

## **Demystifying the Myths Surrounding the Success of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Mode in Higher Education**

By

Jane Iloanya 1

Faculty of Education, Botho University,  
Gaborone, Botswana

[Email-jane.iloanya@bothouniversity.ac.bw](mailto:jane.iloanya@bothouniversity.ac.bw)

Emmanuel Zhanda 2

Faculty of Business, Botho University,  
Francistown , Botswana

[Email-emmanuel.zhanda@bothouniversity.ac.bw](mailto:emmanuel.zhanda@bothouniversity.ac.bw)

**Abstract:** Open and Distance Learning is not a new phenomenon in contemporary higher education system. It is rare to find a country currently without an institution of higher learning offering courses and programmes on distance learning mode. This paper explores the issue of achieving desirable and intended learning outcomes of lessons delivered through ODL. A qualitative research approach was used to collect data from teachers in two institutions of higher learning in Gaborone, Botswana. Findings from the study indicate that, with proper measures put in place by the teachers, and all parties involved, ODL could be as effective as the conventional learning mode in achieving desirable and intended learning outcomes of lessons in higher education. The paper therefore concludes that, findings support the view that myths surrounding the success of open and distance learning mode in higher education can be demystified through the success of ODL as presented in this study.

**Keywords:** Learning outcomes; Higher Education; Achievement ; Success; Open and Distance Learning; Facilitator.

### **1. Introduction**

21<sup>st</sup> century Higher Education has witnessed a tremendous increase in the emergence of Open and Distance Learning (ODL). In the past years, ODL was not accorded recognition and appreciation as it is today. The perception was that, the conventional classroom and face-to-face type of teaching and learning, offered learners better quality education in both efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes. The general belief is that when students sit in class and teachers

teach, there is more interaction and monitoring of the learning activities. The conventional classroom teaching environment seems to be viewed by the majority as a more prestigious and quality driven system of learning. ODL as a form of learning did not receive much acceptance as the face- to- face system did and still do. Things are beginning to change and more people, especially adult learners are changing their perceptions of ODL.

Open and Distance Learning is a form of Education which combines the world of work with learning with mutual benefit (Pityana, 2004; Onwe, 2013). ODL as a flexible type of learning allows the learners to work and learn, while at the same time progressing at their work places. Here, students do not have to register as full-time learners, it allows learners who have jobs to keep their jobs and at the same time improve their level of education by learning from a distance. The idea of 'Open' in ODL, is that there is no rigidity in the circumstances surrounding learning as perceived by the learner. The learner is ready to adapt to the learning environment and make the best use of it. In other words, ODL takes care of individual differences that exist among learners. The idea of 'Distance' signifies that both the learner and the teacher engage in teaching and learning without necessarily having to meet face- to- face as often as is the case in the conventional teaching and learning mode. Distance education is a process whereby an individual or institution packages information in a learnable way with the view to helping another individual or group of individuals to learn at a distance (Honeyman & Miller, 1993; Biao, 2012). In open and distance learning, access to learning is created, but, the learning facilitators and the learners are separated by time, space and distance. Contemporary ODL makes use of available learning resources such as media, library, self-learning materials and technological devices to help learners gain access to information from a distance. According to Biao (2012), distance learning gives the learner a freedom of choice as how to make use of the information presented by the facilitator. It is the learner's responsibility to constructively handle the learning material and the resources to suit his circumstances and environment, without relying solely on the directives of the facilitator or the institution which originated the learning material.

Distance learning is used as a term to describe the student-centeredness of distance education. It deals with the use of print and electronic technologies to present individual lessons at a distance (Keegan, 1996; Yusuf, 2006). Distance education is flexible and open in terms of its admission requirements, that is, not as rigid as in conventional institutions, freedom in terms of study programmes, content and its didactic approach. It is intended to offer useful learning opportunity to recipients at a time and local environments convenient to them. In open and distance learning, contacts between the students and institutions are provided through interactive media. It may also be provided through some contact at a study centre.

This paper addresses the achievement of desirable learning outcomes in higher education through Open and Distance Learning. The study examines how learners can be taught through ODL to achieve success through the intended learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that learners have achieved, and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a lesson, course or programme. In other words, learning outcomes

identify what the learner will know and be able to do by the end of a lesson, course or programme. Can students learn and be able to demonstrate an understanding of what they have learnt in an ODL mode as they would do in a conventional face-to-face mode? Can teachers or facilitators in an ODL mode deliver their lessons and be able to see a demonstration of the competencies, skills and knowledge being manifested in their learners as it would be in a traditional face-to-face mode? These are pertinent issues that this paper tried to address by examining the achievement of desirable learning outcomes in the learners through ODL. The facilitators 'referred to in this study are the teachers who teach or facilitate learning through ODL. Distance learning in Botswana is not as old as it is in some other parts of the world, but, is gaining grounds in recent times. There are about ten tertiary institutions in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana, and only four offer classes on distance learning mode. Conventional mode of teaching takes the lion share in terms of the number of the students who register every year in tertiary institutions in Botswana. The Conventional mode of learning is perceived to be a more popular and common path to earn university degrees. In this paper, it is argued that, positive learning outcomes can be achieved through open and distance learning, as much as it can, through the conventional learning mode. The paper argues that success can be achieved through ODL, the myth surrounding the lack of students' achievements through ODL can be demystified as ODL has proven to be as effective as the conventional face to face mode of learning through numerous institutions offering courses and programmes under ODL mode. This does not mean that ODL mode has no hurdles to be crossed just like any other learning mode, the strengths outweigh the weaknesses .

### **Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research paper were to find out :

1. The perspectives of the facilitators towards achieving desirable learning outcomes through open and distance learning
2. The role of facilitators in ensuring that desirable learning outcomes are achieved through ODL
3. The challenges in ODL teaching and learning processes

The following questions were addressed in this study:

1. Can students learn effectively through ODL?
2. In what ways can different stakeholders contribute to the achievement of desirable learning outcomes through ODL?
3. What are the challenges in ODL teaching and learning?

### **2. The Need for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) at a Higher Education Level**

ODL plays a pivotal role in contemporary global education system. Both the well developed and developing countries of the globe are embracing ODL in their own unique ways. One might

ask why? This could be attributed to the fact that ODL provides more access to learners to experience the benefits of education, without going through the face-to-face mode of teaching and learning. At the higher education level, those who cannot afford to leave work and register as full-time students, can opt to obtain their degrees through ODL. This has made it possible for many to receive higher education qualifications in Africa and other parts of the world. Increased access through ODL in higher education institutions is one of the major benefits of ODL to both the learners, the institutions which operate as Open and Distance learning providers, and the society. The society enjoys the benefits of having well educated citizens who contribute to its development, because of the opportunity provided by ODL through increased access to higher education.

Higher education plays a significant role in the area of knowledge creation, also acquisition and dissemination. Learners are given the opportunity to gain skills, knowledge and competencies to make them efficient in their work places both in the present as well as in the future. Higher education provides learners with skills that can help them function well and contribute meaningfully towards the innovation and transformation of the society. At the tertiary level, education can facilitate growth in the production of much needed and skilled human resources, thereby leading to a substantial development and improvement of the individuals' socio-economic status. Contemporary trends demand that, higher education aim at equipping the individuals with essential skills and competences needed for their well being and that of the local community and country where the individuals reside. Inclusive growth entails the establishment of access, equity, quality and expansion of higher education to enable citizens of various countries, especially in Africa, afford a decent standard of living (Bordoloi,2018; Keosikile,2018). Distance learning gives opportunity to all who are ready to learn but, cannot afford the time and money to enrol for full time classes through the conventional mode, to be included in the learning and teaching processes at higher education level.

In addition to increased access provided by Open and Distance Learning, it is also an important approach used to address the issue of quality and equity in higher education. Even though some schools of thought question the credibility of the quality of education learners receive through ODL, ODL has a lot to offer in terms of quality teaching and learning. This can be achieved through the engagement of quality and well qualified facilitators of the learning processes, good quality learning materials and resources used in ODL. ODL can provide justice to millions of people in achieving the aim of higher education through increased access, equity, quality, innovation and research. With all the relevant facilities available to put ODL in the right platform, desirable outcomes can be achieved through ODL. In fact, ODL, can enhance the capabilities of the learners by disseminating much needed information and knowledge to help in empowering learners with essential skills and competences that will help in achieving positive outcomes in the teaching and learning processes. Dissemination of knowledge through

ODL can be more successful through using Technology in teaching and learning. Information technology via different social media platforms such as Face book, Blackboard, WIKIs, Twitters, WhatsApp and Smart phones help Teachers and Tutors facilitating lessons by ODL Mode to achieve success in the teaching and learning process (Mark, 2018).

The technological advances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has made ODL to be in a high demand among prospective and registered learners. The development of new technology can help learners get educated in any part of the world through ODL. Despite the problems experienced in some parts of the developing countries with internet connectivity, good internet access makes life easier for ODL learners, the facilitators and the institutions. The internet has become one of the most important tools for delivering distance education in contemporary times. Once learners have subscribed to or signed up to an internet provider, they can be allowed access to the educational and course materials provided through the internet. The Web makes it easier for learners to access and download the learning resources needed for their courses. Interestingly, the Web can provide information in different formats such as music, voice or special effects. All these are geared towards the attainment of desirable learning outcomes in ODL.

Many people have come to the realisation that acquisition of higher education helps in the improved standard of living; thus, the need for ODL becomes more pronounced. Those who are already employed, but, do not want to lose their jobs; study through ODL to continuously upgrade their skills while on the job. Through ODL mode, the entire system of higher education can be transformed and empowered in an unprecedented way. The effective delivery of ODL by the tutors will lead to the positive, social and economic transformation in the society as both learners and tutors work together towards the attainment of desirable learning outcomes. ODL empowers learners to take charge of their own learning, by giving them ownership of their learning at a minimal cost, and in that case, learners can be 'fed by own' against being 'fed by others'. The duty of the facilitators will be to provide all learning materials and academic guidance needed by the learners to enhance the achievement of desirable learning outcomes in the ODL Mode. The fact that ODL gives one the autonomy to adapt different approaches for development of course materials, learners' support services and delivery at one's pace makes it possible for both learners and facilitators of learning to work towards the attainment of positive and desirable learning outcomes.

Open and distance learning has expanded dramatically across the world, across the spectrum of subject areas and education levels. According to Chawinga and Zozie(2016), Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programmes are being regarded as one of the most practical ways that Universities across the world are using to increase access to higher education. Education is meant to be accessible to everyone irrespective of their socio-economic situation. In this vein, higher education shall be equally accessible to all based on capacity, by every appropriate means, and by the progressive availability of Online and Distance Learning. In Southern Africa, the very first institution of higher learning to offer ODL was University of South Africa(UNISA)

which was established in 1873, (Pityana, 2004) as a Correspondence Institution. Since its inception, UNISA has produced many degree holders who are contributing to the development of the society in various spheres of life.

ODL plays a pivotal role in the lives of learners, activities of governments and employers. It gives learners a wide range of opportunities, as they choose to learn at their own pace and in their own spaces. The main bone of contention is the general perception of ODL by the society. Do they perceive ODL to be effective and efficient in achieving desirable learning outcomes, as Conventional education is perceived to be by many? What is the role of the teacher in making sure that ODL has positive impacts on the lives of the learners? These of course, are some of the burning issues that this paper tries to address. In the context of this paper, a **desirable learning outcome** should describe what the teacher or facilitator of learning expects the students to be able to do at the end of the lesson and course. It is more about the learners' performance as the facilitator intends it to be. Ideally, each learning outcome of a course should align with the main goal of the course, the activities and the assessment procedures (Biggs, 2003). It should include all the skills and competencies that students are expected to cover at the end of the course or the module. With this in the mind of the facilitator, it would be more realistic to think about the learning outcomes when planning the teaching strategies and methods of assessments. This paper explores the effectiveness of ODL in the attainment of the desirable and intended learning outcomes of lessons and courses delivered through ODL. Facilitators in this case refer to the teachers of ODL who facilitate learning at a higher education level, to ensure that learning goals and outcomes can be achieved through ODL, as much as they can be achieved through the face-to-face learning mode.

### 3. General Concerns About Open and Distance Learning

The misconceptions about ODL hinge on the following:

- a) The idea that ODL is inferior to face-to-face education;
- b) ODL is mainly for people who have not made good grades in prior levels of education;
- c) ODL is a cheap alternative to face-to-face teaching;
- d) Available ODL programmes do not cater for diversity and learning interests of the learners
- e) It is not possible to learn practical skills in ODL programmes;
- f) Assumptions that 'good' education may be based on prior experiences and social myths, rather than grounded insight (SADC, p.27)

Potential ODL learners fear that, it is difficult to keep motivation level high; while studying at a distance;

There is the possibility that one might feel isolated during studies because one learns at one's own pace and space; and

The problem of balancing the demands of studies with other aspects of life is something to be considered too.

Current ODL Learners may be bothered about the negative social perceptions that upon completion of the ODL programmes, that personal and academic benefits are not guaranteed. There is the issue of struggling to balance the demands of study with other aspects of life and doing that successfully coupled with the fact that, some parents might feel that the available ODL programmes do not cater adequately for the learning needs of their children.

The current misconceptions surrounding the effectiveness and efficiency of ODL programmes affect the positive acceptance of the idea of ODL and the role it plays in sustainable development of any country. This paper therefore, delves into the possible ways that ODL can be used in achieving desirable learning outcomes among the learners. The major players here are the facilitators, that is, teachers of ODL and their role in making sure that desirable learning outcomes are achieved through ODL. It is believed that, the results of this study will make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on the effectiveness and efficiency of Open and Distance Learning, in achieving desirable learning outcomes, from the point of view of teachers. It will shed light on the role of the facilitators of learning towards the realisation of positive and desirable learning outcomes in ODL at the higher education level.

#### **4. Methodology**

A qualitative research approach was used for this study. Participants were purposefully selected from two institutions of higher learning used as case studies in this research. These institutions are the Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning and Botho University. These two institutions are among the few currently offering Online and Distance Learning Mode in Botswana. Qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this study because, it allows the researcher to carry out studies about people's experiences in their natural environment and humans serve as the focus of the research processes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Chilisa & Preece, 2005). The issue of achieving desirable learning outcomes through ODL could best be tackled through a qualitative research approach, which allows the researcher to interact with the participants in the study and draw out meanings from their experiences on the topic in question. Four teachers of ODL courses were purposefully selected from each of the two universities used for the study, bringing it to a total of eight facilitators. This number of participants was appropriate for the study because, in qualitative approach, a large sample population is not necessarily ideal (McLaughlin, 2004; Creswell 2014). Students were not included at this point in this study. This measure was taken to make the sampling procedure manageable within the limited time given for the study. Besides, the essence of the study was to find out from the perspectives of the facilitators of learning, their experiences of running the ODL programmes and if desirable learning outcomes could be achieved through ODL.

#### **5. Findings and Discussions**

The findings of the research on achievement of desirable learning outcomes through Open and Distance Learning in Higher Education teaching and learning, were based on the three

research questions used for the study. As is the case with qualitative studies, themes emerged from the study based on the interview questions which were used to elicit information from teachers of ODL in the two institutions of higher learning used for the study. The interview questions spoke directly to the research objectives and research questions.

Research Question 1, examined the issue of students learning effectively through ODL. Facilitators interviewed in both institutions used for the study alluded to the fact that, ODL can be effectively used to achieve the intended and desirable learning outcomes of a course. Reasons given for this assertion include the fact that, students who study through ODL are given well-structured study materials which are not only detailed for students to understand, but, are also very interactive. This mode of study makes students to be more independent because, they are given the opportunity to study on their own, without over reliance on the teacher /facilitator. Singh & Paliwal(2012), reiterate that, Open and Distance learning offers learners the opportunity to study anywhere and at any time . Learners are eager to find things out themselves and are driven by the desire to achieve academic excellence as much as their counter parts in the Conventional Learning Mode do or even better than them. In the bid to find things out by themselves, the learners are equipped with critical and problem-solving skills which are needed in the field of work. One of the facilitators that was interviewed states: "In ODL, the lecturers facilitate, and the actual commitment of the learners makes success more feasible". ODL learners are in the position to defend themselves in any situation because, they apply the spirit of resilience and determination to succeed. These skills are required of graduates at a higher education level. The learner support services used by ODL institutions contribute a lot to the achievement of desirable learning outcomes through ODL. Through learner support services, learners are assigned tutors who support them by connecting them to the institutions. They are given professional guidance, counselling officers or academic advisers who advise and give emotional /social guidance. All efforts are geared towards making it possible for desirable learning outcomes to be achieved, thereby preventing high dropout rates which is one of the problems facing ODL Institutions (Goswani,2013; Tekeli &Gunsoy,2014; Singh &Agawari;2013).

Research question 2, discussed the role of different stakeholders in ensuring the realisation of desirable learning outcomes through ODL. The stakeholders discussed here are mainly the facilitators of learning and the institutions. Teachers that were interviewed in both institutions revealed that, ODL facilitators need the drive, passion and interest to be able to lead the learners towards the achievement of desirable learning outcomes in ODL lessons and courses. The students study on distance mode, in their own space and pace. They need teachers who care about them and in making sure that learning outcomes are achieved. One of the interviewees stated that "The ODL Teacher must be accountable and responsible for any action taken with regards to students' effective learning". Learning outcomes must be clearly defined and proper procedures followed to ensure the achievement of desirable learning outcomes. There must be a strong commitment on the part of the teacher, if desirable learning outcomes



are to be achieved through ODL in higher education. The teachers must ensure that the materials they develop for ODL are interactive and well-structured. The materials should be presented in the language that is clear and simple for the learners to understand since the learners do not see the facilitators as often as their counterparts in the conventional classrooms do. This will therefore entail more commitment and passion from the teacher to make sure that the learners engage with study materials and learn effectively in order to achieve desirable learning outcomes. Teachers can come up with remedial classes for learners who need help. The usefulness of some contact hours, especially with practical-oriented courses, cannot be ignored.

ODL institutions have a role to play in ensuring that desirable learning outcomes are achieved through ODL. Institutions must be supportive in any way they could to ensure the success of ODL. Modern day ODL involves the use of technology which is expensive to run. It places an immense responsibility on the institutions to ensure that resources are in place to facilitate the smooth running of ODL. Institutions should come up with policies to help learners. The issue of inclusive education through ODL should not be overlooked. The use of Information technology for instruction and the development of curriculum which caters for all aspects of teaching and learning should be properly looked into, if the achievement of desirable learning outcomes through ODL is to be realised. Institutions should have virtual laboratories to help students learn well. This involves having simulations to help students learn effectively. All necessary measures should be put in place for the institutions to be able to measure their own achievements in the realisation of the desirable learning outcomes of the students through ODL.

Research question 3 explored the challenges of ODL Teaching and Learning processes. The interviewees from both institutions used in the study indicated that ODL has some challenges which affect the effectiveness and efficiency of its smooth running, and the realisation of desirable learning outcomes. The challenges include:

- a) High drop- out rate among ODL Learners. They register with high hopes and optimism. Along the line, they have setbacks such as; family problems, commitments at work and financial problems.
- b) Some learners who passed through the conventional mode before registering for ODL mode, find it difficult to meet the demands of ODL. ODL requires a lot of commitment, dedication, independent work and resilience. Unfortunately, some learners cannot meet up with these demands of ODL. They get frustrated and it affects the entire system, including the achievement of desirable learning outcomes.
- c) The effective use of Technology is yet another hiccup. Some learners have little or no knowledge of how to apply the use of modern technology in their learning process. Worse still, some are technophobic. There is little or no drive on the part of some students to engage positively with the learning resources to help them succeed in ODL. This is perhaps one of the most burning issues as far as effective implementation of ODL is concerned. The

moves towards non-traditional forms of course delivery for students, have brought to the fore, more emphasis on pedagogical techniques within a technology enhanced arena and call for a well-prepared Staff Development Programme to be established to offer support towards the enhancement of ODL (Ellis&Phelps,2000).

- d) ICT has modest impact on teaching and learning in some tertiary institutions in Africa. Unfortunately, some universities seemingly offer little or no training regarding this crucial aspect of ODL teaching and learning. This has left some academic staff ill equipped to teach in ODL as effectively as one expects them to do. This situation could be arrested if academic staff development opportunities are offered at various levels of expertise, most especially for those academics who have not been previously involved with ODL teaching and learning initiatives (Sandberg, 2001; Shannon & Doube, 2004; Cloete, 2017).

### **Recommendations**

- a) The challenges described above are not insurmountable. All stakeholders, such as students, teachers, institutions and the society could come together and work out something positive to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in running ODL programmes geared towards the realisation of desirable learning outcomes. Institutions for instance, should have policies drafted to guide the proper facilitation of ODL courses/ modules.
- b) There should be a sense of ownership, accountability and intense passion from the facilitators of ODL.
- c) The institutions should have well established communication and change management systems which would help to promote the smooth running of ODL modules.

### **6. Conclusions**

This study examined the issue of achieving desirable and intended learning outcomes in Higher Education through Open and Distance Learning from facilitators' perspectives. Two institutions of higher learning in Botswana, which use Open and Distance learning mode, were used as case studies. Findings from the study indicated that, it is very possible to achieve desirable and intended learning outcomes in higher education through ODL. The study revealed that, ODL learners are given well-structured study materials which help them learn at their own time and in their own space; study materials are interactive; students are independent learners and that helps improve their problem solving and critical thinking skills. Although there are challenges facing the proper and effective facilitation of ODL teaching and learning processes, different stakeholders, such as students, teachers, institutions and the society can work together to find ways of making ODL more effective and efficient. ODL has come to stay and it is packed with a lot of advantages that outweigh the challenges. One can conclude by stressing that findings from the study could help demystify the myths surrounding the success of open and distance learning mode in higher education.

### Acknowledgements

We appreciate our open and distance learners both past and current for making us develop interest in facilitating and teaching through open and distance learning.

### Future Research Direction

This study focused on the achieving of desirable learning outcomes through open and distance learning mode in higher education . Two institutions of higher learning in Gaborone Botswana which use open and distance learning modes were used as case studies. The study focused on the perspectives of the facilitators of open and distance learning in these institutions. Perhaps, future studies could be carried out focussing on the perspectives of the learners.

### References

- Aderinoye,R & Ojokheta, K (2004). Open Distance Education as a Mechanism For Sustainable Development: Reflections on the Nigerian Experience. *The International Review of Research In Open and Distributed Learning*,5 (1).
- Biao ,I (2012). Open and Distance Learning : Achievements and Challenges in a developing Sub-Educational Sector In Africa. Available from: <http://www.intechopen.com/books/>.
- Biggs, J.B (2003). Teaching for quality learning at University . Buckingham. *The Open University Press*.
- Bordoloi,R(2018) Transforming and empowering higher education through Open and Distance Learning in India. *Asian Association of Open Universities Journal* , Vol.13 (1) Available <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAOUJ-11>
- Chawinga,W.D& Zozie ,P.A(2016) Increasing Access to Higher Education Through Open and Distance Learning :Empirical Findings from Mzuzu University of Malawi. *International review of research in open and distributed learning*. Available :<http://dx.doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v17i4.2409>
- Chilisa,B & Preece , J.(2005). *Research Methods for Adult Learners In Africa*. Cape, CTP book printers.
- Cloete,B.A(2017)Distance and E-Learning at Botho University: Perspectives of Students and Teachers. *Unpublished Master's Dissertation submitted to Botho University, Botswana*.
- Creswell, J.W.(2014). *Research design . qualitative ,quantitative and mixed-methods approaches* .4<sup>th</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks.California:SAGE Publications.
- Ellis ,A. & Phelps,R.(2000). Staff Development for Online Delivery:A Collaborative Team Based Action Learning Model.*Australian Journal of Educational Technology(AJET)*, 16(1),26-44
- Goswami,A.(2013). Role of Distance Education and Open Learning in Higher Education. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention* VOL2 (9)
- Honeyman ,G &Miller ,I(1993) " .*Agricultural distance education : A valid alternative for higher education?* " Proceedings of the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual National Agricultural Education Research Meeting:6773

- Keegan,D.(1996). Foundations of Distance Education(3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) London: Routledge
- Keosikile ,M.(2018).Usage of E-Learning among private tertiary students: A case study of Botho University. Unpublished Master's Dissertation submitted to Botho University , Botswana.
- Kolb,D.A.(1984). Experiential Learning: Experience as a Source of Learning and Developoment. Englewood Cliffs,NJ: Prentice-Hall
- Lincoln, Y& Guba, E (1985) Naturalistic inquiry, Beverly Hills , C.A: Sage publications.Inc.
- Mark,M(2018). Innovative practices in technology and the improvement of learning and teaching in higher education :A case for private institutions .Unpublished Master's Dissertation submitted to Botho University , Botswana.
- McLaughlin, T. (2004) . Philosophy and educational policy: possibilities , tensions and tasks. *.Journal of Educational policy,15 (4) 441-457.*
- Onwe , J.O.(2013) Policies and Practice of Open and Distance Learning Models in the Sub-Saharan African countries: A Literature Survey . *American International Journal of Contemporary Research, 3(8).*
- Otto, P(2010) " *Concepts and Models of Open and Distance Learning*" Pedagogical Models In Distance Education Education.<http://www.unioldergurg.de>.
- Perraton,H (1993) " National developments and international cooperation in distance in Commonwealth Africa" .*Distance Education: New Perspectives , New York, Routledge.*
- Pityana, N.B(2004) Open Distance Learning In Africa: Access, Quality , Success. *Retrieved from [www.unisa.ac.za/contents/principle/docs/AMC%20ODL.doc](http://www.unisa.ac.za/contents/principle/docs/AMC%20ODL.doc)*
- Sandberg,J., Christopher ,N. and Emans B.(2001).Tutor Training: a Systematic Investigation of Tutor Requirements and an Evaluation of a Training. *British Journal of Educational Technology,32(1), 69-90.*
- Shannon,S. & Doube,L.(2004). Valuing and Using Web Supported Teaching. A Staff Development Role in Closing the Gaps. *Australian Journal of Educational Technology, 20(1)114-136.*
- Singh ,U.P.& Agarwal ,A.(2013) Role of Open and Distance Learning systems in education and rehabilitation of children with some special needs. *Scholarly Journal for interdisciplinary studies. Vol 1(iv).*
- Singh ,G.&Paliwal ,D(2012).Higher education to Anyone ,Anytime Through Open and Distance Learning in India.Vol 1(1).  
International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development.
- Tekeli, S. &Gunsoy ,G.(2014). The importance of the Open and Distance Education in terms of the women's for professional field and women employment . *International Journal of Social Sciences Vol.5 (6)*
- Wagenaar,R (2008) Learning Outcomes : A fair Way to Measure Performance in Higher Education: The Tuning Approach. *Accessed from : [www.org.nl/let/tuninggen](http://www.org.nl/let/tuninggen).*
- Yusuf,M.O.(2006). Problems and Prospects of Open and Distance Education in Nigeria. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education (TOJDE) (1)-(2)*