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Teacher Education in Open and Distance Learning Universities in Africa

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Introduction

The most potent objective of open/distance learning is the provision of greater access to education, especially as a second-chance opportunity and an alternative to the formal mode of classroom education provided in a normal school, college or university setting where the teachers/lecturers do the interaction with textual or electronic materials and then transfer their understanding of the text or electronic learning content to the students with demonstration which may be supported with teaching aids. In open/distance learning (ODL), the teacher reaches the learner with some well-prepared easy-to-understand, well-illustrated, excitingly illuminating and vividly explanatory self-instructing materials which may be textual or electronic. According to Braimoh (2010), the adoption of ODL in the world is a paradigm shift in the provision of higher education. He further opines that ODL provides the basis for access to higher education and for its mass coverage in Africa. Distance education/learning is the additional means of providing mass access to higher education by all, not only in Africa but the whole world. Braimoh posits that ODL is marked out by the fact that the learners are separated from their human instructor by both space and time. It involves several forms of interactions: between the learner and institutions, learner and learning materials in all forms, non-physical interaction between the learner and instructor, learner and learner, etc. It is noteworthy here that the learner is a principal factor in every form of these interactions.

There are some distinctions between open learning and distance learning. The difference is captured by the following definitions of the two similar but distinctive concepts which are sometimes used interchangeably. Distance learning is the process of education whereby a substantial chunk of teaching is done by someone far removed from the learners in space and, possibly, time; while open learning is

conducted in a manner that employs use of easy-to-understand teaching materials, whereby constraints on the learners in terms of access, entry, time and place, pace and method of study are minimized (Junaid 2010). This actually lies in the openness of Open Learning, while in Distance Learning, participants' graduation is regulated and it is often mass production as in the conventional mode of learning. Duration of open learning is not regulated in terms of time of entry and graduation, which is quite different from the distance learning mode. Dontwi, Amahia, Chukwu and Udomboso (2010) view both concepts as portending an approach to learning that is designed to reach the learners in the comfort of their homes, offices, shops or any other workplace. Reporting on the views on distance education, Onuka (2006) quoted Dohmen (1967) as seeing distance learning as a systematically organized form of self-study in which student counselling, the presentation of learning material and the securing and supervising of students' success is carried out by a team of teachers, each of whom has responsibilities. Furthermore, distance education is nothing but an arrangement for providing instruction through electronic communications media to persons engaged in planned learning in a place or at a time different from that of the instructor or instructors. Distance education as a concept has different meanings and interpretations to different people, thereby making it have variety of names from one region to another. Some regard it as formal education with the only difference being in the mode of training (Onuka 2009b).

It could be inferred from the views of scholars listed in this work that open and distance modes of learning represent approaches to learning whose foci are opening access to learning in all regards, including time and place, and providing flexible means of learning to individuals and groups of learners.

Junaid (2010) reports that distance education could also be seen as an alternative form of education legitimized by the general public as well as by those who allocate educational resources and opportunities. A critical issue in ODL is not necessarily the duration or whether it is a regular or in-service programme, but the fact that the individual who engages in other activities is allowed to participate in the programme.

It is pertinent to note that universities all over the world are faced with the challenge of inadequate space which in turn inhibits the expected access to educational opportunities, yet this development is not matched by the quantum of revenue accruing to higher education institutions to meet this astronomical increase in request of such spaces (Junaid 2010, paraphrasing Schott, Chernish, Dooley and Linder). This occurrence was believed to have caused universities to pay more attention to distance learning programmes. According to Onuka (2006), it was reported that there had been some form of agreement by almost all nations of the world to effect 'education for all' by 2015. One way by which this target can be achieved is through the distance learning mode. Hence, the nations

of the world have been formulating appropriate policies and feasible programmes to facilitate the realization of this laudable goal of providing education for all. This trend is in tandem with the observation of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) in its 2002 and 2003 reports (ADEA 2004) that in the face of the continuously increasing request for higher education spaces, funding of the sector in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has not, in real economic terms, matched such increase in demand for higher education, especially if cognizance is taken of the rate of inflation and devaluation of national currencies across the globe. Thus, the matter of provision of access to higher education via distance learning has become unprecedentedly acceptable by all nations of the world. In the opinion of Oludotun (2001) and Onuka (2006), any meaningful analysis of the goings-on in the Nigerian education sector, with reference to admission into tertiary institutions of learning, exposes the fact that there is a shortfall between demand for spaces in the universities and supply of such spaces for prospective candidates. They further observe that the most potent means of meeting the observed shortfall can only be through the open/distance learning alternative.

For Bunza (1997), conventional education is normally associated with being taught by a teacher who is physically present where the taught is also present, whereas open/distance learning is where the 'taught' do not, in most cases, have physical contact with the instructor. But distance education presupposes that students learn for at least a proportion of the time on their own in the absence of any teacher and, in most cases, far away from the teacher. Distance education is often meant for mature people, though technology and lack of adequate space has opened it to the young. Some elements regarded as essential characteristics of distance education, according to Junaid, quoting Maduka and Keegan respectively, are as follows:

- The separation of teacher and learner which distinguishes distance education from face-to-face learning;
- The influence of an educational organization which distinguishes it from private study;
- The use of technical media, usually printed materials to unite the teacher and learner, and carry the education context;
- The provision of two-way communication so that the students may benefit from or even initiate dialogue; and
- The possibility of occasional meetings for didactic and socialization process.

According to them, these characteristics form the foundation of a distance learning programme, particularly in the face of increasing technological change. Therefore, any distance learning programme which desires to keep abreast with time and

space must necessarily make use of modern information and communication technology that saves not only time but also life. It must be noted, however, that distance education has expanded across the length and breadth of the globe and is no longer in the periphery of the overall provision of education.

The emergence of distance education as a learning process is a turning point in the provision of mass education opportunities for millions of people whose educational aspirations and demands would not have been met by the conventional mode of providing education. Thus, it becomes necessary for the open and distance institutions to develop mechanism for two-way communication for teaching–learning, even in the use of instructional materials. From the various definitions, it can be inferred that the main essence of distance education is the mode of instruction which is made possible to the learner at a distance. The Nigerian National Policy on Education, FRN (2004) in Junaid (2010), as revised the fourth time, gives greater recognition to open and distance learning as an entire section of the document was devoted to it as to the other forms of education. The policy defines open and distance education as 'the mode of teaching in which learners are removed in time and space from the teacher'. It further explains that open/distance learning 'uses a variety of media and technologies to provide and /or improve access to good quality education for large numbers of learners wherever they may be'. All these definitions, notions or concepts have exposed the potency of open/distance learning in the provision of access to education, particularly to higher education in Nigeria.

Junaid (2010) reports that distance education technologies are expanding at an extremely rapid rate. Nonetheless, the need to ensure quality assurance measures, comparable to products of regular but similar university programmes, cannot be over-emphasized. She further reports that, resulting from the Houston University models are the creation of discrete learning objects developed by the faculty and delivered by various forms of technology (WebCT, video, audio, CD-Roms, PDFs, etc). The learning objects are thereafter managed within database so created and then customized, updated, revised and included in courses. This trend, by implication, portends that it cannot therefore overstress the need to employ modern information and communication to facilitate the process of providing access to higher education in the emerging economies. To ignore ICT's use in promoting the ideals of ODL is to do so at the peril of its growth and development and, by extension, stunting the expansion of access to higher education and consequently stagnating national growth and development, since development is by man and man is developed through education. The distance teacher educator must be specially trained to adopt the teacher education curriculum, which itself must have been reviewed to suit distance teacher education, which again must be adaptable to the technologies required in teacher education delivery. In addition, all distance teacher educators must compulsorily take several courses in educational

technology to enable them teach methodology courses electronically in the simplest format that the unassisted learner can understand. They could be in the form of video and visual electronic materials, DVDs, CDs, internet, websites, blogs, etc., to reach learners in the comfort of their homes. This calls for constant power supply.

Practical Issues in ODL

Some practical issues include:

- ODL's marketability in the current knowledge commodity world;
- Putting in place formidable self-explanatory learning materials;
- Application of modern ICT facilities to enable learners access to instructional materials by self-effort;
- The application of contemporary evaluation techniques in ODL;
- Effective management of ODL;
- Provision of support service and counselling;
- Admissions process, record management and client services, etc.

There are quite a lot of practical issues in ODL in sub-Saharan Africa, typified by the Nigerian situation, apart from South Africa which appears to be advanced in running ODL. Some of these practical issues are highlighted below.

ODL's marketability in the current world's knowledge commodity: Knowledge commodity thrives well mostly under competitive market conditions. As such, whoever is providing knowledge must ensure that it is properly and appropriately packaged, advertized, with a total quality management approach to its operation; otherwise, such a knowledge provider will be out of market within a short time. This, according to Onuka (2005), is perhaps the reason why private institutions in Nigeria thrive much more than their public counterparts. If this is the case with other types of education providers, then ODL mode providers could expect to do much more, especially as not many people believe that the ODL model of higher education in Nigeria produces the same quality of graduates as its conventional mode counterpart. It must, therefore, be well managed and packaged towards a good proportion of the market, to keep afloat.

Management in ODL

Any reliable and dependable ODL must be in a position to administer its activities very well in order to ensure that its clientele receive the best of education away from the authors of its learning materials by making the materials simple to interact with and understood by the learner as much as possible, with very little or no assistance from anyone else apart from the materials. This is done through the training of course authors who should be remunerated to be assured of the

production of good, readable and marketable course materials that will attract more beneficiaries to the programme. It also entails that its programme managers are competent, skillful, client-friendly and capable of making its clients ready to assist in the selling of their programme in order to keep it afloat and attractive to prospective clients. Every distance learning programme must imbibe the spirit of evaluative management, possibly using some management evaluation model (Onuka 2010a) to constantly evaluate its programme management effectiveness for service delivery and client satisfaction, in the face of stiff competition from similar programmes. Imperatively, quite a lot of such programmes in the West African sub-region are sometimes ineffectively managed due to incompetence and lack of dedication on the part of those who are managing the programme. Programme management must be dynamic in line with technological changes.

Effective Management of ODL: Onuka (2010a) posits that effective management is an essential ingredient of a successful ODL the world over. Therefore, it is essential to take cognizance of those who possess the requisite management knowledge and skills before employing any into the management cadre of ODL programmes in sub-Saharan Africa. Onuka (2010b) further observes that, for management of ODL programmes to succeed, there must be constant evaluation of the management process. He then suggests what he terms 'strategic management evaluation model (SMEM)' which is based on the components that emerged from his definition of the term 'management' namely: forecasting, planning, budgeting, organizing, implementing/executing, monitoring/evaluation, feedback and programme/process revision for improvement. By implication, every aspect of the ODL management process be evaluated from time to time to minimize quality loss and optimize programme quality on a continuous basis; hence his proposition that all ODL programmes in Nigeria, and indeed all of Africa, should employ total quality management approach in their management because it is presently the most comprehensive management and takes cognizance of all components of the organization/institution – human and material.

Technologies in ODL Teacher Education

Essentially important is the fact that concrete and self-explanatory learning materials should be incorporated into the ODL teacher education programme. The various teacher education methodologies must be customized into the teacher education modules with vivid pictorial and motional illustrations, like the use of graphics and animation, in addition to other information and communication technologies like illustrative handsets such as blackberry, to make the instruction self-explanatory to the distance learner. This is because the trained teachers by both the distance learning and conventional modes are most likely to go into the same labour market and be employed in the same school system to teach children who will have to be assessed by uniform standards and undergo instructions under the

same syllabus. This portends that standards of imparting knowledge, attitude and skills must be the same for both modes. Presentation must however be different, so that the distance learners can at the end of the course be on the same pedestal with their counterparts trained through the conventional mode. The implication is that both textual and electronic materials must be more explicit and detailed for the distance learners with no teacher/lecturer at their side to assist them with the content and context of the text/learning materials. As pointed out earlier, ODL is technology and ICT-driven. Thus, the ODL teacher educator must be ICT-competent, if he would meet the needs of the modern ODL teacher education requirement in terms of instruction preparation and delivery, since it is the prepared learning materials that become the instructor with whom the learner frequently interacts, mostly without any form of external assistance. Thus, the technologically prepared instructional packages become representative of the instructor/facilitator in presenting the materials to the learners in such a way that they easily understand not only the content, concept and context but also the total import.

Evaluation in ODL

Evaluation in the ODL setting is two-fold: systemic/programme evaluation for, and of learning. In a workshop conducted by this author for the University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre in 2008 on best evaluation practices in ODL, it was agreed that 'evaluating the distance learner could be in terms of his/her suitability, achievement, aptitude or in terms of the impact s/he is making at his/her place of work as result of his/her participation in the distance learning program' (Onuka 2009a:30; Onuka 2010c). This is because the essence of distance learning programme is to effect positive change in the knowledge, behaviour, attitude and skills of the participants in a predetermined direction to ensure that they are to themselves and the society by making positively remarkable contributions to the development of the community through their workplaces. However, as pointed out earlier, evaluating any of the above-listed attributes of the learner is only part of the evaluation needed to keep the programme going. Hence, with regard to the learner, we have evaluation for learning, which is what continuous assessment when properly and regularly conducted would do, as it provides feedback both to the programme (including its operators) and the participants for continuous quality improvement. This implies that, at regular intervals, systemic or programme evaluation is done as opposed to evaluating the learner which is partial and less comprehensive in that it concentrates on only infinitesimal aspects of the system. It needs to be stressed that the principal objective of systemic/programme evaluation is comprehensive system or programme revision for quality improvement. Until our university distance learning programmes realise and embark on this important programme management element, they will continue

to struggle to survive. In summary, it is noteworthy that evaluation and management go hand-in-hand. We, therefore, cannot divorce one from the other.

Admission Requirements

In ODL, the admission requirements could be made more flexible than the requirements for the conventional mode of education which is time-bound and does not require experience as a pre-requisite. This is because experience is actually a form of learning and acquisition of knowledge, attitudes and skills. If the ODL mode is meant to open up access to higher education, there is need for some clear distinction in the admission requirements for entry into the conventional mode and the ODL mode without necessarily lowering standards as what one may not have in terms of paper qualification may be possessed in terms of experience and maturity. According to Ayeni and Atanda (2010), studies have revealed that there is no discrimination in admission requirements for ODL and conventional modes, which runs counter to the principle of the ODL mode.

Provision of Support and Counselling Services

One of the essential services provided by ODL is learner support service and counselling. An experienced senior officer who is versed in the functions of ODL programme is usually assigned to assist the learners with all necessary information that will culminate in the success of the individual learners and the programme itself. Provision of these services to the ODL learners is compulsory, as it is invariably the only means by which these learners can tap the services of guidance in their educational pursuit as they have very little or no contact at all with the instructors. The programme operators appointed to do this work must be computer literate and available most of the twenty-four hours of the day. They must be patient, able to explain things in the simplest ways possible and their cellphones open all twenty-four hours of the day to attend to the learners.

Provision for People with Special Needs in ODL Programme

In ODL programme, there is the need to make provision for those with special needs in the preparation of the learning materials. Oyewumi and Olapegba (2010) observe that the issue of consideration for people with special needs has not been taken seriously by programme operators in sub-Sahara Africa, particularly in the West African sub-region. They advocate that all persons, irrespective of their special state, should be educated and accommodated in the learning process for their individual and societal emancipation. They further assert that ODL provides access and opportunities to higher education for all, in all ramifications, irrespective of people's deficiencies. Therefore, if a particular segment of the populace is denied access to education through the mode, then its purpose wouldbe defeated, hence the need to take cognizance of these sets of persons in the

preparation and delivery of instructions through this mode becomes imperative. The deaf and dumb, the visually impaired (whether partially or totally), the intellectually slow persons, etc. must all be provided for. The dynamism of everything on this planet also affects the mode, since the only permanent thing is change. The mode must therefore factor in the change element for all its activities, irrespective of the state of the learner.

Collaboration as an Essential in ODL

Collaboration is a synergy, and it culminates in greater success. In fact, synergy is known as '2+2=5 and not 4', in order to emphasize its contribution and value to organizational/institutional achievements. So, ODL cannot be an exemption. There must be inter-ODL programme collaboration for greater access in sub-Saharan Africa. There are several ways in which this collaboration can take place: training, material development, technology, exchange of facilities, jointly- organized workshops and conferences, joint professional association, ICT facilities, internet centres and common interaction centres both within and across borders. Jhansi and Mishra (2010) highlight several ways through which university distance learning programmes in India could collaborate with others, using available synergies at their disposal for profitable distance learning productivity. Among the areas of collaboration are:

- Administration;
- Advertising;
- Certification;
- Curriculum Design;
- ICTs/Network;
- Evaluation;
- Library Support;
- Learners' Admission/Selection;
- Learner Support/Academic Counselling.

The programmes can cooperate in building mass ICT centres across the nation, whereby participants residing in each area, irrespective of which university programme they belong to, can make use of the facilities. They can jointly advertize for admission and possibly develop a common method of processing the admission, common library support services in various towns for use by programme participants across the nation and across borders of nations within the African continent. This trend will make their programmes and outputs international and thus globally recognized and accepted. The collaboration which could be in all or some areas of ODL can consequently enjoy synergistic benefits

by ways of cost minimization in the admission process, staff recruitment, etc., while avoiding duplication of efforts in library services provision, counselling support, as well as administrative and logistic support.

Joint ownership of certain facilities in centres across a nation or region would not compromise either quality or independence of each university ODL. Rather, it will bring about higher standards and result in interdependence in the utilization of facilities and equipment. thereby simultaneously increasing their profit margins and self-sustenance while minimizing the cost of mass coverage of higher education in the third world.

Power Supply

The issue of incessant power outage in Nigeria in particular and perhaps a few other countries in Africa can hardly encourage the ODL mode in promoting access to education on the continent. It is a known fact that irregular power supply or constant power outage is a hindrance to effective distance learning programmes or any educational programme for that matter (Onuka, Adewale and Ajayi 2007), and the teacher education component cannot be different.

Theoretical Explanation of Issues

In teacher education, there are various methods and theories of teaching or instruction delivery. Some are classroom-specific, and some are adaptable in the ODL situation, while some are not. According to Abdul-Haqq (1998), constructivism theory of teacher education presupposes a learning, meaning-making theory, which offers an explanation of the nature of knowledge and how humans acquire learning. Constructivism theory seems to perfectly fit into the distance learning mode of teacher education. The principle underlying constructivism is electronic media-compliant and can thus be easily utilized in ODL teacher education programme. Wikipedia views teacher education as 'continuing professional development'. This view makes teacher education amenable to the ODL mode of imparting knowledge, attitudes and skills to the learner. Taking cognizance of the constructivism theory of teacher education, it becomes imperative that the ODL mode of teacher education employs all the issues outlined above or takes account of them in implementing the ODL mode of teacher education with in-built quality assurance mechanisms. Boger-Mehall (undated) also supports constructivism as a good theory which promotes teacher education and concludes that the theory is fully supported by the cognitive flexibility theory which, as its name implies, promotes flexibility in teaching and teacher education, thus fitting very well into the ODL teacher education mode. The techniques in the ODL mode must be flexible to give people who otherwise would have been left out of the acquisition of education the requisite teacher

education through the mode, as ODL was primarily a second-chance opportunity, though in the Nigerian context, there is now a paradigm shift.

Quoting Sherry (1996), Junaid (2010) states that distance education technologies are increasingly expanding at an extremely fast rate. Nevertheless, the need to ensure that quality assurance measures are in place cannot be ignored, if high quality comparable to products of conventional mode were to be maintained. The University of Houston's Distance Learning, in its effort to assure quality, evolved database models for course design and course delivery that was to facilitate the highest level of quality teaching and learning environment (reported in Junaid 2010a). The models were meant to create discrete learning objects designed and developed by the faculty and delivered in various forms of technology (WebCT, video, audio, CD-Roms, PDFs, etc.). These objects were then managed within databases so created and customized, updated, revised and included in courses. This shows that collaboration is essential, especially in recognizing the fact that Africa still lags behind the other continents in technological development. Synergy in these areas would likely ensure greater level of success than if each of these programmes were run independently. Studies have revealed that effective leadership, management and supervision are supportive of learning performance (Onuka 2006; Akorede and Onuka 2008; Odinko 2010). The implication is that every issue discussed earlier is relevant in moving the ODL teacher education mode to the next level in our context, and must thus be incorporated into the daily operation of ODL mode of higher education provision. Teacher education theories presuppose that teaching includes the evaluation of the teacher, teaching/instruction and learning for generic systemic and learning improvement (Singh and Nath 2007; Onuka 2009b). Thus, one can conclude that teaching/learning without internally in-built evaluation system is like a body without a head and therefore an incomplete exercise, whose objective may be far from being achieved.

Various studies have been conducted on improving operations of the Nigerian university ODL system in its various aspects and the findings include: total quality management in an ODL outfit could improve its management and attract more participants (Onuka 2006); attitude of students and staff also affect their choice of distance learning programme (Onuka 2006); the way a programme is handled by its managers affects the way students perceive its challenges, prospects and viability (Onuka 2009c); contemporary evaluation mechanism can enhance the quality of its programme and products (Durowoju, Onuka and Onabamiro 2010); good client relationship and service delivery promotes enrolment into ODL programmes (Odinko 2010); many areas of improvement need to be attended to by ODL programmes in Nigeria if they are to continue to increase their enrolments (Junaid 2010b); there is need for provision in ODL courses for people with special needs, that is, those with challenges (Oyewumi and Olapegba

2010); age, sex and place contribute to the academic performance of the distance learner; and the learner needs to imbibe the spirit of time management for better performance (Onuka 2011). These reveal the level of importance that scholars attach to the role of ODL in promoting teacher education in particular and the ODL mode in general. The foregoing implies that the role of ODL in the twenty-first century in higher education provision is very clear and unambiguous. Since theories on teacher education provide the basis of mechanism for optimizing the teaching/learning encounter in order to accomplish the ideal situation for maximizing learning experiences and learning outcomes, ODL teacher education must de-emphasize teaching in favour of learning where the paradigm has shifted (Onuka 2009b). ODL teacher education methodologies must have evaluation for, and of learning in-built into it. Singh and Nath (2007) believe teaching and teaching methodology should be subject to constant evaluation for consistent improvement of learning. This can only be so in the ODL teacher education mode through evaluation of the textual and electronic learning materials, which are expected to be more explanatory, taking note of the fact that there are differential rates of learning by the distance learners.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined some of the principles involved in the ODL mode of teacher education and the practices in the developing countries, with specific mention of the Nigerian university ODL programmes. Though no specific reference to the National Open University of Nigeria is made in the study, its system of operation is not significantly different from what obtains in those that had been in existence before it, except that the mandate it has is to provide university education through the ODL mode only. The inference that can be made from what is on the ground, in terms of translating ODL theory or principles to practice, is that much still needs to be done to bring the practices up to global standards. This implies that the power sector of our economies in the developing countries needs to catch up with the rest of the world in terms of constant power supply(possibly 24 hours a day and seven days a week), if we are to operate our ODL at the optimal level. There must be deliberate efforts at paradigm shift from classroom type of ODL practices to virtual (electronic) forms of ODL teacher education provision. ODL teacher education practices are yet to conform to global standards in which animation, power and electronic methods of instruction presentations are the order of the day.

    Therefore, it becomes imperative that the ODL teacher education mode be well-packaged for marketability so that its clientele base will not only be sustained but also continuously improved. It must also be well-managed in all ramifications: the admission process, evaluation, its information base and its staffing, among others, must be managed in a manner that conforms to the total quality

management approach. Modern electronic teacher education technologies must be developed, applied and constantly improved in such a way that teacher education instructional delivery in the ODL mode will be self-explanatory and the ODL learner will understand contents of instruction and their intents and import without any need for serious assistance from anyone. Evaluation in every aspect of ODL should be seen as essential and expedient for programme improvement and sustainability. Learning support should be given to students so that they do not need to frequently visit the operational base of any particular ODL programme. Counselling support is also essential and expedient to the successful operation of ODL programmes. In like manner, any ODL programme craving for success and sustainability must give prominence to collaborative efforts with similar other programmes to enhance better efficiency in financial and other resource management through optimization of programme cost-benefits. An ODL must also, as part of its social responsibility, ensure that people with special needs are taken into consideration in its programme design, development and execution.

ODL programmes should develop synergy in the provision of power, library and internet services, for interactions among their programme participants in their various locations through the length and breadth of the third world for mass human resource production and operational cost reduction. Finally, efforts should be made to translate as much of the theories of ODL as possible into practice, to minimize waste of energy, time and funds on the part of participants with regard to travelling, while the technology of learning material production and distribution should be improved to ensure prompt production and delivery of materials to learners wherever they are. In this way, collaboration through the utilization of comparative advantage to enhance cost-minimization and benefit-maximization becomes imperative in the operations of ODL programmes in Africa and the entire developing economies of the world.

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