

COVER PAGE

Research Paper Title: “New Normals of Effective Online Learning Methodologies”

Theme of the Paper: Online learning methodologies in ODL

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I, the undersigned, hereby would like to explicitly state that the research article titled

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New Normals of Effective Online Learning Methodologies

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Abstract

Imparting online distance education right from its inception turned out to be challenging for the teachers when it comes to adapting to the new methodologies. Open and distance learning offers many professional and skill-based courses across the globe for upbringing the learners to cope up with changing scenarios. Distance education primarily focuses on imparting knowledge and skills. Skill-based education is now essential in every field. There is

a cry in society about the lack of skilled people. Bridging the gap between knowledge and skill has become a necessity in these changing normals. As per UNESCO, one of the apex organizations, “Distance education is a way of teaching and learning culture where trainer and learner are at a distant location and work out the knowledge propagation effectively.” The essentials of distance education are organized planning, elegant courses, and special instructional techniques with well-versed approaches of

communication by electronic and other technologies. Distance education is compulsorily linked to its mode of delivery and its effectiveness. This paper is an attempt to explore the distance education modes, models, and methodologies.

Keywords: online distance learning (ODL, modes, methodologies, skill outcome

DISTANCE EDUCATION: MODES AND MODELS

Online distance education has become new normal in the recent past. Not only for the working professionals but for our students also the online distance education has become mandatory due to the pandemic situation. The stalwarts in the field of education suggested some effective

methods of communication and data transfer as far as imparting knowledge to aspirants is concerned. There are several predominant trends through various online or distance education methods of conveyance. To understand it and take it further, there are numerous curricula associated with each online education method that may have different eligibility criteria, limitation, interval, institute, and motivations and with no defined time and location. The possibilities are that some are classroom-based, while some are preschool kind of courses and few may be conducted after school timings or even during school holidays. There are distance education “Groups” or teams who have deviated interests in comparison to each other like, types of interactions, way of teaching, timings, and mode of delivery. To meet these expectations is quite challenging. Teachers are the point of attention in print or televisual or web-based approaches. Interactive radio

instruction (IRI) is a distance education system that combines radio broadcasts with active learning to improve the educational paradigm, primarily targeting students. Few modes may avail benefits such as rich content and may facilitate delivery to teachers and students at the same time. Let us have a look at various categories of distance education and corresponding techniques which are used to deliver content.

TYPES OF DISTANCE LEARNING CORRESPONDENCE MODELS

Printed study material

Printed material is always useful for learners as it provides them a ready reference and even provides easy access. Under-qualified or aspirant teachers always take the benefit of print-based material for enhancing their qualifications. These courses are comparatively cheaper

and quite useful for those who are geographically at a distant location and are with a limited budget, inadequate setup such as classrooms and limited manpower. This method has its pros and cons. The study material in printed form can be referred to any time and quite useful as a ready reference but for understanding the concepts, one-to-one interaction between teacher and student is not possible in many scenarios.

Audio-based Distance

Education: Learning by

Listening

The following list is some methods broadly followed for this model:

- Broadcast: IRI (Interactive Radio Instructions)
- Narrowcast: IAI (Interactive Audio Instructions) (Via magnetic audio tape or CDs, DVDs, USB Pen Drives)

- Duplex communication: Two-way radio
- Audio conferencing and telephonic interaction, Mobile Communication
- Broadcast radio

Audio instruction is the most suitable mean of propagation of knowledge for trainers, tutors to their remotely located students. May be due to geographical constraints they may hold at distant and remote locations. Audio-based information exchange has the above-listed techniques such as radio broadcasting or audiotapes, CDs, DVDs, etc. The audio interaction happens in real-time and even it creates an imaginary world where concepts could be visualized in virtual mode. Here the skill of teacher/trainer is vital. There are many methods under this category where both the communities would not require to undergo any sort of pieces of training. This is one of the effective and inexpensive methods.

Overall, even a learner with very little bookish knowledge and with restricted resources can take the benefit of this method. Illiteracy will also not stop any enthusiastic learner from taking its benefits. In Duplex i.e. two-way communication, both teacher and student can talk and exchange views and thoughts. Radio broadcasting is (through certain assigned frequencies) transmission of audio (sound), sometimes with related metadata, by radiofrequency waves intended to reach a wide audience. This method is quite effective for information exchange and develops a habit of good listening.

Televisual-based Distance

Education: Learning by Seeing

For better delivery and understanding of concepts, this method is widely followed where some commonly referred techniques are:

- Broadcast television (Educational and instructional)
- Interactive Videoconferencing
- Videos/ Animations

Generally, we keep faith in what we see. Learning by observing with all focus and concentration will help you learn many new concepts. Young or budding trainers will always get motivated and feel supported when they see other trainers work in new and innovative ways. Videos or animations always help understand difficult concepts more thoroughly. It will reduce the stress of imagination and makes it perfectly visuals to take it further. It even develops faith and promotes innovative ideas. Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) and Video case studies are setting new trends under this model. The use of TV sets for education is now proven its importance in the recent past. The Corona Pandemics taught us a lesson of “Learning by viewing, observing.” The benefits of Televisual-based Distance Education are

listed out as follows:

- Provides teacher a platform to provide effective means of propagating ideas which are difficult through text or audio.
- A most efficient and attractive method of communication.
- Many critical and difficult to understand concepts can be taken care of through video and animation support and demonstration.
- Students can utilize the learned concepts innovatively.
- Can impart skills by providing effective inputs.

Computer-based multimedia

models: Most interactive method

Under this model, the commonly referred modes are:

- Text, Audio, and video storage (Multimedia)

- Animations
- All sort of digital storages
(CDs, DVDs, Hard Disks,
server storage)

Over the past two decades, the use of computers in every field has gone common. Rather it has become the need of the hour. How can online distance learning keeps itself away from this revolutionary change? CD-ROMs, DVDs, VCDs, Pen Drives are the most effective ways of data exchange. Teachers and students are using these mediums very effectively for teaching and learning. Multimedia is a buzzword today and everyone is aware of it as a media that comprises text, audio, and videos with high and ultra-high-definition images and AR/VR-based contents with some encrypted data for security reasons. Group Teaching and Learning Software (GTLS), or computer-aided learning (CAL), computer-based instruction (CBI)

is needed to be tapped in the broad sense for ODL. Multimedia as a Distance Learning Tool will help even tutors for the perspective of apply, analysis and synthesis, and very well organized evaluation methods. This mode offers benefits such as being more powerful and flexible, user-friendly, effective, innovative ideas and game-based learning pedagogy and useful for students with varied learning styles.

Web-based models: New Normals of learning

The list of models under this category is as follows:

1. Use of online platforms
(Zoom, G meet, WebEx)
2. Access to internet
resources
3. E-courses /online
learning courses (e.g.
Coursera, Solo learn,
Udemy)

4. Web-based interactive courses

5. Live seminars, webinars

6. Virtual classrooms

- It is one of the most popular and fastest grown modes of distance education. The obvious reasons for that are:
 - If a user is having internet access then learning becomes simple as “anytime, anywhere, as per convenience” without any stringent constraints.
 - Exchanges multimedia information such as text, audio, video, animations, etc.
 - Communication and propagation of data can happen in real-time

Online coaching, tutoring, mentoring, virtual schools, tele research, webcast, webinars, growth of online learning communities, and web-based distance teaching and learning is a popular trend of ODL teaching, learning pedagogy. Use of

social media, avatars, pseudo images and videos, cheap and user-friendly software.

Mobile models: User-friendly

flexible: E or μ learning

The most recent trend which affected ODL comprises of:

- Mobile phones, Smartphones
- I pods
- Palmtops/ Tabs
- Battery operated handheld devices

M-learning (mobile technology-based learning) refers to e-learning through small, mobile networked devices—cellular or cell phones, smartphones (android or Mac platform), palmtops, tabs, and PDAs so that learners can access information, the study material, and resources ubiquitously. Similar to radio, television, and desktop computers before this, mobile tools have provided unconventional means to participate

teachers and students in the training and erudition process. Relatively inexpensive technique because of affordable cell phone prices; anytime, anywhere, (provided internet access) availability; trainer and learner-friendly; no need of any specialized pieces of training are some positive aspects of this methods. Poor internet connection; high bandwidth requirements; limited life span of mobile devices; and the threat of loss, theft, and damage are some negative aspects of this model.

The Excursion of Methodologies

and Modes:

If we focus on some key points, the ODL will lead to a win-win situation for both teaching and learning communities. We explored few concepts and these may be considered as guidelines for the development and growth of ODL:

- Impart skill/competency-based education with prime focus on

aiding teachers to develop the information, skills, boldness, and temperaments perceptibly shown to improve teaching methodologies.

- It should take into consideration needs and associated work culture/environments.
- Project & Skill-based contents need to be addressed with applicable demonstrations
- Emphasize extending teacher's content-based knowledge and allied competencies.
- Teachers centric models to showcase their mastery, skills in their classrooms
- Provision for rehearsal, investigation, and replication
- Based on analysis of inputs related to student, the teacher should go for content development & mode of communication (Student-centric)

- Methods should lead to non-stop support and conduction over a pre-framed duration.

CONCLUSION

The effective delivery of distance learning resources and fulfilment of outcomes is strongly dependent on the mode of delivery and its usefulness. Well-established and defined teaching-learning pedagogy with ample scope or flexibility to adapt to changes always ensures better results. The student and teacher-centric modes of communication and methodologies always serve the purpose. Workshops, Skill-based projects, project-based learnings, learning by doing, demonstration of concepts, video animations, and well-defined multimedia support has become the need of the hour. Every Open University and institute imparting online

distance education should have a broad approach along with a high degree of freedom to students and teachers for variations which include the types of media or technology used.

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