



DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY, ABRAKA

OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING



**FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING SCIENCE**

**COURSE CODE: NSC202
COURSE TITLE: DISTANCE LEARNER STUDY GUIDE**

COURSE TEAM

Content Developer/Writer:

Dr. M.I Ofili (Associate Professor)
Department of Nursing Science
Delta State University, Abraka

Dr. B.C. Nwogueze
Department of Physiology
Delta State University, Abraka

Content Editor:

Dr. A.E Ojieh
Department of Physiology
Delta State University, Abraka

Content Coordinator:

Dr. M.I Ofili (Associate Professor)
Department of Nursing Science
Delta State University, Abraka

ODL Programme Director:

Prof. Asaiyai R.I
Faculty of Education,
Delta State University, Abraka

ODL Content Editor:

@2023 By DELSU Press
Delta State University, Abraka
PMB1, Delta State Nigeria.

Email:
URL: www.delsu.edu.ng

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to NSC202 titled ‘Distance Study Guide for Students’. It is a two-credit unit compulsory course with a minimum duration of one semester designed for both undergraduate and Postgraduate students. NSC202 is designed to acquaint students with the techniques of studying through open and distance learning to achieve academic success. Read and note the intended learning outcomes for every study session as this will guide you on what expected study outcome required at the completion of the respective study session.

NSC202 will provide you with proper understanding of the course structure and requirements, course expectations, instructional materials needed for the course, how to attempt the computer-marked assignment, assess course assignment files and information relating to examination and grading of the course. This course guide provides you with better understanding of what to expect in open and distance learning. Endeavour to attempt the in-text questions as this would be used to evaluate your academic performance. A minimum of three tutor based tests will be given, in addition to one final examination at the end of the semester that qualifies you pass the course.

Read the study modules, listen to the audios and videos were applicable, complete all in-text assessments, open the links and read, participate in discussion forums, read the recommended books and other materials offered, create your portfolios, and participate in the online facilitation to successfully finish this course. Happy reading through the lens.

AIM OF THE COURSE

The course has four modules and sixteen study sessions designed to be covered within sixteen weeks. Each study session has introduction, intended learning outcomes, main content, conclusion, and summary as well as references/ further readings. In module one of NSC202, you will be exposed to the meaning and historical development of open and distance learning system in Nigeria and at the global level, the features in critical features of ODL and teaching and learning procedures in ODL. The module two addresses core skills required in open and distance learning. These skills include; speaking skills, listening skills, writing skills, reading skills and course study strategies.

The module three deals with learner support services in open and distance learning under which the sub-sessions treated topics like; learners’ support services, categories of learners’ support services, components of ODL learners’ support services and importance of learners’ support services. Whereas, the module four examined the modes of assessment in open and distance learning. Students are taught meaning of assessment in ODL, instruction-based assessment, examination courses assessment and non-examinable courses assessment.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE COURSE

After reading this course, student will be able to:

- i. Define open and distance learning and the various stages of distance education
- ii. Understand the place of technology in online teaching and learning

- iii. Know the features of open and distance learning
- iv. Summarize the elements of a good learning environment
- v. Describe the role, knowledge and skills of the ODL tutor
- vi. Identify ODL learners and their characteristics
- vii. Define and list the basic concepts and terminology about speaking skills
- viii. Classify the types of speaking and the key components of speaking skill
- ix. Understand the benefits and challenges encountered in speaking
- x. Understand the concept of listening as a study skill and types of listening skills
- xi. Evaluate the key components of listening, benefits challenges to effective listening
- xii. Understand the mechanics of effective writing
- xiii. Identify the various types of writing skills
- xiv. Evaluate the element of effective writing, benefits and challenges to good writing skills
- xv. Understand the concept of reading skill and types of reading skills
- xvi. Evaluate the effective reading, benefits and challenges to effective reading skills
- xvii. Explore the strategies to avoiding bad reading and the types of learners
- xviii. Evaluate the essential learner's characteristics and the techniques for effective study
- xix. Explain the mechanics for adopting the right study strategies
- xx. Identify technique for studying for tests and examinations
- xxi. Understand and explain the concept of learners' support services
- xxii. Identify the purpose of learners' support services
- xxiii. Describe elements of effective learners' support services
- xxiv. Understand the categories of academic support services in ODL
- xxv. Classify the different forms of ICT support services in ODL
- xxvi. Explain the various types of administrative and online counselling support in ODL
- xxvii. Understand the directorates in ODL and the components of ODL learners' support services
- xxviii. Understand the stages involved in academic counselling
- xxix. Understand the importance of feedback as a learners' support service
- xxx. Understand the role of collaboration as a learners' support service
- xxxi. Identify the need of counselling opportunities as a learners' support service
- xxxii. Understand the place of Course accessibility and usability in ODL
- xxxiii. Understand the concept of instruction-based assessment
- xxxiv. Classify the different types of instruction-based assessment
- xxxv. Understand the concept of semester assessment and types of semester assessment
- xxxvi. Explain the tips for preparation for semester examination and the possible pitfalls
- xxxvii. Understand the concept of practical based courses, practicum and SIWES
- xxxviii. Compare between teaching practice, clinical posting and community-based education and service (COBES) posting

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

The blended learning mode will be adopted in delivery of the course NSC202 such that 70% will be online and distance learning protocol whereas 30% will involve physical contact involving interactive sessions with facilitators. You will be provided with soft copies accessible from the university e-courseware resources while the hard copies of course materials will be

obtained from the ODL Directorate of Delta State University, Abraka. To access the online class sessions and this course material, you are required to register for this course online.

You can join the interactive online activities through the course link on the ODL website of the University. Endeavour to participate in scheduled activities and submit assignments were applicable for each Study Session as stipulated in the course schedule template before deadlines as grades will form part of the overall assessment for the course. You will be expected to carefully study the course module while attempting the assigned readings and the tutor-marked assessment provided at the end of every Study Sessions, to help you understand the course contents in detail and prepare adequately for the in-course computer-marked assessment and the end of course assessment/ examination. Actively participating in group discussion with your colleagues will provide you with valuable information.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR THE COURSE

The following are the instructional materials required for the course;

- Course Guide
- Study Sessions
- Text Books
- Presentation (Audio, visual or Slide)
- Assignment Files
- Tutorials

COMPUTER-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (CMA) PROCEDURE

The Computer Marked Assignment of the NSC202 will consist of continuous assessment structured into CMA-1, CMA-2 and CMA-3. Every module has an activity that must be done by the student as spelt out in the course materials. These exercises are to aid you in understanding the concepts of the course and it is advisable that you attempt each of them.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

To complete the course NSC202, you are required to read the Study Sessions for each module and related materials, thereafter, attempt the specific in-text questions as requested by each course facilitator. The CMA and assignments will account for 30% of the total course mark. Ensure that your assignments are submitted to your facilitator before the stipulated deadline. Request for extension of submission deadline by contacting the facilitator on time. Note that no extension will be granted after de due date except on exceptional conditions.

COURSE EXAMINATION AND GRADING

At the end of the course, you are expected to sit for the final written examination of NSC202 for 2 hours' duration at a stipulated examination venue within the university. This examination will account for 70% of the total course mark. The examination will cover every area of the course including questions related to the self-testing, practice exercise and in-text questions that you previously practiced in the Study Sessions of the course.

COURSE MARKING SCHEME

Table 1: Marking Scheme for NSC202

Category	Marks
Assignments and CMAs	CMA 1 – 10Marks CMA 2 – 10Marks CMA 3 – 10Marks Total: 30Marks
End of course examination	70% of overall course marks.
Total	100% of course materials.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Work through each study unit carefully and take notes. Participate in the online real-time facilitation as arranged. If you missed the scheduled online real-time facilitation, you can watch the recorded session at your leisure time. Each live facilitation session will be video filmed and made available on the ODL student platform.

Table 2: Course Schedule for NSC202

Course Guide	Topics	Weekly Activity	Assignment
Module One	Overview of Open And Distance Learning	Week 1	
Study Session 1	Meaning and Historical Development of ODL	Week 1	Assignment 1
Study Session 2	Features in ODL	Week 2	Assignment 2
Study Session 3	Teaching and Learning Procedures in ODL	Week 3	Assignment 3
Module Two	Core Skills Required in Open and Distance Learning	Week 4	
Study Session 1	Speaking Skills	Week 4	Assignment 4
Study Session 2	Listening Skills	Week 5	Assignment 5
Study Session 3	Writing Skills	Week 6	Assignment 6
Study Session 4	Reading Skills	Week 7	Assignment 7
Study Session 5	Course Study Strategies	Week 8	Assignment 8
Module Three	Learner Support Services in Open and Distance Learning	Week 9	
Study Session 1	Learners' Support Services	Week 9	Assignment 9
Study Session 2	Categories of Learners' Support Services	Week 10	Assignment 10
Study Session 3	Components of ODL Learners' Support Services	Week 11	Assignment 11
Study Session 4	Importance of Learners' Support Services	Week 12	Assignment 12

Module Four	Modes of Assessment in Open and Distance Learning	Week 13	
Study Session 1	Meaning of Assessment in ODL	Week 13	Assignment 13
Study Session 2	Instruction-Based Assessment	Week 14	Assignment 14
Study Session 3	Examination Courses Assessment	Week 15	Assignment 15
Study Session 4	Non-Examinable Courses Assessment	Week 16	Assignment 16
	Revision		
	Examination		
	Total	16 Weeks	

READERS GUIDE

- i. Create a study schedule for yourself. Read the stipulated guide about registration of courses, and learn what is expected of you in terms of the course, participate in online discussion forum and practical sessions
- ii. Strictly follow directives given by your facilitators and tutors for the course
- iii. By reading this course guide, you may learn more about the context of the course. Endeavour to concentrate to details, knowing that prerequisites is necessary for success.
- iv. Once you have established your personal study routine, make every effort to stick to it. The primary cause of student failure is falling behind on their course work. Please let your tutor know if you run across scheduling issues before it's too late to obtain assistance.
- v. Attempt assignment files and tutor marked assessment provided at the end of every Study Session. Submit your assignments before deadlines
- vi. Do not wait for an assignment to be returned from your facilitator before moving to the next Study Session; keenly stick to your reading timetable.
- vii. Go through your assignments as soon as they are given to you, and don't wait until the day of the exam to address any issues you may be having with any Study Session or topic.
- viii. Engage in active debate in online forums and keep in touch with the course facilitator and exchange ideas with your study group.
- ix. To be sure you have met the goal for each Study Session, go through the stipulated objectives and course outcome again. Consult your facilitator if you have questions about any of the goals.
- x. Always make reference to the provided course materials. Watch the video clips, listen to audio files and consult other online reference textbooks.
- xi. Work ahead of the interactive sessions.
- xii. Remain in contact with the DELSU ODL Directorate and visit the university websites to get pertinent information because these sites will be updated often on this site.
- xiii. Be focused and anticipate to achieve success. Don't forget, determination is the key to success.

COURSE FACILITATORS/TUTORS

You ought to make every effort to show up for the online. You will be duly notified of the dates, hours, and location of these tutorials or facilitation sessions, along with your facilitator name and contact information. Your facilitator will grade and provide feedbacks on your submitted

assignments. Actively participating in online discussion groups can benefit you much. You will have an opportunity to speak with your facilitator directly and get immediate responses to your questions especially when you are having difficulty understanding any part of the Study Sessions or difficulty with any of the tutor-marked tests or assignment exercises. Prepare a list of questions before attending course tutorials to get the most out of them.



MODULE ONE

OVERVIEW OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Study session 1: Meaning and Historical Development of ODL

Study session 2: Features in ODL

Study session 3: Teaching and Learning Procedures in ODL

STUDY SESSION 1: MEANING AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ODL

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1.0 Introduction

Educational opportunities are planned deliberately so that access to knowledge is available to individuals in spite of barriers such as geographical distance. Distance education is a form of distance education that has emerged in the history of mankind. Basically, distance education has been perceived from different dimensions as; non-traditional education, open teaching, open learning, distance teaching, distance learning, contract learning, independent study or learning, home study, extension study, life-long education, correspondence education, flexible education or learning, individualized learning, external study or learning, lifelong learning, self-access learning, experiential learning, directed private study, resource-based learning, supported self-study or continuing education. The distance education today lays emphasis not only on print medium but also on other media. Advancement in technology has transformed these forms of distance education by providing new learning opportunities to learner through Open and Distance learning played. It is therefore important for students to pay close attention to this course as it would help you to understand the demands of the open and distance learning. This study session explores the meaning of open and distance learning, brief history of the open and distance learning from the global and Nigeria perspective.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Define open and distance learning
- Identify the various stages of distance education

- Differentiate between distance learning and open learning
- Comment on the role of technology in distance learning

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Meaning of Distance Education

Distance Education (DE) is planned and organized teaching and learning in which learners are separated from teachers or facilitators in time and space. Distance education, in comparison with the conventional educational system, is a wider system in terms of both connotation and denotation. This term distance education emphasizes on the separation of the teacher and the learner, and planning of educational programmes and material by an educational institutions using technical media such as print, audio, video or computer on a large scale throughout the length of the learning process. This of course distinguishes it from conventional face-to-face education. The significant aspect of Distance Education is the separation of teacher and learner, the people of the technical media, two-way communication, the role of the educational institution, and the separation of the learner from his peer group.

Keegan (1986) argued that distance education can be carried out both in face-to-face encounters and at a distance. It would then include a range of teaching/learning strategies referred to as correspondence education, home study, independent study, external studies or teaching at a distance. Distance education provides a two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate a dialogue; this distinguishes it from other uses of technology in education. They are intended to allow access to wider section of adult population, to enable students to compensate for lost opportunities in the past or to acquire new skills and qualifications for the future. Although, in this type of education, throughout the length of the learning process people are usually taught as individuals and not in groups, such that there is the quasi-permanent absence of a learning group with the possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialization purposes.

3.2 Definition of Open and Distance Learning

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) refers to any learning activities within formal, informal, and non-formal domains that are facilitated by information and communication technologies to lessen distance, both physically and psychologically, and to increase interactivity and communication among learners, learning sources and facilitators. Open and distance learning is the extensive use of technical media for imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes for the purpose of reproducing high quality teaching material which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students at the same time wherever they live. It is rationalized by the application of division of labour and organizational principles (Peters, 1973, p.207).

The term ‘Open and Distance Learning’ reflects both the fact that all or most of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in time and space from the learner, and that the mission aims to include greater dimensions of openness and flexibility, whether in terms of access, curriculum, or other elements of structure. ODL popularly connotes learning which combines the principles of learner centeredness, lifelong learning, flexibility of learning provision, the removal of barriers to access, the recognition for credit of prior learning experience, [and] the provision of learner support. Open and distance learning includes any provision in which a

significant element of the management of the provision is at the discretion of the learner supported and facilitated by the provider. This ranges from traditional correspondence courses, on-line provision and interactive CD ROMs, e-learning, and blended learning to open learning centers and face-to-face provision where a significant element of flexibility, self-study, and learning support, is an integral part.

Not all the distance education programmes have the characteristics of an open learning system. Some are very rigid and inflexible.” The term “open” generally can be visualized from four (4) aspects: **Place**, in the sense that learning would be home-based and not restricted to class rooms or a campus; **People**, where it would not debar applicants on account of their lack of educational qualifications; The use of new **methods** of teaching; and **Ideas**. According to the Commonwealth of Learning, (1999) ODL is characterized by “separation of teacher and learner in time or place, or in both time and place; institutional accreditation; that is, learning is accredited or certified by some institution or agency.

The concept of open learning and distance learning focuses on open access to education that makes

learners free from the constraints of time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and/or groups of learners and providing opportunities of academic pursuits to educated citizens through correspondence instruction without disturbing their present employment. This type of learning is distinct from learning through your own efforts, without the official recognition of a learning institution; use of mixed-media courseware, including print, radio, and television broadcasts, video and audio cassettes, computer-based learning, and telecommunications. Courseware tends to be pre-tested and validated before use; two-way communication allows learners and tutors to interact as distinguished from the passive receipt of broadcast signals.

3.3 Global Perspective of Open and Distance Learning

The origin of distance education lies basically in the philosophy that the society has a responsibility to provide educational opportunities to those who for some reason or the other cannot go to the conventional system. The history of DE dates back to the 1700s and 1800s and reflects an egalitarian approach to education (Casey, 2008). Its history can be classified under three ages at the macro level and under five generations at the micro level. These ages and generations were shaped and determined by the dominant communication technologies adopted by distance learning. Several countries of the world have started open universities to provide innovative education and to strengthen distance education. Historically, open and distance learning at the global perspective will be discussed in four generations as presented below:

1st Generation

The first generation of distance education was defined by print technology. Although there have been examples of first-generation distance learning for hundreds of years, the combination of printing press technology and postal services made what is commonly known as correspondence education widely available. That is, this age was characterized by learning content that was been delivered by mail, and thus it was referred to as correspondence study. It was driven by a strong sense of social justice, correspondence education was provided by a variety of organisations, only some of which focused on qualifications. The foundations of group-based adult education can also be seen during the first generation of distance education.

In the United States of America, land grant universities were formed—a central part of their mission was to reach out to people from all backgrounds through correspondence courses (Moore & Kearsley, 2005). This first generation of distance education was characterized by a didactic teaching style—which Holmberg (1960) called “guided didactic conversation”.

2nd Generation

The ability to broadcast using technologies such as radio and television characterized the second generation of distance education. These broadcast technologies enhanced and added to distance education considerably (Evans & Nation, 2007). Live educational radio reduced many of the limitations of correspondence education, especially delivery time, and increased the immediacy of the learning processes. Delivery of learning content through postal services was no longer necessary once live educational radio emerged (Casey, 2008). However, interaction between the teacher and the learner, or between learners, remained minimal. The use of broadcast technologies was well illustrated in the development of the UK Open University (UKOU) and its use of television. The UK Open and Distance Education is the first Open University of the world. The underlying philosophy of the UKOU is reflected in the vision statement made by Lord Perry, the first Vice-Chancellor of the UK Open University; “The Open University is open to people, places, methods and ideas.

Open and distance learning in India started around 1960s. By the 1980s there were 34 Universities offering correspondence education through departments designed for that purpose. The first single mode Open University was established in Andhra Pradesh in 1982, followed by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), and subsequently in Bihar, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh (established throughout the 1980s and 1990s). Early associations developed into the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE). The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) was founded in 1987. National distance organizations were also established to promote educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality university education to all who wish to realize their ambitions and fulfil their potential”.

3rd Generation

The third generation is called the Computer-Based Distance Education age. This age also marked the beginning of the digital-knowledge age and network society. The scope of the concept of “distance” was altered, as distance in time and space had lost importance. Rather than reaching masses, a more personal approach of reaching individuals became possible. The prominence of teacher-centered education diminished and was replaced with learner-centered education. With the advantages and capacity increase offered by technology, interaction became the central focus for DE. The multimedia used in the previous age had become obsolete when compared to the new, higher quality computer-based multimedia, and synchronous and asynchronous instruction had grown to be as efficient as face-to-face instruction.

Other Generations

The subsequent generations had the features of the use of mobile technologies that enabled learning not considering places and spaces. New learning models, such as e-learning, mobile learning, and ubiquitous learning, appeared with highly rich and interactive content. Learning rather than teaching became the focus, and the idea of lifelong learning took on great

importance. These developments have the potential to be transformational and create new learning experiences, and to individualize the activity of learning. It seems fair to say we are at a crossroads. Some institutions confidently claim to be forging ahead and are energetically embracing these new possibilities while others are unsure. Transformation of teaching and learning requires careful exploitation of technologies, a deep understanding of teaching and learning, and expertise in the content area being delivered.

3.3 Open and Distance Learning in Nigeria

The most critical purpose of setting up any open and distance learning (ODL) institution or facility in Nigeria is to provide a range of opportunities for access to higher education to learners who, for one reason or another, prefer to acquire their education in a more flexible manner. Nigeria, with 36 individual states spread in six geopolitical zones and a Federal Capital Territory in Abuja making up the federation, is the most populated country in Africa, with an estimated population of over 206 million people. Nigeria has the most universities in Africa. As of July 2022, Nigeria had 49 federal universities, 57 state universities and 111 private universities, as well as 55 degree-awarding colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics affiliated with universities, with a combined student population of about 2.2 million. Besides the universities and affiliated degree-awarding institutions, there are also 205 colleges of education offering the National Certificate of Education, 157 public and private polytechnics, 33 colleges of agriculture, 36 special colleges and 73 public and private colleges of health.

The Nigerian National Policy on Education right from its inception as a working document in 1969 recognized the place of open and distance learning in achieving lifelong education as the basis of the nation's education policy. In this regard, ODL is perceived as learning at a distance, facilitated by a number of media, including information technologies and the Internet, CDs, flash drives, printed materials, audio recordings, etc. Institutions that operate exclusively in this mode, without students having in-person class interactions, are considered single-mode service providers. Institutions that operate a mode in which students additionally attend classes in person at designated periods during the course of their studies are dual-mode or blended ODL service providers. According to the policy document, the goals of open and distance education as it related to the National Policy on Education, (2004) are to:

- Provide access to quality education and equity in educational opportunities for those who otherwise would have been denied.
- Encourage internationalization especially of tertiary education curricula.
- Ameliorate the effect of internal and external brain drain in tertiary institutions by utilizing experts as teachers regardless of their locations or places of work
- Meet special needs of employers by mounting special certificate courses for their employees at their work place.

The threshold of revolution in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), has transformed the Nigeria Educational system in recent times considering the large number of candidates seeking for university admission yearly but are constrained by time, space and location. The idea of nonresidential higher education gained traction after Nigerian independence from Britain in 1960, when the government enabled national broadcast institutions to provide some form of distance education through radio and television. Thus,

distance education started with broadcasts from the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation and the Educational Television Programme of the National Television of Nigeria. At that early stage, ODE delivery gravitated to using normal media channels, mainly television and radio, to broadcast “educational programmes” to viewers. The evolution of ODL in Nigeria has its antecedents in teacher training.

In 1962, the government of the Northern Region of Nigeria, then a single geopolitical expression under the Ministry of Education of Northern Nigeria, networked their various teacher training requirements to the Institute of Education in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, which provided the Teachers’ In-Service Education Programme (TISEP); this served the training needs of active teachers during “summer breaks,” when the mainstream faculties were devoid of teaching activities. In 1976, the Institute of Education first offered the Nigerian Certificate of Education via correspondence. Hence, while the attention of analysts and policy makers regarding ODL in Nigeria had always focused on the universities, this often glossed over the fact that the first single-mode ODL institution was introduced in the country in 1977 with the establishment of the National Teachers’ Institute, Kaduna by the federal government of Nigeria.

Table 1: History of Distance education initiatives in Nigeria

S/N	Distance Education Initiative	Status
1	Distance education course using radio by Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation	1960
2	Educational television programmes by National Television of Nigeria	1966
3	University of the Air by Ahmadu Bello University	1972
4	Correspondence and Open University Unit (COSU), the then Distance Learning Institute by University of Lagos	1974
5	Teachers’ In-Service Education Programme by Ahmadu Bello University	1975
6	Teachers’ Training Programme by National Teachers’ Institute	1976
7	Open learning by National Open University	1983
8	Centre for Distance Learning by University of Abuja	1990

Access from National Universities Commission (2022).

In 2002 the suspended National Open University Act of 1983 was reactivated, providing a firmer legal basis for the university. The nascent management of the university took a strong view that the name of the university should be National Open University of Nigeria to properly identify the National Open University as that of Nigeria, as is the case with the Open University of the United Kingdom. The government bought the idea and started recognising the university as the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is currently the only Uni-mode university mandated for Open and Distance Learning in the delivery of university education. The former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo by 1 October 2001, resuscitated the National Open University considering the need of people to learn at their convenience outside the confines of the four walls of the traditional conventional system of education.

The idea of reviving the National Open University had entered the government policy narrative. The federal Ministry of Education, under Professor Abraham Babalola Borishade, set up a high-

powered committee to revisit the resuscitation of the university under the chairmanship of Professor Olugbemi Jegede. On 12 October 2001, Professor Olugbemi Jegede, “on loan” to the federal government of Nigeria by the Open University of Hong Kong, was appointed National Co-ordinator of National Open and Distance Education Programmes, as it was then, and was made a member of the initial permanent staff of the National Open University by President Olusegun Obasanjo. This was the name by which the university was officially referenced in the NOUN (Amendment) Act, 2018. As of 2021, the National Open University of Nigeria is the largest university in West Africa in terms of student population, with a total of 640,942 enrolled students spread over 90 study centers and 15 correctional centres.

Some Nigerian universities like the University of Lagos; the University of Ibadan; the University of Abuja, Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Federal University of Technology Yola and recently Delta State University, Abraka now operates a dual-mode tertiary education system which has the inherent capacity of relieving the enormous pressure on the conventional system and also ensuring education for all. By 2021, Nigeria had a total of 15 universities offering ODL, out of which 11 were federal, two were run by state governments, while the other two were private with limited capacity to deliver degree programmes by the conventional face-to-face in addition to the open and distance learning mode. These ODL facilities produces a large number of certified young men and women through accessible, flexible and cost-effective tertiary education and contribute significantly to human resource development in Nigeria.

Table 2: Universities offering dual-mode ODL in Nigeria

S/N	Name of Institution	Status
1	Distance Learning Centre, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Federal
2	Distance Learning Centre, University of Ibadan	Federal
3	Federal University of Technology Minna, Centre for Open Distance and eLearning	Federal
4	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Centre for Distance Learning	Federal
5	University of Abuja, Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education	Federal
6	Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola, Centre for Distance Learning	Federal
7	University of Ilorin, Centre for Open and Distance Learning	Federal
8	University of Lagos, Distance Learning Institute	Federal
9	University of Nigeria, Nsukka Centre for Distance and eLearning	Federal
10	University of Maiduguri, Centre for Distance Learning	Federal
11	Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Open and Distance Learning Centre	State
12	Lagos State University Open and Distance Learning and Research Institute	State
13	Joseph Ayo Babalola University Centre for Distance Learning	Private
14	Babcock University Ilisan-Remo, Centre for Open Distance and eLearning	Private

Access from National Universities Commission (2022)

The growth and expansion of Distance Education have been phenomenal worldwide. The first move at establishing Distance Education in Nigeria was at the tertiary institutions though not for degree programmes but for agricultural extension courses to farmers. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and the University of Ibadan were early providers of such extension services from the early 1960s, via radio and television broadcast. From about the 1980s, Distance Education was involved more at the higher education level for the training and re-training of teachers and for other areas of human capacity development. Four Universities namely; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, the University of Ibadan, the University of Lagos and the University of Abuja pioneered its use during this early stage, by setting up special units to run Distance Education programmes to meet the increasing demand for higher education. From their inception in the late 1980s to the close of the 20th century, the above institutions grew and expanded providing access to as many as they could absorb. But they lacked the carrying capacity to address the ever growing demand for higher education.

4.0 Conclusion

Open and distance learning (ODL) refers to a combination of two approaches that share a common aim of expanding access to education. Open and distance learning is a set of beliefs about teaching and learning and distance learning as a method/s or a set of techniques for teaching and learning. Distance Education mode from all indications seem to offer the way out of the present problem of giving access to the world's increasing population. The system is even the more attractive because of its varied and flexible media of instructional delivery made possible by advancement in technology.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

Open and distance learning (ODL) combines two forms of education – open and distance – that focus on expanding access to learning. It is characterized by two factors: its philosophy and its use of technology such as; printed workbooks, audio cassettes, radio and the web. Open and distance learning can be summed based upon above features as follows: accessibility is promise, flexibility is its commitment and educational equity is the overall philosophical basis. The different ages and generations of DE and ODL have all been affected by the technologies dominant at their respective times. Therefore, it is possible to say that information and communication technologies are an intrinsic part of these disciplines, yet they must not be taken as the ultimate goal, but rather, as viable solutions to reduce barriers and increase interaction and communication. Considering the speed of the technology used today, it is difficult to predict the future of these disciplines

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What are the key benefits of Distance learning?
2. What is Open and Distance Learning?
3. Discuss in detail the global perspective of Open and distance learning
4. Describe the historical developments of ODL in Nigeria

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The significant aspect of Distance Education includes;

- The separation of teacher and learner

- Involves the people of the technical media
- Two-way communication
- Equals the role of the conventional educational institution
- The separation of the learner from his peer group.
- Enable students to compensate for lost opportunities in the past
- To acquire new skills and qualifications for the future

Q2. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) refers to any learning activities within formal, informal, and non-formal domains that are facilitated by information and communication technologies to lessen distance, both physically and psychologically, and to increase interactivity and communication among learners, learning sources and facilitators.

Q3. The origin of distance education lies basically in the philosophy that the society has a responsibility to provide educational opportunities to those who for some reason or the other cannot go to the conventional system. The history of DE dates back to the 1700s and 1800s and reflects an egalitarian approach to education. Several countries of the world have started open universities to provide innovative education and to strengthen distance education. It has four generations as shown below

- The first generation of distance education was defined by print technology. Although there have been examples of first-generation distance learning for hundreds of years, the combination of printing press technology and postal services made what is commonly known as correspondence education widely available.
- The second generation which had the ability to broadcast using technologies such as radio and television characterized the second generation of distance education. These broadcast technologies enhanced and added to distance education considerably. Live educational radio reduced many of the limitations of correspondence education, especially delivery time, and increased the immediacy of the learning processes.
- The third generation is called the Computer-Based Distance Education age. This age also marked the beginning of the digital-knowledge age and network society. The scope of the concept of “distance” was altered, as distance in time and space had lost importance. Rather than reaching masses, a more personal approach of reaching individuals became possible. The prominence of teacher-centered education diminished and was replaced with learner-centered education.
- The subsequent generations had the features of the use of mobile technologies that enabled learning not considering places and spaces. New learning models, such as e-learning, mobile learning, and ubiquitous learning, appeared with highly rich and interactive content. Learning rather than teaching became the focus, and the idea of lifelong learning took on great importance.

Q4. Nigeria, with 36 individual states spread in six geopolitical zones and a Federal Capital Territory in Abuja making up the federation, is the most populated country in Africa, with an estimated population of over 206 million people. Nigeria has the most universities in Africa. As of July 2022, Nigeria had 49 federal universities, 57 state universities and 111 private universities, as well as 55 degree-awarding colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics affiliated with universities, with a combined student population of about 2.2 million. Besides the universities and affiliated degree-awarding institutions, there are also 205

colleges of education offering the National Certificate of Education, 157 public and private polytechnics, 33 colleges of agriculture, 36 special colleges and 73 public and private colleges of health. The most critical purpose of setting up any open and distance learning (ODL) institution or facility in Nigeria is to provide a range of opportunities for access to higher education to learners who, for one reason or another, prefer to acquire their education in a more flexible manner.

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STUDY SESSION 2: FEATURES IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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1.0 Introduction

The concept of open learning and distance education system focuses on open access to education and training to make the learners free from the constraints of time and place, and offers flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners. Distance teaching institutions are mostly functioning as dual mode institution, where face-to-face and distance education systems are both available. Earlier such institutions taught mostly through print materials which was dominant mode of learning. Gradually the distance education institutions are also acquiring features of open learning with flexible and accessible patterns of education. Open and distance learning is one of the most rapidly growing fields of education now a days and it has substantial impact on all education delivery system. This will enable you to generalize the relevance of Open and Distance Education and contextualize it to your own experiences. An attempt has also been made to explain the differences between face-to-face and distance learning systems.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the place of technology in online teaching and learning
- Know the features of open and distance learning

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Interactions Between Teacher and Learner

The open and distance learning system is a coherent learning alternative to the present conventional system in Nigeria. The ODL has the potential to generate new patterns of teaching

and learning as the teacher and the learner are separated from each other and this is a central characteristic of this form of education. Interactions can be facilitated in ODL through effective usage of technology. The use of technology offers the opportunities to promote interaction between the teachers and the learners as well as with experts in ODL. The use of interactive technology with the affordances of two-way communication and multiple representations provides more interactions for online learners, and thus lead to enhanced learning outcomes. It is two-way communication because the student is able therefore can receive through assignment-responses or other media and therefore can receive feedback. The student thus enters into a dialogue with the institution with high levels of interactivity that leads to higher levels of student motivation, improved learning outcomes, and satisfaction over less interactive learning environments. More so, such interactions between teacher and learner can help in achieving the learning outcomes and thus ensure successful learning. Interaction in turn can promote students' motivation and can enhance the whole learning process.

3.2 Openness

Open education is a system of education that does not operate through traditional conventions which are essentially restrictive in nature – admission restrictions, attendance restrictions, restrictions on the candidature for examinations, restrictions on the period of time to be devoted to a course, restrictions on the number of examinations given and taken in a year, restrictions on subject combinations for a particular degree, restrictions on the modes of didactic communication and the didactic tasks, etc. Openness is an ideal for which an institution must keep striving so that the maximum number of learners can be benefited. In open learning system, the learner can select his/her own place of study. This means that geographical boundaries do not restrict admission and learning. In open learning, the learner can continue his/her education from any place of his/her choice under the jurisdiction of the open university/institute. In this system, the learners also have the freedom to take even more than one year to complete a 'one year programme'. This is because programmes have a minimum and a maximum duration during which the learner remains registered in the programme and thus a learner can complete a programme at his/her own pace.

3.3 Accessibility

Education is made accessible to those who cannot attend regular classes due to social, structural or personal situations such as lack of places in educational institutions, distance from educational institutions and family, and work commitment. Access to higher education in Nigeria is negotiated through a battery of examinations whose overall effect is not to eventually select the best candidates for the various segments of schooling, but to create high examination anxiety, reflected in intense fear or panic (Bassey & Iruoj, 2016), often leading to a multitude of examination infractions (Okorodudu, 2013). One of the main reasons for delivering training and education via ODL is to make it accessible to people who cannot attend regular classes due to social, structural or personal situations. These might include a lack of places in educational institutions, distance from educational institutions, absence of specific programmes, family commitments, the need to continue earning while learning, or travel costs. The Federal Government of Nigeria felt the need to create a uniform platform that would provide admission to higher education institutions based on the results of a national matriculation examination to

be conducted by a new examination board, known as the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB)

The main gateway to higher institutions in Nigeria is the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). This was introduced in 1978. Prior to its establishment, students wishing to enter universities usually applied directly to the university of their choice, and based on the results of both their high school and their post-high school examination results, they were often admitted. This, however, led to multiple admissions stress for students, who had to travel to the various cities where the universities of their choice were located, at a time when there were few universities in the country. The number of applicants seeking admission into the various Nigerian higher institutions has been on the increase, as reflected in a recent five-year period as shown in Table 3 and 4 below. While there were more applications from males, there was also a corresponding increase in female applications.

Table 3: Trend of JAMB applications from 2015–2020

Year	Gender		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
2015	826,429	649,171	1,475,600	43
2016	895,233	697,229	1,592,462	44
2017	952,422	769,814	1,722,236	44
2018	902,176	750,951	1,653,127	45
2019	1,022,161	864,327	1,886,488	46
2020	1,063,146	886,837	1,949,983	45

Source: JAMB Database Abuja, 2021.

Table 4: Trend of JAMB admissions from 2015–2020

Year	Gender		Total	Percentage (%)
	Male	Female		
2015	325,152	248,885	574,037	43
2016	336,113	266,466	602,579	44
2017	315,792	251,220	567,012	44
2018	319,541	263,057	582,598	45
2019	338,002	291,649	629,651	46
2020	277,078	250,851	527,929	48

Source: JAMB Database Abuja, 2021.

The only mainstream alternative, for those who can afford it, are private universities, which are often expensive and as a result never exhaust their carrying capacities. Yet there was, and still is, considerable reluctance on the part of applicants for higher education to consider applying to distance learning institutions, especially students making the immediate transition from secondary school to university. Open and distance learning can overcome problems of physical distance for learners in remote locations who are unable or unwilling to physically attend a campus; and learners and teachers geographically separated in that teachers in urban settings instruct learners in rural settings. Open and distance learning can solve time or scheduling for learners unwilling or unable to assemble together frequently; learners engaged in full-time or part-time work, both waged and volunteer; as well as family and community commitments.

3.4 Qualification

In the conventional system of education, the enrolment capacity is limited. As a result, there are restrictions in admissions, based upon the percentage of marks/grades obtained by the learners. In the open learning system, there is no such restriction for most of the programmes. In ODL only a few professional programmes like Nursing, Medicine, Law etc, may have some restrictions due to heavy hands-on work that learners need to undertake and for which prior knowledge is required.

3.5 Age Limit and Gender

The flexible nature of Open and Distance Learning is perhaps its most enduring characteristic of no age limit and barriers to gender restriction. By being open to all, and at all times, it offers opportunities for those who “missed out” in the earlier stages of their lives to “catch up” with not only new knowledge but also new delivery systems. The normal age range for university admission in Nigeria is 16–21 years for a standard four-year degree programme. The essence of ODL provision is to enable those who, for one reason or another, were edged out of mainstream university education and therefore need a late start. In the open learning system, while there may be a minimum age required to take admission to a particular programme, however, there is no maximum age limit.

Gender equity is another critical area in which ODL offers the opportunity to balance access to higher education. Women in Nigeria, as in other developing countries with predominantly patriarchal social cultures, are under-represented in all spheres of economic activity, including education. It is therefore gratifying to note that a large proportion (66%) of the students participating in the survey were female, while 32% were men. Although women constituted a consistent 45% of conventional university admissions through UTME over a five-year period, 66% of students who willingly shared their personal experiences of learning through the ODL mode identified as female. For example, if a learner who passes Senior Secondary school examination at the age of 10-12 years in June, 2015, he/she can take admission to a Bachelor’s Degree programme either in a conventional University or in an Open Learning University in the same year. However, the flexibility of the Open learning system allows him/her, even after a gap of some years to take admission to the Bachelor’s Degree in any Open Learning University as per his choice irrespective of age or gender. This is because there is no restriction on upper age and on the gap in his/her studies.

3.6 Flexibility

This term flexibility covers giving learners the physical flexibility to study at a time and place that suits them and educational flexibility to study subjects, courses and programmes in an order and manner appropriate to their needs. The term flexible learning emphasizes the creation of environments for learning that have the following characteristics: convergence of open and distance learning methods, media and classroom strategies, learner-centered philosophy; recognition of diversity in learning styles and learners’ needs, recognition of the importance of equity in curriculum and pedagogy, use of a variety of learning resources and media; and fostering of lifelong learning habits and skills in learners and staff. Educational flexibility is less common in conventional academic institutions, where the content, sequencing and structure of programmes tend to be fixed. However, some institutions that offer ODL are becoming more

flexible about admission requirements and may restructure programmes to meet specific needs, such as specialized training for professionals. In the open learning system, the learner enjoys flexibility in selecting his/ her courses. Learners have the opportunity to study at own pace, learners have the opportunity to learn at any time, from anywhere at their own pace. This means that the educational preferences of the Open University are more towards learners needs and requirements, it is broader in their perspective than the traditional conventional universities.

3.7 Learner-Centered

The phrase ‘learner-centeredness’ is used frequently but inconsistently in ODL. At one level, it enshrines the goal of providing education and training in a way that prioritizes learners’ needs, rather than institutional convenience. ODL students in Nigeria fall into two categories: enrolled and registered. Registered students are those who continuously pursue their studies, without pausing for a year or a semester. Enrolled students include anyone who was admitted and has started their studies. Unlike formal education, distance education puts the client, i.e. the student, first and then the institution. ODL is learner – centered because of its philosophy of accessibility and flexibility, provision of adequate learner support system and good quality learning materials in learner friendly formats. Sometimes, students pause their studies. The metrics of an institution will always capture these students as having valid registration so long as they are still eligible to return to their studies. Thus, “enrolled students” includes both registered students and those who have paused their studies at a material time.

For the educational institution, this means providing good quality learning materials in appropriate, accessible media, and giving sufficient support to ensure learners have a good chance of successful completion. ODL emphasizes on the needs and convenience of the learners while taking into account the individual diversity among them and indeed makes this an operative condition. In learner-centered education, integrity and freedom of the individual (learner) is primary. It does not distinguish between the young learner and the old learner, but provides them with a possibility that permits individuals to programme their specific course of study. It works on a concept of time which is not arbitrary in the sense that it permits individual variation in the time span required for purposes of study. Further, it does not advocate a definite time frame for any course of study. In that sense, it is a flexible kind of system which adapts itself to the needs of the learners as they actually exist and arise from time to time and place to place.

3.8 Technological Inclusion

The essence of ODL is communication in all forms with the objective of reducing the distance between learning and teaching end. Educational technologies are almost an extended form of the distance education and open learning. Technology has enabled flexibility and interaction in delivery. The manipulation of education technology and ICT enables education anywhere and everywhere to be possible. The use of educational technology also enables multiplier effects of reaching out to a large numbers of learners in a cost effective and efficient manner. The usage of ICT is said to be a practicing tool in education rather than a preaching tool, thus, the use of technology allows many user groups to share the network. Technology in ODL also contributes to the repository of digital learning material/ knowledge and enhances the learning process of the learners of the institution. This approach is a dynamic concept to educate mass/majority of

learners. We see that quite powerfully in the recent developments. However, technology by itself can blind us to the needs of students and the need for good pedagogy.

3.9 Convenient Examination System and Credit Accumulation

Open and distance education system allows the learners the freedom to take examinations according to their own preparedness and mastery of the subject. Examinations are usually spread at different times of the year and learners can register for examination as per their own convenience and pace of learning. In addition, ODL also offers the learners the facility of credit accumulation as learners can spread their registration for examination over a specified minimum and maximum number of years. This is quite different from the conventional system where every learner has to pass all the requisite number of courses in a particular year.

4.0 Conclusion

The current trends in ODL shows that open and distance learning will be an important element in mainstream education and has improve the traditional education system. The usage of technology in ODL teaching and learning has become very crucial nowadays. Across the globe, the higher education system is now transformed to a world where extreme usage of tablets and social media is very common for both teaching as well as learning. The benefits accruing from technology usage include; improved access, interaction between teachers and learners, access to a wide variety of latest, flexibility, openness, learners' centeredness, technological inclusion, and updated resources that are available online as well as content sharing.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

The concept of open learning and distance education system focuses on open access to education

and training to make the learners free from the constraints of time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners. The overall focus of this unit is to provide various conceptual inputs, both western and Indian, to make ODL relevant to the context of developing countries. Open and distance learning can be summed based upon the following features as follows: accessibility is promise, learner-centeredness, flexibility is its commitment, Openness with regard to place and time of study, Credit accumulation and self-paced examination system, no upper age limit and educational equity is the overall philosophical basis. Therefore, the teaching and learning process provides: flexible sequences of study, negotiated objectives and content, negotiated learning methods, negotiated methods of assessment; and a choice of support mechanisms.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. State 7 features in Open and Distance Learning
2. Discuss Openness fund in Open and Distance Learning
3. Describe the Age Limit and Gender involved in Open and Distance Learning

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The features in open and distance learning are;

- Emphasis on the teacher and learner
- Emphasis on openness

- Emphasis on accessibility
- Emphasis on qualification
- Emphasis on age limit and gender
- Emphasis on flexibility
- Emphasis on learner-centeredness

Q2. Openness is an ideal for which an institution must keep striving so that the maximum number of learners can be benefited. In open learning system, the learner can select his/her own place of study. This means that geographical boundaries do not restrict admission and learning. Open education is a system of education that does not operate through traditional conventions which are essentially restrictive in nature – admission restrictions, attendance restrictions, restrictions on the candidature for examinations, etc. In open learning, the learner can continue his/her education from any place of his/her choice under the jurisdiction of the open university/institute.

Q3. The flexible nature of Open and Distance Learning is perhaps its most enduring characteristic of no age limit for education. By being open to all, and at all times, it offers opportunities for those who “missed out” in the earlier stages of their lives to “catch up” with not only new knowledge but also new delivery systems. By being open to all, and at all times, it offers opportunities for those who “missed out” in the earlier stages of their lives to “catch up” with not only new knowledge but also new delivery systems. Gender equity is another critical area in which ODL offers the opportunity to balance access to higher education. Women in Nigeria, as in other developing countries with predominantly patriarchal social cultures, are under-represented in all spheres of economic activity, including education.

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STUDY SESSION 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCEDURES IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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5.0 Summary of the Study Session

6.0 In-Text Questions

7.0 In-Text Answers

8.0 References/ Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Good learning is good learning, no matter what its shape or form – in other words, the principles of good learning that underlie everything we do as educators also apply in ODL. So, before we explore tutoring in ODL, let's consider what makes a good learning experience. Common factors, whether in formal or informal education, whether in a classroom or at a distance, include: how it is organized, how the information is presented, how the teacher responds to learners and the quality of resources (books, tapes, articles, etc.). One of the most important tutor activities is maintaining contact with learners. Learners consistently stress the importance of contact in their evaluations of distance courses, and research evidence demonstrates that contact has a significant influence on learners' persistence and achievement. The tutor is usually the main contact between learner and educational institution, and so is often the first person a learner contacts if needing help dealing with administrative issues. Tutors may also have to explain to the institution (to the administrator who would deal with this kind of situation) the situation of a learner who cannot complete their final assignment, due to a family crisis

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Summarize the elements of a good learning environment
- Describe the role, knowledge and skills of the ODL tutor
- Identify ODL learners and their characteristics

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Learning Environment

The definition of a virtual learning environment emphasizes the importance of learning. The learning environment determines how the students are going to learn the content. This vital component determines what teaching and learning methods will be employed for students to achieve the objectives. By addressing this challenge, development teams can move well beyond simply presenting content and devising tests to check students understanding. Consideration

can be given to the overall approach, focusing on the learning activities or the process rather than the content. Examples of ways the learning environment can be constructed include problem-based learning, case study approaches, clinical teaching, experiential learning, videoconferencing and computer-based learning. Its value lies in its ability to show the expected total study time of the learners, and to identify areas where learning demands might exceed available time.

Learners in a virtual environment are expected to make use of and include examples, observations, experiences, situations, rules, concepts and techniques in a continuous (e.g., day by day or week by week), permanent (i.e., committing knowledge into memory) fashion to improve the performance of the execution of tasks. A virtual learning environment (VLE) is a set of teaching and learning tools designed to enhance a student's learning experience by including computers and the Internet in the learning process. A useful device in designing the learning environment is to construct an organizational outline that shows the essential components of the subject, along with how they fit together. The principal components of a VLE package include curriculum mapping (breaking curriculum into sections that can be assigned and assessed), student tracking, online support for both teacher and student, electronic communication (e-mail, threaded discussions, chat, Web publishing), and Internet links to outside curriculum resources.

The type of educational institution or organization that play key role in providing ODL include: university, college, teacher training institution, technical training institution, schools, non-governmental organization among others. It may offer courses and programmes in both face-to-face tuition and through ODL (this is called a dual-mode institution), or it may offer courses and programmes only through ODL (a single-mode institution).

3.2 The Role of Teacher in ODL

The most commonly used term for this role is 'tutor'; other terms are 'mentor', 'facilitator', 'guide', 'instructor' or 'teacher'. The role of a tutor may be part-time or full-time; as a staff member, or as a freelance (self-employed) consultant. The ideal tutor is a paragon: she or he is consistent, fair, professional in standards and attitudes, encouraging but honest, unbiased, kind, positive, respectful and accepting of students' ideas, patient, personal, tolerant, appreciative, understanding and helpful. Marking by a tutor of this sort will provide the best possible feedback, a crucial, and for most learners, central part of the learning process.

The ideal tutor or instructor is the one who treats his or her students as s/he would want to be treated, who is approachable as a real person (signs the assignment comments, responds to letters and phone calls promptly and without fail) and who provides the most extensive and encouraging comments. Such tutor or instructor does the following roles:

- provides clear explanations on his or her expectations and marking style
- welcomes extra questions
- being familiar with and understanding the material
- makes thorough but cheerful and constructive comments in contrast with another student's plaintive remark: "the comments left one feeling criticized, threatened and nervous"
- presenting real life examples to further clarify the information documented in the modules
- gives an extra boost to encourage a student in difficulties

- clarifies points which have not been easily grasped or correctly learned
- interpreting / clarifying any aspects of the reading material as required by students
- helpful in achieving the student's objectives
- offers flexibility when it is needed
- shows a genuine interest in motivating learners
- writes all corrections legibly and at a meaningful level of detail
- Returns assignments promptly.
- Encouraging participation, group interaction, discussion
- providing strategies to guide or coax students into creative application of what is learnt
- providing honest feedback to students on performance.

3.3 The Place of Learner in ODL

ODL learners are adults with busy lives, family and work commitments. 'The learner is more than a cognitive machine processing information. He or she comes with a mind, memories, conscious and subconscious worlds, emotions, imagination and physical body, all of which can interact with new learning.' ODL allows learners to study when and where suits them best. They continue learning while fulfilling commitments to work, family or community. Those living in remote areas or with limited transport can study courses that would otherwise be inaccessible to them. The learner reacts to all experience as he/she perceives it, not as the teacher presents it. The adult learner reacts to a learning experience out of an organised whole self-concept and perceives the experience as an integrated whole.

Many learners prefer ODL that accommodates their approach to learning. They may prefer print- and text-based courses to classroom sessions if they like to learn by reading, reflection and writing. ODL can provide a variety of study opportunities, (academic, technical/vocational, personal and professional development, basic education) to a range of learners (young adults, adults returning to learning, people preparing to enter trades or professions, people acquiring new work-related skills, established professionals in health and education working towards further accreditation).

Planning and facilitating group learning in ODL differs from conventional classroom instruction because of the differences in learner needs, the context and the resources available. Group learning in ODL involves making the best use of the resources available. In addition to materials and technologies, these include the tutors' and the learners' experience, skills and time. Group learning in ODL usually has more time constraints than in the classroom, so group learning sessions should enable learners to use focused activities to achieve specific goals. Facilitation strategies should enable participants to use group activities to build on what they have learned from their individual studies, rather than be passive recipients of direct instruction. Technologies should complement, rather than override, the goals, processes and outcomes of group learning in ODL.

3.4 Barriers to Teaching and Learning Procedures in ODL

Course Materials Problems:

Sometimes course materials can cause learners some difficulties, through: inconsistency between the course materials and the assignments, course materials that are outdated in a way that causes problems for learners and unclear assignment instructions.

Cost:

e-learning system of education in Nigeria's tertiary institutions is still a new thing because of poor ICT infrastructure with other socio-economic issues. Most developing countries are affected by these challenges of high cost of infrastructural development and the need to increase public access to internet and other ICTs. The cost of laptop or personal computer and internet connectivity is still high in Nigeria. In addition, Software are expensive and mostly not developed locally.

Maintaining Academic Standards:

Tutors' dual responsibilities for meeting the needs of learners and for maintaining the standards and academic integrity of the educational institution can lead to difficult choices, for example where plagiarism is suspected. Plagiarism can mean that: a learner copied work from a published source without acknowledging the source, a learner copied work from another learner and that two or more learners decided to work together on an assignment without advising the tutor.

Digital Divide:

When compared with other countries of the world, digital divide in Africa is a main constraint. This is major barrier for the usage of technology for online teaching and learning. Blocking the distance learners' realization of their information needs is the digital divide, which further marginalizes the underclass of "info-poor". It was also noted that cultural barriers also possess problems to technology innovation in Africa.

Pedagogical Skills:

Pedagogical skills of online lecturers are also a challenge in online teaching. Online lecturers need to acquire relevant skills to teach online, they are also challenged to develop curricula of an exploratory nature that engages learners with hands-on, inquiry-based learning.

Maintenance and Technical Support:

ICT technologies requires high level of technical maintenance. Open and distance learning students most often finds it difficult to access technical support when problems arise from their computers. They often resort to roadside unqualified technicians that cannot meet their expected needs.

Access to Technology:

Access to technology is also a challenge, especially in many parts of Africa. The underdeveloped areas, as in other countries on the African continent, face challenges in accessing information technology as a result of poor infrastructure.

4.0 Conclusion

The way we use technology for teaching and learning has enhanced the distance education and also proved to have a positive impact on the education process. This adoption of technology has enriched the popularity for ODL among learners as it offers flexibility and accessibility. Similarly, ODL teachers also found the usage the technology can improve the interaction as well as collaboration among learners.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

Now that you have developed a clearer picture of ODL and considered the role of the tutor, it is valuable to reflect on the work you have done in this unit before moving on to the next. Make sure you are comfortable with what we have covered in this unit. If you are uncertain about any aspect, go back and review the relevant part of the unit to make sure that you are happy with your understanding of the: elements of a good learning experience, differences between ODL and traditional learning, key characteristics of ODL, nature of ODL learners, role, knowledge and skills of the ODL tutor.

The impact of an individual teacher or tutor include; support and guidance needs of learners, responds to learners, the need for guidance and enabling of learners, rather than direct instruction, the tutor's role in ODL, and the 'ideal' tutor. Because each ODL situation is different, and each person brings different experiences to the task of tutoring in ODL, tutors need to develop individualized learning plans by identifying the skills and knowledge they bring to the situation and the skills and knowledge they need to develop or acquire.

Some of the perceived challenges to teaching and learning procedures in ODL are; course materials problems, cost of running ODL, maintaining academic standards, digital divide, pedagogical skills, maintenance and technical support, and access to technology

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What is a Virtual Learning Environment?
2. List the 5 characteristics of the ideal tutor that you value most as a learner
3. Describe the role of teacher in ODL
4. Identify 5 challenges to teaching and learning procedures in ODL

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. A virtual learning environment (VLE) is a set of teaching and learning tools designed to enhance a student's learning experience by including computers and the Internet in the learning process. Such learning environment determines how the students are going to learn the content. This vital component determines what teaching and learning methods will be employed for students to achieve the objectives.

Q2. The characteristics of the ideal tutor are

- A tutor is a paragon: she or he is consistent, fair, professional in standards and attitudes,
- A tutor that is honest, unbiased and kind
- A tutor that is positive, respectful and accepting of students' ideas
- A tutor that is patient, personal and tolerant
- A tutor that appreciative, understanding and helpful.

Q3. The most commonly used term for this role is 'tutor'; other terms are 'mentor', 'facilitator', 'guide', 'instructor' or 'teacher'. The role of a tutor may be part-time or full-time; as a staff member, or as a freelance (self-employed) consultant. The tutor in ODL does the following

- Provides clear explanations on his or her expectations and marking style

- Welcomes extra questions
- Being familiar with and understanding the material
- Makes thorough but cheerful and constructive comments in contrast with another student's plaintive remark: "the comments left one feeling criticized, threatened and nervous"
- Presenting real life examples to further clarify the information documented in the modules
- Gives an extra boost to encourage a student in difficulties
- Clarifies points which have not been easily grasped or correctly learned etc

Q4. Barriers to teaching and learning procedures in ODL are as follows

- Course materials problems
- ODL is capital intensive/Costly to run
- Issues relating to maintaining academic standards
- Issues bordering on digital divide
- Issues patterning to maintenance and technical support

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MODULE TWO

CORE SKILLS REQUIRED IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

- Study session 1: Speaking Skills
- Study session 2: Listening Skills
- Study session 3: Writing Skills
- Study session 4: Reading Skills
- Study session 5: Course Study Strategies

STUDY SESSION 1: SPEAKING SKILLS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Speaking as a Study Skill
 - 3.2 Types of Speaking
 - 3.3 Key Components of Speaking
 - 3.4 Benefits of Effective Speaking
 - 3.5 Challenges Encountered in Speaking
 - 3.6 Strategies to Effective Speaking
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary of the Study Session
- 6.0 In-Text Questions
- 7.0 In-Text Answers
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1.0 Introduction

Communication refers to the act of transferring information from one person to another which may occur in four different forms namely; Spoken or Verbal (using voice), non-verbal (body language, gestures, the tone and pitch of voice), written (printed or digital media like; magazines, books, emails or websites), visual (maps, charts, logos or graphs). Effective communication skills are fundamental to good interactions between two or more people. Senders and recipients, or receivers, are of course both vital in communication. The roles of the sender and receiver are not distinct in face-to-face communication because both parties communicate in both directions including the use of eye-contact (or lack of) and general body language. The desired outcome or goal of any communication process is understanding.

Speaking is an important form of communication skills in Open and distance learning. Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts. Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching. There is difference between speaking and talking. Speaking has a purpose and a specific goal whereas talking is casual. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. One should be in a

position to speak on a topic confidently and logically so that the listeners could understand what is spoken about.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Define and list the basic concepts and terminology about speaking skills.
- Classify the types of speaking and the key components of speaking skill
- Understand the benefits of effective speaking
- Explain the possible challenges encountered in speaking
- Use the strategies to motivate the students to get engaged in speaking activities.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Speaking as a Study Skill

Speaking is regarded as the most perfect tool and able to bring good thoughts and feelings about things that are concrete or abstract (Effendi, 1985). Tarigan (1986: 3) argues that speaking is the ability of a person to pronounce articulation sounds or words that aim to express, express and convey the thoughts, ideas and feelings of the person. Speaking is a skill to convey the message through spoken language. Also, speaking can be defined as a form of human behavior that utilizes very intense physical, psychological, neurological, semantic and linguistic factors. The link between the message and the spoken language as the medium of delivery is very heavy. The message received by the listener is not in the original form, but in another form that is the sound of language. The listener then tries to divert the message in the form of the language into its original form.



Figure 2.1: Speaking Skill

Today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills, because, only in that way, students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance. Speaking is considered to be the mostly sought skill for an individual to be accepted competent in a foreign language. Speaking is more than to form grammatically correct sentences; it rather covers broad areas of mechanics, functions, pragmatics and social interaction. Effective speaking demands a high level of skill in oral presentation of material and fullest compression

on the part of instructor. An individual has to interact with other members of the society throughout the life; and, herein lies the importance of possession of speaking skills.

3.2 Types of Speaking

Speaking to Inform:

This type of speaking could be argumentative or informative in nature. When the speaker is presenting interesting facts or lessons to the audience or explain how to go about doing something. Informative demonstration speeches lend themselves well to the use of visual aids to show the step-by-step processes with real objects. The organization of the speech depends on the specific purpose and varies depending on whether you are defining, explaining, describing, or demonstrating. This could be a teaching /lecturing relating to the Civil War, a student giving an oral report or showing how to decorate a cake or set up a blog, a museum docent explaining the history of painting, or a doctor explaining a procedure.

Speaking to persuade, Motivate, or Take Action

This is when the speaker will try influencing the audience in some way. This could take the form of persuasive, argumentative, controversial or policy speech. The speaker might be trying to change once mind about something, to persuade you to change your opinion, to motivate to change a behavior, or to take action. When speaking persuasively, directly state near the beginning of the speech what is good or bad and why you think so. Some examples are explaining the benefits of a non-profit for the purpose of eliciting donations, trying to get people to change bad eating habits by explaining all the benefits of eating healthily or attempting to convince people to vote against a candidate in an election. One way to structure a persuasive speech is to use the five-part argument:

- The *introduction* attracts the attention of the audience, sets the tone, and describes what the persuasive speech is about. The introduction usually includes the thesis statement—the specific sentence that explains the main point of the argument.
- The *background* provides the context and details needed for a listener to understand the situation being described, as well as the problem or opportunity being addressed.
- *Lines of argument* make up the body of the speech. Here is where you include all your claims, reasons, and supporting evidence that help make your points effectively.
- *Refuting objections* means disproving, ruling out, and countering any potential objections before the listeners can think of reasons not to be persuaded.
- The *conclusion* is takes a form of closing arguments. To be effective, the conclusion restates the thesis statement and summarize the main points of argument.

Speaking to Entertain

This type of speaking is often found at events like banquets, weddings, or dinners. The speaker is usually sharing a funny story or other anecdotal information. Some examples of this would be the best man speech at a wedding or an after-dinner speech given by a host of a party to thank guests for coming. They could also be planned as entertainment at an event. Topics are usually humorous and light and could serve a very specific purpose, like introducing a featured guest or giving a toast.

3.3 Key Components of Speaking

Some effective component of speaking skill are as follows:

Pronunciation:

Pronunciation is the way for students to produce clearer language when they are speaking. It means that the student can communicate effectively when they have good pronunciation and intonation even though they have limited vocabulary and grammar. Pronunciation refers to the traditional or customary utterance of words. From that statement can be concluded that pronunciation is the way for students to produce the utterance words clearly when they are speaking. Pronunciation includes all those aspects of speech which make for an easily intelligible flow of speech, including segmental articulation, rhythm, intonation and phrasing, and more peripherally even gesture, body language and eye contact.

Grammar:

Grammar refers to the set of rules that allow us to combine words in our language into larger units. Grammar is needed for the students to arrange correct sentences in conversation both in written and oral forms. Grammar is defined as a systematic way of accounting for and predicting an ideal speaker's or hearer's knowledge of the language. This is done by a set of rules or principles that can be used to generate all grammatical utterances in the language. The grammar of a language is the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language. Thus, from the statements above can be concluded that the function of grammar is to arrange the correct meaning of sentences based on the context; in addition, it is used to avoid misunderstanding in each communicator.

Vocabulary:

Vocabulary means the appropriate diction or the most important thing in a language especially in speaking; furthermore, knowing many vocabularies we will be easier to express our ideas, feeling and thoughts both in oral or written form. In spoken language, the vocabulary tends to be familiar and every day. Vocabulary is an aspect of speaking is essential for successful second language use because without an extensive vocabulary, one won't be able to use the structure and function we may have learnt for comprehensible communicative. It can be said that one key the success in communicative, which is the power of words. Vocabulary is a basic building block of language learning. Students need to know words, their meanings, how they are spelt and how they are pronounced.

Comprehension:

This is an ability to perceive and process stretches of discourse, to formulate representations the meaning of sentences. Comprehension of a second language is more difficult to study since it is not; directly observable and must be inferred from overt verbal and nonverbal responses, by artificial instruments, or by the intuition of the teacher or researcher. Comprehension refers to the fact that participants fully understand the nature of the research project, even when procedures are complicated and entail risks.

Interactive Communication:

Interactive communication refers to the ability of a candidate to interact with the interlocutor and the other candidates by initiating and responding appropriately and at the required speed and rhythm to fulfil the task requirements. The most difficulties faced by students in speaking are the interactive nature of communication. In speaking, especially when they are having conversation they are engaging in a process of negotiation of meaning. Thus, learners usually have problems in how to say things, when to speak, and other discourse constants.

Fluency:

This is the ability to speak communicatively, fluently and accurately. Fluency usually refers to express oral language freely without interruption. In teaching and learning process, if the teacher wants to check students' fluency, the teacher allows students to express themselves freely without interruption. The aim is to help students speak fluently and with ease. The teacher does not correct immediately whereas the idea being that too much correction interferes with the flow of conversation.

Complexity:

The spoken language is complex in a different way. The complexity of written language is static and dense, while spoken is dynamic and intricate. It is wrong that written language is highly organized, structured, and complex while spoken is disorganized, fragmentary, and simple. What made speaking difficult were related to the type of information that had to be conveyed and were concerned the scale of the task and interrelationships among the different elements involved.

3.4 Benefits of Effective Speaking

Speaking is a tool for communication. We communicate with others, to express our ideas, and to know others' ideas as well. Communication takes place, where there is speech. Without speech we cannot communicate with one another. The importance of speaking skills, hence is enormous for the learners of any language. Without speech, a language is reduced to a mere script. The use of language is an activity which takes place within the confines of our community. We use language in a variety of situations.

- i. The goal of the speech may be to educate, entertain, or influence the listeners. Sometimes effective public speaking skills can help with career advancement, as they indicate creativity, critical thinking skills, leadership abilities, poise, and professionalism.
- ii. People at their work places, i.e. researchers working either in a medical laboratory or in a language laboratory, are supposed to speak correctly and effectively in-order to communicate well with one another. Any gap in communication results in misunderstandings and problems.
- iii. In-order to become a well-rounded communicator one needs to be proficient in each of the four language skills viz., listening, speaking, reading and writing, but the ability to speak skillfully, provides the speaker with several distinct advantages. The capacity to express one's thoughts, opinions and feelings, in the form of words put together in a meaningful way, provides the speaker with these advantages. The joy of sharing one's ideas with others is immense.
- iv. An effective speaker can gain the attention of the audience and hold it till the completion of his message. Speaking skills are important for career success, but certainly not limited to one's professional aspirations. Speaking skills can also enhance one's personal life
- v. For a smooth running of any system, the speakers of a language need to be especially and purposefully trained in the skill of speaking.

3.5 Challenges Encountered in Speaking

Inhibition: Most students have issues with speaking as they are worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism, or simply shy. The primary reason of fear of mistake is that students are afraid of looking foolish in front of other people and they are concerned about how other will see them. It is important for teachers to convince their students that making mistakes is not a wrong or bad thing because students can learn from their mistakes.

Lack of Confidence: It is commonly understood that students' lack of confidence usually occurs when students realize that their conversation partners have not understood them or when they do not understand other speakers. The main cause of students' confidence is their low ability in speaking. In this situation, they would rather keep silent while others do talking showing that the students are lack of confidence to communicate. This suggests that encouragement becomes a vital thing in order to build the students' confidence and this helps to improve students' success of learning.

Lack of motivation: Motivation is a key to students' learning success and perhaps it is a key consideration in determining the preparedness of learners to communicate. Some learners also lack the motivation to speak. The causes of the students 'lack of motivation e.g. uninspired teaching, boredom, lack of perceived relevance of materials and lack of knowledge about the goals of the instructional program. The development of communicative skills can only take place if learners have the motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and relate with the people around them.

Difficulty of expression: Many learners lack the necessary vocabulary to get their meaning across, and consequently, they cannot keep the interaction going. Not allowing learners to participate in discourse can be another reason for speaking difficulties. As such, students have no motive to express themselves.

Issue relating to Competence: Inadequate strategic competence and communication competence can be another reason as well for not being able to keep the interaction going.

Low or uneven participation: Only one participant can talk at a time because of large classes and the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all.

Mother-tongue use: Learners who share the same mother tongue tend to use it because it is easier and because learners feel less exposed if they are speaking their mother tongue.

3.6 Strategies to Effective Speaking

i. Make your speech purposive:

Any speech you make must have some purpose to entertain, amuse, instruct, interact, sell an idea or product, or ask for some action. In case audiences are strange, then introduce yourself, but avoid unnecessary information.

ii. Be prepared:

Develop good command over language as well as the subject. Practice your presentation until you feel comfortable. Make sure you can present your information within limited time frame. Anticipate questions you may be asked and prepare answers to these.

iii. Know the audience:

Make your presentation to audience's level of knowledge about the subject of your presentation, what they need to know, and their interest. There are far more types of audiences because audiences have innumerable flavors. They may ask you as an individual to address a room full of factory operations, managers who have no choice but to attend their talk, you then may go before a congressional committee looking into various environmental issues. When an individual stands up to deliver a presentation before an audience, it's essential that the audience know who the presenter is, why they are there, what specifically they expect to get from your presentation, and how they will react to your message.

iv. Don't read your presentation:

Talk to your audience. Use your notes as prompts as needed. Reading a speech is never preferred. It is better not to speak at all than to read a speech, regardless of how useful, well prepared and eloquent it may be.

v. Don't make excuses

Many-a-times, we may notice, a speaker making a beginning by saying, "*I am sorry, I have not prepared adequately to deliver the topic, because...*" Really, you are not prepared! Such excuses should not be announced to public speaking, because the audience might never notice it.

vi. Arouse the interest of the audience

Always speak in terms of what the audience wants and what you the speaker want. The opening of your speech should be effective for making the presentation a success. Shift your eye-contact around the room, so that everyone feels that you are talking to them.

vii. Use of proper gesture, posture and body movement

Non-verbal communication plays a vital role in transfer of message. So, for effective presentation your gesture, posture and body movement should match with your verbal communication.

viii. Be fluent and Positive

Fluency is one of the most important parameter for effective communication. Without a smooth flow of speech, you are handicapped as a speaker. Make it clear that you are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about your subject. Try to make your presentation as concrete and "down to earth" as possible. Add appropriate examples and humor for effective understanding.

ix. Use visual aids

Supplement what you say with visual aids such as handouts, charts, transparencies, and slides. Make sure that everyone can easily see the visual aids. Don't use visual aids that are so complex that the audience will spend its time trying to read them instead of listening to you. Visual aids are supplements to what you say, not replacements for what you say. Skillful use of properly selected visuals makes your presentation easier and more effective.

x. Actively involve your audience

People can only listen so long without their attention wandering. Making your presentation interesting will help you to capture and keep your audience's attention for a while, but you must do more. Build in some simple and quick activities for your audience so that they are actively involved in your presentation. Ask questions that you are confident your audience will be able to answer.

xi. Use repetitions, pauses and variation in voice

Vary the tone of your voice and be careful not to talk too quickly. Repetition pauses and variations in voice for emphasis are desirable in oral presentation. You must come to an early and appropriately end after reaching the climax. Make it a point to stop at a time, when audience feels you should stop. Do not end your speech suddenly and abruptly. At the end, conclude your talking.

4.0 Conclusion

Speaking is the active use of language to express meaning, and for young learners, the spoken language is the medium through which a new language is encountered, understood, practiced, and learnt. Speaking is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips. Speaking can be formal or informal. Informal speaking is typically used with family and friends, or people you know well while formal speaking occurs in business or academic situations, or when meeting people for the first time. Speaking is probably the language skill that most language learners wish to perfect as soon as possible.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

In this study session, we examined the basic concepts and terminology about speaking skills, types of speaking and the key components of speaking skill, the benefits of effective speaking, explain the possible challenges encountered in speaking and strategies to motivate the students to get engaged in speaking activities.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. List 4 types of speaking skills
2. What are the benefits of effective speaking?
3. What are the possible challenges encountered in speaking?
4. Enumerate 5 strategies to motivate the students to get engaged in speaking activities

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The types of speaking skills are;

- Speaking to Inform
- Speaking to persuade, Motivate, or Take Action
- Speaking to Entertain

Q2. The benefits of effective speaking are;

- To educate, entertain, or influence the listeners.
- People at their work places, i.e. researchers working either in a medical laboratory needs to speak efficiently

- In-order to become a well-rounded communicator one needs to be proficient in each of the speaking skill
- An effective speaker can gain the attention of the audience and hold it till the completion of his message.
- Speaking skills are important for career success, but certainly not limited to one's professional aspirations.
- Speaking skills can also enhance one's personal life
- For a smooth running of any system, the speakers of a language need to be especially and purposefully trained in the skill of speaking.

Q3. The challenges of effective speaking are;

- Emphasis on inhibition
- Lack of Confidence
- Lack of motivation
- Difficulty of expression
- Issue relating to Competence
- Low or uneven participation

Q4. Barriers to teaching and learning procedures in ODL are as follows

- Course materials problems
- ODL is capital intensive/Costly to run
- Issues relating to maintaining academic standards
- Issues bordering on digital divide
- Issues patterning to maintenance and technical support

Q5. The strategies to effective speaking are;

- Make your speech purposive:
- Be prepared
- Know the audience
- Don't read your presentation
- Don't make excuses

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STUDY SESSION 2: LISTENING SKILLS

CONTENTS

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1.0 Introduction

Language is an important channel of communication through which we share our feelings and thoughts with others. Listening is a form of communication process whereby two or more people exchange ideas, opinions, facts, feelings or expressions in a way that each gain a common understanding of the message being communicated. Listening skill is a very important skill and fundamental to the development of all other skills, in fact, one can't appreciate the beauty of life without listening skill; since it is an in-built function helping us in our day-to-day activities. Effective listening skill can be helpful to students in achieving successful communication. As such, a student's communicative competence successfully linked to good listening skill of the students.

There are two kinds of knowledge used in listening; linguistics and non-linguistics knowledge. Linguistics knowledge in listening comprehension relates to students' abilities in understanding phonology, syntax, lexis, semantics, and discourse structure. Then, the non-linguistics knowledge is knowledge about topic, context, and general knowledge. Both of them are really needed in the process of comprehending aural information because listening is a complex process that involves the students to activate their knowledge for reaching their listening purposes.

Several factors may affect listeners, some of which they may not be able to control such as the background noise which may reduce listening comprehension. They are; problems in comprehending due to anxiety pronunciation, speed of speech, their own poor vocabulary and mastery of grammar, native speakers' volume, speakers' accents, intonation, listening strategies, lack of concentration, and poor quality recordings.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the concept of listening as a study skill
- Identify the various types of listening skills
- Evaluate the key components of listening

- Understand benefits of proper listening
- Explain the challenges to effective listening
- Explore the strategies to becoming an effective listener

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Listening as a Study Skill

Listening refers to a complex process that allows people to comprehend spoken language. It is the ability to receive, process and interpret and respond to messages in the oral form. Listening is among of the four basic pillars of communication skills together with speaking, writing and reading. Listening is the initial step towards communicating and understanding. Listening is different from hearing; it involves concentration and involvement in what is being said. It involves focusing on not just what is being said, but how the speaker conveys the information – catching the verbal and non-verbal cues. In daily life, listening is an everyday activity that has an important role in receiving information.

Listening is important in communication as ineffective listening can lead to misinformation, misunderstanding and loss of communication whereas, good or effective listeners are valued in all walks of life – as empathetic friends, engaged workers, with social skills, confidence and self-esteem. Having good ability in listening is one of the main skills that has to be mastered by language learners because it tightly relates to the communication process. There are three main kinds of listening materials that you can use for the listening lessons or during teaching, namely;

a. Authentic listening materials: This is real life listening. Though, its disadvantage is that it cannot be graded.

b. Recorded listening materials: Learner concentrate on listening, can pause to reply at intervals and can use it independently. Though, its disadvantage is that it technical problems may occur due to the quality of cassette recorder. Also, speech can be too rambling.

c. Live listening materials: It is closer to real life. Allows a teacher to grade according to learner’s level and teacher can slow down or accelerate pace. Though, its disadvantage is that it cannot be repeated.



Figure 2.2: Listening Skill

When a person listens accurately, interprets the message correctly, and gives an appropriate response, then is it known as “EFFECTIVE LISTENING”. Such listening is an active process

of communication involving input, processing and output. By input we mean the word spoken by the speaker. Output means the listener's response. The listener processed the input before coming out with output. The input could be processed in two primary ways, namely;

a. Top down processing – In the top down processing, listener rely on their background knowledge for understanding the message. So, input is not the only source of meaning

b. Bottom up processing - In the bottom up processing, the listener depends solely on the incoming input for the meaning of message.

3.2 Types of Listening

Active Listening:

Active Listening is a communication technique that needs the listener to feed back what he hears to the speaker by re-stating or paraphrasing what he has heard in his own words to confirm what he has heard to confirm the understanding of both parties. Active listening comprises interpreting body language or focusing on something other than words. The Active Listening are two types which are as follows; listening with a purpose and listening with comprehension

Casual Listening:

Many times we listen to someone or something without any particular purpose. At such times, we often do not listen to them with much concentration, unless we hear something which interests us. This type of listening is often found in social context when we interact with others.

Critical Listening:

This is the active aspect of listening, aimed to analyze and evaluate what is being said. The Ability to listen critically is essential in a democracy. Critical listening is very important in different sphere like; job environment, in the community, at service clubs, in the place of worship or in the family. Politicians, the media, salesman, advocates of policies and procedures and our own financial, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual do require us to place a premium on critical listening and the thinking that accompanies it. The process of critical listening leads to problem-solving or decision-making. Hence, it requires following the main argument of the speech.

Empathic Listening:

Empathic listening is also called reflective listening which involves listening to understand the feelings and emotions of the speaker. It is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding and trust. It is essential skill for third parties and disputants enables the listener to receive and accurately response. The listener does not respond, instead, they encourage the speaker to share their emotions. The response is an integral part of the listening process and can be critical to the success of a negotiation/meditation

Intensive Listening:

It is 'Focused Listening' for information or for transacting business. During intensive listening listener listen very carefully. The listener is attentive and concentrates on what the speaker is saying. For example: - While, listening to directions the listener listens with full concentration. Such listening material is short and has a special task or worksheet designed on it. The intensive listening practice takes place in class and should be so designed that it is practical, easy to administer, and can be completed within the time limit of a lesson.

Defensive Listening:

This is the opposite of Empathetic listening. It involves listening and interpreting the speaker's words as criticism. The listener feels defensive due to their sense of guilt, jealousy or insecurity. True criticism is evaluation which shows the speaker's is faithful image and to compare it with the ideal he might attain. They respond in anger and any conversation descends into shouting as the listener misinterprets the speaker's intent. The challenge is in being non-defensive and listening to the words only within the present context.

3.3 Key Components of Listening

There are six stages of listening given as below:

Hearing:

Hearing refers to the act of getting information or the response caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear. Therefore, the reception of sound waves, which we know as hearing, does not mean that there is any conscious perception of what is being heard.

Attention:

Our senses are constantly bombarded by countless stimuli from the world around us. However, your brain screens these stimuli and permits only a few to come into focus. This selective perception is known as attention.

Understanding:

Hearing and perceiving a sound are not enough to enable meaningful messages to be received. Decoding the information to find its meaning. The next step understands the symbols we have seen and heard. To do this, we must analyze the meaning of the stimuli we have perceived.

Remembering:

Remembering is important to the listening process because it means that an individual has also added it to the mind's set. Storing away the information for later use. Also, retrieving previous information so that the response can be formed.

Evaluating:

Examining the message and deciding what response to give out. It is at this point that the active listener weighs evidence, sort fact from opinion, and determines the presence or absence of bias or prejudice in a message.

Responding:

Forming and sending out the response message. This stage of the process requires that the receiver complete the process through verbal and/or nonverbal feedback.

3.4 Benefits of Proper Listening

Effective listening is a process of analyzing sounds, organizing them into recognizable pattern, interpreting the pattern and understanding the message by inferring the meaning. The benefits of proper listening include;

Grasp New and Important Information:

Proper listening aids the learner to remember precise information since they are actively involved with the speaker. This is particularly important when the speaker is providing directions, teaching or presenting a message that needs transmission to others

Expansion of Knowledge:

Active learners are often eager in learning new skills and broaden their knowledge. effective listening can aid in understanding new subjects and recall what have been learned so that one can implement it in the future because it helps in preserving or expanding knowledge

Resolve Problems Effectively:

Listening effectively to others will assist the learner in detecting obstacles and issues that others are experiencing, as well as identify new problems. The more you recognize these problems, the sooner you will come up with a solution or make a strategy to solve them.

Build Trust:

People are more likely to trust you if they feel they can talk openly to you without disruptions, judgement, or unnecessary interjections. This is particularly useful when meeting someone new, a client or maybe a person with whom you hope to establish a lasting relationship.

Build Connections:

Proper listening makes it easier to communicate with others and solve problems easily. These factors will assist you in achieving professional success. People would be more interested in engaging with you on a daily basis if you show your willingness to really listen to what others have to say. Others would feel a lot more comfortable exchanging information with you if you listen actively.

Prevent Misunderstandings:

Among the most understandable reasons to practice active listening is to ensure that you have correctly heard the message from the speaker. Miscommunications and misunderstandings may result from improper listening or not fully comprehending what is being said and this could interfere with personal relationships.

3.5 Challenges to Effective Listening

Internal Barriers:

This form of barrier interferes with effective listening in the form of; lack of interest, use of jargons (complicated technical terms), cultural or language difference, gender difference, assumptions (about a person or situation) and emotional or psychological challenge which occurs we are overcome by complexes/ emotions resulting in “I don’t care attitude”, and when we do not want to strain our minds to listen to what is not being said, thus, preventing listening actively.

External Barriers:

This form of barrier interferes with effective listening in the form of; other noises, interference, poor connection and visual distractions. For example; environmental challenge which occurs when the sounds around us becomes a barrier when they distract our attention thus affecting our ability to listen actively or physical challenge which occurs due to lack of proper sleep/ nutrition, thus preventing actively listening.

3.6 Strategies to Becoming an Effective Listener

i. Don’t talk, listen:

Allow the speaker to give their points. Do not interrupt or work on your responses until they finish speaking. Talking along with the speaker or with others in the group communicates our lack of interest in what is being said.

ii. Place the speaker first:

Prepare yourself to listen. Relax and give the speaker your undivided attention. Maintain eye contact, nod and encourage them. Active listening involves listening to the emotions of the speaker too. During active listening, your non-verbal behaviors are just as important. To show the person you're truly tuned in, use open, non-threatening body language. This involves not folding your arms, smiling while listening, leaning in, and nodding at key junctures.

iii. Listen to Body Language Cues:

Pay attention to the non-verbal cues given by the speaker that convey more than words. The speaker may convey their confidence, or lack thereof through non-linguistic clues such as gestures, facial expression and movements. Focus on these to redirect your attention towards them and actively listen.

iv. Focus, Empathize:

Give your complete attention to the speaker. When engaged in active listening, making eye contact is especially important. This tells the other person that you are present and listening to what they say. Do not doodle, text, look out of the window, or otherwise distract yourself from what is being said. Put yourself in the speaker's place; they may be overcome by nervousness or be ill-prepared. Our lack of attention may further distract them.

v. Avoid Prejudice:

A non-judgmental, open-minded listener tends to attract more interaction with people. Develop a non-critical attitude to the speaker's words, focusing on what is being said and not who speaks. Remember that communication is based on the present context and never past experiences or remembered criticism, forgotten slurs, etc.

vi. Ask Open-Ended Questions:

Asking "yes or no" questions often produce dead-end answers. This isn't helpful during active listening as it keeps the conversation from flowing. It also makes it difficult to truly listen to the other person because there isn't much you can gain from a short, non-descriptive response. Instead, ask open-ended questions to show that you are interested in the conversation and the other person.

vii. Reflect on What You Hear:

After the person has spoken, tell them what you heard. This active listening technique ensures that you've captured their thoughts, ideas, and/or emotions accurately. It also helps the other person feel validated and understood while keeping any potential miscommunications to a minimum. One way to reflect what you've heard is to paraphrase.

viii. Improve listening Ability:

Some specific suggestions for listening improvement are: be mentally and physically prepared to listen in the class, avoid interruption while speaker speaking in the class, be flexible in your views, behave as you think good listeners should behave, concentrating all of your physical as well as mental energy on listening, practice listening to difficult expository materials and develop habits to good listening as well as difficult listening

4.0 Conclusion

Good ability in listening means having competence to comprehend information during listening activities or transfer the information in written or oral communication. It relates to the ability

of understanding, communicating, and responding what is listened. Listening skill is a very important skill and fundamental to the development of all other skills since, language itself is basically sound. Language learning is developing language skills in the target language. The skill to concentrate fully on a speaker, grasp their message, absorb the details, and react thoughtfully is known as active listening.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

This study session provided information regarding the concept of listening, types of listening and key component of listening skills. It emphasized on the importance of language and what are the main hurdles and breakdowns in listening skills and also give information about how this skill can be fruitfully developed. Furthermore, it has also suggested some activities to students how to tackle down problems which are difficult for them; during listening in the class and any other public place.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What listening is study skill? List 3 types of listening materials
2. What are the key components of listening?
3. Enumerate 5 benefits and 2 challenges to effective listening
4. Describe the strategies to becoming an effective listener

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. Listening refers to a complex process that allows people to comprehend spoken language. It is the ability to receive, process and interpret and respond to messages in the oral form. Listening skill is important in communication as ineffective listening can lead to misinformation, misunderstanding and loss of communication whereas, good or effective listeners are valued in all walks of life – as empathetic friends, engaged workers, with social skills, confidence and self-esteem. Types of listening materials are

- Authentic listening materials
- Recorded listening materials
- Live listening materials

Q2. There are six stages of listening. They are;

- Hearing
- Attention
- Understanding
- Remembering
- Evaluating
- Responding

Q3. Benefits of effective listening includes;

- Grasp new and important information
- Expansion of knowledge
- Resolve problems effectively
- Build Connections
- Prevent misunderstandings

Challenges to effective listening are;

- Internal Barriers like; lack of interest and use of jargons
- External Barriers like; poor connection and visual distractions

Q4. Strategies for effective listening include

- Don't talk, listen
- Place the speaker first
- Improve listening Ability
- Listen to body language cues
- Focus and empathize
- Avoid prejudice
- Ask open-ended questions
- Reflect on what you hear

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STUDY SESSION 3: WRITING SKILLS

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1.0 Introduction

For effective communication among various factors communication skills of both source and receiver are important. Communication skills encompass verbal and non-verbal communication skill. Writing skills are the abilities used to clearly communicate ideas through writing in various forms. Knowing what situations call for different styles of writing and being able to set an appropriate tone over text are both good writing abilities that any person can use at work.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the mechanics of effective writing
- Identify the various types of writing skills
- Evaluate the key element of effective writing
- Understand benefits of effective writing
- Explain the challenges to good writing skills
- Provide tips & tools for improving written communication
- Reinforce the fact that good communication is critical for success

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Writing as a Study Skill

Writing is a process or the series of steps that result in a composition of words that is well thought out, carefully organized, and technically correct. Effective writing is that which explicates exactly what the writer wishes to say in a clear and understandable language. Ineffective writing on the other hand is clumsy and distracts the reader's attention. Writing as a skill of language is crucial not only to the academic but also to other people in various professions. Technical knowledge about writing conventions, style guides and formatting for different situations is also an important part of writing abilities. Because of the importance of the written medium as a means of communication, the need therefore arises for teaching the various ways and strategies by which writing can be effectively actualized.



Figure 2.3: Writing Skill

The steps in writing as a process should include the following:

Executive Summary/Introduction: This should include previously identified “purpose,” and depending how complex the communication is, might also include a high level overview of the main points the writer intends to cover in the main body.

Main Body: In this section the writer further develops the main points of the writer’s communication – and provide supporting information

Conclusion: The writer recaps the main points and his/her call to action.

3.2 Types of Writing Skills

Important types of writing abilities in educational setting include:

Research:

Research allows writers to find accurate information and best practices related to writing in a particular style or about a particular piece of content. Writers often write about subjects that they are not familiar with, so finding quality sources quickly is an important skill. The information from research may also inspire you to write more content

Organization:

In writing organization refers to the ability to put ideas into an easy-to-understand and logical order, which you do by outlining. Outlining is creating a plan for the structure and flow of a piece of writing. Good writing needs to have a logical structure in order to make sense to a reader. Ability to organize sentences and paragraphs in the most interesting way influences how others perceive you and understand the point of your writing interesting way influences how others perceive you and understand the point of your writing

Reading Comprehension:

Reading comprehension skill refers to the ability to read a passage, understand the context, content and subtext and retain the information that have been read. Reading comprehension skills help the writer respond to prompts, reply to messages and learn about new content. People use reading comprehension skills to assess the tone and main idea of a piece of writing. Having good reading comprehension also helps you edit your own work by determining if you communicate a point effectively from the perspective of a reader

Editing:

Editing refers to being able to review a write-up for issues with clarity, structure, coherence, accuracy and language. Editing also involves reading your own writing from another perspective and considering how well it suits your goals. You may write multiple drafts of a piece because you keep editing and revising to make it easier to read, clearer, more concise and better organized. When editing your own work, think about your word choice and tone, removing any irrelevant phrases.

Proofreading:

Proofreading is the ability to review a piece for sentence-level items, like grammar, punctuation, spelling, word choice and other minor errors. Being able to proofread your own work is a highly sought-after skill because some writers find it challenging to catch smaller errors in their work. And being able to proofread others' work is an equally important skill because your employer or colleagues may ask you to proofread documents.

Critical thinking:

Critical thinking in writing means using research to support your points or craft arguments against research. Critical thinking in writing may also involve carefully considering a topic or passage and determining if it meets the overall goals of the piece. Such goals may include; clarity, accuracy and relevance.

3.3 Element of Effective Writing

The five major elements of writing are;

Purpose: the purpose of your writing is the main idea(s) you want the reader to take away. In most professional writing, you directly state the purpose in the first sentence or two.

Audience: the intended audience typically includes the readers you want to read the piece, and in some cases, you may consider a general audience who may come across your piece as part of your secondary audience.

Clarity: this element of writing deals with how easily and accurately readers can understand your purpose and the supporting features of your piece.

Coherent: a coherent piece is one that is well-organized on every level, where the ideas expressed in the piece relate and each segment leads the reader to the next segment.

Unity: this addresses whether every segment of the piece at the word-level, sentence-level, paragraph-level and section-level all relate to one another and emphasizes or supports the purpose.

3.4 Benefits of Effective Writing

Writing is a significant literacy activity in modern life that enables individuals to accomplish a variety of personal, intellectual, occupational, and recreational goals. The benefits of benefits of effective writing are;

Effective Communication:

Writing is important because it's used extensively in higher education and in the workplace. If students don't know how to express themselves in writing, they won't be able to communicate well with professors, employers, peers, or just about anyone else. Much of professional communication is done in writing: proposals, memos, reports, applications, preliminary interviews, e-mails, and more are part of the daily life of a college student or successful graduates.

Improves Language Development:

Creative writing obviously can play a crucial role in the language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse. Writing requires learners to manipulate the language in an interesting and demanding manner such that they attempt to express uniquely personal meanings.

Improves Thinking Ability:

Writing is necessary to help the human mind achieve its full potential. Writing, for example, allows the writer to concretize abstract ideas and to "connect the dots in their knowledge. Indeed, research has it that effective writing skills are beneficial to intellectual vitality, creativity, and thinking abilities. According to Menary, (2007) and Donald, (1991) writing skills enables the external storage of information that can be represented symbolically (e.g., letters, numbers, words, formulas drawings) and which can then be potentially analyzed, critiqued, reproduced and transformed into a meaningful form.

Recover Memories:

Start writing down those which you do remember. Before you know it, a certain word or a phrase you've put down on paper will trigger some other memory you would never have thought of otherwise. Pleasant memories will put a smile on your face, and you will remember events and people you care about, driving you to get in touch with them again.

Emotional Fulfilment:

Writing can help you feel good and emotionally stable. It has the ability to heal emotional wounds and persons who are dealing with terminal illness, victims of violent crime, or new college students struggling with the transition from high school. Pennebaker, Kiecolt-Glaser, & Glaser, (1988) in their study reported that writing is connected to improvement in improvements in physical health, immune system functioning and greater academic performance

3.5 Challenges to Good Writing Skills

The barriers to good writing skills are:

Using Unnecessary Phrase and Clauses:

If there are many phrases or clauses in our sentences, readers would find it difficult to find and comprehend the main point of the sentence. This should, therefore, be avoided in our writing as much as possible.

Using Unnecessary Adverbs:

This can make our writing boring. Adverbs such as extremely, really, very, so, too etc. known as intensifiers, add little or nothing to the meaning of sentences. Rather, they sometimes weaken the words they modify.

Using Unnecessary Sentence Openings:

There are some introductory expressions or words at the beginning of a sentence that make the sentence awkward. Such openings should be eliminated in our sentential constructions

Using Wordy Expressions:

The use of sentences with empty phrases contribute little or nothing to the meaning of a sentence, thus when sentences are too wordy in write-up, it does not add anything to the meaning of the sentence.

Redundancy:

Redundancy is the unnecessary repetition of words or ideas. Redundant sentences express the same thing or idea twice by using the same words or different words that have the same meaning.

Appropriateness of Tone and Lexical Choice:

Tone refers to the attitude of the writer to their readers and how the writer feels about the chosen topic. Inappropriateness of tone and lexical choice are barriers to effective writing. Our choice of words should be consistent with our tone.

3.6 Key steps in Writing

The following are Key steps to effective writing:

Planning:

Planning comes first in everything writing process either within or outside the field of academics. It is germane to have a workable plan ahead of any writing task. Failure to plan one's writing before the actual writing exercise results in poor presentation of material. Parts of the sub-activities of the planning phase include: *choosing and narrowing a topic* while considering the subject-matter, place, and time; *brainstorming, reading and making notes, preparing an out-line* (scratch or informal outline and formal outline), *drafting, revising, editing* and *writing the final draft*.

Revise Grammar:

Review grammar concepts you may have learned in school to remind yourself of the proper ways to construct sentences and paragraphs. Then, consider taking grammar quizzes online. They may test your application of these rules in an engaging way.

Review Sentence Structure and Vocabulary:

Improve the readability of your work and diversify your writing abilities by using different sentence structures, sentence lengths and vocabulary words in your work. For example, you can review your piece for repeating sentence structures like complex sentences that start with prepositional phrases and then adjust the structure to some of those sentences. Or, you might use the search function in your word processor to identify words that you use frequently, then replace a few of them throughout your piece to ensure the use of rich and varied vocabulary.

Use Different Reading Techniques:

Review your work using different techniques like: reading the whole piece from the end to the start, sentence by sentence, to proofread; reviewing only the topic sentences and concluding

sentences of each paragraph to check your structure and reading your work aloud, can better help you find spelling, grammar and punctuation errors as well as readability issues

Learn New Words:

Having a robust and diverse vocabulary can help you craft engaging pieces and use words in new ways. When looking for new words to use in your writing, keep a dictionary or thesaurus nearby or visit an online dictionary/thesaurus. You can also make it a habit of reviewing one passage in the dictionary or thesaurus to learn a new word or revisit the meaning of a word you think you know by looking it up in the dictionary to learn the meaning.

Practice Daily Writing:

Focus your time on the types of writing where you most need to improve. Give yourself writing prompts and challenge yourself to try out different skills. Even if you don't write every day at work, practice writing in some way every day.

Read Different Kinds of Writing:

One of the best ways to improve your writing is to read a variety of writing styles daily. The more exposure you have to quality writing, the better you can produce great writing yourself. Reading helps you understand how to apply the skills in writing you have learned.

4.0 Conclusion

Writing is a skill that only improves through practice and repetition. As such writing as a communication skill must be taught and learned especially in the academic circles. Effective writing is a special skill that is inevitable particularly for effective communication in the written medium. One can master effective writing skills if one devotes considerable amount of time to different writing tasks. We should, therefore, combine the writing strategies discussed in this chapter with others we consider valuable in order to increase our chances of becoming great and effective writers.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

In this study session, we have discussed the writing as a study skill, the types of writing, element of effective writing, benefits of effective writing, challenges to good writing skills and the key steps for effective writing skills. In all, Writing is essential. It brings about a lot of advantages such as; foster communication, Express one's personality, develop thinking skills, make logical and persuasive arguments, promote a chance to reflect and re-evaluate ideas, process and receive feedbacks and prepare for school and employment.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. Explain the mechanics of effective writing
2. State 6 types of writing skills you know
3. What are the 5 elements of effective writing?
4. Enumerate 5 benefits and 5 challenges of effective writing skills

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. Writing as a skill of language is crucial not only to the academic but also to other people in various professions. Writing is a process or the series of steps that result in a composition of words that is well thought out, carefully organized, and technically correct. The mechanics for effective writing is that which explicates exactly what the writer wishes to say in a clear and

understandable language. Ineffective writing on the other hand is clumsy and distracts the reader's attention.

Q2. Important types of writing abilities in educational setting include:

- Research
- Organization
- Reading Comprehension
- Editing
- Proofreading
- Critical thinking

Q3. The five major elements of writing are;

- Emphasis on purpose
- Emphasis on audience
- Emphasis on clarity
- Emphasis on coherent
- Emphasis on unity

Q4. Benefits of effective writing includes;

- Promotes effective communication
- Improves language development
- Improves Thinking Ability
- Recover memories
- Emotional Fulfilment

Challenges of effective writing includes;

- Using unnecessary phrase and clauses
- Using Unnecessary Adverbs
- Using unnecessary sentence openings
- Using Wordy Expressions
- Appropriateness of Tone and Lexical Choice

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STUDY SESSION 4: READING SKILLS

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1.0 Introduction

Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, words, sentences and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills and strategies to determine what that meaning is. Reading is an important way to gain information and will underpin much of your academic study including researching and writing assignments, revising for exams and following up on information taught in lectures. Most academic reading is motivated by the need to find and understand information and develop ideas and arguments. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, for enjoyment, enhance knowledge of the language being read, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or writing style. The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the concept of reading as a study skill
- Identify the various types of reading skills
- Evaluate the essential component of effective reading
- Understand benefits of learning through reading
- Explain the challenges to effective reading skills
- Explore the strategies to avoiding bad reading

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Reading as a Study Skill

Reading is a complex “cognitive process” of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning. Reading is a means of language acquisition, communication and of sharing information and ideas. The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. Reading for a purpose provides motivation which constitutes an important aspect of being a good reader. Reading is an interactive activity as the reader makes

use of information from his/her background knowledge as well as information from the printed page; also, reading is also interactive in the sense that many skills work together simultaneously in the process.

Essential reading skills include: recognizing the script of language; conceptual meaning, understanding the communicative value of sentences, understanding explicitly and non-explicitly stated information, deducing the meaning, use of unfamiliar lexical items, relations within the sentences and between parts of text through lexical cohesion devices; recognizing indicators and main point of information in discourse; distinguishing main idea from supporting detail; selective extraction of relevant points from the text; basic reference skills; skimming, scanning, transcoding information from diagrams/charts. The elements of reading are; decoding, acquiring new vocabulary, fluency, knowing language conventions, focused attention and expanding world knowledge



Figure 2.4: Reading Skill

3.2 Types of Reading

The following are types of reading skills;

Skimming Reading:

Skimming implies going over a text briefly before making a decision on whether to read the whole text. This technique is useful because it saves the reader plenty of time. Students mostly benefit from skimming texts in particular as it helps them to avoid reading some material deeply only to conclude after a while that it is not useful. The technique applicable in skimming reading include: look at the title and table of contents of your material, go over the text quickly to get the gist of the material and pay attention to bolded or italicized sentences.

Scanning Reading:

Scanning is the technique used to locate specific information in a given text. In scanning the reader is reading selectively to achieve very specific reading goals. Scanning is a useful technique to employ both in education and real life. Like skimming, it saves you time and makes locating specific facts easy. In scanning, the reader already knows what the text is about and that it contains the needed information.

Intensive Reading:

Intensive reading implies diving deep into a given text. The reader's interest is to analyze not only every idea expressed in it but also the words and phrases the author has used. For this

reason, intensive reading is usually regarded as an advanced reading activity. Several types of reading skills are needed to read intensively, such as; advanced vocabulary range, excellent attention span, good memory and familiarity with the context (or extensive world knowledge). Intensive reading helps the reader to gain new vocabulary, makes you a critical reader, and broadens your attention span further. The technique applicable in intensive reading include: pick a reading material that deals with the topics you are interested in, set a timing for the reading, preview the text by reading the heading, subheadings, and first sentences of paragraphs, read the text deeply, noting down any questions that come to mind or highlighting the statements you want to fact-check and document the vocabulary items you are not familiar with.

Extensive Reading:

extensive reading can be perceived as reading for pleasure. The reader does not have to analyze each part of the reading material or feel worried not knowing what the author wanted to say. Reading extensively implies that the reader is reading to get the bigger picture, enjoy the story, and pass the time. Regular extensive reading helps you acquire new vocabulary too. It also builds a healthy habit of reading for pleasure. Ideal materials for extensive reading are magazines, fiction novels, and comic books. The reader should endeavour to pick the material of interest and create a relaxing environment for reading for at least an hour.

3.3 Essential Components of Reading

The essential components of reading are:

Decoding in Reading:

Decoding or phonemic awareness is the first skill to learn when in school. It is the ability to make out words, phrases, and sentences. For example, you may stumble upon an unknown word while you are reading. You don't know its meaning, but you do know how to pronounce it by decoding the letters and the sounds they make when they are arranged in a specific order.

Fluency in Reading:

Reading fluency means the ability to read any text without difficulty, regardless of whether the reader is familiar with the topic or not. Fluency in reading is reflected in the number of times a reader has to pause while reading to understand what is written. A better method for measuring reading fluency is by clocking the reading time. The reader does not necessarily need to use a stopwatch each time during reading rather estimating the total time spent when reading through a paragraph or even one sentence of an unfamiliar text.

Language Conventions:

Language conventions refer to the knowledge of grammar, spelling and punctuation. While spelling words correctly can fall under vocabulary skills, being familiar with various grammar constructions and standard punctuation rules deserves a special mention. A reader can possess this skill when he/she is comfortable with using more than several grammatical constructions in writing. This is one way in which writing and reading skills are interconnected in expressing certain ideas or conveying a specific tone with ease and understanding them perfectly.

Vocabulary Range:

Language is a living thing, which means that new vocabulary is being invented and acquired naturally all the time. Vocabulary is closely related to content development. This implies that

the higher the level of vocabulary the broader the understanding of the world. Vocabulary is not only a skill for proficient reader, but also, it improves an individuals' prospects of studying any given major. Using vocabulary knowledge helps in deciphering meaning from the words and phrases during reading. Learners are to improve their vocabulary regardless of age or education level.

Readers' Attention:

Poor readers have short attention spans. They cannot focus on a lengthy passage without being distracted oftentimes, by their own thoughts. Another cognitive skill that is relevant for reading with respect to attention is memory. Proficient readers won't forget what they have absorbed as soon as they are occupied by a different activity (i.e retention), and not only does it help to study better, but it also lets paves way for truly enjoying the reading material and in absorbing new ideas from it.

Extensive World Knowledge:

Drawing on background knowledge of the world is another skill used unconsciously while reading. In practice, the reader relates what is already know to what is been read. The more the reading, the more knowledge of the world that is gained. The reader uses the knowledge acquired to infer meaning from other texts. This is a good example of how you employ all the different reading skills simultaneously.

3.4 Benefits of Learning through Reading

The benefits of learning through reading includes;

Reading to learn the language:

Reading material is language input. By giving students a variety of materials to read, instructors provide multiple opportunities for students to absorb grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure and discourse structure as they occur in authentic contexts.

Reading for Cultural Knowledge and Awareness:

Reading everyday materials that are designed for native speakers can give students insight into the lifestyles and worldviews of the people whose language they are studying.

Reading to Improve Reading Process:

Effective reading skill can develop student's awareness of the reading process and reading strategies by asking students to think and talk about how they read in their native language. It allows students to practice the full repertoire of reading strategies by using reading material. Students practice reading strategies in class in their reading assignments. It encourages students to be conscious of what they are doing while they complete reading assignments.

Reading to Improve Communicative Competence:

Reading activities that are meant to increase communicative competence should be success oriented and build up students' confidence in their reading ability. A fully developed reading activity support students as readers through pre-reading, while reading, and post reading activities.

Reading for Content Information:

Reading for content information in the language classroom gives students both authentic reading material and an authentic purpose for reading.

3.5 Challenges to Effective Reading

Factors that influence reading skills are:

Language Barrier:

Language in all its forms (spoken, read and written) is an especially important tool in teaching and learning. Human relationships help the learner to become a processor of language. There is a need for an interaction between a child and an adult for language acquisition, and this leads to reading acquisition skills. Reading instruction begins with oral instruction and if this oral foundation is weak, progress in reading will be slow and uncertain.

Vocabulary and Comprehension:

Reading skills is significantly related to ability to comprehend words. A reader should a conscious make effort each day to introduce new words and their meaning so as to build a sufficient vocabulary giving rise to comprehension and flurry of different abilities. The vocabulary aspect of language will aid the reader in the realm of reading comprehension, enabling them to do better understand the use of words in different scenarios.

Home Environment and Parental Involvement:

A learner's first environment is the home and this can be the foundation for cognitive growth and development. The early experiences of a learner's life will have a powerful influence on his/her development. Hungry or unhappy learners will have less energy to focus on school activities. Parents may also be undereducated and lack skills to nurture literacy, there may be little or no encouragement, no assistance with homework activities and no communication with teachers. Barrier to reading skills is strongly associated with environmental factors. This includes: the size of the family, social class and material circumstances, the reading habits of the parents and the number of books available in the home.

School Environment and Effective Teachers:

The school environment, coupled with teaching practices, profoundly affects their lives. For learners with reading difficulties, the experiences at school will be unhappy ones and will include; many negative feelings. In addition, learners with reading difficulties do not read as much as those who are good readers. Poor readers read only a third as many words as average learners do. There is not enough practice to improve and unsatisfactory relationships with adults at school add to reading difficulties. Reading problems can also be caused by poor reading instruction in that formal reading instructions may have begun prior to the learner being ready. Classes with a large number of learners may lead to the unintentional provision of poor instruction and the needs of individual learners are not met.

Physical Factors:

Good physical health is a vital basic condition for learning. Poor health can affect a learner's ability to read. Poor health can include chronic illness and/or lack of medical facilities. The general health of learners may affect their success in learning to read, especially if these health problems result in frequent absence from school. Persistent allergies and frequent colds may cause temporary loss of some of hearing abilities, vision and visual perception thus, hampering reading instruction.

3.6 Strategies to avoiding Bad Reading

Strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively include

Design a Reading List:

Provides a good starting point for reading materials relevant to your course. Reading lists usually include a mixture of both essential and recommended reading. Explore beyond your reading list to find additional reading materials (including books, e-books, journal articles) to expand your subject knowledge.

Selection:

Be selective about what you read and remember you can't read everything. Don't spend time reading in detail without first checking how relevant the text is by;

- Surveying the text by looking at the table of contents, chapter headings, abstracts and summaries. This will help you assess the material so you can decide if it contains the information you need.
- Scanning to get a general feel for the text. Look over the material quickly for key words, headings and illustrations. You can get an idea of what the text is about by reading the first and last sentence of each paragraph.

Preview and Predict:

Reviewing titles, section headings, and photo captions to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading selection. Predicting content using knowledge of the subject matter to make predictions about content and vocabulary and check comprehension; using knowledge of the text type and purpose to make predictions about discourse structure; using knowledge about the author to make predictions about writing, vocabulary and content.

Adopt Critical Reading Style:

This involves detailed reading of a text. After deciding if it is relevant, you will sometimes need to analyze, question and evaluate what you are reading. Some useful questions include asking yourself:

- Who is the author/source? Are they credible?
- What is the main argument in the text?
- What evidence does the author use in supporting the argument?
- Do you agree or disagree with the author, if so why? or why not?
- How can you use this information (assignment, report, or presentation)?

Making Notes:

Making notes when reading using a quick survey of text to get the main idea, identifying text structure, confirm or question predictions. This will be useful in remembering most key points. Such notes will prove its usefulness when writing assignments and revising for exams.

Adopt Suitable Reading Strategy:

Use an effective reading strategy such; Survey, Question, Read, Recall and Review (SQ3R). This technique is useful purposefully reading. The SQ3R is described as follows:

- **Survey:** Look over material critically. Skim through the text to get a general idea of what it is about and this helps you to decide whether it is of any use to you

- **Question:** Formulate critical question. Asking questions will help you to stay focused on your subject. E.g; Does the text give you any useful information that you can use?
- **Read:** Make a more careful and detailed key points during reading of the text. Endeavour to remain focused on the purpose for reading the text.
- **Recall:** Try to recall the information you have read by putting the text and your notes away from you.
- **Review:** Clarify any points you were uncertain about by trying to re-read the text to perfect your understanding of the text.

Take Regular Breaks:

When you are reading or studying take regular breaks. Reading for short periods of time of about 20-30 minutes should be enough to really focus on the text and take in as much as possible.

4.0 Conclusion

Reading is a complex, purposeful, interactive, comprehending, and flexible activity that takes considerable time and resources to develop. It is not merely a process of exact identification of letters, words, and ultimately sentences leading to comprehension built from letter to word to phrase to sentence. Reading skills involve: identifying word meaning, drawing inferences, identifying writer's technique, recognizing mood of passage, finding answers to questions

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

This study session evaluated the concept of reading as a study skill, the four types of reading which included; skimming reading, scanning reading, intensive reading and extensive reading styles. It further reviewed the essential components of reading skills and the possible benefits of learning through reading. It also, identified the tentative challenges to effective reading as well as the strategies to avoiding bad reading.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. Define reading as effective study skill
2. State the 4 types of reading skills you know
3. What are the essential component of reading?
4. Enumerate 5 benefits and 5 challenges effective reading
5. What does the SQ3R as describe?

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. In other words, reading is an important way to gain information and will underpin much of your academic study including researching and writing assignments, revising for exams and following up on information taught in lectures.

Q2. The following are types of reading skills;

- Skimming Reading
- Scanning Reading
- Intensive Reading
- Extensive Reading

Q3. The essential components of reading are:

- Decoding in Reading
- Fluency in Reading
- Language Conventions
- Vocabulary Range
- Readers' Attention
- Extensive World Knowledge

Q4. The benefits of learning through reading includes;

- Reading to learn the language
- Reading for cultural knowledge and awareness
- Reading to improve communicative competence
- Reading to improve reading process
- Reading for content information

The challenges of effective reading are;

- Language Barrier
- Vocabulary and Comprehension
- Home Environment and Parental Involvement
- School Environment and Effective Teachers
- Physical Factors

Q5. The SQ3R stands for:

- **Survey:** Look over material critically. Skim through the text to get a general idea of what it is about
- **Question:** Formulate critical question.
- **Read:** Make a more careful and detailed key points during reading of the text.
- **Recall:** Try to recall the information you have read by putting the text and your notes away from you.
- **Review:** Clarify any points you were uncertain about by trying to re-read the text.

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STUDY SESSION 5: COURSE STUDY STRATEGIES

CONTENTS

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1.0 Introduction

Studying is a skill. Every student has a unique and personal learning style or a preferred channel through which learning comes more easily. Being successful in school requires a high level of study skills. Every student approaches the task of learning differently. Everybody learns in their own way and at their own pace. Good study habits include many different skills: effective time management, adopting self-discipline, concentration, organization, memorization and effort. In this study session, you will learn about the types of learners and the different course styles and strategies to adopt towards remembering what has been studied. The study skills can be applied in other areas of life as well like: job, career, or any activity that requires thought, planning, processing, information, and self-discipline.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Identify the various types of learners
- Evaluate the essential learner's characteristics
- Understand the techniques for effective study
- Explain the mechanics for adopting the right study strategies
- Identify technique for studying for tests and examinations

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Types of Learners

The characteristics of the different types of learners are discussed below;

Visual learners: this means learning by seeing and looking. For the visual learner, learning comes through imagery of the whole concept. Visualization provides the organizational construct for assimilating and processing new ideas. As such, visual learners spend most of the day dreaming, watching movies, and staying as far away from reality as possible.

Auditory learners: this means learning by hearing and listening. For the auditory learner, learning is step-by-step, following a logical progression from beginning to end. Auditory

learners are good listeners, learn sequentially, are rapid processors, and think in words. This type of learner is best at noticing details, pitches, and rhythms that escape the normal listener. They are excellent at keeping tune, and are adept at turning the abstract into concrete objects.

Tactile learners: this means learning by touching and doing. These are the learners who can do more than one thing at a time. They are always on the move. They constantly walk around, they have to touch everything, and they use body language to convey their feelings. They would rather play sports or do a craft than sit down and read a book.

3.2 Learner Characteristics

Learner characteristics is used to designate a target group of learners and define those features or qualities that may influence how and what they learn. With respect to learner characteristics, there are often large differences between the characteristics of different learners and groups of learners such as children, students, professionals, adults, older people and disabled persons. These groups differ in their motivation, prior knowledge, expertise level, study time, and physical abilities. The differences within the learner characteristics have an impact on the structure of the instruction and the degree of support and guidance of the learning process. Learner characteristics can be academic, personal, cognitive in nature and social/emotional.

Academic characteristics: are more education and/or learning related such as learning goals (of an individual or a group), prior knowledge, educational type, and educational level.

Personal characteristics: often relate to demographic information such as age, gender, maturation, language, social economic status, cultural background, and specific needs of a learner group such as particular skills and disabilities for and/or impairments to learning.

Cognitive characteristics: relates to such things as attention span, memory, mental procedures, and intellectual skills which determine how the learner perceives, remembers, thinks, solves problems, organizes and represents information in her/his brain.

Social/emotional characteristics: relates to the group or to the individual with respect to the group. Examples of social/emotional characteristics are group structure, place of the individual within a group, sociability, self-image (also feelings of self-efficacy and agency), mood, et cetera.

3.3 Techniques for Effective Study

The techniques for effective study are described below;

Reading and Studying Textbooks:

As soon as you buy your textbook for a class, give yourself a head start before going to class. Read the Table of Contents, prefaces, introduction, and any other up-front material in the book. Leaf through the book and see what it contains. Read the captions, read chapter titles, and go to the back of the book to see if there is a glossary, an index, answers to quizzes given throughout the text, etc. Get familiar with your book. Treat it like a tool you want to use with proficiency.

- **Preview the chapter:** Look at headings, subheadings, topic sentences, boldfaced and italicized words, pictures, diagrams, graphs, summaries, and review questions at the end.

- **Formulate questions:** Ask yourself key questions about the subheadings to guide your reading and studying of the text.
- **Read a section of the chapter:** Put the book down and ask yourself what you just read.
- **Avoid skipping any part of the chapter:** Read the sidelines, the captions under photos, definitions, and any additional information the author has included. It's all there to help you learn.
- **Don't be afraid to mark your text:** use different colored highlighters for particularly important parts, however, avoid defeating the purpose of highlighting by overdoing it.
- **Outline the chapter:** When you have read the chapter through, go back and take notes. Define terms, draw diagrams, and explain things in your own words. Make up memory tricks to help you remember new terms.
- **Underline key points:** Draw arrows or other symbols to direct you to important details or definitions. If a word appears that you do not know, look it up and write the definition in the margin.

SQ3R Method of Reading:

The SQ3R Method of reading sets the stage for interacting with your text material. As you go through the five steps you are gaining information, formulating questions, thinking about what you are reading, and trying to find answers to your questions.

- **Survey:** This step takes only a few minutes. Go through the chapter quickly. Glance at the chapter title, the introduction, headings, and summary paragraphs, if any. Notice any pictures, diagrams, graphs, tables, etc. Read any bold print. Previewing your text gives you some background about topics you may have never encountered before. You pick up general information. You know where to find information.
- **Question:** Before you begin reading a section, turn the heading into a question. For example, if the heading is Basic Causes of Stress, your question would be "What are the basic causes of stress?" This arouses your curiosity and increases your comprehension. It also brings to mind information you already know. The questions you ask help make important points stand out as you read. This forces you to think about what you are reading
- **Read:** Read the material under the heading with the purpose of getting the answer to your question. Read with concentration. Identify the main ideas and highlight or underline them. Read sections at a time and stop to ask questions. Jot down notes and ask yourself what you just read. If you can answer your question, read on. If not, look it over again. A good practice for more difficult reading is to do an outline of chapter in your notes.
- **Recite:** This step requires that you recite out loud the answer to the question you asked prior to reading a section of the text. Say it in your own words. If you find you cannot answer your question, go back and look for the answer, then try again. This way you will know if you have understood the material.
- **Review:** After you have read the entire chapter, look over the notes you made to familiarize yourself with the important information. Check your memory by reciting the main points out loud. Then review the main points in your notes, making sure you understand them. Add to your notes from the text, if necessary. Always do a review of the chapter after completing your reading. Then do quick reviews before and after each

class. Finally, make up test questions from what you have read. Be sure to write them down and answer them

Note Taking Strategy:

Note taking is much easier when the reading and the homework is done before class. Class also makes more sense and is much easier to follow when the work is done ahead of time. The following tips are also helpful

- **Add to your notes** Supplement the notes you took in class with extra material from the text and handouts. Always leave plenty of extra space in your notes for this.
- **Define terms heard in class:** When you hear unfamiliar words in class, write them in your notes as best you can, then look them up later, getting the correct spelling and definition in your notes.
- **Clean up or rewrite your notes:** If notes are too scribbled or difficult to read, copy them again.
- **Summarize your notes:** At the end of each topic or chapter summarize the notes created.

Create Review Tools:

Review tools will help make studying more interesting and effective. Design your own tools or work with a group or study partner to develop them. Following are some suggestions for study tools:

- **Concept maps:** create a visual diagram of your notes with the central topic at the top middle of the paper and the remaining concepts branching off from the central point.
- **Study checklists:** make a list of all the topics you are going to study and check off as you go along

Memory and Mnemonic Devices:

Mnemonic devices or memory tricks help you remember factual information like names, dates, formulas, or other information that requires rote memorization. Some sample mnemonic devices are: rhymes, creative sentences, and acronyms.

Join A Study or reading Group:

A good study group can be one of the most effective means of studying. It helps to combine the efforts of different minds, increase your storehouse of information, learn new study techniques, and allows you to share notes and information. It reinforces learning through discussion, questioning, repetition, and reinforcement. Study groups require the same organization and time management as private study sessions.

3.4 Adopting the Right Study Strategies

To Improve as a Visual Learner:

- Visualize what you are studying
- Visualize what the instructor or facilitator is lecturing about
- Learn from videos
- Draw pictures and diagrams
- Use color in your notes (colored pens, highlighters, etc.)
- Use mind maps in your notes

- Use picture and graphics to reinforce learning

To Improve as an Auditory Learner:

- Participate in class discussions
- Read out loud when studying
- Tape record your own textbook reading
- Listen to tapes of recorded assignments
- Listen to audiotapes on the subject
- Talk over ideas from class and what you are studying with other students

To Improve as a Hands-On or Tactile Learner

- Take frequent breaks while studying
- Stand up and move around while you are studying
- Memorize or drill while walking or exercising
- Use the computer to reinforce learning
- Make use of your hands and write things down as you study
- Be physically active; experiment with objects

3.5 Studying for Tests and Examinations

Reading at university for examinations may necessitate a change in your usual concept of reading. It's not just a matter of stringing words together and making your way through yet another ten pages of material. Rather, it's a question of becoming an effective and efficient reader which means reading with a purpose or being clear about what ideas you're looking for in the reading. You'll read differently for assignments and exams so be clear about why you're reading a text. Knowing how to read effectively involves understanding the structure of texts, how this structure can direct your reading, the purpose of your reading and reflecting on it. For most students this is a process which requires experimentation and practice, and the more actively you read, the greater the benefits.

Scheduling time effectively:

Effective study strategy is time management, a skill that can be learnt. Students sometimes have a cluster of assignments or tests during certain periods of the semester so it's imperative to be organized. Studying for an exam is not an "assignment" in the same way that writing a paper is an assignment because you don't hand in your test preparation. If you're a student who feels you're spending a lot of time preparing for your exam but still aren't doing as well as you expect, maybe you aren't squeezing in all the time you could. Good time management skills are also an asset in your personal life and in your future profession. The first thing to do is to sit down and estimate how much total time you can and should devote to preparing for this exam. It's also important to know the learning objectives for each of your papers and the topics within them to guide and structure your study and the amount of time you spend on it. Every week at university is different in terms of workload, so you need to take a flexible approach to accommodate changing priorities or circumstances. A time plan is a guide only, so don't panic if there are disruptions to it some weeks.

Setting goals:

Identifying goals is particularly important to avoid procrastination and help you to remain focused and motivated. Be clear about what you want to achieve at university and work out some short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. Make sure that these goals are realistic

and achievable because doing so means you're more likely to attain them. You may be unclear about which profession you're aiming for but you obviously want to pass your exams.

Setting Priorities:

The next thing to do, after you've allocated time to preparing for your exam, is to decide what the exam is going to be about, as specifically as possible. You might start by going back to your syllabus and reading the course goals. Remind yourself how the themes laid out in the course affect the information presented in the course. Or ask yourself how you would explain this exam to someone who is not in the course as a way of testing how well you really understand what you are going to be tested on. Often, how well you can explain what a test is going to be about and what its purposes are is a measure of how well you are currently prepared for the test or examination.

Make Appropriate Decision:

Identify what you do know and what you do not know. Preparing for an exam involves making decisions, including deciding what you do and do not know. Don't spend the same amount of time preparing for every topic. Studying everything with equal emphasis can be tempting, because you may feel like you're doing a thorough job, but concentrating on what you do not know is a better use of your time. When you've more or less equalized your knowledge of all the topics that the test covers, then review all the material together, not before.

Relate Textbook and Lecture Notes:

Almost always, the textbook serves as a backdrop to the more focused lecture material. Find out what is the relationship between lectures and textbook readings? Even if your instructor wrote the textbook you are using, a lecture is designed to highlight and trace the themes of the course in a way a textbook cannot. In general, therefore, you should use your lecture notes as a way to orient your review of the textbook. The textbook may, in one sense, contain "everything you need to know on the test"; but in another sense, your textbook is simply a collection of information given its full meaning by the design and implementation of the course you are taking. Review your lecture notes and write down the major themes the course is tracing. Then go to your textbook and flesh out these themes as necessary, as well as looking for any major themes you may have missed in your lecture notes but that you suspect will be present on the test

Mock Testing:

Challenge yourself to activate your memory. When you review, do more than read your textbook and notes over. "Self-test" by asking yourself questions, as if you were administering the test. If you review your course materials passively, it's easy to fool yourself into thinking you have material better fixed in your memory than you actually do. Try to do more than memorize what your course materials say. Try to make sure you really understand the implications and applications of the materials you're reviewing. Simply looking at something over and over doesn't mean you really understand it nor will it necessarily put it in your memory for the test. Try looking away from the book or your lecture notes and asking an original question about the material you're reviewing.

Positive Attitude:

Try to have a positive outlook and not hook into other people's negativity about what they haven't studied. Another part of having a positive attitude is having Plan B. For example, if

your results preclude you from being accepted into a course, think about some alternative options rather than adopting an all or nothing attitude. The efforts you've put into your current course don't need to be devalued or wasted if you adopt this flexible and realistic approach regarding other possible interests and careers. Furthermore, having Plan B will put you under less pressure and help you to remain motivated. Practicalities to check before going in for the test or examination are;

- Check out the exam venue well in advance of the day.
- Double-check the date and time of the exam.
- Take several pens, pencils and an eraser, calculator and ruler if required/permitted.
- Don't forget your ID card, school fees slip or course registration slip

4.0 Conclusion

Basically, we use all specific senses in learning about the world around us, but each of us has a tendency to lean more heavily on one of the three learning channels, namely; visual, auditory, and tactile styles. In conclusion, we all have elements of each learning style. But the truth is that one or two types stand out in each of us.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

Everybody has a learning style that is most comfortable for him or her. Students must first learn these skills, practice them and develop effective study habits in order to be successful. Learning styles are generally classified into three different types: Visual learners tend to learn best by reading or observing. Auditory learners tend to learn best by listening. Tactile learners tend to learn best by doing, touching, or manipulating objects. Some people may also be a combination of more than one learning style.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What are the types of learners?
2. State learner characteristics you know
3. Highlight 5 techniques for effective study
4. What are the study technique for tests and examinations?

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The three types of learners include;

- **Visual learners:** this means learning by seeing and looking.
- **Auditory learners:** this means learning by hearing and listening.
- **Tactile learners:** this means learning by touching and doing.

Q2. Learner characteristics includes;

- **Academic characteristics:** are more education and/or learning related such as learning goals, prior knowledge, educational type, and educational level.
- **Personal characteristics:** often relate to demographic information such as age, gender, maturation, language, social economic status, needed by learners
- **Cognitive characteristics:** relates to such things as attention span, memory, mental procedures, and intellectual skills which determine how the learner perceives.
- **Social/emotional characteristics:** relates to the group or to the individual with respect to the group.

Q3. The techniques for effective study are;

- Reading and Studying Textbooks
- SQ3R Method of Reading
- Note Taking Strategy
- Create Review Tools
- Memory and Mnemonic Devices

Q4. The study technique for tests and examinations include;

- Scheduling time effectively
- Setting goals
- Setting priorities
- Make appropriate decision
- Relate textbook and lecture notes

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MODULE THREE

LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Study session 1: Learners' Support Services

Study session 2: Categories of Learners' Support Services

Study session 3: Components of Learners' Support Services

Study session 4: Importance of Learners' Support Services

STUDY SESSION 1: LEARNERS' SUPPORT SERVICES

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1.0 Introduction

This study session emphasizes on the need for learners support services for students in open and distance learning and how they are benefited from these services in their learning activities. Support services in many occasions stand to reduce learners' isolation from the ODL institution. It encourages learners to go for life-long learning. Similarly, it addresses the purpose of learners' support services and the elements of effective learners' support services. With the advancement in information and communication technologies, heterogeneous and diverse learners' groups who are geographically scattered and having increasing expectations from all concerned, necessitate effective support services to ensure proper guidance and learning conditions. Learner support service include not only availability of high quality academic programmes, but also ensure that the students receive their study material in time, assignments are assessed and evaluated within the stipulated time frame and provided academic guidance is provided.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand and explain the concept of learners' support services
- Identify the purpose of learners' support services
- Describe elements of effective learners' support services

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Learners' Support Services

Learner support systems are the major components of open and distance learning. Although support services are not compulsory to avail for all learners but those who seek help from the institution in any form will be treated as support services. ODL institutions offer support services to learners based on their demands, requirements, and necessity. They require support services to understand ODL system and its various functions starting with admission to certificate distribution.

Support services are offered to learners because they are of three types. First, those who join in the ODL institution after a long gap of their academic studies due to some or other reasons. Second, those who wish to complete a set of courses/ programme while doing their job, may be in a distant place. Third, those who passed from face-to-face educational institutions and join in the ODL institutions for their higher studies. In either of these cases not even a single learner is quite familiar with ODL institutions to its full form, and may not be knowing the patterns of education that ODL institution provides to its learners. Hence, learner support services are offered to learners to avail and understand the various operational activities, assessment and evaluation procedures of the ODL institution.

3.2 Purpose of Learners' Support Services

The term ODL is defined in many ways but the essence remains same, i.e. "variety of education programmes and activities (where) the learner and teacher are physically separate but... efforts are made... to overcome this separation using a variety of media" (Belanger, F. & Jordan, D.H., 2000, P.8). Since this is a true fact and universally accepted phenomenon, it implies learners need support services desperately and it is not superfluous to consider support service is the principal element in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system. Given the spatial separation between learners and tutors in ODL systems, there is need to establish a vibrant Directorate of Learner Support Services, offering guidance and counselling services to students on a wide range of issues that include choice of programmes, studying in an ODL system, course and examination registrations, and many others. This will help study centers bridge the interaction between the university and its students, most of the learner support services are undertaken at the study centers. Libraries, ICT, moot courts, and laboratories are some of the learner support services offered in the study centers. Purpose of learners' support service; include; practical reasons for learners' support, theoretical reasons for learners support and moral reasons for learners' support.

3.2.1 Practical Purpose

The uniqueness of distance learning demands learner support services in an urgent manner. This is so because when learners took admission in the ODL institutions they find themselves in an unfamiliar situation, where there are no teachers who can teach them directly as they had been availed in the classroom situations of face-to-face educational institutions. Further, they are expected to work independently on the self-learning materials or/and online courses in the absence of a teacher. Some of the learners astonished and cannot gather confidence on their capacity to learn through unfamiliar learning packages (i.e. self-learning print materials) that

are sent to them. In addition to these, learners' retention in ODL institutions are become a crucial issue for all ODL institutions/universities across the globe. This is so because, their dropout rate in ODL courses are higher than the face-to-face educational institutions because of various reasons (academic, non-academic, or both) which we will discuss later in this unit. These are some reasons seek supports badly from the Open and Distance Learning system.

3.2.2 Theoretical Purpose

One among the theoretical reasons required for support services is learners' isolation from distance educational institutions. They do not only feel isolate from the institution, but also from their peer groups, and teachers. Thus, studying through ODL is really an isolated experience for them. Lack of academic socialization often brings reluctance to continue the opted courses till the end. So in this case, to remove isolation from learners and establish an amicable healthy study atmosphere, ODL institution should do the induction programme immediately after their admission in the courses. They need to familiarize the ODL functions and its various operational aspects as well as to be properly guided towards the self-directed learning materials, the instructional package, and 110 examination pattern.

3.2.3 Moral Purpose

Morality becomes a crucial issue in all fields and methods of study. It is always seen as a prescription rather than description in any contexts. In teaching learning domain at global and distance learning in particular experiencing ethical difficulties of learners are eternal and ubiquitous. For example, there are learners who fall in difficulties like divorce, marriage ceremony, death of a kin, illness, etc. In these cases, learners are struggling for the intellectual demand of a course. To help those learners sometimes institutions need to facilitate them with some sorts of counselling sessions, and give them flexibility to complete their courses as per the institutions norms and conditions. In this regard, it is demanded that every DE institution should have clear guidelines, policies, and procedures to help these learners in this juncture.

3.3 Elements of Effective Learners' Support Services

Support services for learners are all those measures taken to facilitate learning persistence and success, and to improve the quality of the learning experience through engagement and integration into the academic community. Learner support services should have the following characteristics towards the student;

3.3.1 Responsiveness:

ODL need to be available on demand according to the needs of the learner; 24/7 where possible. Learner support services should be responsive to individual needs; provide efficient turnaround. Collect any relevant information to be considered: online learner characteristics, data about impact of existing services, student needs surveys, reports from online faculty about need for referral points, research about future needs, e.g. trends in student demographics, graduate skills most in demand by employers, best practice models and guidelines

3.3.2 Interactivity:

Encourage and facilitate interaction among and between students(s), faculty, student support staff, and academic content. They should demonstrate a high level of cross-functional collaboration that results in services being experienced as seamless by the learner

3.3.3 Context Specificity:

ODL exist to support learners in their studies from first inquiry through graduation and beyond; integrated into institutional mission and strategic objectives. Clearly identify the objectives to be achieved by making the transition to online student services and how achievement of these objectives will be measured, e.g. improved satisfaction with services for all students, retention, skill development, engagement.

3.3.4 Learner Development:

Self-directed and developmental strategy adopted by ODL helps in facilitating self-management of processes and development of skills and attitudes necessary for independence and lifelong learning of student. Create an environment conducive to creative thinking and risk-taking. A relaxed and comfortable atmosphere will help project team members brainstorm to elicit the best ideas for re-engineering existing and inventing new support, services, and systems.

3.3.5 Openness to Change:

Open to Change: evolve continuously to accommodate new learner populations, educational developments, economic conditions, technological advances, and findings from research and evaluation. Develop a strategic plan for online learner support services that is aligned with the institutional mission and strategic directions. Include a plan for data collection and evaluation.

4.0 Conclusion

Support services are broadly of two types; non-academic and academic. Non-academic support also referred to as “counselling” deals with the affective and organizational aspects of learners’ studies. In the case of academic, the services are provided only in teaching-learning domains whereas, non-academic supports deal with learners’ personal problems, updating of information about the institution, and any changes of the institutional functions. Academic support assists learners to develop their cognitive, intellectual, and knowledge on a set of courses.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

In this study session, we have learnt the meaning of learning support service especially as relates to open and distance education. The purpose of learners’ support services included; practical reasons for learners’ support, theoretical reasons for learners’ support and moral reasons for learners’ support. The elements of effective learners’ support services were discussed.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What is Learning support service? Explain it’s need in open and distance education.
2. What is the purpose of learners’ support services?
3. Enumerate the elements of effective learners’ support services

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. Learner support systems are the major components of open and distance learning. Although support services are not compulsory to avail for all learners but those who seek help from the institution in any form will be treated as support services. Support services are offered to learners because they are of three types. First, those who join in the ODL institution after a long gap of their academic studies due to some or other reasons. Second, those who wish to complete a set of courses/ programme while doing their job, may be in a distant place. Third, those who passed from face-to-face educational institutions and join in the ODL institutions for their higher studies. In either of these cases not even a single learner is quite familiar with DE

institutions to its full form, and may not be knowing the patterns of education that ODL institution provides to its learners.

Q2. Purpose of learners' support service;

- a) Practical reasons for learners' support
- b) Theoretical reasons for learners' support
- c) Moral reasons for learners' support.

Q3. Learner support services should have the following characteristics towards the student;

- Emphasis on responsiveness
- Emphasis on interactivity
- Emphasis on context specificity
- Emphasis on learner development
- Emphasis on openness to change

8.0 References/ Further Reading

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STUDY SESSION TWO: CATEGORIES OF LEARNERS' SUPPORT SERVICES

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1.0 Introduction

Learner support services are the most vital component of any open and distance learning (ODL) system. It includes wide range of academic and other related activities. The support services should not only be responsive to the needs of the distance learners but should also be accessible. Monitoring of the support services has to be a continuous and ongoing exercise, which could bring constant improvement through innovations in the support services.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand and explain the categories of learners' support services
- Identify stages of academic support services in ODL
- Classify the different forms of ICT support services in ODL
- Explain the various types of administrative support in ODL
- Understand the varieties of online counselling support in ODL

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Academic Support Services

Academic supports are indispensable for distance learners in distance learning settings. These supports are provided to learners in different stages of their studies. Academic supports are concerned with the subject of study and the issues related to academic matter. For example, how to write assignment-responses, is it necessary to do all the self-assessment questions while studying the unit, etc. Learners should be provided with all necessary information prior to admission of their course so that they can make appropriate decisions about their studies and also have access to all resources and support services. Such as; information on the institutions, institutional arrangements, various programmes, admission criteria, eligibility, fees structure, study material, examination procedures, etc. These stages are;

Pre-entry stage: In this stage, learners in majority are not clear themselves what they want to do. Hence, they need the guidance about the courses offered by the institutions, entry requirements, application procedures, a little bit about the institution, fees for different programmes, distance education teaching-learning procedures, the recognition of their degrees, and the employment opportunities after completion of the programme.

Entry to the Course: After receiving the study materials in packets from the DE institutions on his/her subject of studies, a learner needs further help to know how to read the Blocks, what is to be done with these units, the date of submission of assignment responses, addresses of the nearest study centers, how many assignment responses have to submit and where, how to manage the study time to complete the programme, etc All these information for which a learner wants support services are available in the programme guide which is also been sent to the learner along with the study materials to their communicational addresses.

Mentorship During the Course: It is always an anxiety for a learner to know his/her academic progresses. Thus, he/she may expect the grade and tutor-comments on his/her assignment responses. Thus, it is suggested that a good tutor is one who motivates, guides and instructs learners for the benefit of their learning activities. A tutor should not discourage and disorient learners. Sometimes learners fail to understand the subject content; hence they interact with the counselors for correct guidance. In many cases, learners are encountered with some unavoidable problems, and thus some of the academic activities get delayed, e.g. late submission of assignment responses. In this regard, they need the advice from the counsellor. In short, learners may want to discuss about their progress, assignment grades, field visits, seminars, practical results, strategies of learning from media, and so on with the counsellor.

Examination: In this stage, learners do not only seek the information regarding their dates of examinations, information about the hours of examination, but also the revision processes and the methods to prepare for the examination. Some learners ask for revision strategies and even requested the counsellor to conduct a demo examination. In this situation, a counsellor explains the ways of organizing revisions, question types and answering strategies which prove successful at examination.

Post-course stage: After the completion of their programmes and even after receiving the certificates still learners need support services from the institution. Their query remains in this directions-- -they seek advice on their educational career and what will they do next. In this situation, an academic counsellor should guide the learner in correct path by asking on his/her needs, abilities, and aspirations for future. Thus, learner support never ends with the examination only, it lingers much after the examination, and this is known as “pre-course stage counseling”.

3.2 ICT Support Services

ICT can be briefly described as the result of convergence of technologies telecommunications and television with informatics. The computer considered as an engine of the mind has tremendous capacity to store and process data and to produce and disseminate information with the emergence of diverse multimedia and networking possibilities computers have emerged as tools for innovative teaching and learning. Students are proving more adopt than their teachers at mastering ICT based delivery system. The scope of the new technologies for transforming existing educational set up is indeed enormous and includes the possibility globalization of

education, adaptation of foreign curricula, new teaching materials and the networking of schools. Open and distance learning having access to a variety of technologies audio, video, radio, tapes, television, video cassettes teleconferencing, computer and Internet, Word Wide Web etc. of Information Communication Technology (ICT) which vary with Institution to Institution and course / programme to course / programme end learner to learner.

The use of multimedia and ICT based packages in Open and Distance learning is imperative. The ODL institutions have to search for new ways to educate and keep learners up to date and to the brim. Use of ICT in ODL, brings learning interactive, where the learner is guided by the lecturer and the facilitator initiating the learning process, gaining direct access to various sources of information. Role of ICT in ODL include teleconferencing innovative self-learning modules, greater reliance on practicum especially, lands on experience, tutorials, phone-in facility and academic as well as personal counselling.

Radio: Distance teaching is basically a multi-media process. Radio is the cheapest and the most easily accessible electronic media, with its potential audience very large in comparison to other media. Radio lends itself to serve different purposes. For instance, while it provides learners with new joys of learning, it can develop their command over vocabulary, promote concentration and critical listening, and improve fluency and confidence in speech and discussion. It can be used for formal and non-formal education. Its broadcasts can be designed to supplement / enrich the formal school subjects.

Audio Tapes: The use of audio tapes in ODL can help the learners practice skills, hears the voices of experts, users, clients and other learners; and overcome some of the limitations of radio broadcasts. It provides considerable freedom to the learners who can use it at any time and place of convenience while providing the necessary and needed variety in the learner's learning process. The learners can replay the tape any number of times and review the taped materials over and over again Radio / audio medium has few characteristics like easy accessibility, wide coverage, low capital investment and operating cost, easy learner reception, direct instruction easy production, effective creation etc.

Video cassette: This is a two ways, interactive communication, where in students and other users can transmit the requests to a central database, video programmes become popular in the teaching learning process. The video cassette is considered a more effective medium than the television broadcast. Video cassettes have certain advantages over television. They are more flexible and convenient in their use because the students have full control over their pace of learning in terms of their time and place of using the video cassettes. Video cassettes are available as and when needed, Repetition / search / mastery learning, individualized pace of learning, integration with other media, more flexible and decentralized systems of delivery, allows the students control over the learning process, and difficult for distribution. Video programmes are equally useful for the distance as well as face-to-face classroom teaching.

Television set: In the current age, different electronic media are used as vibrant communication technologies in the educational system, most commonly, available electronic media as radio and television are very popular for the distance students. TV stimulates the students' learning enhances their attention, learning, assimilation and application of knowledge gained. Although TV is used mainly being used by the public as a medium of entertainment, but it plays the role of a teacher. It is necessary to use TV as teaching aid, and get the maximum out of it. The TV

and the video programmes have to be attractive, visually rich, interactive in nature and need based. Educational television has been taken by various experts – either as individuals or as representatives of institutions. With the advancement technology a variety of visual media – television broadcast, video cassettes, video disc, video text and computer, have become a multimedia packages in teaching and learning at a distance. Television is an effective tool in the hands of education if it is utilized imaginatively.

Computers: The use of computers in ODL has become very effective means of immediate delivery of message. It encourages interaction between the learner and the computer, between learner and tutor, and between learner and learner connected through network. It also provides students with a broad understanding of the computer and its use; provide hands on experiences, familiarize the students with the range of computer applications in all walks of human activity and the computer's potential as a controlling and information processing tool and, demystify the computer and to develop a degree of ease and familiarity with it, which should be conducive to developing individual creativity in identifying and developing application relevant to the student's immediate environment. Computer based instruction can take place through remote network as well as local network. Remote networks include telecommunications between central level data base and computer and the micro-computer at delivery level. The local network use terminals for connections inside a complex of an Institutions campus. Computer encourages individualized as well as group based learning depending on the available facilities of computer network through distance mode.

Satellite Technology: This form of technology strengthens the capacity of the telecommunication network and the information flow, which among other things gives a boost to the educational development of a country. This is useful for students of far flung areas who are pursuing their study at a distance. The communication satellites are usually placed in a special earth orbit, which makes them appear stationary to the transmitters and receivers on earth. There are more than a hundred of these communication satellites in orbit around the world, and new satellites are being launched regularly. The satellite based communication is with different elements a ground based transmission station known as uplink and a receiving disc known as down link. The target audience for distance education courses run by the open universities is large and scattered across vast regions, the high cost incurred can be easily justified. Transmission through the satellite has been relatively cheaper and the system is more accessible to all parts of the country on a personal basis.

Teleconferencing: Teleconferencing is understood as “Two-way electronic communication between two or more groups, or three or more individuals, who are in separate locations; includes group communication viz audio, audio graphics, video and computer system.” Teleconferencing plays a major role in Distance Education situations because of its potential of group method of learning at a distance. It facilitates interaction between teacher and learner as well as Learner and learner. It acts as a substitute to classroom based face to face learning. Teleconferencing can provide solution to various issues in distance education. It proves its worth in the context of regularity and immediacy of two-way communication. It can also be integrated with regular study activities because of its naturalness in communication. It can replace face-to-face interaction programme group activities conducted by tutors at regional study centers. Three main types of teleconferencing have been identified, namely; audio teleconferencing, video teleconferencing and computer teleconferencing.

3.3 Administrative Support Services

The nature of this support is of providing update and correct information and advice to the desired learners about any aspects of their studies. After a learner enrolls, the tutor may be their primary contact with the educational institution. Tutors need administrative skills to manage the link between learner and educational institution and are accountable to both. Administrative supports are demanded by the learners because of the rapid development in various academic programmes, fast expansion of the institutions, practices of new initiatives, and so on. Tutors also use their administrative skills on behalf of the educational institution for: managing and communicating learner information, record keeping, reporting marks and ensuring that information about learners is relayed to the right person at the right time

With all these activities at one stretch there may be situations where earlier practices are drastically changed and this information have not communicated to learners because of some or other reasons. There are learners who are even confused to locate a particular information in the institution Web Pages. Hence, not to refrain from correct information learners keep themselves update in ODL context, and in particular to their programme of study. These are; communicating, commending, and exploring.

Communicating: It is the process of giving accurate, timely and appropriate information to the learners about any aspects of their studies. For example, “on-demand” examination is available round the year in your programme. Tutors may be responsible for ensuring that learners are informed of deadlines and procedures for applications, exams, withdrawing from courses, completing requirements, etc.

Commending: While informing a learner on a particular issue, you may give enough guidance- but one should be most appropriate for him/her. For example, a learner asked to his counsellor, I would like to do ODL Programme because I am doing marketing in a small scale industry. Can you help me what course I should prefer? In this situation the counsellor may inform all the courses available in the ODL. But certainly suggest him that it would be better if you choose “Nursing Science” course, since you have little experience as a registered nurse, you will be benefited from this course immensely in comparison to other courses.

Exploring: It is the process of helping learners by clarifying the options open to them in which a way to enable them to come to a decision for themselves. For example; I am sorry to hear of your parents’ accident. Let’s talk it through and see whether it’s best to cancel the examination now or carry on with the tasks.

3.4 Offline Arrangements Support Services

ODL institutions do not require a huge campus for catering education to mass population in a country in contrast to conventional educational institutions/universities. This is so because learners in ODL are taking admission by staying at different parts of the countries. They are independent and autonomous; hence they do not require to attend the regular classes as it is practiced in the conventional situations. But certainly they need some support services for their academic activities, and make availability of these facilities ODL institutions open its “Study Centers” in various suitable places of a country. Learners can receive counselling (both academic and non-academic matters) at the study centers. They can submit their assignment responses and get feedback of their assignment responses for improving their study. They can access the library available at study centers. Besides these facilities, they can watch

teleconferencing sessions regularly on their programmes. They can also interact with their peer groups and may resolve some of the problems pertaining to their study. Some of the offline arrangements support; ODL directorate, programme centers unit, ODL center works' unit, Information center unit, counselling by letter, counselling by handbook, counselling by audio and video cassettes etc

3.5 Online Counselling Support Services

Today's world is the technology world. There are no such situations where technology has not yet intervened. Somehow or other technology plays a major role even in ODL setup. The internet as a counselling tool for distance education programmes is largely popularized among majority of learners. However, the internet service requires the basic setup, such as computer, internet connection, etc. Due to the global market competition computer parts are available at affordable prices. Thus, learners at large number prefer to use internet to remain update themselves in all contexts of their studies, and thereby day-to-day activities. Some online arrangements made by the ODL institutions to provide support services to learners are; counselling through internet, counselling by interactive video disk Use of mobile devices and counseling by telephone.

Online Discussion: It facility allows learners to interact with the counsellor at different terminals. Counsellor can announce the contact time much in advance, and learners can log on in that time and discuss the questions among the peer groups. Counsellor acts as a chair person to moderate the discussions take place among learners. It is known in bulletin board systems as the 'chat room' which facilitates one-to-one and one-to-many conversation respectively.

E-mail: It is a medium provide both synchronous and asynchronous communication between and/or among learners and counsellors. Instead of writing letters to the counsellor and waiting for the reply for the long time, learners can communicate to them their query and may receive the response immediately without a long waiting. This tool helps learners to receive the feedback on their assignment responses.

World Wide Web (www): This tool can be used to collect and accumulate all the relevant study materials for the learners. It gives the facilities to upload and download the texts, programme guide books, slide shows, lecture presentations through You Tube, etc. It is used basically for one-to-many correspondence, i.e. a counselor can guide more than one learner at a time. Learners can ask frequent question by using this facility. They can even upload the update information for their peer groups.

Virtual Conferencing: This is a platform where many-to-many communication is possible. In other words, group interaction is organized by using this tool in the ODL institutions. In this case, counsellor and learners present at their own places. Through computer networks they can connect with each other, but the necessity is a camera and that should be attached to the computer. Once the setup is made, all the participants can be seen on the monitor whenever and whoever they log in. They can hear voices from others and can put their opinion in voice form. In this way learners can take the advantage of online facilities provided by the ODL institutions.

3.6 Desk Officer Support Services

Help Desk Support in study centers are course advisers in the conventional university system that are responsible for providing accurate information and support to address any queries and concerns of students relating to ODL or services offered at ODL. They log and provide F.A.Q

and assist with the development of the knowledge based system, communicate and transfer any feedback or suggestions by students to the appropriate internal team. Desk Officers maintain good public relations when answering telephones, emails, live chat, routing calls and when in face to face contact with the public. They serve as the first point of contact for students seeking support from the Office of Open and Distance Learning. Also, they assist the students by providing a step by step problem solving process.

3.7 Technical Support Services

Technical support is a service that supports users of technology products or services. Technical support is also known as Information technology (IT) support is a unit in ODL directorate straddled with resolving any technical issues relating to the IT of ODL services to the student. Example; payment of school fees, issues with CMA or TMA, online assessment of course materials, registration of courses. Technical support in ODL can be delivered in a variety of ways, depending on the support needed, including; by phone, email, live chat or chat bots, WhatsApp, video, online tutorials and, message boards, and other logging tools.

3.8 Library Support Services

Libraries are indispensable in every facet of higher education. Effective library supports to distance learners is mandatory for qualitative delivery of instruction and learning. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has transformed all aspects of society particularly information dissemination. The development of libraries without walls has definite benefits to distance learners, thus, creating virtual learning environments and libraries without walls to reach multitudes of learners at various locations. This unit of the ODL directorate assists students on how to use such tools as databases, online catalogue and the Internet in identifying, assessing and organizing information for the distance learning.

4.0 Conclusion

Learner support is a mechanism to help the learner to learn. In conventional system, class room transactions, peer team interactions and library facility are components of learning. ODL provides interactive support services at the study centers, staff responsibility for providing the services, ICT facilities and equipment at the study centers, mode of service delivery and monitoring mechanism to ensure effective student support services.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

ICT provides flexibility in terms of the place and pace of learning, time of learning selection and combinations of subjects, delivery system and interaction with experts. Television is an effective tool in the hands of education and used imaginatively. Audio video materials are used in all the fields of education for its potential, multi-various approaches. It's higher quality, flexibility and best available resources, effectiveness helped learners as well as learning system for quality. In this study session, the following categories of learners support services were discussed; academic support services, ICT support services, administrative support, offline arrangements support, online counselling support, desk officer support, technical support and library support

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What are the different types of support services? What are the stages of academic support services need for the distant learner?

2. State 5 facilities used in ICT Support Services
3. Write short notes on the following online counseling support:
 - a. World Wide Web (www)
 - b. Online Discussion
 - c. Virtual conferencing
4. What is the role of desk officer support services in promoting effective ODL. Explain with examples.

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The different types of support services are;

- Academic Support Services
- ICT Support Services
- Administrative Support Services
- Offline Arrangements Support Services
- Online Counselling Support Services
- Desk Officer Support Services
- Technical Support Services
- Library Support Services

The stages of academic support services include;

- Pre-entry stage
- Entry to the course
- Mentorship During the Course
- Examination
- Post-course stage

Q2. The ICT facilities needed in ODL support services are;

- Radio
- Audio Tapes
- Video cassette
- Television set
- Computers

Q3. Description of the following online support services;

a. World Wide Web (www): This tool can be used to collect and accumulate all the relevant study materials for the learners. It is used basically for one-to-many correspondence, i.e. a counselor can guide more than one learner at a time.

b. Online Discussion: It facility allows learners to interact with the counsellor at different terminals. Counsellor can announce the contact time much in advance, and learners can log on in that time and discuss the questions among the peer groups.

c. Virtual conferencing: This is a platform where many-to-many communication is possible. In other words, group interaction is organized by using this tool in the ODL institutions.

Q4. Help Desk Support in study centers are course advisers in the conventional university system that are responsible for providing accurate information and support to address any queries and concerns of students relating to ODL or services offered at ODL. For Example, Help Desk Support officer log and provide F.A.Q and assist with the development of the knowledge based system, communicate and transfer any feedback or suggestions by students to the appropriate internal team.

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STUDY SESSION THREE: COMPONENTS OF LEARNERS' SUPPORT SERVICES

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1.0 Introduction

Distance education utilizes the most efficient principles and practices of education to implement objective-based teaching-learning processes through the distance mode. It deals with the identification of relevance-based programmes for specified target groups, defining overall and specific objectives, analysis of learning situations, selection of methods and media, development of self-instructional multi-media materials and evaluation tools and the implementation and validation of the instructional system. Distance education is now considered an essential component of an educational system whose scale of operations are very large which therefore means adopting varied methods and systems for delivery, hence adopts the different methods of learners' support services; directorate of ODL, Faculties and Departments in ODL, registry, library, information communication technologies centre and examinations and assessment centre in achieving its goals and vision.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the different directorates in ODL
- Identify the components of ODL learners' support services
- Understand the stages involved in academic counselling
- Enumerate the major responsibility of the center in ODL

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Directorate of ODL

The ODL programme is coordinated by a Director appointed by the Vice-Chancellor. Within the directorate important functions of academic and non-academic staff that helps to develop and implement instructional programmes packages including self-instructional materials. The academic staff are; curriculum designers, course coordinators, course writers, editors, evaluators, assessors, facilitator/tutors, counselors, media specialists etc while the non-academic staff are; planners and decision-making officers and support staff. Their task within the directorate are described as follows;

Course Coordinators: A course coordinator is one who plans, supervises and monitors the activities of the course writers, content editors, format editors, audio and video producers, graphic artists, copy editors, printers etc. involved in the preparation of a course. She/he is a manager responsible for the inputs from the academic and production staff involved in the preparation of a course, and is often an in-house faculty member who specializes in an area covering the course. Also, courses are maintained by course coordinators. Course designing is the next step in the process of systematic planning which determines the aims and objectives, instructional events, and evaluation procedures of a course. It is a composite task which involves activities such as outlining the actual content area, selection of themes and sub-themes, division of the content into blocks and units, planning of media inputs, establishing time frames and determining the approximate expenses involved.

Curriculum Designers: They are subject experts, and are concerned with the identification of relevance based programmes and courses. They are in-house experts as well as the best subject area specialists available in the country, who are invited to design and suggest syllabus, identify curriculum aims and objectives and design multi-media packages. They work at the planning stage of the development of distance education programmes and courses. They are generally top level academicians and practitioners.

Course Writers: The tasks of course development involves the actual task of writing the course units and also the audio and video scripts. The course writers and subject specialists and they may preferably be middle level academics of the rank of Reader or Lecturer (assistant and Associate Professors) who can devote adequate time to attend to the rigorous and time consuming process of developing instructional materials, particularly, self-instructional materials. Their tasks include analysis of the syllabus, identification of objectives in behavioral terms, development and analysis of content and activities.

Language Editors: The editor in a distance education system has to play a pivotal role in the production of instructional material which is self-instructional and learner-oriented. His/her involvement covers all stages of course preparations, initiation, development, production and even post production stages. He/she is responsible for the academic and pedagogical quality of the material, which requires the editor to check the language, the structure of the Unit/Block, content and the final design. The initial drafts of the self-instructional materials generally undergo three types of editing: content, format and language editing.

Assessors and Evaluators: Assessors are not merely experts in assessing the various aforementioned assignments, but are constantly engaged in developing and evolving appropriate assignments to reflect the long-term and overall objectives of the distance education programmes. The way in which student achievement is assessed forms a vital part of the way in which the curriculum is defined. The role of tutor-marked assignments and computer-marked assignments in the internal assessment and final evaluation of the student is moderated by ODL assessors and evaluators who undertake all activities concerned with internal and external evaluation. They have a clear understanding of evaluation which is formative (evaluation conducted during the teaching learning process to identify and utilize process improvements) and that which is summative (evaluation carried out at the end of the teaching-learning process, which is essentially focused on the product or the learning outcome/achievement of the student).

Planners and decision-making officers in divisions like Planning, Publishing and printing, Material Distribution, Admissions, Evaluation, Computer, Communications, etc. These officers have a variety of designations such as Directors /Joint/ Deputy/ assistant Directors, Registrars, Joint/ Deputy/ Assistant Registrars/Section Officers, Finance Officers, Public Relations Officers, etc

Academic Counselors: The academic counselors are thus expected to offer support to the students through counseling and tutorial services. As tutors they are concerned with providing academic guidance to learners. They clarify academic doubts through discussions or/and audio-video presentations, and may grade and provide feedback on assignments. They also help in conducting practicals and guiding projects etc. Academic counseling encompasses all types of teacher-learner interactions that are aimed at facilitating learning. These interactions may be mainly tutorials with various aspects of counseling featuring in between tuition; however, sometimes the interaction may be exclusively of the nature of counseling. Such counseling may be at the:

- Stage of Pre-enrolment or pre-entry
- Stage of induction into the programme
- Stage of submitting the first assignment
- Stage of Initiation into any new activity such as a lab course, a hands-on experience in a computer programme, preparation of a project proposal, etc
- Stage of pre-examination; and
- Stage of the post-programme

Media Specialists: The very nature of distance education programmes makes media a central role in the delivery of the content to the learner. Teaching and learning through a distance mode is now becoming independent of time and place. The trend of using information technology to develop and deliver more effective instruction is increasing. The emergence of modern two-way communication technologies has led to a contraction in the distance between the learner and the tutor. Thus, the development of telecommunication technologies has led to the convergence of distance education and traditional face-to-face teaching. The easy availability of databases, the resources of the internet and connection with students around the world have led to small but significant changes in the content of some of the courses, from the primary to the post graduate level. The notion of resource based learning in which multi-media resources such as videos, databases, online image banks, e-course materials and electronic journals are made available to students with the advent of telecommunications.

Support staff: This non-academic staff involves personnel in the various departments who have to provide a wide variety of technical inputs include: Senior Assistants, assistants, Junior Assistant, Typists/ Personal Assistants /Professional Assistants/ Secretaries/ Computer Operators etc

3.2 Faculties and Departments

The head of the faculty is the Dean who is assisted by a Sub-Dean while each department is headed by an academic staff. All represents the Vice-chancellor in administration, the managerial and coordination of the ODL programme. Within each Faculties and Departments in the open and distance learning is a distance teacher also called a facilitator or tutor. The profile of the distance teacher requires certain knowledge and skills to be tapped at different times. Subject specialization and expertise together with a knowledge and familiarity with

distance education concepts and practices besides some knowledge and experiences in instructional design, will help the individual deal with the identification, planning, designing, development of curricula and courses. They provide standardized, individualized instructional materials to the students followed by personalized tutorial guidance.

3.3 Registry

This involves planners and decision-making officers that are non-academic staff in divisions with variety of designations such as Registrars, Joint/ Deputy/ Assistant Registrars/Section Officers, Finance Officers, Public Relations Officers, Directors /Joint/ Deputy/ assistant Directors, etc. The integral role of these personnel in helping to deliver education through the distance mode makes it imperative that they all have a basic orientations and training in the fundamental issues related to distance education

3.4 Library

This are non-academic staff that oversees to student needs for library resources and information needs. The staff in the library includes: librarian, professional assistant, assistant, library clerk/ typist, computer assistant, etc.

3.5 Information Communication Technologies Center

ICT offers enormous potential to impart quality education remove illiteracy, provide educational opportunities to the unreached, reduce imbalances among regions and social groups and train teachers. The convergence of telecommunications, audio-video and computers has a tremendous potential to revolutionize education and transform the teaching learning process. The use of ICT, is for making quality education accessible to all, particularly to the disadvantaged group. It provides interface and integration of face to face and distance modes of transactional processes in the classroom environment and to workout strategies for content generation and share these to improve the professional competency of teachers. Digital technologies improve teacher education programme. Teacher is, nowadays not a mere transmitter of knowledge but also a facilitator, collaborator, coach mentor, knowledge navigator, and co-learner in the teacher learning process. Presently ICT includes content and pedagogy, collaboration and networking, social issues and technical issues. ICT can facilitate both the teachers and the children construct new knowledge or experience and thus can strengthen the learning process. ICT has proved that learning is possible anytime and anywhere now. ICT brings about several benefits to the learner and the teacher. These include shared learning resources, shared learning spaces, promotion of collaborative learning and move towards autonomous learning. ICT should be used as a vehicle for educational transformation. ICT, make radio lessons interactive and lively, development of audio video materials in capacity building, regular teaching learning process for sustainable quality of education.

3.6 Examinations and Assessment Centre

The examinations and assessment center under the Directorate of Open and Distance learning is established to promote academic integrity through the administration and supervision of examinations, utilizing the latest technologies to ensure academic integrity and fairness by strictly adhering to professional standards and guidelines through the Open and Distance Learning. They strive to earn uphold trust of learners and other stakeholders in the efficient, effective and quality of the conduct of ODL examinations while ensuring effective communication and exchange of information on issues bordering on examinations. Major responsibility of the center includes;

- Prepare timetables for of examinations
- Provision of adequate logistics for examinations at the examination venues
- Ensure security and credibility of the examination process
- Ensure availability of examination booklets
- Coordinate the yearly development of the examination question bank
- Custody of marked and unmarked answer booklets
- Ensure adequate provision of items needed for smooth conduct of all examinations
- Ensure adequate monitoring and supervision of all examinations.
- Ensure timely marking and release of exam results

4.0 Conclusion

Learner support refers to the resources that learners can access in order to carry out the learning processes. The learner is connected to several services that enables them have control over the learning experience within the ODL programme. The amount of support services an institution can offer largely depends on that particular institution's capacity and resources at its disposal.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

In this this study session, the component of learners' support services for ODL examined include; directorate of ODL, faculties and departments, registry, library, information communication technologies center, and examinations and assessment centre.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What are the components of ODL learners' support services? Indicate the support staffs
2. What are the nature of counseling in the ODL learners' support services?
3. What are the roles of the examinations and assessment center under the directorate of ODL?

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The components of ODL learners' support services are;

- Directorate of ODL
- Faculties and Departments
- Registry
- Library
- Information Communication Technologies Center
- Examinations and Assessment Centre

In ODL Directorate, there are two categories of staffs, the academic staff and non- academic staff. The academic staff are; curriculum designers, course coordinators, course writers, editors, evaluators, assessors, facilitator/tutors, counselors, media specialists etc while the non-academic staff are; planners and decision-making officers and Support staff.

Q2. The nature of counseling in the ODL learners' support services are;

- Stage of Pre-enrolment or pre-entry
- Stage of induction into the programme
- Stage of submitting the first assignment
- Stage of Initiation into any new activity such as a lab course, a hands-on experience in a computer programme, preparation of a project proposal, etc

- Stage of pre-examination; and
- Stage of the post-programme

Q3. The roles of the examinations and assessment center under the directorate of ODL include;

- Prepare timetables for of examinations
- Provision of adequate logistics for examinations at the examination venues
- Ensure security and credibility of the examination process
- Ensure availability of examination booklets
- Coordinate the yearly development of the examination question bank
- Custody of marked and unmarked answer booklets
- Ensure adequate provision of items needed for smooth conduct of all examinations
- Ensure adequate monitoring and supervision of all examinations.
- Ensure timely marking and release of exam results

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STUDY SESSION 4: IMPORTANCE OF LEARNERS' SUPPORT SERVICES

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3.4 Promote collaboration

3.5 Availability of counselling opportunity

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

6.0 In-Text Questions

7.0 In-Text Answers

8.0 References/ Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Learner support services in ODL refers to services that complement educational content and learning resources. The nature of learner support services is depending on academic needs and problems of the students, arising due to the following: inadequate interaction with tutor who can facilitate learning; lack of appropriate study, environment financial constraints, limited access to information and services; physical disability; issues arising from time constraint that is linked to social, family or work commitments; issues relating to study material; non-responsiveness and inefficient ODL management services; lack of personal rapport as well as opportunity due to geographical boundaries; non-familiarity with self-study strategies, among others.

Learner support focuses on what the teacher or instructor can or should do to help learners beyond the formal delivery of content, or skills development. Learner support covers a wide range of functions, and is discussed throughout the study session. Support services can be provided to the learner in the learning process under the titles of learner admission and registration, academic counseling, orientations to online learning, academic support services, scholarships, library resources, IT and technology resources, articulation and transfer from other institutions, and career development

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the importance of feedback as a learners' support service
- Understand the role of collaboration as a learners' support service
- Identify the need of counselling opportunities as a learners' support service
- Understand the place of Course accessibility and usability in ODL

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Promote Feedback

Learner support services guarantees adequate feedback to course material developers and to the students on assignment responses. The role of providing feedback on student performance of activities such as writing assignments, project work, creative activities, and other student

activities that are beyond the current and perhaps future scope of automated computer feedback. Again, the instructor's role here is to provide more individualisation of feedback to deal with more qualitatively assessed student activities, and may or may not be associated with formal assessment or grading.

3.2 Bridges the Distance Between the Institutions and Learners

Learner support service has become useful in bridging the distance between the institution and learner. The facilitators have become indispensable in diagnosing learners' difficulties, helping students when they struggle with new concepts or ideas, helping students to gain deep understanding of a topic or subject, helping students to evaluate a range of different ideas or practices, helping students to understand the limits of knowledge, and above all challenging students to go beyond their current level of thinking or practice to acquire deeper understanding or a higher level of competency. These activities normally take the form of personal interventions and communication between an instructor and an individual or a group of students, in face-to-face contexts or online. They tend not to be pre-planned. They are usually a means of individualizing the learning, enabling student differences in learning to be better accommodated as they occur.

3.3 Course accessibility and usability

Technological infrastructure and the internet can be regarded as necessary for the lessons to be accessed at a distance. Even if the outcomes, instructional strategy, content or support systems are designed ideally, they may not be functional in case of problems with end-user access. Course accessibility is an element that focuses on the smooth functioning of all add-ons in the environment, sufficient connections and referrals, and keeps the user on the intended path. Course usability on the other hand can be defined as the ability of users to access the data they need without getting lost in the system and to use them comfortably. Usability is also about making interfaces consistent, controllable and predictable, which makes them easier to use. Course usability and accessibility principles, which should be considered as complementary elements, are essential in the development of internet environments. In this regard, both designers and instructors need to consider both accessibility and usability by understanding users' needs in ODL.

3.4 Promote Collaboration

Collaboration among students can be a great support for learners. Much of this will happen informally, through students talking after class, through social media, or helping each other with assignments. However, instructors can make more formal use of collaboration among students by designing teamwork or collaborative learning activities, group work, and designing online discussions so that students need to work together rather than individually. This will in turn reduce drop-out rate of students.

3.5 Availability of Counselling Opportunity

Counselling opportunity is a direct support available within ODL academic study centers, considering that the learners often need help and counselling guidance on administrative or personal issues, such as; whether to repeat a course, delay an assignment because of sickness in the family, or cancel enrollment in a course and postpone it to another date. This potential source of counselling help needs to be included in the design of an effective learning environment, with the aim of doing all that can be done to ensure that students succeed while meeting the academic standards of a program.

4.0 Conclusion

Learner support is another critical component of an effective learning environment. It focuses on what the teacher or instructor can or should do to help learners beyond the formal delivery of content, or skills development.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

Learner support services are components that should be considered at all stages of education. Providing the support of the learners in the subjects they need throughout the process by the institution, administration and course managers, one-to-one or through determined tools, will make a great contribution to the smooth progress of the educational process

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. Enumerate 5 importance of feedback as a learners' support service
2. What are the key role of collaboration as a learners' support service?
3. Explain the need of counselling opportunities as a learners' support service
4. What is the place of Course accessibility and usability in ODL?

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The importance of feedback as a learners' support service are;

- Promotes feedback
- Bridges the distance between the institutions and learners
- Course Accessibility and Usability
- Promotes collaboration
- Availability of counselling opportunity

Q2. The key role of collaboration as a learners' support service are;

Collaboration among students can be a great support for learners. Much of this will happen informally, through students talking after class, through social media, or helping each other with assignments. For example, an instructor or tutor can make more formal use of collaboration among students by designing teamwork learning activities, group work, and designing online discussions so that students need to work together rather than individually.

Q3. Counselling opportunity is a direct support available within ODL academic study centers, considering that the learners often need help and counselling guidance on administrative or personal issues, such as; whether to repeat a course, delay an assignment because of sickness in the family, or cancel enrollment in a course and postpone it to another date.

Q4. Course accessibility is an element that focuses on the smooth functioning of all add-ons in the environment, sufficient connections and referrals, and keeps the user on the intended path. Course usability on the other hand can be defined as the ability of users to access the data they need without getting lost in the system and to use them comfortably. Usability is also about making interfaces consistent, controllable and predictable, which makes them easier to use. In this regard, both designers and instructors need to consider both accessibility and usability by understanding users' needs in ODL.

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MODULE FOUR

MODES OF ASSESSMENT IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Study session 1: Meaning of Assessment in ODL
Study session 2: Instruction-Based Assessment
Study session 3: Examination Courses Assessment
Study session 4: Non-Examinable Courses Assessment

STUDY SESSION 1: MEANING OF ASSESSMENT IN ODL

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 - 3.1 Definition of Assessment and Evaluation
 - 3.2 Types of Assessment and Evaluation in ODL
 - 3.3 Tools of Assessment and Evaluation
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- 5.0 Summary of the Study Session
- 6.0 In-Text Questions
- 7.0 In-Text Answers
- 8.0 References/ Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

It is well accepted that distance education (DE) is an innovative approach to education and training. Thus, it seeks to check whether the aims and objectives of education and training that offered through distance mode are actually achieved or not. there is a need to evaluate the components associated with the distance education system. Being the essential component of DE, assessment and evaluation plays a role to assure and retain quality in distance learning. Teachers/instructors involve in educational system tend to ascertain the output of an educational programme. Output is counted in terms of test results. Tests may consist of assignments, term-end question papers, interviews, group discussions, projects, and so on.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

The present study sessions aim to achieve the following objectives to:

- Discuss the importance of assessment in the ODL system;
- Discuss challenges relating to students' assessment in the ODL system;
- Elaborate present assessment practices conducted in the ODL institutes;
- Examine the use of ICT tools in assessment practices of the ODL system;
- Deliberate an innovative practice of students' assessment; and
- Suggest good assessment practices in the ODL system

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Definition of Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment provides an indication of the overall assessment structure, including the balance between assessment items and a description of the nature of the items (examinations, essays, reports, investigations or problems). The mode of submission of assessment items, whether electronic or hard copy, will be detailed. Time lines and policy on late submission can be included. Note that clear indication must be given as to how the assessment meets the objectives. Generally, assessments are directed by some principles. In order to estimate some learning outcomes of the learner or to be assigned some work which may be written, interactive and problem solving, motivating, value judgement and developing new things, creative types.

Evaluation is an inseparable component of teaching-learning activity where judgments need to be made. The teaching and learning activities are the continuous process linked with the instructional decisions to promote learners' learning. The main concern of evaluation in ODL is to judge the effectiveness of instruction which relate to the causes of quality of ODL. Evaluation is an integral part of the instructional process and involved in the following three steps, namely; identifying and defining the intended learning outcomes, constructing and selecting texts and other evaluation tools relevant to the specified outcomes and using the evaluation results to improve learning and teaching.

Assessment is a sub-system of the total ODL system. A vast mechanism works for managing students' assessment. Overall assessment strategies should include the formative evaluation that will take place during the development phase. This can be peer evaluation, trials or other approaches designed to ensure that potential problems are addressed well before the course is offered. Plans for summative evaluation, which will take place as the first students experience the learning environment, should also be outlined. Such evaluation, which normally includes both teachers and learners, is through interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires.

3.2 Types of Assessment and Evaluation in ODL

Document Evaluation:

It provides a descriptive record of the evaluation process. It supplies a contextual record of all evaluation events to the institution. Further, it facilitates the development of a benchmark system. It helps in the revision of a programme. This evaluation is used for two purposes. First, documentation of programme and lesson development, second; giving support to other types of evaluation. In the case of first, the examples are; evaluating learners' records block instruction, anecdotal records, and programme reviews both informal and formal, and evaluation of academic counselors. In the case of second, the evaluation will take a stipulated time period. It implies that without proper documentations, other types of evaluation would not be feasible in DE context.

Summative Evaluation

It is used to judge the effectiveness of a programme. While doing that it focuses on the quality of distance teaching components and effectiveness of the support systems provided to the learners of the programme. It validates all the courses of a programme. An evaluator while doing the summative evaluation of a programme must consider the following; have the programme achieved as it was intended or expected, how it can be revised in future, does the programme stand as a model for other programmes, and is the cost appropriate for the

programme. Summarily, summative evaluation reports on the effectiveness of the curriculum of a DE programme

Formative Evaluation:

It is a continuous activity. This evaluation is used for the purpose of improving the components associated in teaching and learning process at a distance. It helps to modify and improve the quality of the programmes while they are at the development stage. It includes reviewing all instructional materials, assessment tools and techniques, accuracy of instructional contents, ensuring all instructional objectives are covered through the instruction, monitoring learners' performance and learning strategies. The purpose of formative evaluation is not to measure the effectiveness of a programme, but to identify any changes it may require which would improve the programme. Thus, it is stated that formative evaluation is the systematic collection of information for the purpose of making informed decisions about designing and improving educational programmes.

Impact Evaluation

It focuses on the preparation of the design of a programme in such a manner that learners“ after completion of a programme uses their knowledge at their workplace. If a learner does make any difference after completion of the programme towards the real world situations, then the instruction has a very little value. Impact evaluation is a continuous process. This form of evaluation includes surveys and questionnaires, formal evaluation of research projects, etc. The report of this evaluation can be used to improve the curriculum, instructional contents, and assessment methods.

3.3 Tools of Assessment and Evaluation

There are two methods religiously followed by researchers across the globe to evaluate a programme/event/issue. They are; qualitative and quantitative methods. In both the methods, tools and techniques are required to do the evaluation tasks. The tools that are useful for collecting quantitative data for programme evaluation are;

Tests and Inventories:

Tests are instruments to describe and measure a sample of certain aspects of behaviour. Tests contain a fixed set of items and procedures for administrating and scoring. Tests of several kinds can be used for evaluating the components of a programme. These are; aptitude test, achievement test, creative test, anxiety test and intelligence test. An evaluator has to see his/her requirements and accordingly prepare the sample to test the behaviour that intended to measure. For example, an evaluator desires to measure the originality of distance learners on their assignment responses. In this case, he/she can use the “creative test” to evaluate the issue.

Open-ended Questionnaire:

Open-ended questionnaire seeks an analysis, elaboration and explanation. The data receives from this questionnaire represent the most elementary form of collecting qualitative data on an issue or an event. The evaluator of a programme who use this questionnaire for his/her tasks could able to know the learners' emotion, reaction, experience, perception, feelings about the study materials, counselling sessions, and so on.

Structured Questionnaire:

This tool is used largely for data collection in education and training. It is used to get factual and practical information from the stake holders like learners, counsellors, etc. A structured

questionnaire is normally given with 'Yes' or 'No' type or multiple choice of responses to collect information. Through such questionnaire opinions, experiences, and reflections concerning a programme is collected. Since it is objective type question, it is easy for the respondent to answer with a little time. A properly constructed and appropriately administrated questionnaire is considered as useful data gathering tool.

Observation:

Observing a discussion will result to collect better qualitative data. The data obtained through observation should always found in an explanatory and detail form. Interview as a tool to evaluate components of a programme or a programme as a whole has its own limitations. It is due to the reason that though learners say many things about the programme, and the complexity of the programme but sometimes it is not understood clearly. It is easy for others to understand what happened during the programme and how it was occurred. The description of the observation must be accurate, based on facts and devoid from ambiguities. Thus, to collect correct observational data, the evaluator needs to be competent to do so.

Interview:

In an interview conversation takes place for a specific purpose. Interview is of two kinds; structured and semi structured. In the case of earlier one, the evaluator may use a questionnaire and ask the learner to do one after another item, whereas in the latter case, the learner is asked to explain something more on an issue pertaining to his/her programme of studies. Interviews can be organized in telephone, i.e. one-to-one basis, and virtual mode, i.e. one-to-many basis. This tool helps the evaluator to gather qualitative information from learners on their perception on programme activities and impact on the programme.

Case Study:

An evaluator is interested for a case study implies he/she desires to understand the situation in more detail and in depth. To collect data for a case study the evaluator can use various tools as discussed above, such as; opinionnaire, tests, inventories, observation, etc.

Audio-Video Recording and Photographs:

A video programme does not only record the expressions and thoughts of the learners but also provides a way out to interpret the events and gather the interactive feedback. Photographs and audio recording are also used for accumulating qualitative data for evaluation purposes.

Records and Documents:

The programme records and documents such as, agenda of meetings, schedule of virtual classes, online tutoring sessions, and institution's news latter can be used to gather qualitative data for evaluation purposes.

Opinionnaire:

In many cases, to evaluate a programme as a whole or of its components the evaluator needs opinions rather than facts. To collect opinion from the target audiences an opinionnaire is required. In this case, the evaluator has to take consideration the profile of participants' opinions about a programme. Participants are asked about their feelings/reactions about the programme.

Focus Group Discussion:

This tool is used for a group those interested on exploring on an issue given by the evaluators. During the discussion the evaluator discovers the feelings and opinions of learners about the

given issue/problem and other matters. To record the group discussions evaluators can use the recorder and later can be transcribed and analyzed. The data collects from the group discussions would not possible in the quantitative techniques in any ways.

3.4 Importance of Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation of educational programmes is undertaken with two main purposes. They are accountability and improvement. Accountability implies that if resources are spent on educational programmes, it is very much necessary to determine whether the programme achieve what they are designed to achieve and whether resources are used to the greatest benefit. It is also true that no matter how well a programme seems to work, there is always room for improvement. Evaluation provides knowledge and understanding about the aspects of programme that needs changes and helps us to determine as to what sorts of changes are required. Programme assessment and evaluation can also be stated as a formal and systematic process of gathering and providing information about the worth of an educational programme to assist in decision making. Thus, it provides the necessary feedback to academics, administrators, and policy makers to take appropriate decisions about their practices at the right time (Pradhan, 2006). There are three principal reasons to carry an evaluation task in the ODL setup. These are;

Providing: to demonstrate conclusively that something has happened as a result of learning or training and that may also have a link to judgments about the value of the activity, whether the right thing was done, whether it was well done, whether it was worth the cost, and so on.

Controlling: to use evaluation data to ensure that an individual learner or trainee is performing up to the standard or that subsidiary learning/training establishments are meeting targets according to some centrally determined plan (Biswas & Pradhan, 2002).

Improving: to ensure that either the current or future programmes or activities would be better than they are at present.

The distance learner, the distance institutions and the distance teachers agree that the two-way communication generated by the work assignments. Assignment helps the learners in different ways:

- Studies become more stimulating
- Studies are better organized as the courses get divided appropriately.
- Learners are introduced to each other in the course.
- Learners build a closer acquaintance with the institutions.
- Learners are corrected where they might have gone wrong.
- Learners are reinforced through encouragement
- Learning is applied to the solution of real and / or hypothetical problem.
- Revision of the course becomes easier.
- Significant parts of the course become clearly visible.

3.5 Barriers to Assessment in ODL

Quality of Teachers:

There are problems facing both programmes. One such a challenge is the quality of assessments used in these institutions hence the quality of teachers produced by these institutions. According to Motlomelo (2004) our success as classroom teachers and students depends to a great extent

on our understanding and practice of assessment at the classroom level. To this end, students rely almost completely on the day-to-day and term-to-term assessments of that achievement as conducted by their teachers and this is the area where teachers are lacking in both the theory and practices.

Credibility and reliability of assessment procedures:

Assessment occupies a vital position in the process of teaching learning, certification and acquiring knowledge and skills, whether in a conventional system, or an ODL system. Credibility and reliability of assessment procedures is a question of serious debate in the ODL system. Careful observation of all aspects of students' assessment can help to organize it constructively. Provision of certain grades/credits should be there for attendance in the programme (Makamane, 2011). There are three types of assessment qualities that are essential for credibility and reliability assessment procedure. They are validity, reliability and fairness.

Validity: For an assessment system to be valid, care should be taken to verify whether the purpose of assessment has been achieved or not.

Reliability: it entails the extent to which assessment is free from errors of measurement. An error free assessment system is treated as a reliable system.

Fairness: with respect to fairness in assessment, there are objectivity of assessment and making assessment free of subjective judgment (UNESCO, 2006).

4.0 Conclusion

Assessment and evaluation is an inseparable component of teaching-learning activity where judgments need to be made. The teaching and learning activities are the continuous process linked with the instructional decisions to promote learners' learning. The main concern of evaluation in ODL is to judge the effectiveness of design instructions which relate to the quality concern matters of ODL. In majority cases evaluation report is considered for taking a decision on the issue on which the evaluation is done. Distance teaching system find ways and means to enable the distance teachers and learners to get to know each other. Special steps are taken by the distance teacher to introduce open assignments. These practices make academic exchanges between the distance teacher and the learner more stimulating facilitate better insights, encourage independence of thought and the discovery of knowledge. Larger number of assignments to be submitted in a particular course, the larger the number of occasions of contact between learner, distance teacher, consequent upon which the chances of the success of learners are brighter.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

Assessment and evaluation is an inseparable component of teaching-learning activity where judgments need to be made. The teaching and learning activities are the continuous process linked with the instructional decisions to promote learners' learning. The main concern of evaluation in DE is to judge the effectiveness of design instructions which relate to the quality concern matters of DE. It deals with the collection, analysis and interpretation of the information about any aspect of a programme of education and training, as part of a recognized process of judging its effectiveness, its efficacy and any other outcomes it may have. The tools that are useful for collecting qualitative data for programme evaluation are; open-ended questionnaire interview, observation case study, focused group, discussion,

journal/diary/logbook records/documents, audio/video, recording and photographs. There are three principal reasons to carry an evaluation task in the ODL setup. These are; providing, improving and controlling. There are four types of evaluation found in an educational programme. These are; document evaluation, formative evaluation, summative evaluation and impact evaluation. The tools that are useful for collecting quantitative data for programme evaluation are; structured questionnaire, tests and inventories, open-ended questionnaire, interview, observation, case study, focused group discussion, records/documents audio/video recording and photographs, and opinionnaire

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. What is evaluation? Explain the purposes of evaluation in distance education
2. What are the types of Assessment and Evaluation found in ODL programme?
3. What 6 tools can be useful for collecting quantitative data for programme evaluation?
4. Explain the principal reasons for carrying out an evaluation task in the ODL setup

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. Evaluation is an integral part of the instructional process and involved in the following three steps, namely; identifying and defining the intended learning outcomes, constructing and selecting texts and other evaluation tools relevant to the specified outcomes and using the evaluation results to improve learning and teaching. Evaluation is an inseparable component of teaching-learning activity where judgments need to be made. The teaching and learning activities are the continuous process linked with the instructional decisions to promote learners' learning. The main concern of evaluation in ODL is to judge the effectiveness of instruction which relate to the causes of quality of ODL.

Q2. The types of Assessment and Evaluation found in ODL programme includes;

- i) Document evaluation
- ii) Formative evaluation
- iii) Summative evaluation
- iv) Impact evaluation

Q3. The tools useful for collecting quantitative data for programme evaluation include;

- Tests and Inventories
- Open-ended Questionnaire
- Structured Questionnaire
- Observation
- Interview
- Case Study

Q4. The three principal reasons to carry an evaluation task in the ODL setup are;

- **Providing:** to demonstrate conclusively that something has happened as a result of learning or training and that may also have a link to judgments about the value of the activity, whether the right thing was done, whether it was well done, whether it was worth the cost, and so on.
- **Controlling:** to use evaluation data to ensure that an individual learner or trainee is performing up to the standard or that subsidiary learning/training establishments are meeting targets according to some centrally determined plan (Biswas & Pradhan, 2002).

- **Improving:** to ensure that either the current or future programmes or activities would be better than they are at present.

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STUDY SESSION 2: INSTRUCTION-BASED ASSESSMENT CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Tutor Marked Assessment
 - 3.2 Term-end Examination
 - 3.3 Open-book Examination System
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary of the Study Session
- 6.0 In-Text Questions
- 7.0 In-Text Answers
- 8.0 References/ Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Assessment is conducted differently according to the learning strategies of ODL systems. Students' performance assessment cannot be separated from learning. ODL institutions follow diversified approaches to assessing performance of the students. The components of assessment in ODL systems should never be separated from students' learning experiences. For example, strategies of student's self-evaluation, peer evaluation, instructors/ tutors evaluation, and external evaluation may well be linked with the learning strategies of the students.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the concept of instruction-based assessment
- Classify the different types of instruction-based assessment

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Tutor Marked Assessment

The marks or grades received by the learners on their assignment responses are added to the end of term examination. Examples of formative assessment are; tutor-marked assessment and scheduled practice assignments. But these two components are not the only to evaluate in learners' context in the ODL system. The major challenge in this method is that quite frequently, the tutors assigns the same grade to all/most students just to satisfy them. It has also been observed that the copies of assignments are evaluated not by the real appointed tutors but by a person who is not specialized in that field or is unauthorized to do that. All the above cases left room for the system to be blamed. A careful monitoring is needed to check such type of evaluation lacunas in ODL systems (Shidong, 2011).

3.2 Term-end Examination

Assessment of learning plays an important part in the measuring of the quality in education. Students' performance assessment cannot be separated from learning. Almost all the ODL institutes give a higher weighing to the final or term-end examination (summative assessment), which is conducted annually. Most often, students respond to the subject matter with a very low standard but manage to get a higher grade, and sometimes a good writing gets a lower grade. It is difficult to find out the real cause of this as it is a matter of subjective evaluation. Expert to

expert scoring may vary, but we can try to attain objectivity by adopting certain important steps such as carefully phrasing the essay items, make the response restricted in words/time/pages, by preparing standard answers of the questions and comparing them with students' writing, by asking various types of questions in the form of essay, short answer, and objective questions, by moderating the checked answers (randomly/fully) by the experts, and by supplying reasonable copies to the examiners (Makamane, 2011).

3.3 Open-book Examination System

Realizing the changing scenario of the ODL system, open book examination may be seriously considered. The philosophy of ODL encourages students to develop their comprehension and analytical skills. In the ODL system students may also be provided with study materials and other reference books within a specified period. Fully open book examination may also be executed in a distance education system in which students may be allowed to enter the examination hall with their notes and books. They may be allowed to answer the questions by referring to the material they have brought with them. If the institutes adopt an open book examination system, they have to be more careful in constructing questions for term-end examination, mostly analytical and synthesis type. But it remains a question whether the ODL system is able to manage it properly or not.

4.0 Conclusion

A valid system of assessment, which can ensure fulfilment of the course objectives, needs to be practiced.

5.0 Summary

In this study session, the different assessment strategies used in open and distance learning are discussed and constructive suggestions are given to meet the challenges of assessment.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. Briefly explain the concept of term-end examination in ODL
2. Enumerate the different types of instruction-based assessment

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. Assessment of learning plays an important part in the measuring of the quality in education. Students' performance assessment cannot be separated from learning. Almost all the ODL institutes give a higher weighing to the final or term-end examination (summative assessment), which is conducted annually. Most often, students respond to the subject matter with a very low standard but manage to get a higher grade, and sometimes a good writing gets a lower grade. It is difficult to find out the real cause of this as it is a matter of subjective evaluation.

Q2. The types of instruction-based assessment include;

- i) Tutor Marked Assessment
- ii) Term-end Examination
- iii) Open-book Examination System

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STUDY SESSION 3: SEMESTER EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Structure of semester examination
 - 3.1.1 Paper and pen examination
 - 3.1.2 Electronic based examination
 - 3.2 Preparation for semester examination
 - 3.3 Pitfalls in semester examination
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary of the Study Session
- 6.0 In-Text Questions
- 7.0 In-Text Answers
- 8.0 References/ Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Generally, the University conducts end of term examination or annual examination twice a year, April and October which are held at study centers. Students appear in End of Term Examination subject to the condition that registration for the course(s) in which they appear is valid, minimum time pursue these courses, and have submitted the required number of assignment(s) to their study center, if any, in those course within due date. There is provision of submit examination form with exam fees and late fees as given in different programme guides and the forms can be submitted to the director, of Open University.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the concept of semester assessment
- Classify the different types of semester assessment
- Explain the tips for preparation for semester examination
- Identify the pitfalls in semester examination

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Structure of Semester Examination

Examination is an organized system of evaluating and estimating students' academic abilities and performance. It is a standardized procedure to measure quantitatively or qualitatively through verbal or non-verbal behaviors. It can also be defined as a means of measuring knowledge, skills, feelings, intelligence, or aptitude of an individual or a group. Both the annual and semester systems of examination are in practice simultaneously at university level in ODL. The question papers for the online End Semester Examinations shall be set in such a manner so as to ensure that they cover the entire Course Curriculum as per the weightage of the modules of the concerned course unit. The examination takes two forms, namely; paper and pen examination and electronic based examination.

3.1.1 Paper and Pen Examination

Paper-and-pen instruments refer to a general group of assessment tools in which candidates read questions and respond in writing. This includes tests, such as knowledge and ability tests,

and inventories, such as personality and interest inventories. Paper-and-pen examinations can be used to assess job-related knowledge and ability or skill qualifications. The possible range of qualifications which can be assessed using paper-and-pencil tests is quite broad. The question paper for paper and pen would test the various levels of cognitive learning. Some of the questions shall be analytical / applied and invite original thinking or application of theory. The paper setters should give wider choice to the students for answering questions, by providing alternate questions in each of the sections of the question paper.

3.1.2 Electronic Based Examination

Online Exams are becoming one of the most effective and easy solutions for conducting tests to students. The traditional examination system is long, time consuming conducting and evaluating process while the online exam systems offers the learner the speedy and accurate solutions within desired time limit. The online assessment is highly interactive, customizable, trustworthy, fast, reliable, secure and accurate. The questions for the electronic examination should be framed in such a way that the Learning Outcomes of the course are assessed properly. The tests and examinations shall aim at evaluating not only the student's ability to recall information, which student had memorized, but also their understanding of the course, ability to apply the concepts in real life situations, analyze, evaluate and create information into a meaningful whole.

3.2 Preparation for Semester Examination

Preparing for an exam can be stressful and time consuming, and perhaps is discussed in terms of term preparation, long term preparation and exam day preparation as follows;

Short Term Preparation:

As the examination period draws closer, the timetable will be released and you can begin to customize your exam preparation specifically for each exam. When you are studying closer to the examination, you want to begin to work in ways which simulate exam conditions, from the time of day to the environment (e.g. individual desk in an exam hall), to the layout and type of questions. When you know the time of the day you are sitting each exam you can begin to schedule your practice activities (e.g. past exam papers) at the same time. If your exam involves individual seating with nothing more than a pen, then try doing your study or practice tests in a quiet space at home or in the Library. When you set up your own practice tests, or use those created by peers from study groups, ensure they all follow the same layout and type of questions as your exam.

Long Term Preparation:

A lot of people rely on their short-term memory by doing last-minute cramming of knowledge before an exam. Often this involves rote learning, or repeating drills to retain information over long duration study periods, one item after another. This 'blocking' is successful in the short term, i.e. while you're practising, but in test situations, the opposite is the case. People who succeed in tests use a range of strategies to move through the cycle of learning, practising, testing, and adapting over a long period of time in short and focused study periods. What this means is that you should think of exam study like you would puppy training.

Exam Day Preparation:

In addition to modelling exam conditions in the lead up, you want to plan out your exam day from the night before to shortly after your exam. The advantage of all this practice is the reliance

of your mind and body on automation or routine. This is a habit commonly used by athletes preparing for competition to reduce test anxiety and improve performance.

3.3 Pitfalls in Semester Examination

Institutional Efficiency and Throughput:

The efficiency of the educational process is of great importance in ODL institutions. Throughput can be defined as the percentage of students who registered for a module and passed the examination. The relevance of educational efficiency, as far as throughput is concerned, lies in maximizing outputs from a given set of inputs that translates into increasing the number of learners who are successful 'outputs' from the educational process, as a proportion of those who are 'inputs' to the process. Major inefficiencies in higher education are reflected by student throughput, graduation, drop-out and repetition rates, and the retention of failing student.

Timing Between Registration and Receipt of Study Material:

Most ODL institutions offer students three routes for registration (i.e. via electronic, postal or personal means). The time-span prior to students receiving their study material is of critical importance in an ODL environment. The opportunity for students to prepare for assignments and examinations largely depends on the time that elapses before they receive their study material. The late arrival of study material has a detrimental effect on students' performance, as it leaves them insufficient time to prepare. This often gives rise to students not being able to meet assignment due dates, insufficient time to complete the syllabus and, subsequently, inadequate preparation for the examination.

Time Lag Between Registration Date and Acquisition of Textbooks:

Promptness in obtaining prescribed textbooks after registration is crucial, as textbooks form an integral part of the study package in most courses and largely affect students' performance. Late acquisition of textbooks may, to a certain extent, contribute to some students failing. Both successful and unsuccessful students who acquired textbook(s) after a month, cited the following difficulties: booksellers are not cooperative with foreign students; inefficient booksellers poorly administered orders placed by students; inefficient mailing system, particularly in neighbouring countries; shortage and non-availability of certain books and late arrival of books.

Attendance of Discussion Classes and Tutorials:

Discussion classes and tutorial classes form crucial components of the teaching process in ODL institutions, thereby offering students the opportunity to personally interact with their peers and module instructors. Two categories of ODL delivery systems: synchronous and asynchronous. The possibility of students and instructors participating simultaneously in real time can be achieved by means of synchronous instruction.

Examination Preparation Time Span:

It is important to note that some students found it very difficult to estimate the time they spent studying in preparation for the examinations. Time management plays a critical role in students' success in their studies. It is evident that attempting to cover a large volume of study material within a very short space of time – especially during the short examination period – places an immense burden on students and results in poor performance. Unfortunately, students in ODL tends to underestimate the time required to balance their academic, professional and personal (family) obligations.

Students' Access to Communication Facilities:

Communication between ODL institutions and students plays a vital role, not only in matters pertaining to teaching and learning, but also in administrative support activities. Lack of access to communication technology, such as facsimile, telephone and computer facilities, could present a serious impediment to effective learning and teaching in an ODL environment. Students who do not have the opportunity to pay personal visits to module instructors/lecturers often rely heavily on the available communication technology

4.0 Conclusion

Teaching and learning process is incomplete without effective and meaningful assessment of students' learning outcomes. This involves periodic assessment via tests or examinations to check the level of students' knowledge acquisition and competence; and award of certificates at the end of programmes of study. The need to validate the process of preparing pen and paper examinations and electronic examination in open and distance education is necessary bearing in mind that assessment activities of online distance education.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

Semester examination assessment is an essential pre requisite for the students to submit the examination form; so as to reach within the prescribed dates. The semester examination assessment format are paper and pen examination and electronic examination.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. Explain the two types of structure of semester examination in ODL
2. Enumerate the different types of preparation for semester examination
3. What are the pitfalls in semester examination

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. The two types of structure of semester examination in ODL are;

1) **Paper and Pen Examination:** This refers to a general group of assessment tools in which candidates read questions and respond in writing. This includes tests, such as knowledge and ability tests, and inventories, such as personality and interest inventories. Paper-and-pen examinations can be used to assess job-related knowledge and ability or skill qualifications. The possible range of qualifications which can be assessed using paper-and-pencil tests is quite broad. The question paper for paper and pen would test the various levels of cognitive learning.

2) **Electronic Based Examination:** Online Exams are becoming one of the most effective and easy solutions for conducting tests to students. The traditional examination system is long, time consuming conducting and evaluating process while the online exam systems offers the learner the speedy and accurate solutions within desired time limit. The online assessment is highly interactive, customizable, trustworthy, fast, reliable, secure and accurate.

Q2. The types of preparation for semester examination include;

- i) Short term preparation
- ii) Long term preparation
- iii) Exam day preparation

Q3. The possible Pitfalls in Semester Examination includes:

- Institutional efficiency and throughput
- Timing between registration and receipt of study material
- Time lag between registration date and acquisition of textbooks
- Attendance of discussion classes and tutorials
- Examination preparation time span
- Students' access to communication facilities

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STUDY SESSION 4: NON-EXAMINABLE COURSES ASSESSMENT

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Learning Outcomes

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Practical Based Courses

3.2 Practicum and SIWES

3.3 Teaching Practice and Clinical Posting

3.4 Community-Based Education and Service (COBES) Posting

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

6.0 In-Text Questions

7.0 In-Text Answers

8.0 References/ Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Non-examinable courses are courses that are not assessed through regulated examination condition but their assessment are based on criteria set on every aspect in which students are required to demonstrate skills. Such courses might be assessed using observations from the supervisor, rating of the required skills and assessment of quality report presented.

2.0 Learning Outcomes

After reading this study session, student will be able to:

- Understand the concept of practical based courses
- Explain the meaning of practicum and SIWES
- Describe the idea behind teaching practice and clinical posting
- Understand the meaning of community-based education and service (COBES) posting

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Practical Based Courses

The emergence and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) made open and distance learning mode effective in delivering courses in disciplines which need intensive practical and face to face situations. In general, practical based courses are such courses or subjects where the practical/ action /skill related tasks like project works, experimentations etc. are found. practical based courses are understood as the courses which are evaluated through three ways evaluation system i.e. ‘term end theory examination’, ‘term end practical examination’ and ‘submission of assignments’. Practical based courses are functionally different from theory based courses from many fronts. Theory based courses are such courses or subjects where the practical based tasks like projects, experimentations etc. are hardly/less found.

In spite of the potentialities of the media and self-learning nature of the instructional/training modules, many obstacles have been encountered in teaching practical base courses like courses in Science and Technology, Agriculture, Nursing, Medicine, Vocational Training etc. For the practical based courses, practical contact sessions and assignments are crucial components, the evaluation of which is handled at the level of study centers. Writing assignment and attending practical sessions are compulsory for the learners of practical programs. ODL system, the

physical separation of teacher and the learner distinguishes it from formal education. The system of providing practical based courses is different from the theory-based courses in many ways.

The importance of practical based courses under open and distance learning system is rising rapidly. In The teaching of practical based courses involves intensive practical work, and running of such courses in open and distance education requires special techniques, learning material and specialized learning center. As such, opening/implementing practical based courses through ODL system is a very challenging task. Effective monitoring is the most significant means of ensuring quality standards in any given situation. But, it is seen that there exist some specific problems in the monitoring of the conduct of laboratory courses in the study centers. Lack of laboratories at regional centers, lack of infrastructure facilities, lack of laboratory equipment, lack of trained manpower and financial constraints, etc. adversely affect the learning process and performance of the learners.

3.2 Practicum and SIWES

Practicum are internship programmes organized by higher and tertiary institutions which entail the student being attached to the prospective workplace. Through practicum the student is exposed to work related experience and is expected to marry the theory learnt at college with the practical experience at the workplace. Also, a practicum can be perceived as an active involvement of the learner chosen in professional field. It gives the learner an opportunity to demonstrate new knowledge with enthusiasm, practice the new skills and give feedback to the tutors of the acquired skills. McMahon and Quinn (1995) noted that practicum is supervised work experiences whereby students leave their institutions and get engaged in work related programmes, during which period they are closely supervised by experienced job incumbents. The philosophy behind practicum is to put into practice the theoretical essences and applying this correctly in the work situation (DuBey et al,1985). To this end, practicum is any carefully monitored piece of work or service experience in which an individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what she or he is learning throughout the experience or duration of attachment. However, the organization and management of the practicum is an issue of concern among the different stakeholders. The objectives of practicum include;

- Provides students with hands-on experience so that they enhance their learning or understanding of issue relevant to a particular area of study
- Assisted the internee to bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practical reality.
- Practicum is supervised work experiences where students are closely supervised by experienced and qualified mentors
- Practicum is the best way for students to explore the suitability of a particular job. It follows, therefore, that the benefits accruing to conventional students may not apply to the ODL student.
- Practicum bridged the gap between the theory of the classroom and the world of practice. Also, it is perceived as a valuable way to acquire broad competencies where the practical knowledge obtained supports and complements the theoretical studies learned in the classrooms
- Practicum has been seen to be beneficial in socializing the student through training and teamwork assignments at the workplace.

The Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) is a Skills Training Programme designed to prepare and expose Students of Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Technology, Colleges of Agriculture and Colleges of Education for the Industrial Work situation they are likely to meet after graduation. In Nigeria, SIWES was introduced in 1973 to enable undergraduate students in Science and engineering acquire practical skills needed to function satisfactorily in work-settings. Industrial training commenced in the country due to the reliance of companies or industries on technical proficiencies, for production process and preservation of company resources. The scheme affords students the opportunity of familiarizing and exposing themselves to handling equipment and machinery that are usually not available in their Institutions. Specifically, the objectives of the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) are to:

- Provide avenue for Students in Institutions of higher Learning to acquire industrial skills and experience in their course of study.
- Prepare Students for the industrial work situation they are to meet after graduation. Expose Students to work methods and techniques in handling equipment and machinery that may not be available in their Institutions.
- Make the transition from school to the world of work easier, and enhance Students contacts for later job placement.
- Provide Students with an opportunity to apply their knowledge in real work situation thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice.

3.3 Teaching Practice and Clinical Posting

Effective teaching is a term used to describe the knowledge, strategies and conduct of a successful educator. It's the ability to make a positive impact on a student's life and academic career, including the capacity to teach important skill sets, introduce new concepts and manage any classroom concerns. In the ever-changing education environment, effective teaching practices are helping educators enhance their instructional style. Using these teaching methods allow them to adjust their teaching strategies to fit both the students and the material, recognizing that different students learn in different ways. Practice teaching is an important component towards becoming a teacher. It provides experiences to student teachers in the actual teaching and learning environment. During teaching practice, a student-teacher is given the opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession.

Clinical posting is a vital component and fundamental to nursing students learning which provides them direct, real experience of nursing profession as they participate in routine nursing activities of the ward. Clinical posting is a vital component of nursing education. Clinical experiences are necessary to help nursing students apply theoretical concepts and skills to professional practice. Clinical experience is one of the most anxiety producing components of the nursing program which has been identified by nursing students. Clinical practice provides the opportunity for students to strengthen their clinical skills, how to perform physical and psychosocial assessment, administer medication, perform other needed skills, develop critical thinking skills and develop plan of nursing care. Students are responsible to integrate theory into practice and to gain real nursing experiences while being facilitated by their clinical supervisors.

3.4 Community-Based Education and Service (COBES) Posting

Community-Based Education and Service (COBES) is the “learning activity that uses the community as a learning environment, in which not only students but also teachers, members of the community, and representatives of other sectors are actively engaged throughout the students' educational experience. Community-based education and service and rural outreach programmes are increasingly being used in the delivery of undergraduate medical education in rural communities to address the disparity of health workers across the world. One of its key objectives of integrating community-oriented medical education was to train a team of health graduates with considerable knowledge and skills to work effectively in both rural and urban areas as well as to provide comprehensive health care to a defined geographical area, in partnership with members of the community. This will help students to appreciate those difference and help students to navigate different complexities. COBES helps students to understand the efficiency of health services in the rural communities may benefit more from inclusion of health promotion and the prevention of diseases than from curative care. Equally, COBES aims to reduce the inequity with respect to access to healthcare services by improving access to health facilities in the rural areas.

4.0 Conclusion

Non-examinable courses are courses that are not assessed through regulated examination condition but their assessment are based on criteria set on every aspect in which students are required to demonstrate skills. Such courses might be assessed using observations from the supervisor, rating of the required skills and assessment of quality report presented.

5.0 Summary of the Study Session

Non-examinable courses are vital to your completion of your course of work and are key requirement for your graduation. This study session has exposed students to how non-examinable courses such as research project, practicum, SIWES, teaching practice, clinical posting and COBES.

6.0 In-Text Questions

1. Explain the concept of practical based courses
2. What is the different between Practicum and SIWES?
3. What is the different between teaching practice and clinical posting?
4. What is community-based education and service (COBES) posting?

7.0 In-Text Answers

Q1. Practical based courses are such courses or subjects where the practical/ action /skill related tasks like project works, experimentations etc. are found. practical based courses are understood as the courses which are evaluated through three ways evaluation system i.e. ‘term end theory examination’, ‘term end practical examination’ and ‘submission of assignments’. Practical based courses are functionally different from theory based courses from many fronts. Theory based courses are such courses or subjects where the practical based tasks like projects, experimentations etc. are hardly/less found.

Q2. Practicum are internship programmes organized by higher and tertiary institutions which entail the student being attached to the prospective workplace. Through practicum the student is exposed to work related experience and is expected to marry the theory learnt at college with

the practical experience at the workplace. While, The Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) is a skills training programme designed to prepare and expose students for the industrial work situation they are likely to meet after graduation. The scheme affords students the opportunity of familiarizing and exposing themselves to handling equipment and machinery that are usually not available in their Institutions.

Q3. Practice teaching is an important component towards becoming a teacher. It provides experiences to student teachers in the actual teaching and learning environment. During teaching practice, a student-teacher is given the opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession. While, clinical posting is a vital component and fundamental to nursing students learning which provides them direct, real experience of nursing profession as they participate in routine nursing activities of the ward. Clinical posting is a vital component of nursing education. Clinical experiences are necessary to help nursing students apply theoretical concepts and skills to professional practice.

Q4. Community-Based Education and Service (COBES) is the “learning activity that uses the community as a learning environment, in which not only students but also teachers, members of the community, and representatives of other sectors are actively engaged throughout the students' educational experience. COBES helps students to understand the efficiency of health services in the rural communities may benefit more from inclusion of health promotion and the prevention of diseases than from curative care.

8.0 References/ Further Reading

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