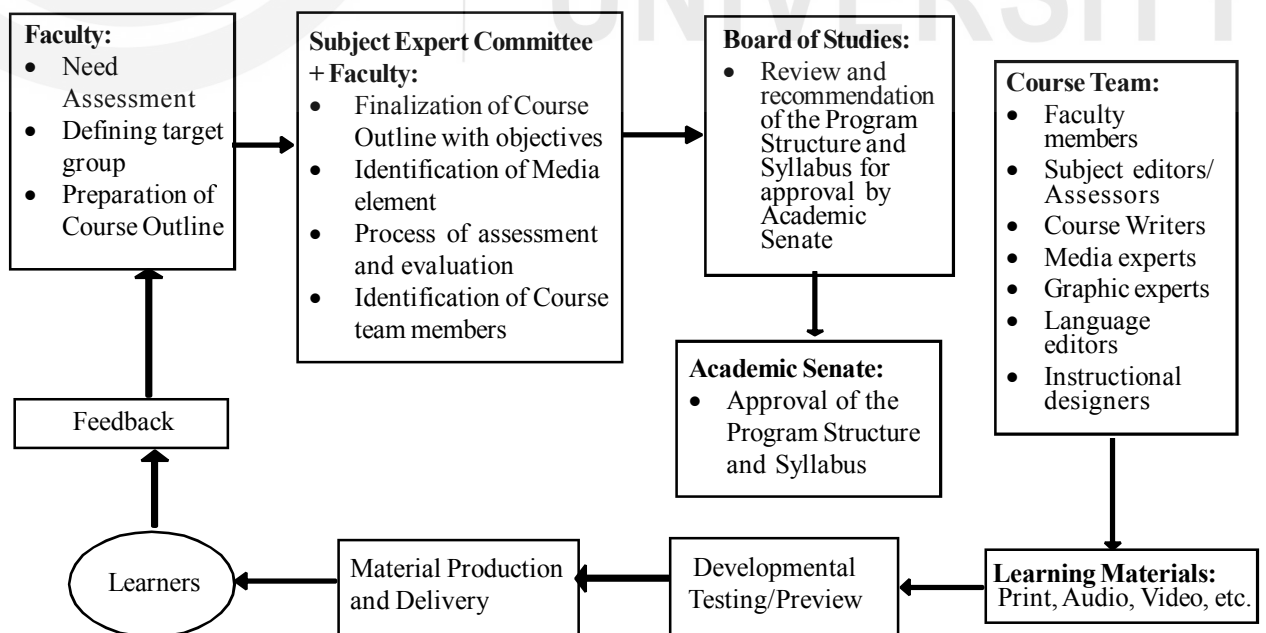


Fig.5.2: The model of program/course development in BRAOU

### 5.4.5 Course Team Approach for Course Development

The BRAOU has developed extensive guidelines for the development and preparation of all academic programs; the main purpose of these guidelines is to ensure the quality of the programs. According to these guidelines, the academic programs are planned, developed and produced with a high degree of quality and consistency in such a way that they:

- must meet the higher content and instructional standards;
- must have parity with similar courses from conventional institutions;
- adhere to rigorous internal and external academic norms and processes;
- are learner-centric; and
- meet appropriate exit standards.

The teachers working in the Faculty develop course materials with the help of external resource persons. For all the courses developed by the BRAOU, a Course Team is constituted. The Course Team includes:

- i) **Course Writers:** Four or five individuals with subject expertise to undertake the actual writing.
- ii) **Course Editor:** An eminent subject expert who edits the content and validates the course units.
- iii) **Artist-cum-designer:** A specialist in art and graphic designs who provides required art and graphic expertise.
- iv) **Course Assessor:** An academic (from the Faculty or outside) with subject expertise who contributes to and ensures that the academic content is both accurate and relevant.
- v) **Course Coordinator:** A person identified from among the internal Faculty Members who undertakes the coordination by convening necessary meetings of the Course Team and prepares press copy observing the norms of self-learning format.

#### Check Your Progress 2

**Note:** i) Space is given below for your answer.

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

What are the parameters followed for ensuring quality of academic programmes? (Answer in about 50 words)

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## 5.5 LEARNERS AND LEARNER SUPPORT

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You will have noticed from the objectives of the university that its primary constituency was the large number of young men and women who were not able to join universities and colleges for higher education due to one reason or another, those who had to start work early in life, those who were not able to secure gainful employment, and not the least, the large number of women who opted out of the education system to turn homemakers. It was not possible to address these concerns if the new university was not flexible enough in its approaches while responding to the variety and diversity of the needs of the very heterogeneous nature of the learner groups that it was intended to serve. We shall now look at the ways in which the BRAOU went about in enrolling students and serving their needs.

### 5.5.1 Admission Criteria and Enrollment

The admission to undergraduate program is based on certain eligibility conditions set forth by the University. These are:

- **For admission to B.A. and B.Com.:** (a) a pass in higher secondary or equivalent examination (12 years of schooling); or (b) qualifying in an entrance test for those who have no prior educational qualifications.
- **For admission to B.Sc.:** (a) a pass in higher secondary with relevant science subjects as electives (12 years of schooling); or (b) those who have work experience of one year in science and technology related organizations or departments.

*This is done with a view that the students who seek admission to science subjects had better necessary knowledge and aptitude to study and cope with the academic requirements of science education.*

- **For all post-graduate degree and diploma programs:** a bachelor's degree in the relevant subject.

During the first two decades of its operations, BRAOU had enrolled about 600,000 students in various undergraduate programs; over 75,000 in post-graduate programs and about 20,000 in diploma and certificate level programs. The total student strength in 2002 was over one million.

### 5.5.2 Management of Learner Support Services

The development and management of student support services is of vital importance in distance education. Learning packages are supposed to enable distance students to become completely independent of teachers. Increasingly, distance teaching institutions realized that their students need support beyond what is provided by teaching materials. In emphasizing the need to provide adequate academic support to distance learners, Perraton (1981) states that “*no matter how good our teaching materials and how efficient our distribution system, distance students have to work by themselves. We need to consider how we can give them the individual encouragement, help and guidance to overcome the barriers of distance and the remote students' feeling of isolation*”.

BRAOU, since its inception, planned and managed support services to its students in such a way that they are benefited greatly. Student support provided by BRAOU may be divided into five forms:

- i. Information support;
- ii. Guidance support;
- iii. Tutorial support;
- iv. Counseling support; and
- v. Library support.

Student support services are provided through a network of Regional Coordination Centers (RCC) and Study Centers (SC) spread over the entire State. Study Centers, numbering 26 in the first year of the University increased to 207 by the end of 2008. Of 207 Study Centers, 23 are Regional Coordination Centers, 19 are Postgraduate Centers, 14 are MBA Centers, five are B.Ed. Centers and six are Women Centers.

In order to strengthen the study centers for effective provision of services to the students, the University established regional coordination centers one in each district and two in Hyderabad city. The main aims of these centers are to create an institutional arrangement for effective coordination; to arrange for the use of technology; to deliver learning materials; and to provide timely communication.

The characteristics of BRAOU study centers are:

- a) shared space in a local education institution;
- b) minimum equipment and facilities;
- c) local part-time with limited full time staff; and
- d) limited opening hours.

A Study centre is headed by a senior academic of the host institution on part-time basis. Head (Principal) of host institution functions as overall chief of the study centre. A few study centers are headed by the University's own staff.

All students enrolled with the University are distributed among the study centers depending on their physical proximity to the centers. Students go to study centers for one or more of the following purposes:

- to attend tutorial classes/academic counseling sessions;
- to get counseling and information service;
- to consult books and periodicals;
- to watch television;
- to use audio-visual material;
- to study when home environment is not conducive;
- to do tests, oral and written; and
- to socialize.

Based on his study, a former Director of Student Support Services of BRAOU classified problems in the management of support services (Venkaiah, 1996) under four categories:

- a) accommodation and infrastructural problems;
- b) course materials and counseling problems;
- c) technology application and funding problems; and
- d) personnel problems.

In order to monitor the functioning of study centers, it is necessary to decentralize support services and to coordinate the study centers. Regional coordination centers set up at district headquarters are to be structured with functional decentralization and delegation of authority.

### **5.5.3 Recruitment and Training of Academic Counselors**

Learning through distance mode is significantly different from conventional modes of study and, therefore, it makes different demands on students and academic counselors. Distance learners experience a range of problems including negative effects of isolation, unfamiliarity with the process of academic study, lack of confidence in their own learning ability, lack of experience in using study skill effectively and conflicting demands on their time. In order to address these problems and to neutralize the negative effects of lack of regular personal contact with the institution/teachers and peers, the University provides regular weekend counseling by appointing competent and experienced academic counselors who are drawn from conventional universities and colleges. The teachers of BRAOU also teach courses in the local Study Centers.

The academic counselors are selected based on their qualifications in the relevant subject, teaching experience and other qualities required for teaching various courses including professional courses. The newly recruited counselors are provided with necessary orientation and training by organizing training programs. Workshops are also organized by the Centre for Staff Training and Development (CSTD) of BRAOU to update their skills from time to time. The University also organizes training programs on methodologies to conduct lab based practicals.

#### **Check Your Progress 3**

**Note:** i) Space is given below for your answer.

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

What are the main functions of study centres? (Answer in about 40 words)

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## **5.6 TECHNOLOGY AND ITS APPLICATIONS**

India did not have a significant ICT infrastructure in the early 1980s. Television had not penetrated much into the interiors of the country. In the urban areas, television served primarily the needs of entertainment. Computers were still not in use. The only significant mass communication facility was the radio; it had the reach and penetration all across the country. The new university had only a limited option; it could reach its student body only through radio broadcasts.

### **5.6.1 Management of the Media**

The Expert Committee on the Establishment (1982) of BRAOU strongly suggested the use of multiple media for instructional purpose. It recommended the use of television broadcasts, radio broadcasts as well as audio-video programs as integral parts of the instruction ‘to enrich, support, illuminate, demonstrate or otherwise strengthen the learning experiences of students’. Following the Expert Committee’s

suggestion, the university designed and evolved a multiple media instructional system comprising:

- specially structured course units;
- radio programs;
- programs on audio tapes;
- programs on video tapes;
- face-to-face tutorial sessions;
- counseling services;
- course assignments;
- summer schools intensive counseling programs;
- project works; and
- lab-based practicals.

The instructional system of the University is diagrammatically shown in Figure 3.

### 5.6.2 Electronic Media Use in BRAOU

BRAOU is fortunate to get time on All India Radio for broadcasting its academic programs almost from its inception. All the programs broadcast on All India Radio were also put on audio tapes and were made available at study centers for the benefit of students and counselors. A number of audio programs, besides those recorded on tapes, were also made available at big study centers.

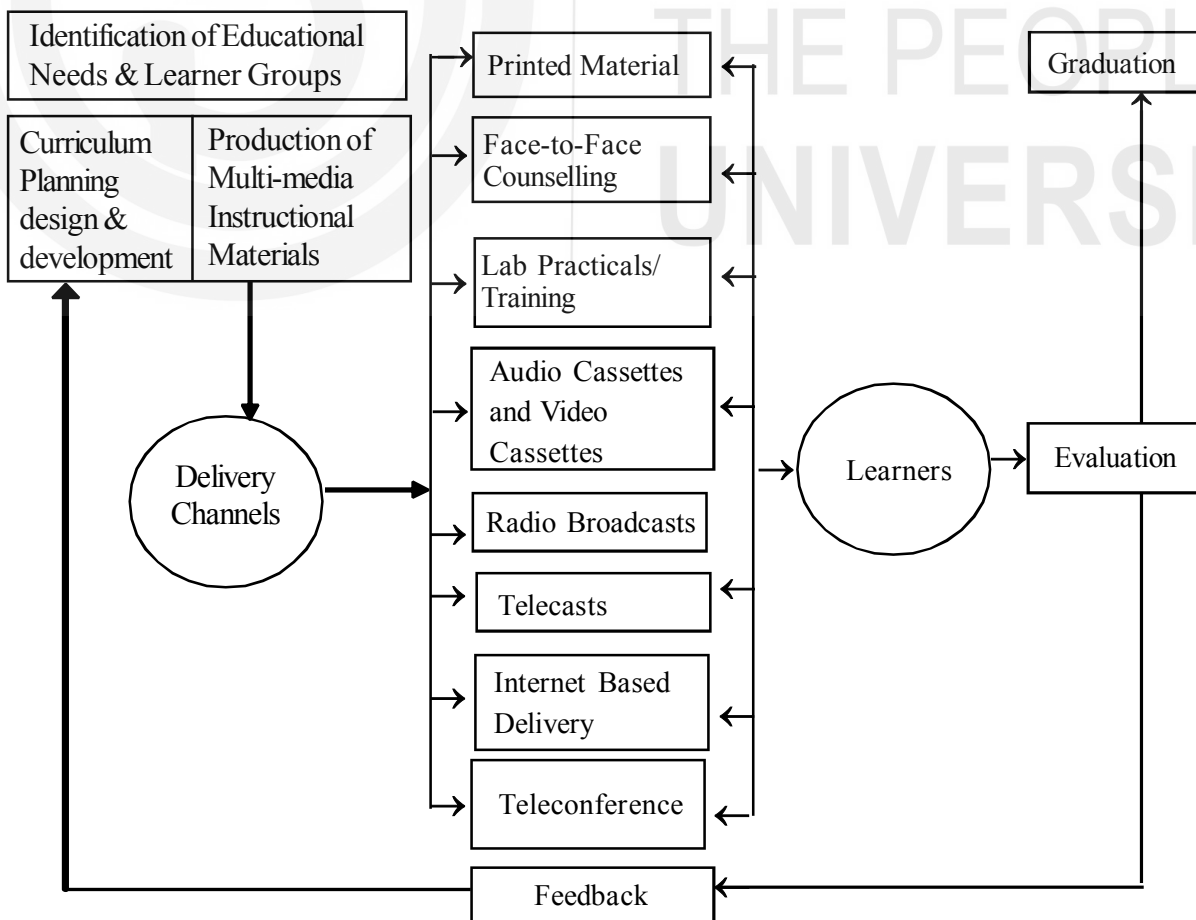


Fig. 5.3 : Instructional System of BRAOU

Soon enough the ICT landscape of the country began to change. Television expanded rapidly. By the close of the 1980s, television had covered more than three-fourths of the country. Color television became the norm. But still, television primarily remained in the realm of entertainment. After the launch of India's own satellite in 1984, attention began to focus on educational broadcasts beginning with a one-hour transmission of general education materials. It was only during the closing years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that India had a dedicated education satellite and a dedicated education channel. From 1999, the BRAOU started telecasting its programs.

The University has a separate unit – Audio Visual Production and Research Centre (AVPRC) to:

- produce audio and video programs;
- organize transmission of educational programs over radio and television;
- conduct training and academic programs in communication; and
- undertake research in the field of educational technology as applied to distance education.

The number of audio/video lessons produced and the teleconference programs organized by BRAOU is given below:

	<b>Number</b>
Radio lessons produced (1983-2008)	2111
Audio lessons produced (1983-2008)	244
Video lessons produced (1983-2008)	93
Teleconference sessions organized (1999-2008)	469

Though AVPRC's objectives include conducting training on educational electronic communication, it has not been conducting adequate number of training programs for academics, resource persons and technical staff of the University on the use of communication media for distance teaching and learning.

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## **5.7 QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS**

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Quality assurance refers to the systems through which an institution demonstrates that conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set in educational programs. A quality assurance system includes all those planned and systematic activities which provide confidence that an academic program and the associated services satisfy given requirements for quality.

Quality assurance serves several purposes (Robinson, 2004):

- to satisfy the need for accountability for funds used;
- to ensure that defined standards will be reliably achieved;
- to inform decision making when setting standards or defining goals;
- to improve quality and standards in program provision, service delivery, operation, student learning and institutional performance;

- to provide reference points for judging performance;
- to provide evidence to achievement in relation to competitors;
- to gain public confidence; and
- to ensure that learners receive the program and services as promised in program information and registration.

The areas of quality assurance initiatives of the BRAOU are (Prasad et al., 2005):

- Program planning
- Development of learning materials
- Delivery of programs
- Learner evaluation
- Governance
- System development.

In the initial years the University did not concentrate much on quality assurance in program development and delivery. In course of time, drawing from the experiences of other well established distance teaching universities, BRAOU evolved and implemented quality assurance measures (Prasad et al., 2005).

In 2001, the University established a separate research academy after its founder Vice-Chancellor, Professor G. Ram Reddy, viz. Prof. G. Ram Reddy Research Academy of Distance Education (GRADE), with the broad functions of research, consultancy, training and networking for system development. The Quality Assurance Cell of the University is located in GRADE.

The objectives of GRADE are:

- to carry out system based research in distance education in India, Asia and beyond;
- to conduct workshops, seminars, training programs;
- to collaborate with institutions and agencies in India and abroad to undertake research in distance education;
- to undertake consultancy services and communication projects related to distance education system;
- to promote, coordinate, fund and sponsor research projects;
- to publish research work in distance education and to establish and maintain a data bank;
- to receive grants, scholarships, endowments and other donations;
- to institute awards, endowments and prizes;
- to grant fellowships; and
- to undertake evaluation studies.

GRADE brings out publications under quality assurance series. So far it published eight such quality assurance manuals covering various sub-systems of BRAOU besides several other publications.



In order to promote system based research, GRADE started Ph.D. program in distance education in 2003. The multi-dimensional activities of GRADE have spread the climate of research among academics of the University.

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## **5.8 LET US SUM UP**

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The BRAOU, being the first open university in India, has brought legitimacy to the open learning system in the country. The credibility of distance education no longer needs to be established. It is eminently suited to the convenience of heterogeneous group of learners. It has been using the latest technology in communication. BRAOU proved that open learning is cost-effective and the student unit cost is much less than the unit cost in conventional education. The quality of material produced for purposes of learning is also very good. In spite of some limitations, the university has realized its objectives of greater access to disadvantaged and marginalized communities; flexibility in the learning process; use of multiple mediums in the enrichment of learning and quality and relevance of teaching and learning processes. To state it briefly, the achievements of BRAOU are really commendable.

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## **5.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS**

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### **Check Your Progress 1**

- a) Towards an Open Learning System (August, 1982).
- b) The legislation to establish the Andhra Pradesh Open University, the first of its kind in India, was prepared and piloted in the state legislature and made into a law within a span of a few weeks. All this happened because of political will and commitment of the state government.

### **Check Your Progress 2**

The quality parameters for academic programmes are – higher content and instructional standards; parity with similar courses in regular institutions; learner centric; adhere to rigorous internal and external academic norms and processes and meet appropriate exit standards.

### **Check Your Progress 3**

The main functions are to conduct tutorial classes/academic counseling sessions; to provide information, to facilitate learner view television, audio-video material and provide books and periodicals.

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