

# Course: Planning & Management of Distance Education (832)

## Semester: Spring, 2022

### Assignment No. 01

#### Q.1 Discuss the open and distance learning competencies.

1) Open distance learning ( ODL ) is easy and accessible to all. ODL is a learning distance that can open or available for anyone and is regardless of age, qualification or to the ethnic group as well. The distance is to study away from the institution or college and the time of teaching and learning is separated. The institution or college will prepare the course materials in advance. The learning method is the student to self studying of the course material at home or other places and to complete the assigned assignment.

The top ten competencies portray the dual importance of both communication and technical skills in distance education. These ten competencies are: (1) Interpersonal Communication, (2) Planning Skills, (3) Collaboration/Teamwork Skills, (4) English Proficiency, (5) Writing Skills, (6) Organizational Skills, (7) Feedback Skills, (8) Knowledge of Distance Education Field, (9) Basic Technology Knowledge, and (10) Technology Access Knowledge. The resulting competency model will be useful in serving as a research foundation for development training and certification programs for distance education professionals.

The ODL learning is does not require the present of the teacher. The learning place does not necessarily at the same time in teaching. For this education learning the methods of the communication is thru 'technologies innovations like self-instructional electronic communication, telephone, printed materials, audio, broadcasting, video and online communication.' ( WOU CD: Unit2). The student can have the comfort of studying at home.

The ODL it has two learning instruction such as synchronous and asynchronous.

The characteristics of open distance learning as following:-

The learning for the student and teacher – the student is learning in different place, time and maybe both with the tutor.

E.g. WOU, the student can always learn thru the 'My LMS' to go to 'Public forum' or the ' General Discussion' link to learn more.

The learner need to be self-managed – student need to be independent and well organize to learn by themselves.

E.g. WOU, will provide a course material such as textbook, printed material or CD form for each student. The student can learn or study their own when they are free.

Is thru 'synchronous and asynchronous learning' process ( WOU:CD:Unit2.2) – the tutor will be teaching and learning that maybe at the same place or different times.

E.g. WOU, the tutor and the student will only meet once a month for a discussion or learning at the centre or maybe thru video conferencing.

The course can be unlimited access – student can have unlimited access

to course by internet to the tutorial which flexible throughout 24 hour a day, a week or a year.

E.g. WOU, student can have the support to get more information to the course by using the internet access that provided from the Open University.

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Learning process is on-demand and 'Just in time' – from the digital learning will provide knowledge as often as student required regardless when and where. From this learning concept is generally student finds more satisfaction and benefit to give benefit of cost saving for the employers.

E.g. WOU, student can access anytime by provided website from the Open University that can give them easy access and knowledge such as the 'Tutorial' link with the upload of the files or document that relevant to their course. From this method is save a lots of time and they can learn 'anywhere-anytime'.

Is an institutional accreditation- the institution or agency has a certified or accredited and the learning by self-evaluation that without the recognition of the official learning from the institute.

E.g. WOU, it has utilized of the accreditation academic to ensure the distance learning is quality and as according to the accreditation standard.

The mixed-media is in use for the courseware- such as radio and television, video, print, audio cassette, telecommunications and computer-based learning and for pre-tested and up-to-date before use.

E.g. WOU, uses the printed, CD, computer based learning and others to distribute to the student and tutor for they learning of the course. From the material student can study their own when according to their schedule.

It is a two-way communication – the student and tutor can communicate from passive receipt from using web-based instruction broadcast signal such as synchronous or asynchronous.

E.g. Open University, the used of two-way communication of audio-conference can be deliver to the student ( the voice that can communicate each other ) or two-way video which the student can see and communicate with each other. The student is able to participate with each other in real-time and class.

Face-to-face meeting for the tutorials- the students can connect with other in library study, practice sessions and laboratory.

E.g. WOU, by using the 'Student Portal' in WOU website, the learning process is by posts to the website such as assignment, discussion and lesson material of the course. From this webpage the student can download the information to read or view based on their schedule. Besides, student can interact with other students to group up to study or having discussion together by using the WOU library.

2 ) The learning management system ( LMS ), WawasanLearn, is an online learning (e-learning) software package that management and to deliver resources and data to students. From this LMS technology is makes convenience to the students and tutor to give them support in more options in learning environments.

### Q.2 Critically examine the Society-based Educational Models.

Historically, American education served both political and economic needs, which dictated the function of education. Today, sociologists and educators debate the function of education. Three main theories represent their views: the functionalist theory, the conflict theory, and the symbolic interactionist theory.

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The **functionalist theory** focuses on the ways that universal education serves the needs of society. Functionalists first see education in its manifest role: conveying basic knowledge and skills to the next generation. **Durkheim** (the founder of functionalist theory) identified the latent role of education as one of socializing people into society's mainstream. This “moral education,” as he called it, helped form a more-cohesive social structure by bringing together people from diverse backgrounds, which echoes the historical concern of “Americanizing” immigrants.

Functionalists point to other latent roles of education such as transmission of **core values** and social control. The core values in American education reflect those characteristics that support the political and economic systems that originally fueled education. Therefore, children in America receive rewards for following schedules, following directions, meeting deadlines, and obeying authority.

The most important value permeating the American classroom is **individualism**—the ideology that advocates the **liberty rights**, or independent action, of the individual. American students learn early, unlike their Japanese or Chinese counterparts, that society seeks out and reveres the best individual, whether that person achieves the best score on a test or the most points on the basketball court. Even collaborative activities focus on the leader, and team sports single out the one most valuable player of the year. The carefully constructed curriculum helps students develop their identities and **self-esteem**. Conversely, Japanese students, in a culture that values community in place of individuality, learn to be ashamed if someone singles them out, and learn **social esteem**—how to bring honor to the group, rather than to themselves.

Going to school in a capitalist nation, American students also quickly learn the importance of **competition**, through both competitive learning games in the classroom, and through activities and athletics outside the classroom. Some kind of prize or reward usually motivates them to play, so students learn early to associate winning with possessing. Likewise, schools overtly teach patriotism, a preserver of political structure. Students must learn the Pledge of Allegiance and the stories of the nation's heroes and exploits. The need to instill patriotic values is so great that mythology often takes over, and teachers repeat stories of George Washington's honesty or Abraham Lincoln's virtue even though the stories themselves (such as Washington confessing to chopping down the cherry tree) may be untrue.

Another benefit that functionalists see in education is **sorting**—separating students on the basis of merit. Society's needs demand that the most capable people get channeled into the most important occupations. Schools identify the most capable students early. Those who score highest on classroom and standardized tests enter accelerated programs and college-preparation courses. Sociologists Talcott Parsons, Kingsley Davis, and Wilbert Moore referred to this as **social placement**. They saw this process as a beneficial function in society.

After sorting has taken place, the next function of education, **networking** (making interpersonal connections), is inevitable. People in high school and college network with those in similar classes and majors. This networking may become professional or remain personal. The most significant role of education in this regard is

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matchmaking. Sociologists primarily interest themselves in how sorting and networking lead couples together of similar backgrounds, interests, education, and income potential. People place so much importance on this function of education that some parents limit their children's options for college to insure that they attend schools where they can meet the “right” person to marry.

Functionalists point to the ironic dual role of education in both preserving and changing culture. Studies show that, as students progress through college and beyond, they usually become increasingly liberal as they encounter a variety of perspectives. Thus, more educated individuals are generally more liberal, while less educated people tend toward conservatism. Moreover, the heavy emphasis on research at most institutions of higher education puts them on the cutting edge of changes in knowledge, and, in many cases, changes in values as well. Therefore, while the primary role of education is to preserve and pass on knowledge and skills, education is also in the business of transforming them.

**Conflict theory** sees the purpose of education as maintaining social inequality and preserving the power of those who dominate society. Conflict theorists examine the same functions of education as functionalists. Functionalists see education as a beneficial contribution to an ordered society; however, conflict theorists see the educational system as perpetuating the status quo by dulling the lower classes into being obedient workers. Both functionalists and conflict theorists agree that the educational system practices sorting, but they disagree about how it enacts that sorting. Functionalists claim that schools sort based upon merit; conflict theorists argue that schools sort along distinct class and ethnic lines. According to conflict theorists, schools train those in the working classes to accept their position as a lower-class member of society. Conflict theorists call this role of education the “hidden curriculum.”

Conflict theorists point to several key factors in defending their position. First, property taxes fund most schools; therefore, schools in affluent districts have more money. Such areas are predominantly white. They can afford to pay higher salaries, attract better teachers, and purchase newer texts and more technology. Students who attend these schools gain substantial advantages in getting into the best colleges and being tracked into higher-paying professions. Students in less affluent neighborhoods that do not enjoy these advantages are less likely to go to college and are more likely to be tracked into vocational or technical training. They also represent far higher numbers of minority students.

**Symbolic interactionists** limit their analysis of education to what they directly observe happening in the classroom. They focus on how teacher expectations influence student performance, perceptions, and attitudes.

**Robert Rosenthal** and **Lenore Jacobson** conducted the landmark study for this approach in 1968. First, they examined a group of students with standard IQ tests. The researchers then identified a number of students who they said would likely show a sharp increase in abilities over the coming year. They informed the teachers of the results, and asked them to watch and see if this increase did occur. When the researchers repeated the IQ tests at the end of the year, the students identified by the researchers did indeed show higher IQ scores. The

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significance of this study lies in the fact that the researchers had randomly selected a number of average students. The researchers found that when the teachers expected a particular performance or growth, it occurred. This phenomenon, where a false assumption actually occurs because someone predicted it, is called a **self-fulfilling prophecy**. For example, the stock market may be stable with rising values. If investors become afraid that the market will crash, however, they may suddenly sell their stocks, which causes the market to crash. The crash occurred simply because investors feared it would do so.

**Ray Rist** conducted research similar to the Rosenthal-Jacobson study in 1970. In a kindergarten classroom where both students and teacher were African American, the teacher assigned students to tables based on ability; the “better” students sat at a table closer to her, the “average” students sat at the next table, and the “weakest” students sat at the farthest table. Rist discovered that the teacher assigned the students to a table based on the teacher's perception of the students' skill levels on the eighth day of class, without any form of testing to verify the placement. Rist also found that the students the teacher perceived as “better” learners came from higher social classes, while the “weak” students were from lower social classes.

### **Q.3 What do you understand by opportunity costs? Also discuss financing of distance education.**

When teachers make decisions for their classroom, they often have to consider what the opportunity cost will be for a particular path. They must know what they will be giving up in order to pursue their desired route. Most schools are adopting digital learning platforms with the increasing popularity of edtech. Educators are left wondering what they might be missing out on by opting for these new forms of technology.

#### **Digital learning could take away from a more equalized academic system.**

The previous model of education used written materials and textbooks to ensure that all students had access to the same information. Sending textbooks home with children guaranteed that low-income students had access to the same study materials and answers as those from high-income households. This is no longer true when digital learning usurps the more traditional model. Those from low-income households may not have the same technology available at home to study and practice necessary skills.

#### **Students are losing their interpersonal skills.**

School is one of the only places where students will learn to navigate the social world around them. Their peers often have grace for their blunders and social mishaps at this age. In the future, their employers are likely to be far less forgiving of a social faux pas. Unfortunately, one of the opportunity costs of digital learning could be a child's social skills.

They will now be spending much of their time in front of a computer screen instead of among their peers. We are creating a society that continues to make the next generation less socially inclined than the ones before. In fact, two out of five millennials have found difficulty in their job or personal life due to a lack of social skills. As a result of too much screen time, their interpersonal skills could be extremely lacking upon graduation.

#### **Staying on task is less likely with digital learning.**

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Every classroom is bound to have a few daydreamers, but it used to be relatively easy for teachers to keep a class focused on their work. By focusing on their classwork and materials, students would be more apt to absorb the material and retain it for longer periods of time. In today's classroom with digital learning, you might find that staying on task is a lot less likely.

Children have shorter attention spans as the result of spending too much time in front of screens. Distractions are plentiful, and your students might have lower academic performance because of their digital learning. This could be a dangerous opportunity cost for something that is generally considered to be a very positive item.

Digital learning presents a lot of wonderful opportunities to students, but is the cost too high for our students? After weighing what we might be giving up with this new system of digital learning, teachers might want to move forward with caution and restraint. Some digital learning could be extremely beneficial in the classroom. However, we shouldn't rush to overdo it or we may offer students too much of a good thing.

Our inclination is to focus on immediate financial trade-offs, but trade-offs can involve other areas of personal or professional well-being as well—in the short and long run.

That's why Caceres-Santamaria challenges us to consider not only **explicit alternatives**—the choices and costs present at the time of decision-making—but also **implicit alternatives**, which are “unseen” opportunity costs.

“It's about thinking beyond the present and assessing alternative uses for the money—that is, not being shortsighted,” she writes.

What are some other examples of opportunity cost?

- A student spends three hours and \$20 at the movies the night before an exam. The opportunity cost is time spent studying and that money to spend on something else.
- A farmer chooses to plant wheat; the opportunity cost is planting a different crop, or an alternate use of the resources (land and farm equipment).
- A commuter takes the train to work instead of driving. It takes 70 minutes on the train, while driving takes 40 minutes. The opportunity cost is an hour spent elsewhere each day.

### Q.4 Critically analyze the costs involved in open and distance learning (ODL).

The cost-effectiveness of distance education

While comparative data on the relative cost of particular media is still scarce, there is plenty of evidence that distance education can be more cost-effective than traditional education.

The basic cost function of distance education is explained in Appendix 1. Broadly speaking, this function is:

$$T=S[\pi]+C\mu+F$$

where T is the total costs, S is the number of students, C is the number of courses or volume of materials,  $[\pi]$  is the unit cost per student,  $\mu$  is the unit cost of the courses or materials, and F is the fixed costs.

Those planning a distance education system in the hope that they will reap economies of scale must ensure that:



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- the variable cost per student is less than that found in conventional systems operating at a similar education level
- the number of students  $S$  is large enough to bring down the average cost per student to a level where it is lower than the average cost found in conventional educational systems. The average cost per student ( $AC$ ) is found by using the formula:

$$AC = \frac{C\mu + F}{S} + [pi]$$

- drop out rate is kept at a reasonably low level.
- the number of courses or volume of materials  $C$  does not grow so large as to increase the value of  $(C\mu + F)$  to a level where it becomes difficult, given the likely volume of students ( $S$ ), for the average cost per student ( $AC$ ) down to a level that is 'competitive' with the average cost per student in conventional educational systems.

These conditions have very significant implications for:

- the choice of media. In theory distance educators have a wide choice available to them. In practice this is often constrained not only by the absolute costs of a particular medium but by the effect its adoption may have on average student costs.
- market research—aimed at ensuring that sufficient students will be attracted to particular programmes at the institution to enable economies of scale to be achieved.
- the resources put into student services. Since these costs are a student variable cost, the degree of investment in student support services has to be weighed against the effect on the average cost per student ( $AC$ ) and on drop-out rates.
- the resources put into the central infrastructure (fixed costs of the institution) are too large relative to student numbers.

The concept of cost-effectiveness needs to be distinguished from that of cost-efficiency.

Effectiveness is concerned with outputs: an organisation is effective to the extent that it produces outputs that are relevant to the needs and demands of its clients. It is cost-effective if its outputs are relevant to the needs and demands of clients and cost less than the outputs of other institutions that meet this criteria. This implies the existence of criterion for the measurement of effectiveness.

Efficiency is concerned with the cost of achieving outputs: an organisation is efficient relative to another programme if its output costs less (per unit) than that of the other institution. It becomes more efficient to the extent that it maintains outputs with a less than proportionate increase in inputs.

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Organisations can be effective but not necessarily efficient. For example, one can teach Russian to Italians very effectively (i.e. they learn to speak Russian like a native), but if the cost per student of doing this is five times the costs incurred by anyone else, then one is not doing it very efficiently.

An organisation may also appear to be more efficient than another one (i.e. its unit costs are lower) but the extent to which it is really efficient must depend on its effectiveness. The single-minded pursuit of efficiency (ie. cost-cutting) may damage the effectiveness of an organisation, thus diminishing its cost-effectiveness. mean that it is as cost-efficient as it could be. There may well be internal diseconomies which could be rectified without damaging its effectiveness.

Distance and open education systems are not always more cost-effective than conventional educational institutions. Some of the major factors which may make distance or open education institutions less cost-effective than traditional ones are mentioned in paragraph 3.6.

It is important to point out that what is not being compared is the absolute cost of different systems. Distance education requires considerable investment before a single student can be enrolled—in both the development and production of course materials and the design and implementation of an institution's infrastructure. Thus Wagner (1977 : 360) pointed out that the ratio of fixed to variable course costs in conventional British universities was 8:1 whereas in the British Open University it was 2000:1. What is cheaper in distance education is the cost per student. What is compared is the average cost per student, full-time equivalent student, or student credit hour.

In summary, a distance system may cost more in absolute terms than the conventional systems with which it is being compared, but it can be more cost-efficient because it has sufficient students to bring the average cost per student down below that of conventional systems—thus making it more cost-effective.

Perraton (1982 : 21–35) shows:

- that at the primary basic education level, some distance teaching systems with even quite small numbers of students (eg. Radioprimeria, Mexico with 2,800 pupils) had lower average costs than conventional schools, and students achieved comparable scores. Other systems with large student numbers (eg. ACPO, Colombia with 70000 pupils) were also cheaper. However, in the Ivory Coast the primary educational tv system had a higher average student cost than conventional systems, even though it had 23 1000 enrolments annually. (The cost of setting up a tv network and of paying teachers salaries near to those of regular teachers meant that even with its large student numbers the Ivory Coast ETV system could not bring the average cost per student down.)
- at the secondary level, where there are more systems, some distance education systems (such as the Correspondence Course Unit, Kenya with from 340 to 2900 students each year) were more expensive than traditional systems. The Malawi Correspondence College (with 3800 students) had a cost per successful student that was more expensive than that of day schools but cheaper than that of boarding



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schools, while the National Extension College, UK, were cheaper than full-time classes and probably cheaper than evening classes. Yet other systems (eg. Tevec in Canada with 25000 students) were said to be cheaper than the in-school alternative.

- at the tertiary level, the British Open University is probably the best studied of all distance education systems. The cost per graduate at the Open University (which has an annual enrolment of 20000–25000) is about half the cost of a graduate at a conventional university, while the cost per student per year is about one third that of a student in a conventional university. The relative advantage of the Open University is less when comparing the cost per graduate because it has a higher drop-out rate than conventional UK universities. The costs at Athabasca University, Canada (with an annual enrolment of 4400) is comparable to that found in conventional universities in Alberta. These costs are for universities designed to teach only at a distance. Universities which run distance education programmes 'pick-a-back' on conventional programmes can expand their student numbers for relatively modest costs per student by teaching the additional students at a distance.
- in non-formal education, it is much less easy to draw comparisons between the costs of distance and conventional educational methods, not least because non-formal education does not lend itself to traditional methods of teaching what can be said is that where distance methods are used in large scale projects the unit costs are low.

Thus distance teaching can be cheaper than conventional methods, but this is not invariably the case. It is clear that achievement of high student numbers has a major impact on whether or not average costs per student are brought down to a level at which distance education is an attractive proposition. It is equally clear that distance systems have a high absolute cost and that it is cheaper to use conventional methods where student numbers are restricted.

### **Q.5 Elaborate general principles of staff training for the maintenance of institution's record.**

Employee training isn't simply a nice-to-have element of human resources management—it's a must-have. From training on your company's vision and mission, to compliance training, to soft skills training such as time management, the knowledge of your staff is directly linked to the success of your business. Follow these ten basic employee training principles to make sure you're doing it right.

#### **#1 – Train Every Day**

The most important principle of employee training is to view training as an ongoing process, not a single event. When you train every day, in one form or another, it becomes part of your culture. This doesn't mean sitting your employees down in front of a computer to take 30 minutes of training each day – there are a lot of ways you can incorporate training into your daily routines. Create daily training tips that can provide current information or reminders, share relevant articles, encourage employees to sign up for webinars, initiate

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discussion on training topics; even just five minutes a day can help promote a culture of learning within your organization.

### #2 – Create Learning Objectives

Learning objectives define what your employees will be able to do when they complete a training program. Objectives are multi-tiered. You should have objectives for your overall training plan, for broad training topics, for individual courses, and for sections within those courses. You can also set individual objectives for each of your employees. Discuss these objectives with employees and get their feedback on what they feel is realistic as well as what objectives they would like to work toward to improve themselves. When employees are aware of your expectations and the objectives they're working towards, they're more likely to apply themselves and do well.

### #3 – Address Skills Gaps

Often, it's easy to know where to apply your employee training principles. Compliance training, for example, is a given. In other instances, you need to conduct a thorough gap analysis to identify specific areas where employees lack the skills they need to be successful. Keep an eye out for obvious signs of a skills gap: poor performance reviews or employee incident reports, new technology or software adoptions, and staffing changes are all indicators that there is a gap needing to be addressed.

### #4 – Deliver a Consistent Message

For training to transfer to the workplace, it's important that all employees receive a consistent message. The right learning management system (LMS) will help you deliver that consistency. In fact, consistency is one of the main benefits of online training. It's also important to ensure that managers, trainers, and mentors are delivering a consistent message during on-the-job training. Checklists, templates, and manager sign-offs within the LMS can all be utilized to ensure that all topics are being covered during on-the-job training.

### #5 – Blended Learning Methodologies

There is no single right way to train. Everyone has a different learning style, which is why the list of basic employee training principles includes delivering training in different ways. When you implement blended learning methodologies, your training will be more effective overall. Blended learning can take multiple forms – including mixing online training modules with opportunities for role playing, on-the-job training, or classroom training where applicable. There's no right or wrong way to build a blended learning strategy, so seek out the learning options that work best for you and your employees, and frequently evaluate those options to make sure they remain the best options.

### #6 – Create Custom Learning Paths

While you'll have many courses that are mandatory for all employees, such as sexual harassment training, overall learning paths can be customized for each employee based on their specific career development goals. You can also use custom learning paths as a way of upskilling or reskilling employees. Learning paths to

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consider include: an orientation learning path for all the training a new employee needs, a management track for employees demonstrating leadership potential, or a compliance learning path to schedule with annual refresher training and ensure employees are always up to date on mandated compliance training.

### #7 – Evaluate Comprehension

Testing is only an effective principle of employee training if you have a solid plan in place to follow up on poor assessment results. Use testing as a way to determine which employees need further training and which are ready for more advanced content. Evaluating your employees is a great way to certify and advance them along their learning paths. Quizzes and certifications motivate employees to learn more and retain their knowledge while also providing them with a sense of accomplishment when they receive an actual certification at the end of their training.

### #8 – Streamline Administration

Training administration is a common thread throughout all the employee principles. By streamlining important training administration tasks, trainers and managers have more time for critical follow-up interactions. A learning management system allows you to assign and track training in real-time. With most LMS platforms, you can even set up schedules to automatically assign training based on job role or status, saving administrators the time of going in and assigning training manually. The same can be done for specific training modules, such as compliance that needs to be retaken after designated periods of time. You can even automate reporting so a notification arrives in your inbox when a report is ready to view.

### #9 – Engage Employees

An engaged employee is a happier and more productive employee. In order to increase engagement with training, employees need to know what's in it for them. When you engage your employees through training, they'll be more likely to implement what they've learned. Give them a reason to pay attention and care. Investment in a good training program is also an investment in your employees' future with your organization; employees want to be trained and want to know you're willing to invest. This alone will help increase engagement and productivity.

### #10 – Reward Successes

When you've applied all the employee training principles correctly, there's still one thing left to do: Let your employees know you appreciate the time and effort they put in to learning. Look for opportunities to reward training successes, both big and small. Everyone likes to know they're appreciated, so rewarding your employees will go a long way towards increasing their loyalty.