STUDY GUIDE
ON
STUDENT SUPPORT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

M.A.(EDUCATION)/M.ED.

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DEPARTMENT OF DISTANCE
AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
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COURSE TEAM

Chairman Dr. Muhammad Rashid
Dean, Faculty of Education, AIOU, Islamabad.

Members

1. Professor Laeeq Ahmed Khan,
Consultant, Prime Minister's
Literacy Commission, Islamabad.

2. Dr. Prof. Mrs. Munawar Mirza.
Director/Dean (Education), I.E.R.
Punjab University, Lahore.

3. Dr. S.M. Anwar Hussain.
Director, Preston University
Peshawar.

4. Dr. Zulkaif Ahmed.
Pedagogue Air University, Islamabad.

5. Mr. Mahmood Hussain Awan.
Incharge, Department of Special Education
AIOU, Islamabad.

6. Mr. Muhammad Javed Iqbal.
Assistant Professor,
Distance & Non-Formal Education Deptt:
AIOU, Islamabad.

7. Dr. Nabi Bux Jumani
Assistant Professor
Distance & Non-Formal Education Deptt:
AIOU, Islamabad.

8. Mrs. Amtul Hafiz
Lecturer
Distance & Non-Formal Education Deptt:
AIOU, Islamabad

-	Course Development Coordinator		Dr. Muhammad Rashid
-	Editor		Mr. Salman Masood Mrs. Shahida Shah Mr. Umar Farooq
-	Reviewer	1st Edition 2nd Edition	Dr. M. Aslam Asghar. Dr. Nabi Bux Jumani
-	Course Coordinator		Dr. Muhammad Rashid

FOREWORD

Whenever students undergo a transition in education, from one level or sector to another or from classroom-based to distance education, there is generally a need for the acquisition or development of new study skills. In distance education it is usual for study skills to be discussed in terms of coping with problems associated with geographical isolation from fellow students and from educational resources. Often the distant student is an adult who may be returning to study after a break of a new (or many) years. It is generally felt that students entering distance education may have uncertainties about: (i) their own abilities as learners; (ii)the demands of studying at a distance; and (iii) the demands of the subject at their chosen level of study.

Distance educators not only stress the importance of study skills for distance learning, but also aim to provide detailed instructions in such skills, as poor study skills are certainly a handicap for a distant learner. However, to blame poor study skills for all that goes wrong in learning may not be reasonable. Various learner factors, such as different approaches to learning, differing levels of sophistication as learners and differing reactions to instructional materials, all contribute to the quality and degree of learning. Based on these insights, it has been suggested that apart from some reasonable training in study skills, distance learners need to be made aware of the process of learning, the nature and purpose of various learning tasks, flexible and suitable study strategies, and also their own motivations and abilities, in relation to learning materials. Such awareness is bound to help the process of learning.

Many distance learners have problems in mastering the skills needed by an independent learner. As there is no timetable, and no collective discipline, such students need careful planning of their work and are reliant on tutorial advice in achieving the necessary perspective. Many complain that they are surrounded by activities which take preference to study and often find themselves at a loss because they do not know how long or how short their answer ought to be or which topics of the course to emphasise. Such issues can become acute when a student finds that he does not know of the standards to prepare for the examination. It is the tutor's role to help his learners to handle their studies and prepare for examinations. Without this kind of help from a tutor, it is hard for students to measure their progress. Many would be discouraged or stuck whenever they could not resolve the problems they encountered. The tutor's role in personalizing the system and in helping students

avoid or overcome difficulties is thus essential to the process. The process by which the distance tutor actually assists individual students can be referred to as counselling.

I congratulate Dr. Muhammad Rashid, Dean, Faculty of Education and Course Coordinator for completing the study guide to be offered on time. Any suggestions/comments for improvement of the course will be welcome.

(Dr. Anwar Hussain Siddiqui)
Vice-chancellor
September, 1998

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The Allama Iqbal Open University and the author is grateful to all scholars within or outside Pakistan and the publishers of various reports and journals whose works have been used as reference materials in this course. The quotations used from their works are gratefully acknowledged. It may be pointed out for general information of all whose work has been quoted in the course that the Allama Iqbal Open University is a non-commercial educational institution which provides educational facilities to under-privileged remote rural areas through its distance education method.

I am grateful to Dr. Anwar Hussain Siddiqui, Vice-Chanceller, Allama Iqbal Open University for providing facilities and encouragement for writing the study guide.

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(DR. MUHAMMAD RASHID)
DEAN/COURSE COORDINATOR

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

1. Explain the concept of student support in distance education;
2. Discuss the significance of students support in distance education;
3. Evaluate the scope of student support in distance education.
4. Discuss the role and importance of tutorial in distance education;
5. Describe in writing the role of workshops in student support services;
6. Specify the role of study centres and regional offices in student support services;
7. Identify the role of media support in student support services;
8. Evaluate the role of library services in distance education;
9. Evaluate the effectiveness of student support services in distance education in Pakistan.
10. Explain the role of tutor in student support;
11. Differentiate between tutoring and teaching;
12. Specify the role of tutor as a face to face teacher;
13. Identify the functions of tutor as counsellor;
14. Evaluate the role of tutor as assignment marker;
15. Analyse various responsibilities as correspondence teacher;
16. Appreciate the link of tutor between students and institution;
17. Analyse criteria for tutor appointment.
18. Explain the concept of counselling;

19. Discuss the need for counselling in student support;

21. Identify the techniques of counselling;

22. Specify counselling services particularly;

    a) centrally and locally based
    b) types of counselling services
    c) media of counselling

23. Evaluate the role of counselling in student support services;

24. Identify the individual learning styles;

25. Discuss the teaching of study skills;

26. Describe the conducting of tutorials in the system of distance education;

27. Evaluate the two way communication facility in the system of distance education;

28. Explain the advantages of group meetings;

29. Analyse the role of interactive activities in distance education;

30. Identify the problems of distance learners;

31. Discuss the problems relating to study techniques and learning;

32. Compare and contrast the problems of students vs tutors;

33. State the personal problems of distance learners;

34. Evaluate students needs in distance education;

35. Specify the role of study centres in imparting education to the distance learners;

36. Discuss the significance of tutoring by telephone and tele-tutoring;

39. Explain the management of student support staff;

40. Explain the concept of dropout;

41. Specify the types of distance learners;

42. Analyse the causes of dropout;

43. Suggest possible solutions to the problem of drop-out in distance education;

44. Classify the media used in student support services with their characteristics;

45. Specify the potential role of radio in student support services;

46. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the use of radio and television in distance education;

47. Appreciate the role and three broad types of characteristics of TV;

48. Identify the role of TV in particular mental skills;

49. Discuss the role of non-broadcast media in student support services;

50. Evaluate the effectiveness of the use of non-print media in distance education particularly in student support;

51. Discuss the problems involved in student support in distance education;

52. Explain the problems of punctuality of students and tutors in study centre;

53. Describe the significance of regional offices and study centres;

54. Appreciate the training of tutor in student support system;

55. Evaluate the usefulness of monitoring and briefing of tutors;

56. suggest some possible solutions to the problems involved in student support system in distance education;

CONTENTS

		Page No
UNIT-1	**INTRODUCTION OF STUDENT SUPPORT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION**	**1**
1.1	Introduction	3
1.2	Objectives	4
1.3	The Concept of Student Support	4
1.4	Significance of Student Support	5
1.5	The Scope of Student Support	6
1.6	Activities	8
1.7	Exercise	9
1.8	Bibliography	10
UNIT-2	**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**	**11**
2.1	Introduction	13
2.2	Objectives	14
2.3	Tutorials	15
2.4	Workshops	16
2.5	Study Centres	17
2.6	Regional Offices	18
2.7	Media Support	21
2.8	Library Services	22
2.9	Activities	25
2.10	Exercise	26
2.11	Bibliography	27
UNIT-3	**THE ROLE OF TUTOR IN STUDENT SUPPORT**	**29**
3.1	Introduction	31
3.2	Objectives	33
3.3	Difference between Tutoring and Teaching	34
3.4	Tutor as Face to Face Teacher	36
3.5	Tutor as Counsellor	37

3.6	Tutor as Assignment Marker	39
3.7	Tutor as Correspondence Teacher	42
3.8	Tutor as a Link Between the Students and the Institution	44
3.9	Criteria for Tutor	45
3.10	Activities	46
3.11	Exercise	47
3.12	Bibliography	48
UNIT-4	**COUNSELLING AS STUDENT SUPPORT**	49
4.1	Introduction	51
4.2	Objectives	52
4.3	The Concept of Counselling	52
4.4	The Need for Counselling	54
4.5	Techniques of Counselling	55
4.6	Counselling Services	58
	4.6.1 Centrally and Local Based Counselling	62
	4.6.2 Types of Services	63
	4.6.3 Media of Counselling	64
4.7	Activity	65
4.8	Exercise	65
4.9	Bibliography	67
UNIT-5	**TECHNIQUES OF STUDENT SUPPORT**	69
5.1	Introduction	71
5.2	Objectives	72
5.3	Identifying Individual Learning Styles	72
	5.3.1 Teaching of Study Skills	77
	5.3.2 Conduct of Tutorials	84
	5.3.3 Two-way Communication Facility	87
	5.3.4 Group Discussion	90
	5.3.5 Interactive Activities	92
5.4	Activities	96
5.5	Exercise	97
5.6	Bibliography	99
UNIT-6	**SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING**	101
6.1	Introduction	103
6.2	Objectives	103

6.3	Identifying the Problems of Distance Learner	104
	6.3.1 Problems relating to Study Techniques and Learning Difficulties	107
	6.3.2 Student VS Tutor Problems	111
	6.3.3 Personal Problems	113
	6.3.4 Student Needs	114
	6.3.5 The Role of Study Centres	115
	6.3.6 Tutoring by Telephone	116
	6.3.7 Teleconferencing	118
	6.3.8 The Management of Student Support Staff	123
6.4	Activities	124
6.5	Exercise	125
6.6	Bibliography	126
UNIT-7	**DROP-OUT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION**	**127**
7.1	Introduction	129
7.2	Objectives	129
7.3	Concept of Drop Out	129
7.4	Types of Distance Learners	130
	7.4.1 Good Distance Learners	130
	7.4.2 Non-Starters	131
	7.4.3 Mid-Course Drop Out	132
7.5	Causes of Drop Out	133
	7.5.1 Learner Based Factors	133
	7.5.2 Institutional Based Factors	134
	7.5.3 System Based Factors	134
	7.5.3.1 Shortage of Time	135
	7.5.3.2 Assignment and Assessment	135
	7.5.3.3 Support for Study	135
	7.5.3.4 Difficulty Level of Study Units	136
7.6	Solution to Problems	138
	7.6.1 Educational Objectives	138
	7.6.2 Educational Material	138
	7.6.3 Educational Services	139
	7.6.4 Student Services	140
	7.6.5 Student Success and Satisfaction	140
	7.6.6 Qualification of the Faculty and Administration	140
	7.6.7 Admission Practices	140
	7.6.8 Advertisement and Promotion	141

		7.6.9 Financial Responsibility	141
		7.6.10 Tuition Fee Policies	141
		7.6.11 Plant and Equipments	141
		7.6.12 Research and Evaluation Centre	142
	7.7	Activities	143
	7.8	Exercise	143
	7.9	Bibliography	145
UNIT-8		**THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN STUDENT SUPPORT**	**147**
	8.1	Introduction	149
	8.2	Objectives	150
	8.3	Classification of Media	150
	8.4	Role of Radio	152
	8.5	Role of Television	154
	8.6	Role of Non-broadcast Media	156
	8.7	Non-print Media in Student Support	158
	8.8	Activities	160
	8.9	Exercise	161
	8.10	Bibliography	162
UNIT-9		**PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN STUDENT SUPPORT**	**163**
	9.1	Introduction	165
	9.2	Objectives	169
	9.3	Punctuality of Students	170
	9.4	Efficiency and Punctuality of Tutors	170
	9.5	Communication Problems	172
		9.5.1 Constraints in the use of Communication	172

	9.5.2 Suggestions for Overcoming Constraints in the use of New Technology in Distance Education	173
9.6	Provision of Regional Offices	174
9.7	Availability of Study Materials	177
9.8	Availability of Tutors	178
9.9	Tutor Briefing	178
9.10	Monitoring of Tutoring	178
9.11	Coordination Between the Tutor and the Course-Coordinator	179
9.12	Financial constraints	179
9.13	Evaluation	183
9.14	Activities	183
9.15	Exercise	184
9.16	Bibliography	185

UNIT NO.1

INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT SUPPORT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

1.1 DISCUSSION

Distance Education is widely accepted in the developing countries. New institutions are being created whose role responsibility is providing education through distance education. Institutions which previously took no interest in this form of education are entering the field. Those which are recognised providers are seeking to increase their share of the market. Distance education materials in print are being supplemented and complemented by audio and video programmes. Even telephone tutorials are being used. Counselling and advising procedures are being extended and refined. Regional networks of study centres are being established.

According to Peters, (1973) some people have seen distance education as an industrialised form of teaching arising out of new techniques perfected in the twentieth century. Others, while not denying the importance of new technologies have seen in teaching at a distance a remedy for the rapidly escalating costs of conventional teaching, a labour intensive enterprise for which distance teaching offers a potentially cost effective alternative. The possibility of supplementing or even replacing conventional teaching by distance education has had wide appeal.

Despite technological changes, the basis of distance education has always been the printed word. The twentieth century, however, has been used new technologies in some instances quite extensively. Both radio and television open circuit broadcasts have been supplemented by audio and video replay devices which reduce time and place restrictions and have often proved useful adjuncts to the printed word. The telephone in some developing countries added the possibility of immediate interaction that had been lacking in distance education. In some instances the telephone has been developed extensively as a teaching medium (Turok, 1977) but its cost and technological development to date have stood in the way of more extensive use.

Referring to the Open University system, Sewart (1975) notes that the conventional tutorial has been replaced by the use of television, radio and written correspondence; directed reading has been replaced by specially designed course units; and the study centre has become a base for student interaction. There is another significant, and more important change in distance education, which should be pointed out here.

The increasing emphasis on the student learning at a distance, rather than the institution teaching at a distance, individual support services have become an

integral part of an effective distance education system.

Effort has been made in this unit to highlight the student support system, its scope and process and some experiences of student support system.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, you should be able to:

1. explain the concept of student support in distance education;
2. discuss the significance of students support in distance education;
3. evaluation the scope of student support in distance education.

1.3 THE CONCEPT OF STUDENT SUPPORT

The distance learner is generally separated from the supporting organisation and in this way suffers a lot as compare to a formal system student. He fails to get immediate feedback from the teachers, lacks access to a good library to supplement his studies and further, he does not get opportunities to interact and meet his fellow students and the staff of his supporting organisation. The disadvantage of immediate feedback can be compensated to some extent by (a) two-way communication in the form of written correspondence associated with submission of assignments; and (b) face-to-face teaching, tutoring and discussion during the personal contact programmes. But all these are not sufficient for a distance learner as these may not be coming at a time of their need. Similarly, the lack of library facilities and lack of interaction with fellow students remains unsatisfied. The distance teaching organisations have to struggle hard to eliminate such disadvantages faced by a distance learner. The system of study centres accompanied with support services like library tutoring/counselling and other media facilities has become a widely recognised as a major input in supporting distance study.

It is an admitted fact that self instructional materials help a vast majority of distance learners to work through their chosen courses successfully, but even then a considerable number of learners find it difficult to fully comprehend the correspondence distance materials. Such learners require additional help to achieve what they want to. Whatever the way and mean is used to provide

additional help to distance learner will be called as "support service". It refers to the help which a distance learner receives alongwith the learning materials. It has many forms i.e. face-to-face teaching, computer-mediated communication, counselling, marking, self-help, workshops, telephone tutorials, tutorial support, etc., which may or may not be organised, provided by distance teachers, counsellors, trainers, instructors, supervisors, colleagues, other learners and families.

For detail, please study the below referred material:

Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.1-10	1-1

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDENT SUPPORT

With increasing awareness among people, the demand for education at all levels, particularly in the developing countries, is increasing and no one can deny the people their legitimate right to education. Distance education, is considered to only system that will be able to face this challenge.

The concept of Distance Education is comparatively a recent development in number of developing countries. The main aim of this system of education is to provide the opportunity for higher education to large sections of people, particularly to those who live in rural areas and have no educational opportunities in others who wish to upgrade their qualifications. The attraction of distance education lies in the potential economics-of-scale that could be realised. Distance education is not only a less expensive way of solving educational problems, but in most cases, it is considerably more effective.

The success of distance education system depends on the effectiveness of its student support services. The organisational set up of distance education system is entirely different from that of a traditional system of education. In conventional system, student is bound to strictly follow the institute's schedule and programmes. He can not isolate himself from tutor and his fellows. Attendance is compulsory, selection of optional papers is restricted and he has to listen to the lecturers. But, on the other hand, in distance education system, a learner is more independent in his studies. In the distance education system, the

organisation has to adopt an integrated media approach, in the form of print, broadcasting and audio-video materials supported by contact-cum-counselling classes, assignments, etc in order to supplement learning. Print media plays a very significant role and is compulsory and more effective. The other facilities provided are complementary.

The rationale of student support services is to provide educational help to students. No one can deny the importance and pivotal role of student support services in the system of distance education as it will help in the successful completion of the course. The learning process from a distance requires the student to expose himself to a wide range of unfamiliar systems. Their problems may range from the simple non-receipt of course material or assignments to the best use of the multi-media mix which is offered by the instruction. Students need help at every stage i.e. in selecting of optionals, how to learn from distance teaching, etc.

For detail study, please read the book mentioned below:

Holmberg, Borge (1986)	Growth and Structure of Distance Education, London, Croom Helm, PP.75-81.	1-2

1.5 THE SCOPE OF STUDENT SUPPORT

A rapid expansion of distance Education and an increase in the complexity of distance education system has been seen during the last decade. In the different Open Universities, one of the largest and most recent entrants to this field, there has been added to the traditional correspondence course communication through broadcasting via radio and television. The Open University system thus serves the specific subject requirements of the mass of its students through centrally produced correspondence materials and broadcasts. It then indivisualises. This service through correspondence contact and face-to-face instruction by tutor.

Doubtless to say that student support begins with a student-centred approach to distance education. The needs of the students are inextricably linked with every phase of the process. They are presented in:

i) the basic assumptions of definitions of distance education;

ii) the development of distance education programmes;

iii) instruction design;

iv) choice of media;

v) administrative systems; and

vi) evaluation.

The student support also includes tuition and guidance of students throughout their course of study, and the provision of services which ensure the most effective learning experiences for students.

While discussing the student support and the open university, David Sewart (1984) commented:

> "It is no coincidence that the growth of research into the support needs of distance education students parallels the development of the UKOU. With its charter to provide opportunities for those who could not gain entry to traditional tertiary education, the open university began with a student-centred view. It was not, at first, concerned to produce cost. Effective courses for large numbers of students, but rather, to assist those adults with little previous formal education to succeed at tertiary distance learning system of the UKOU has proved its success both in retaining students and in being cost-effective. The success of UKOU has led to an acceptance and legitimation of support services integrated with the provision of study materials.

For further details to comprehend, please read the below referred material.

Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support in Distance Education. Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.10-13	1-3

1.6 ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the concept of student support with any educationist of your area and prepare a report of the outcome of your discussion.

2. Write down atleast three points about the need of student support in distance education.

_____

_____

_____

3. Write down at the space provided for, your own definition of student support in distance education.

_____

_____

_____

1.7 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have studied the unit, now please answer the following questions :

Q.No.1 Discuss the nature of student support in distance education.

Q.No.2 Critically examine the significance of student support in distance education.

Q.No.3 Explain the scope of student support in distance education.

Q.No.4 Why the students of distance education need support services? Give suitable examples in support of your answer.

Q.No.5 Discuss the importance of student support in distance education.

Q.No.6 "Student support services enable the student to enter into meaningful dialogue with their tutors". Discuss.

Q.No.7 Give your own concept of student support services in distance education.

Q.No.8 Discuss the advantages of student support services in distance education.

1.8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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3. Rashid, M. (1998) Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation.

3. Sewart, David (1984) Teaching for Open University in Dewart, D.et-al. (Edits) Distance Education Internat-ional Perspective, London, Croom Helm.

5. Turok, N. (1977) Telephony: a passing lanacy or a genuine innovation? Teaching at a Distance No. 8

UNIT NO.2

STUDENTS SUPPORT SERVICES

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As you are aware that in distance education system the learner is removed from the physical presence of a teacher, whether or not he/she studies privately or in a group. The two-way communication between student and teacher need not be in writing. The important thing to bear in mind is that distance education and classroom face-to-face teaching are but two ways of doing one and the same thing, that is, the dissemination of knowledge and developed skills in people wherever they may be, regardless of their age and their individual circumstances. The existence of an organised two-way communication over a distance is the chief characteristics of distance education.

The student who studies distance form of education must keep in mind that it is often a lonely and difficult task. It demands patience, perseverance and concentration, often in very difficult circumstances. This is so because the majority of students who study by this method at least in Pakistan, do so because they have no other alternative. However, a close one-to-one relationship with the student in the form of guidance and even individual coaching, is an essential feature of distance education. The existence of an organised two-way communication over a distance is the main characteristic of distance education. Distance education must embrace the communicational aspect (the type of course and how it is distributed), the human or social aspect (the student, his problems, and way of learning), and the pedagogical aspect (the learning methods and techniques).

Distance education can be used in almost any age group, subject or course to the type of work to be taught and the kind of assistance available to the student wherever and whenever he chooses to study. Contrary to the popular opinion, conventional classroom teaching is not always the best method of teaching. In fact, a great many subjects, such as reading, writing and arithmatic, require individual learning which can often best be done by students working alone. In any case reading itself is a solitary activity and so is writing, and these can best be done by a student working alone.

Distance education is a method systematized by means of specially produced material, so that it is made available to many students at a time and for period of varying length. Thus the system is characterised by the student receiving instructions or studying materials and assignments. Then he carries out these assignments and returns them to the tutor for correction and comments, which

subsequently are returned to students as a means of feedback. The rate at which the materials are studied and assignments are done. The degree of activity, will vary from student to student. It would depend on a number of factors not be the least of which is the tutor himself, the nature of the course, and the consequential assignments. In order to teach effectively it is necessary to have well-prepared instructional materials, sufficiently motivated students and properly trained teachers who will use the instructional materials purposefully and properly.

Having imparted knowledge and skill to the students, a good teacher will determine the level to which such knowledge and skill has been absorbed by the students. This is why revision of materials and tests within the course are necessary. Tests and other assignments are necessary learning experiences. They are intended to induce activity and give practice which leads to learning. Any teaching material and any test that does not satisfy or achieve the aim for which they were prepared, should be scrapped in teaching. and learning are not to be impeded.

The provision of study skills, tutorials, library services and other student support services is essential to make the distance education programme effective. Effort has been made in this unit to highlight the importance and the role of student support services in the system of distance education.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading the unit, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. discuss the role and importance of tutorial in distance education;
2. describe in writing the role of workshops in student support services;
3. specify the role of Study Centres and Regional Offices in student support services;
4. identify the role of media support in student support services;
5. evaluate the role of library services in distance education; and
6. evaluate the effectiveness of student support services in distance education in Pakistan.

2.3 TUTORIALS

Opportunities for personal contact in a distance education course are limited. But meeting students now and then in a classroom situation in cities where there is a concentration of students is an effective way of bridging the gulf between the teacher and the learners. Face to face sessions help pull students out of the stopper they fall into. During or immediately after a contact programme, the frequency of student assignments increases and the quality of answers also improves. But in a country like Pakistan, having large rural population, contact programmes cannot be held for all the students. Study centres at various places help meet some of the student needs. A tutor is assigned a group of students and they meet twice a month or weekly basis. Or a member of the teaching faculty in nearby college or institution, on part time basis, takes charge of a group of students at a place to provide institutional assistance. There is no dearth of such places. The place where tutorials are held is called a Study Centre.

The functions of the Study Centre is to:

a) encourage group activities such as discussions and paper readings. Students are informed in advance about the topics to be discussed. The teacher acts as moderator; the students do most of the talking; and

b) invite students to come with their problems arising from the study material they have studied during the intervening period.

c) To provide opportunities for feedback on assignments.

d) To provide place for direct instruction and personal communication with fellow students.

e) To afford an opportunities for promotion of groups for studying the course

Such facilities, are available to students residing in or near the place where the distance education institution or the regional office has its headquarters or in cities and towns where a distance education institution seeks help from local institution of formal education. Students in remote areas still remain unattended or un-privileged. For such situation, one sort of mobile team which could travel to

distance places, can prove beneficial for the remote and isolated students. Some places could be visited just as the course begins to provide orientation. The remaining places would be scheduled at various times during the semester or study period.

In order to fully comprehend the idea of tutorial or two-way communication in the system of distance education, pleas read the below referred materials:

Rashid, M (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.14-17	2-1
David Sewart, Desmond Keegan & Holmberg, B. (1983)	Distance Education: International Perspectives, London, Croom Helm. PP.334-335	2-2

2.4 WORKSHOPS

Workshop is another component of student support services. In most of the courses at higher education offered by the Open University and workshops are considered a compulsory element. Students absent from these workshops are declared fail in that particular course. However, the student may complete the workshop component within a specified period of time to pass that course.

Workshops play an effective role in the learning of distance students. These are opportunities for them to interact with their tutors and other fellows students and thus can discuss their problems. During workshops, students are taught with the help of modern technology including radio, television, video, slide projector, overhead projector, filmstrips etc. They are encouraged and motivated to express whatever they know about the subject. Experts are invited to deliver lecturers on different topics and to give proper guidance about their studies. Different topics are allotted to students and asked them to make presentation in front of their fellows and senior teachers or experts. Such presentation are usually evaluated.

For further details, please read the below mentioned materials:

Don F. Seaman, Robert A. Fellenz, (1989)	Effective Strategies for Teaching Adults, London, Merrill Publishing Company, PP.39-40 Islamabd, National Book Foundation.	2-3

2.5 STUDY CENTRES

The effectiveness of distance learning system very much depends upon student support services. In distance education support services are organised and managed on the concept of (i) local centres and (ii) study centres. Local centres generally carry out one or more of three functions: academic, advisory and administrative. Local centres facilitate the students by providing opportunities of contact with other student fellows and with tutoring and counselling staff. They enable access of students to materials and provide a good place to study. But the role of study centres in distance education is only to facilitate the students regarding their studies. The study centres provide facilities for tutoring and counselling, TV and Radio, copies of course units and, in some cases, computer terminals and loudspeaking telephones.

Study centres can also be used for informal self-help groups, organised by students. One of the limitation of study centres is that they do not meet the needs of all tutorial events, e.g. for science or technology students, a laboratory setting at a different Study Centre is required which cannot easily be provided in every study centres in the network

For more details, please read the book mentioned below:

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabd, National Book Foundation. PP.34-36	2-4

2.6 REGIONAL OFFICES

The main characteristic of distance education is that there is a vast distance between students and tutors. This separation vast gulf is reduced to a large extent by using different ways and means . But still, student of distance education has to experience a variety of problems at different stages from pre-entry stage to passing out. In order to reduce and eliminate such problems, Open Universities have established a network of regional offices to arrange de-centralized support services. The regional office is responsible to arrange support services in its local areas in order to cater to a large number of students of distance education. Robinson, Bernadette (19) delineated the major functions of a regional office:

- recruitment and supervision of part-time tutors and counsellors;
- allocation of student groups to tutors;
- local arrangements for study centres;
- planning the tutorial programme alongwith guidelines provided by the centre;
- local organisation of examinations, degree ceremonies and summer schools;
- provision of advisory services;
- keeping student's and tutor's records.

AIOU Report 1985-1988 (1988. PP.165-67) indicates the Regional Services as:-

"Being a distance learning institution, the Regional Services meet the essential purpose of instructional support, information and advice for the students, who may be hundreds of kilometers from the main Campus. The Regional Services comprise of Directorate at the Campus mainly responsible for the policy and coordination of the activities carried out by a network of Regional Offices/Sub-Regional Offices/Personal Coordinating Offices and part time Regional Coordinating offices presently 32 in number throughout the country"

Following are the main functions of the Regional Services:

1. the sphere and pace of regional function is closely related to the number of courses presented and the instructional requirement of each course;

2. regions advise students interested in the courses being offered and provide them with the relevant literature and application forms;

3. regions undertake regular publicity in their respective regions and maintain close contact with the press, radio and television;

4. their main function is organising tutorial support for various courses;

5. they appoint tutors for area-based tutorial groups for students;

6. they set up study Centres;

7. once the courses begin, they supervise the tutorial programme and conduct workshops, and maintain progress reports of the students;

8. regions provide constant feedback for the course work notes, course teams and for the central administration;

9. regions play a vital role in organising and supervising the final examinations.

Special emphasis at AIOU is being paid currently to the following activities:

1. establishment of Sub-Regional & Coordinating Offices in remote areas:

2. training of newly recruited Officers;

3. establishment of libraries in Regional Offices;

4. appointment of Senior Tutors with particular reference to monitoring of tutors performance;

5. improvements in Model Study Centres;

6. Consolidation of physical facilities in Regional and construction of Regional Campuses;

7) strengthening of regional centres to provide better services;

8) to computerized the regional centres for better record keeping and solving student problems at local level;

9) to network regional centres with the computer centre, main campus using internal or provide E-Mail or fax to expedite transfer of student data to the regional centre and fast communication.

Regional Directors are the University's representatives in the field. They are senior members of the University staff and have overall responsibilities beyond local administration and the organisation of tutorial support services. One of their major responsibilities is to foster knowledge of the University amongst the general public, among professional groups and within government and provincial organisations. They themselves build up a knowledge of the educational needs of their regions and particularly the needs of those groups who are least likely to have benefited from the conventional system and for whom local provision is generally not available. In many ways, the Regional Directors are the eyes and ears of the University, scanning the field and feeding back information, suggestions and criticism to the parent body. Their resources and staffing have, in the past, been somewhat limited, but gradually increased staffing, enabled them to offer an improved service to students and to develop their own role as representatives of the University.

For the smooth running and efficient activities of the AIOU, throughout Pakistan, it was needed to establish regional offices at Provincial/Division Headquarters in the country. At present there are 28 Regional Centres. Out of the total regional network, ten are designated as regional campuses while rest are called regional centres. The nine regional campuses are at Peshawar, Quetta, Karachi, Hyderabad, Multan, Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Mirpur (AK), and Islamabad. The regional centres at Dera Ismail Khan, Sawat, Skardu, Citral, Gilgit, Sahiwal, Dera Ghazi Khan, Mianwali, Sargodha, Gujranwala, Muzaffarabad, and Sehwan Sharif. In addition, the University has established four Regional Coordinating Offices at Jauharabad, UmerKot, Sibi and Zhob part-time

Coordinators have been appointed at Muslim Baagh, Dera Murad Jamali and Astore. The part-time regional coordinating offices are a new feature, established after 1983.

These regional centres provide essential study support to students, including tutors, student-counsellors and study centres. Regional Directors arrange tutorial meetings, workshops, examination centres and other academic activities and also liaise with provincial and other authorities.

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education. Islamabd, National Book Foundation. PP.40-46	2-5

2.7 MEDIA SUPPORT

A variety of media can be used to further promote the learning of students through distance education. Many of these can be combined into multimedia packages that appeal to students with different learning styles. Telephone, radio, phonograph records, and audio tapes are widely used as audio modes. They can use recorded media anytime and anywhere and can comprehend any specific topic by repeating it again and again. Radio can be used to impart knowledge and information to students of far flung areas and can reach to mass audiences and learners. The major limitation of audio media is that they lack a visual component.

Video media is one step ahead of audio. They have also a great impact on distance education. A variety of educational programmes are delivered through television network that strengthen the learning of distance students while they are sitting in their homes. Video cassettes are also used to help the distance learners in teaching learning process. Besides all these, various other types of media programme are also used under the umbrella of student support services that play a crucial role not only in the development of the distance learners but also in the progress of the distance education system.

For further detail, please glance through the below mentioned material:

Yuen, K.S. G, Dhanarajan, T.E. Hodgin, S.Timmers, (1990)	"The use of Media in the Delivery of Distance Education Courses in Hong Kong: Interactive Communication in Distance Education,Indonesia, University, Terbuka, PP.235-245.	2-6
Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabd, National Book Foundation. PP.51-54	2-7

2.8 LIBRARY SERVICES

An independent, well equipped and efficiently running library is essential to any distance education programme. This should be obvious that the library should not only have reference books, but it should also be well-equipped with journals, and if possible photocopying facilities.

Apart from remaining open to students at all hours of day, the library should extend facilities to students at a distance in the following ways.

i) Provide lists of relevant books to the students and the other material involved in the system of distance education, so that they should know for which what books they can ask for. Issue lists of new books. The duplication or Xeroxing section should provide copy material from journals and books which must be kept in the library.

ii) Open sub-branches of the main library in places where student's concentration is appreciable. The local colleges as well as a correspondence unit could be of utmost help. Further, in other public libraries, the corner of distance education materials may be provided for the benefit of students and public at large.

iii) Send library personnel with the basic reference and textbook to the

students working or living in remote and undeveloped areas. Even a fortnight's exposure to such reading material can make a student more active than he has been.

iv) Establish book banks for students who want to borrow prescribed books. This would encourage the willing student and, perhaps, motivate the less willing.

Libraries and distance education are no doubt interrelated. Pakistan is one of the largest democracies in world 135 plus million population. But the rate of literacy in this country is about 35%. It is only because of this that the need for various literacy, non formal education programme including distance education is felt. The role of the libraries in furthering distance education is of great importance.

Keeping in view the objectives of distance education, the library be central or regional of a distance education institution would have to shoulder heavy responsibilities. The library services should include the following:-

i) Career Information Section.

ii) Mobile Units/Extension activities.

iii) Book Banks.

iv) Inter Library Loan.

v) Interne

The Open universities have two different categories of libraries as mentioned below:-

a) Central Library at the main Campus.

b) Regional Libraries located at the Regional Offices and various model study centres

In order to make the successful working of the Allama Iqbal Open University library, the library development policy would depend upon two major

factors - budget and staffing. Separate adequate budgets both for Central and Regional offices/study centres libraries and professional qualified and experienced staff to organise the library on modern lines by having automation of some operations to provide library services both to the academic staff and students are essential.

Moreover, Cooperation in collection development at an Open University library is a complex process involving several internal and external persons and organisations. Internal cooperation includes coordination between the library staff of different sections, library and management, different branches (Regional Offices) of the university, academic staff responsible for selection of books, technical staff of the audio-visual, coordinators of the study centres, Central library users, and students through the feedback from the coordinators.

External cooperation is also essential It includes the coordination of the library with the booksellers and publishers and distributors, libraries of the conventional universities, various higher educational institutions and public libraries. There should be coordination between Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) and Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV) for the assistance in getting information regarding the radio broadcasts and television telecasts of Allama Iqbal Open University which can be of use for university programmes and courses.

In order to fully comprehend the role of library service or local media resource centres in distance education, please read the below referred material which will provide a good idea of resource centres, libraries and challenges for media resource centres of distance education.

Roy Tomlinson (1984)	"Local Media Resource Centres", In A.W. Bates, ed (1984) The Role of Technology in Distance Education, London Croom Helm. PP.195-203.	2-8
Rashid, M (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.109-117	2-9

2.9 ACTIVITIES

1. List below the different media being used in the student support services of AIOU.

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Please visit any nearby regional office or study centre of AIOU and write a report on its role in student support services.

3. Being student of AIOU, you have experienced the role of study centres. Write your impressions about the behaviour of tutors towards students.

4. Write four advantages of workshops in the student support services.

   a) _____

   b) _____

   c) _____

   d) _____

2.10 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Discuss the role of study centres in student support services at AIOU.

Q.No.2 "The Regional Offices are eyes and ears of AIOU through which the university scans the problems faced by the potential students". Discuss.

Q.No.3 Critically examine the role of tutorials in distance education.

Q.No.4 "The tutorials are study techniques which facilitate the students in their learning difficulties". Discuss.

Q.No.5 Critically examine the role of media in student support services.

Q.No.6 Discuss the role of audio cassettes in student support services.

Q.No.7 Describe the role of Radio and T.V. broadcasts in student support services.

Q.No.8 "Workshop brings people together in groups in order to develop specific competencies in the participants or to use the member's talents to resolve some common problems" Discuss the statement.

Q.No.9 Discuss the advantages of workshops in student support services.

Q.No.10 Evaluate the effectiveness of student support services in distance education.

Q.No.11 Write short notes on the following.

a) Tutor and media.
b) Tutor and tutoring.
c) Face-to-face teaching.
d) Role of workshops in student support.
e) Video-Cassettes in student support.

2.11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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5. Yuen, K.S. G Dhanarajan, T.E. Hodgin, S.Timmers (1990) — "The use of Media in the Delivery of Distance Education Courses in Hong Kong: Inter active Communication in Distance Education, Indonesia, Universitas Terbuka.

UNIT NO.3

THE ROLE OF TUTOR IN STUDENT SUPPORT

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers in distance education institutions develop instructional plans, implement them and evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction for the main purpose of enabling their students to acquire the knowledge and skill prescribed in the courses of study. Students often encounter difficulties in understanding what is taught in the classrooms, laboratories and workshops. They will be found wanting in achieving the explicitly spelt out instructional objectives. Underachievement, unsatisfactory involvement in the academic work by students are some of the often noticed problems. These result in improper utilisation of institutional facilities and resources, satisfactory benefits of the efforts of instruction and frustration to students. Efforts must be made to ensure that problems of the above types are solved to the maximum extent. Towards this end, tutors and all others concerned need to analyse the causes of educational problems and give adequate assistance to students to overcome them.

Tutorial support aims to maximise learning in students. The emphasis is on providing assistance to them to achieve the best of their ability in all the prescribed courses of study.

The following are the objectives of tutorial support:

- To monitor the academic progress of students studying in the institution.
- To acquaint the students with the prescribed curriculum.
- To identify the academically gifted, backward, creative and other category of special learners.
- To cater to the educational needs of special learners.
- To assist students in getting information about further education.
- To diagnose the learning difficulties of students and help them overcome the same.
- To assist the students to maximise their scholastic achievement.

- To help the students to review and reflect on their performance on the course, and where appropriate to identify ways of seeking changes in work habits or behaviour.

- To help the students face the consequence of acceptance of their role and to respond to the demands legitimately made on them.

The strategies that tutors adopt to plan and implement tutorial support must be appropriate to the problems for which support is needed. The following are some of the principles on which student support must be based.

- Student support must be objective oriented.

- Individual differences in academic achievement of students must be recognised.

- Student support strategy must be student oriented.

- The strategies must take into consideration the resources and facilities available to the students.

- Student support is not for a new student only; it needs to be provided for all.

A group of students in which all students have more or less the same abilities for coping with instruction is ideal for teaching-learning. Tutors may employ the same instructional strategy for an entire group of students whose entry behaviour characteristics, learning ability, interest, motivation, attitude to learning are the same. In such situations they do not encounter much difficulty in providing students for optimal learning. In reality, classes are never homogeneous and tutors have the challenging task of coping with a variety of students' characteristics.

Students of any course can be ordinarily classified into three categories viz., the average, below average and above average on the basis of their academic performance. The below average students are those whose performance is below the average performance of class. Those whose performance is above the average of the class are categorised as above average. In this category, we may notice creative and gifted students as well. There are other types of students called slow learners, who have the ability to perform satisfactorily but are only slow in doing

so. Their slowness may be attributed to a combination of a variety of causes. There may be some students, whose performance in comparison to that of the class may be satisfactory. Yet, their own performance may not be commensurate with their ability.

Problems in learning are most common in all categories of students. An above average student is likely to have as much of learning difficulties as a below average one. By providing student support efforts must be made to ensure that students maintain their level of academic performance. In all other cases, the efforts should be towards enabling the students to overcome their educational difficulties. In doing so it is important to identify those students who have problems and find solutions of their actual problems.

Identification of students with different styles of learning is possible by continuous and careful observation of the 'academic behaviour' by the tutors. The aspects of behaviour that may be observed should include the interaction of students with the tutor during instruction, the type of questions put by them, interest shown for involvement in the teaching-learning activity, keenness exhibited for learning, alertness in grasping whatever is taught in the class, performance in tests and assignments, perusal of assignments and other assigned work. Tutors can easily observe their students in the classes. However, care must be exercised in drawing conclusions based on observation only. For, a student who may be shy to answer questions or ask questions should not be identified as a weak student. It is important to spot out those students who require student support not only on the basis of observation, but also on the basis of discussion with other faculty. However, keeping in view the significance of the role of tutor in student support effort has been made in the unit to highlight various roles of tutor in student support.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, it is hoped that you will be able to:

1. explain the role of tutor in student support;
2. differentiate between tutoring and teaching;
3. specify the role of tutor as a face to face teacher;

4. identify the functions of tutor as counsellor;

5. evaluate the role of tutor as assignment marker;

6. analyse various responsibilities as correspondence teacher;

7. appreciate the link of tutor between students and institution;

8. analyse criteria for tutor appointment.

3.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TUTORING AND TEACHING

In conventional system of education students are taught on the basis of regular face-to-face teaching. They have to study a prescribed syllabus within a stipulated period of time. The person who teaches them is called the teacher. The art of imparting knowledge and skills by using a variety of teaching aids and keeping in mind the prescribed lesson objectives is called "Teaching". This term is generally used in conventional system of education.

In distance education system, the term tutor is used for the person who imparts knowledge and skills and has close contact with distance student, by using a variety of media. He performs several duties as a tutor i.e. correspondence with students, providing counselling and guidance, evaluating their assignments, etc. All such functions are included in tutoring. Robinson, Bernadette (1981, P.150) explained various functions of a tutor as under:

- commenting on students' written work;
- marking and assigning grades to students' written work;
- helping students understand course material through discussion;
- answering student queries about the system;
- helping students plan their work;
- organising self-help groups or study circles;
- conducting face-to-face or telephone discussions;

- demonstrating and supervising practical or project work;
- teaching at a residential school or personal contact programme;
- keeping records of students' progress;
- giving a lecture;
- giving feedback on course materials and student problems to the local centre co-ordinator, or counsellor, or course writers;
- negotiating with the institution on students' behalf when certain problems occur.

There is no doubt that tutor plays a very significant role in distance teaching process.

A tutor in distance education system is expected to play the role of a guide and an inspirer. A tutor can and should do as much and as well as a classroom teacher. There is a great resemblance in the work of a classroom teacher and a tutor. The classroom teacher presents information through the 'Word of mouth' and the tutor does this through the `Word of hand', the comments on the answer-script of the distance learner. He also communicates through the word of print, presented as bits of information. A classroom teacher uses various aids to illustrate his lesson and he gets the feedback immediately on the spot. The distance education tutor gets and provides the feedback but after a lapse of some time. A tutor by not writing any comment on the answer sheets ceases to be a tutor, in spite of his having graded the answer sheets(assignments). Hence the most significant implication of the contrast is that a distance tutor must find ways to communicate with the learner and should not rest content with his scribbling a grade on the top of an assignment.

Koul B.N. (1995, P.277) has summend up the role of a distance tutor in these words,

> "To stretch his reach fully he must understand each and every student, and unlike a classroom teacher who addresses the abstract average student of his class, the distance tutor has to address every student individually. And only

way of addressing his students is to write comments on the answer scripts. This makes his task much more difficult and challenging than that of the classroom teacher. The teacher/tutor must correct his student, elaborate what he may have attempted summarily, guide him where he may have given wrong answer, confirm the acceptable aspects of his responses, assess the level of his achievement and explain the basis of that assessment so as to ensure better student performance in future. And all this has to be repeated over and over again with every student a task that demands great patience."

The role of a distance education tutor may be classified under three headings:

a) Communication at the academic level. The role of the tutor is three fold:

   i) Reading the answer-script;

   ii) writing his comments on the answers; and

   iii) evaluating the answer to grade them.

b) Communication at personal level aims at breaking the isolation of the student.

c) Supplementary communication may emanate either from the tutor or from the learner.

For further detail, please read the below mentioned material.

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.99-109	3-1

3.4 TUTOR AS FACE-TO-FACE TEACHER

The salient feature of the distance learning system is its tutorial sessions. Tutor plays the role of face-to-face teacher during these tutorial sessions. He is responsible to arrange some kinds of activities for motivating and encouraging the

students. Face-to-face contact with tutor is an important and useful element. The role and responsibilities of a tutor are changed in different countries. In some countries tutor is the sole person who not only conducts tutorial session but is also responsible to assess the performance of students through assignments marking and other techniques. He is responsible for several activities. But in some countries, tutor is solely a face-to-face teacher. He does not conduct correspondence with students and also does not assess their performance by marking students' assignments. He, simply attends tutorial session and provides the opportunity of face-to-face learning to students by playing intermediary role between the student and the material.

The working of the face-to-face tutor in a distance learning system is entirely different from that of the face-to-face teacher in formal system of education. In traditional system of education, face-to-face meeting and teaching is a regular and the main means of imparting knowledge and skills. The teacher of traditional system has to deliver lectures regularly and the students have to follow the face of the teacher while in distance learning system, face-to-face tutor simply provides guidance to students about their studies.

For further detail, please read the below referred material.

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education. Islamabad. National Book Foundation. PP.67-82.	3-2

3.5 TUTOR AS COUNSELLOR

No matter how good our teaching materials, and how efficient our distribution systems, distant students have to work by themselves without the support that comes from teachers, or from other students in a conventional class. We need to consider how we can give them the individual encouragement, help, tuition and guidance which they need, and so overcome the barriers of distance and the remote students' feeling of isolation. Some of these feelings, and some of our students' feeling of uncertainties, could be overcome if students met together, even without a tutor. But there remain functions which properly belong to a tutor. Before considering which kinds of tutoring need to be done face-to-face, and which can be done at a distance, it is useful to distinguish between the different groups of people who may do tutoring and counselling in distance education.

They include:

- Local or field tutors where they are employed;
- college staff, who will do some tutoring at study centres, but may also tour to visit students;
- head teachers, if it is possible to involve them as supervisors of trainee teachers in their own schools particularly in teacher training course;
- correspondence tutors;
- radio tutors:
- a student adviser, where one is employed on the staff of a distance teaching institution.

Among the various functions of a tutor in distance education system, counselling is also an important function which he is supposed to do. He plays the role of a counsellor and tries to solve various problems faced by distant learners. Students of distance learning system possess a variety of characteristics. They have different family and educational backgrounds. They may be isolated, both from other students and the institution. They may have had previous educational experience which may be positive or negative. They may be more intelligent or weak in their studies. So effective and well planned counselling is expected on the part of the tutor so that the interest of students in their studies is maintained.

Counselling is important as it is the only way of sharing and solving the problems of students, encouraging and assessing them. Tutor should not only disseminate the knowledge but also must be a source of problem solving. In most open learning schemes help and support will be provided by the course tutor rather than by a separate `Counsellor', though the course tutor may at times need to call in the services of a specialist for some students who are in particular difficulties (e.g. emotional, financial) and centres may appoint particular individuals to specialise in `pre-enrolment counselling' or advise on career choice after the completion of a programme or course.

For further details, please read the below referred book.

Bernadette Robinson (1981)	"Support for Student Learning, In Anthony Kaye & Greville Rumble, ed. (1981) Distance Teaching for Higher and Adult Education, London, Croom Helm. PP.156-161.	3-3

3.6 TUTOR AS AN ASSIGNMENT MARKER

Since students are generally far away from their tutors and they rarely see them, much of the teaching is carried out by correspondence. Tutors mark students' assignments and give comments on them that help the student reflect on his work and evaluate record of his strengths and weaknesses. If the tutor does not write appropriate and encouraging comments on the written material, it may lead the students quiting from their studies.

While commenting on written material, the tutor first advises for further study and, secondly, perceives the students existing state of knowledge and conceptual framework. According to Robinson Bernadette (1981, P.155), the comments themselves should be specific, self-explanatory and clear, and may be categorised as follows:

- those which acknowledge the student's point of view;
- those correcting errors of fact or syntax;
- those which help the student to clarify his argument;
- those which direct the student to the proper use of evidence;
- those criticising the assignment as a whole;
- those which suggest a different viewpoint to the students'; and
- those which explain the grade being given.

The tutor will also need guidance on marking students' work and on commenting on it. Each institution may have a system of marks or grades, which may be alphabetic or numeric, and tutors will generally be asked to use a standard format for them. As we have seen, commenting on a student's answer is more important. Advice to tutors on the kind of comments needed by students have been summarised by the British Open University, in the following ways stated by Huillary Perraton (1984, PP>72-73):

"i) Comments which indicate that the assignment as a whole has been received and considered, for example an acknowledgement that you can see what the student was trying to achieve;

ii) correction of errors of text or misunder-standing, explaining why something is incorrect or including a precise reference;

iii) Comments on essay and study techniques - cases, for example, where the work shows an obvious lack of perspective, or where an otherwise reasonable essay is marred by atrocious grammar or spelling. However, in this latter case it is important for tutors to emphasise the reasons why grammar and spelling are important;

iv) Comments on the relevance of the content or approach. Some courses involve a discussion tape which offers an opportunity to explain the criteria of relevance, and explore the benefits of certain approaches. the isolation of external students, which prevents them from trying their ideas out on their peers, makes comments from the tutor in this area all the more valuable;

v) Encouragement: As the Open University tutor's booklet (1995) says, 'Even when an assignment is poor, you can usually find some positive virtue to praise. A written invitation to the student to discuss points of difficulty in writing or on the telephone will further assist him to "balance out" his comments, and renew his commitment'. Although an apt comment may help ease the frustrations of a tutor who has just waded through ten pages of it considered prose, these are often wounding to a distant and perhaps anxious student;

vi) An explanation of the assessment: On receiving his assignment back from his tutor, a student will open it and look at the grade (if any) - then, possibly at the explanation on the assignment sheets. Thus, this teaching

summary sho Hollow comments You uld give an overall view, commenting not only on the reasons for any specific grade on the assessment but also relating this assessment to the student's progress in the course.

Various types of tutor's comments as given by IGNOU (1995, PP.39-40) are as under:-

S.No.	Category	Language used in comments
1.	Harmful comments	Horrible language. Beating about the bush.
2.	Hollow comments	You have not understood the question at all.
3.	Misleading comments	Read the lesson once again.
4.	Null comments	Non-verbal remarks; question marks.
5.	Negative comments	the treatment of the topic is not sufficient; make your answer more clear.
6.	Positive comments	Your argument is acceptable.
7.	Constructive comments	Prepare illustration based onyour own experience
8.	Global comments	These sum up the grading and the reasons thereof.

The first five comments come under the category of non-teaching comments and the last three as teaching comments.

It must be remembered that in distance education the tutor is not to act like an examiner. Remarks should be constructive and encouraging concrete suggestions should be given.

Tutor comments must be clear and positive. They should not be negative so as to discourage the learners to make attempts. 'Wrong', 'worthless', inadequate', 'absurd' etc. should not be used as they are very harmful and do not stimulate motivation.

The role of a correspondence tutor is a demanding one. We cannot assume that all tutors will find it easy and it will be necessary for a distance-teaching institution to monitor some of its tutors' work in order to see if the marking is being done properly. Two other things will help the development of good tutors. The first is the production of a handbook for tutors which will advise them both on the administrative procedures they should follow and on their teaching

techniques. The second is for a distance-teaching institution to provide training for its tutors. A brief workshop, in which tutors can learn about the courses and react to specimen assignments and be guided on their marking, can be of great value. For further details, please read the below referred material.

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.83-92	3-4

3.7 TUTOR AS A CORRESPONDENCE TEACHER

Tutor plays a variety of roles in distance learning system. Correspondence medium is generally used as the main mode of tutor-student contact in AIOU and UKOU and is considered as the central and continuing teaching process. In both these Universities, the tutor is first and foremost a correspondence tutor. In an U.K. Open University handbook (1977, P.42)), tutor has been described as a correspondence teacher in these words:

> "The main source of individual advice, guidance and constructive criticism for an Open university student on a particular course is his course tutor, who bases his teaching primarily on the student's written work in his tutor-marked assignments, and his advice is primarily written advice."

The essence of a correspondence tutor's work is that it is individual. But, as a course proceeds, some problems will arise which are common to a variety of students. Here, useful tutorial help can be given by a radio broadcast. If there is a regular part of a radio programme dealing with student problems, then a tutor who always gives advice to students at that point can gradually build up a valuable rapport with them.

There remain some problems which are individual but are not necessarily about a particular subject. There are problems about how to go about studying, when to take examinations, about not receiving books on time and the like. Students may need advice before they start working. A distance-teaching institution needs to have somebody who has the job of answering student enquiries like students advisor at AIOU. If the institution is large enough, it will be necessary to employ a student counsellor or adviser, or even a team of advisers. If it is on a smaller scale, then this job will fall to one of the academic staff. There

are two sides to the student adviser's job. The first is to answer, as helpfully as possible, the enquiries which come from a student and to work out which of those should be answered by a subject specialist and which are more general. The second, and often more demanding and more contentious, is to represent the students' interests to the rest of the institution. The student adviser is the person who is most closely in touch with student difficulties and problems and so is the person who has the best view of what is going wrong inside the institution. If there are delays in production, then the student tutor may arrange an altrnative activity in order to keep the student busy to fill the gap. A good student tutor, therefore, combines the ability to help students sympathetically with tact and toughness to improve the working of the institution in the interests of the students.

The best correspondence tutors are the people with a mastery of their own subject, who can correspond warmly and sympathetically with students, possibly live near the institution which is receiving work from students and sending it back to the students promptly after evaluating it.

The job of tutors needs to go beyond the minimum marking of right and wrong. They provide much more guidance, help and stimulation. Indeed, a good correspondence tutor has a slightly different function from that of evaluation which is to build up a relationship, with the student. If the student feels that his tutor is a real person, and gets to know him through correspondence even if he never meets him, then each of the tutor will get much more out of the relationship. In order to encourage that kind of relationship some distance institutions send students a short, one-page, biography of their tutor and encourage students to write back to the tutor about themselves. It is easier to develop that sort of relationship if students are allocated permanently to one or more tutors so that, for any one subject, the same tutor always deals with the same student.

The tutor needs help and support from the distance teaching institution in order to undertake these duties. The first thing which he needs is a clear statement from the distance teaching organisation about how it works and what he is expected to do. He needs information about the administrative procedures of the institution so that his own work is made as simple as possible and he can concentrate on advising his students, rather than coping with the bureaucracy of the institution.

The tutor will also need to keep some kind of record about students and their work. Each tutor may want to work out his own way of dong this. In some cases, however, it is useful to use a card with a summary of the tutor's comments

to accompany each piece of work as assignment and pass backwards and forwards between the tutor and student. In that way both can see how the student's work is progressing from assignment to assignment.

Tutoring in distance learning system requires special skills and professional training for effective correspondence tuition. Lack of special skills and professionalism causes, poor communication and understanding among students and tutors.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Roger. Lewis (1984)	How to Tutor and Support Learners, London, Council for Educational Technology PP.39-57	3-5

3.8 TUTOR AS A LINK BETWEEN THE STUDENTS AND HE INSTITUTION

In distance education system, students have to make contact with their ultimate institution i.e. with whom they are doing their courses. It is very hard and sometimes seems to be impossible for distant learner to make direct contact with the concerning institution due to several personal, geographical and social problems. So, in this situation, there must be a person who should play an intermediary role or who should fill the gap between the organisation and the students.

Tutor is the person who has almost regular and close contact with students through correspondence or other media available. Students of distance learning system need to discuss their problems arising during studies and need solution of these problems. They sometimes have to face problems regarding the assignment schedule, tutorials, workshops, exams etc. But most of them never visit the office of the open university. They simply ask their tutors about these kind of problems. Tutor, at that time, acts like a bridge and tries to solve students' problems. Many instructions about rules and regulations of the open learning institutions are imparted through the tutor. The tutor always tries to create a pleasant and healthy link between the students and the institution.

3.9 CRITERIA FOR TUTOR

In order to ensure effective and efficient tutorial support, tutors are appointed by the concerned Regional Directors/Regional Coordinators. Normally, they are appointed on part time basis from amongst the experienced teachers of college as well as from the schools. Special care is taken in the appointment of tutors. They must possess higher degrees in the related areas. Qualification and experience required for appointment as a tutor varies from one level to another.

No relaxation is admissible in the qualification of tutors while appointing as them except in the areas where teacher are not available. Then the retired personnel from army, education or other profession, but related to the subject area and enjoying good reputation are appointed as part time tutor. For example, in case of M.A(Edu.) and M.Ed, only those teachers of Institutes of Education and Research of all Pakistan Universities, Colleges of Education, and the graduates of AIOU who had completed M.Phil (Edu) degrees are eligible for appointment as tutors. Moreover, preference is given to the local qualified personnel to be appointed as tutor. In case local tutor is not available, correspondence tutor is appointed. This practice is also done even in other courses of all levels of AIOU.

Sometimes the concerned department sends a panel of specialists to be appointed as tutors for Master level courses. The concerned Regional Directors mostly appoint tutors out of the panel.

3.10 ACTIVITIES

1. Prepare a chart of comparison between tutoring and teaching.

2. Write down four important functions of tutors.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Write a report of the experience which you got with your tutor during this study.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3.11 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Critically examine the role of tutor in student support service.

Q.No.2 "It is not easy to teach in distance education. There is a lot of difference between teaching in distance education and formal education". Discuss.

Q.No.3 Discuss the role of tutor as face to face teacher.

Q.No.4 What cares should a tutor must take while teaching in the study centre?

Q.No.5 What steps are involved in the role of tutor to act as counsellor?

Q.No.6 Discuss the procedure and process of marking of assignments by the tutors.

Q.No.7 Critically examine the types of comments which a tutor has to give on the students assignments.

Q.No.8 Which type of comments on student assignments do you consider more effective and why?

Q.No.9 Discuss the role of tutor as correspondence teacher.

Q.No.10 "Tutor is the best link between the student and the institution". Explain with reasons.

Q.No.11 Describe the criteria for tutor appointment at AIOU.

Q.No.12 "Effective student evaluation can best be done by tutor rather than the Regional Director". Discuss.

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UNIT NO.4

COUNSELLING AS STUDENT SUPPORT

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Counselling is very important aspect in the teaching learning process of distance education system. Students' counselling begins with the pre-admission period, continues through the duration of the programme or the course, and it is helpful even after the course is completed. Student counsellors, by personal contact or through correspondence, help students to reach the right person at the right time. Counselling is a short cut for an otherwise long trip.

The counsellors help students to know their own minds. Even after getting enrolled, some students feel that they are in a blind alley; they are tempted to drop out. If someone will listen to the problems and suggests possible solutions, confused students are at least less confused. They further help find out about opportunities that may go unnoticed otherwise. Student counsellors should watch for advertisements of jobs for which their students might be qualified. Such information can also be given to students by the counsellor.

However, the counsellor should devote sufficient time for advising students requiring it. In programmes with large number of students, a full-time student advisor is necessary for such tasks like answering of routine questions. It should be ensured that he must know the answers to these types of questions.

The main reason for counselling is to show to students that they are being cared for. Further, the distance education institution is genuinely concerned with the students problems and tries to help the students. As a collateral benefit to the approach the student's disposition becomes positive towards the programme which again tends to motivate him to succeed in his studies. Some students need to know which programme or course best fits their background and abilities. Helping them select the right course or programme saves them money and time. In addition, it deflects the frustration of one's finding oneself spending needlessly for the economic benefit of the institution. A student's special request during his studies, like speeding up the return of his assignments faster than the regular time, should be carefully evaluated. If at all possible positive action toward the student's wish should be taken.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, you will be able to:

1. explain the concept of counselling;
2. discuss the need for counselling in student support;
3. identify the techniques of counselling;
4. specify counselling services particularly;
    a) centrally and locally based
    b) types of counselling services
    c) media of counselling
5. evaluate the role of counselling in student support services.

4.3 THE CONCEPT OF COUNSELLING

Counselling is an aspect of student support services. It begins from the entry of the student into distance education system and never ends. In distance education system, counselling means the advice, help and support given to students to enable them to make satisfactory progress in the system. Students seek guidance and counselling almost at every stage of their course work. Tutors and in some open universities, counsellors, student advisors, etc. provide counselling and guidance to distance learners and help them solve their educational or other problems. Thus counsellors' contribution in making the distance education effective cannot be ignored.

Webster's dictionary defines counselling as "Consultation, mutual exchange of opinions, deliberating together.". It is not lecturing, it is not always having a piece of advice.

A fruitful approach to define counselling is to ascertain the common elements of agreement among various counselling theorists. Aggarwal, J.C (1977, P.107) lists three areas of agreement.

a) Counselling is a process involving two people.

b) The basic objective of counselling is to assist the individual to solve his problems independently.

c) Counselling is a professional task for the professionally trained people.

Roger, L (1981, P.87) points out the following Freudian concepts that are basic to all counselling:-

a) Recognition of a state of conflict.

b) Acknowledgement of the unconscious.

c) The role of repression.

d) Dependence and transference.

e) Acquiring the insight.

f) Emphasis on collective emotional experience.

g) The objective and accepting attitude of the therapist

IGNOU (1993, P. 8) MENTIONS:

"Counselling is personal and dynamic relationship between the two individuals-one of whom is older or more experienced than the younger, who together approach a more or less well defined problem of the younger or less experienced or less wise, with mutual consideration for each to the end that the problem may be more clearly defined and that the one who has the problem may be helped to a self-determined solution of it"

However, counseling is a process in which a counsellor is approached by the pupil on an individual basis for arriving at a solution. Counselling comes in when emotions are at stake. Counselling can be done by interview or by post and even by telephone.

Roger Lewis (1984, P.63) described the role of counsellor as:

> ...intermediate between the formal framework of the institution on the one hand and the very informal network of family/friends at the other. It is a role that has been most developed in the area of young adult support where it is variously called `working'coach', `jobmate' or `godfather', for example, in an ordinary worker who takes responsibility for one to two trainees, independent of the management structure, and who meets the trainees informally."

From the above discussion we can say that if guidance is the heart of education, then counselling is the heart of guidance. It is through counselling that the client is given assistance in analysing his problem, making decisions and revising plans.

In order to fully comprehend the concept of counselling, please read the below mentioned books:

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, National Book Foundation, Islamabad. PP.55-61.	4-1
Mary Thorpe & David Yrugem, ed., (1987)	Open Learning for Adults,, UK, Longman Open Learning. PP.195-201	4-2

4.4 THE NEED FOR COUNSELLING

Distance education system is considered in-complete and ineffective if the counselling component is absent from the system. Without the provision of counselling and other support services, students will not be able to solve their educational problems. The Planning Committee of the U.K. Open University, reporting in January, 1969, highlighted the need and significance of counselling as:

> "Because of the range of choices inherent in the degree pattern, the `Openness' of the University, and the possibility that many students may wish to enrol who are not at a stage when they could profitably pursue degree studies, we consider the development of the counselling service to be

of particular importance. It will, together with the preparatory courses which we hope to see developed, and the screening effect of the University's foundation courses, be the means by which the university can reduce to a minimum the number of students who embark upon courses only to find that they cannot continue with them".

An efficient open or distance learning programme needs - both for the sake of the students and the management of the programme, an effective counselling service.

For further detail please read the below referred book:

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education. National Book Foundation. Islamabad. PP. 62-66	4-3

4.5 TECHNIQUES OF COUNSELLING

Counselling in distance education is just like the role of a doctor in a hospital. Patients come to the doctor and explain their physical problems. The doctor listens to the problems of their patients and try to satisfy them by using various methods. Same is the case in distance education. Student come to see the counsellors or other concerning persons, tell their educational problems and demand their solution. The counsellor listens their educational and administrative problems carefully and gives suggestions and advice, and tries to satisfy them. It is quite possible that a tutor is assigned the job of counselling as well. He thus performs dual role.

The tutor or counsellor should not try to impose his advice or suggestion against the will of the student. He must share their problems and try to satisfy them by every way and mean. The counsellor should keep in his mind that the characteristics and behaviour of every individual varies from person to person. A specific technique of counselling appropriate for one individual might not be suitable for other one. So tutors/ counsellors have to apply different techniques and methods to tackle different distance learning individuals. Counselling is not a job of an ordinary person. Every person is not able to provide counselling and guidance to others. It requires professionally trained person.

Counselling is the art of giving advice. How does one influence the thoughts of a complete stranger? What will be the outcome? What is the limit beyond which it is inadvisable to advance?

Who is the counsellor? It can be the director of student services, the course tutor, any combination of these, or a special student counsellor who works in co-ordination with them to resolve whatever problem could interfere with the satisfactory completion of the course. Counselling is response to uncertainty of any kind. Whoever responds to uncertainty is a counsellor.

When the assistance of a counsellor is requested in distance education, often neither the student nor the counsellor expects to meet. They may correspond or talk on telephone or by cassette or correspondence by electronic mail or computer. Whichever way or ways they meet, the answer must be specific.

Problems on which advice is sought result from some inadequacy felt by a student. Each student knows within himself/herself that responsibility for success is personal and individual. But it is human nature to look for a scapegoat for one's shortcomings. Therefore, if a lesson or examination seems too difficult, a student contacts teacher or counsellor for assistance.

Small institutions of distance education which have limited facilities can take as long as several weeks to respond to a student's request for advice or information. By that time the student may have forgotten the reason for the question, or have become discouraged because of the feeling that the organisation has no interest. On the other hand, some institutions have a policy of answering each question within a specified time. They so inform all students at the beginning of a course.

Today's distance education institutions which have computerised their research/data/instructions may find that interdepartmental delays sometimes cause anguish among students. It is, of course, possible to codify problems in advance along with prepared responses which will fit individual needs. These responses can then be delivered promptly.

It is the responsibility of the counsellor to be warm, friendly. He should write as though both correspondents are talking together.

An angry or otherwise disturbed person can easily become incoherent. A

wise, well-prepared counsellor will establish the cause of the disturbance and then find a way to eliminate or overcome it. Happy students reflect pleasure with letters of commendations, with suggestions for constructive change, with recommendations to friends and family. Dissatisfied students complain with bitterness to family and friends and to the educational authorities.

Open University must respond to a student as soon as possible. A friendly, responsive letter can clam ruffled nerves and sooth ragged spirits. If a question requires research and cannot be answered immediately, courtesy demands that the student be thanked for writing and informed that an answer will follow as soon as available. Then be sure to get that answer and send it.

Great importance must be attached to the fact that local customs differ not only among countries, but also between provinces, regions, and even local neighborhoods within a city. Family relationships, the status of women, the choice of profession or job - each makes its own demands upon every student. The counsellor must be alert as to what the cry for help really means. It is the counsellor's responsibility to assist the one in trouble whether that difficulty stems from physical, mental, social or emotional causes.

Often money is the problem. Surely it is far wiser to respond to a student by extending credit for a limited time or by granting a "leave of absence" from sending in work projects until the emergency has passed than to allow someone to drop out by default or from embarrassment. Students are more important than money.

A counsellor must be familiar with the aims and subject-matter of each course. Sometimes the counsellor may be asked to restate a passage in the study material in simpler language.

Finally, the counsellor must enjoy dealing with people and their emotions. He/she must take the initiative in establishing a one-to-one relationship which can inspire a student to complete a difficult course, perhaps enroll in another course, and even eventually achieve a career goal.

What works best? The entire counselling programme is to be carefully coordinated and fitted to each individual student.

For further comprehension please read the below mentioned book:

Aggarwal, J.C. (1997)	Educational Vocational Guidance and Counselling, Delhi, Doadar House, PP.109-126	4-4

4.6 COUNSELLING SERVICES

In most of the open universities systems, tutor is the main person who provides counselling and guidance to a large number of students at every stage of their study programme. In distance education, the tutor is expected to do general advisory work, and he does provide some counselling in an in-formal way alongwith tutoring. Counselling means providing the advice, help and support to students whenever they are needed during distance learning courses.

Counselling services are not much less than tutoring. There is a controversy on the implementation of counselling services in open learning institutions. Some institutions are fully equipped with such facilities, but many others see counselling not so important. There are few institutions in the world which have institutionalised this function.

There are three types of counselling:-

1) **Directive Counselling:** It is counsellor directed counselling. Counsellor is the leader or it is he who dominates. It is the counsellor who discovers the problem, diagnoses and provides a solution to it. It is counsellor-oriented. Most of the talking is to be done by the counsellor. In this type of counselling the emphasis is upon the problem. What caused the problem? How can it be best solved?

   According to Aggarwal, J.C (1997, P.137) the basic assumptions of directive counselling can be:-

   i) Counsellor has superior training, experience and information and is competent to give advice about how a problem is to be solved.

ii) The maladjustment of an individual does not entirely impair the intellectual ability of the client. Hence counselling is primarily an intellectual process.

iii) Because of factors as bias, the client is not always capable of solving his problems.

iv) The objectives of counselling are achieved primarily through a problem solving approach.

The role of counsellor in directive counselling can be portrayed by presenting the various steps the counsellor takes. They include:-

a) **Analysis:** The collection of pertinent data by a variety of tools and techniques.

b) **Synthesis:** The mechanical and graphical organisation of the data.

c) **Diagnosis:** Drawing a conclusion about the causes of disturbance.

d) **Prognosis:** A prediction of the future development of the student's problem.

e) Counselling and Treatment

f) Follow-up and Evaluation

The merits of directive counselling as laid down by Rashid, M. (1998) are as under:-

i) It takes less time or it is economical with respect to time. The counsellor can attend others in need.

ii) The counsellor comes to his solution soon. That gives him happiness.

iii) Directive counselling gives more significance to the intellectual rather than to the emotional aspect of individual's personality.

The demerits of directive counselling are as under:-

i) It kills the initiative of the child and as such it makes him helpless.

ii) It does not guide the counselee to be efficient and he can not express himself.

iii) There is lot of regimentation in it because of the dominant role played by the counsellor. It is undemocratic.

iv) Lastly, the counsellee is made dependent upon the counsellor.

2. **Non-Directive Counselling:** Non-directive counselling is also known by various other names like permissive counselling or counsellee or client oriented counselling. Carl Rogers is the leading exponent of this type of counselling.

This type of counselling is totally opposite to directive type of counselling. In non-directive counselling, the counsellor keeps silent to the maximum and allows the counselee to speak freely about the problem. The counsellor passes an occasional remark so as to keep his client on the track. The counsellor asks a few questions and in this way the counsellor helps the pupil to think out the solution of the problem himself and this is the real purpose of counselling. Complete responsibility is placed on the individual and the counsellee plays the primarily role.

Synder summarises basic assumptions of non-directive counselling as follows:-

a) The client has the right to select his own life goals even though these goals may be at variance with those that the counsellor might choose for him.

b) The client will, if given the opportunity, choose for himself the goals most likely to result in the greatest possible happiness.

c) In a reasonably short time the counselling situation should develop to a point at which the client will be able to operate independently.

d) An emotional disturbance is the primary cause of preventing an individual from adjusting properly.

Carl Rogers (1972, P.27) has outlined the role of the counsellor by listing down the steps in the said type of counselling:-

i) The counsellor defines the problematic situation.

ii) The counsellor is permissive so that the client feels free to express his feelings.

iii) The counsellor recognises and classifies the negative and positive feelings of the client.

iv) As insight begins to develop in the client, the counsellor continues to reflect and clarify the new feeling of the client.

v) The counsellor watches for signs at which counselling situation should be terminated. The client or the counsellor may suggest termination.

The merits of the non-directive counselling are as under:-

a) In the present day personnel work, the non-directive counselling movement may be linked to the progressive movement in education. Both stress the freedom of the individual.

b) As therapy it has indisputable values.

c) Non-directive counselling can be compared to confessions made in the church and as such when one is allowed to talk, one brings one's repressed thoughts to the surface and relieves one's tensions.

The demerits of the non-directive counselling are as under:-

i) It is a time consuming process. The counsellee may begin a never ending dialogue.

ii) Accordingly, it may deprive many who wish to seek necessary counselling.

iii) The resources, judgement and wisdom of the client cannot be fully relied upon.

iv) How the most problems be solved by simply talking out things in the interview situation? This is a big limitation.

3. **Electric Counselling (Best Type):** Electric counselling is a combination and synthesis of the previous two types of the counselling or view points. This is the type of counselling, i.e. Directive and Non-directive are combined. Here both the counsellor and the counsellee are active and co-operative. Both do the talking turn by turn. The problem is solved jointly.

This also raises one problem as to how much freedom should the counsellee be allowed? Answer is simple-fifty per cent. But the factors of the personality of the counsellee and the situation should also be taken into consideration.

4.6.1 CENTRALLY AND LOCALLY BASED COUNSELLING

The effectiveness of the counselling service depends upon the interest and initiative of the counsellor and maintaining contact with the concerned students. Counselling services can be more effective if they are maintained and managed locally rather than centrally. In this way the students have easy access to the counsellor and they can frequently meet him/her in order to discuss their problems and for seeking a useful advice. But in case of centrally based counselling the

students will hesitate to come to the counsellor due to lack of easy access to him/her.

4.6.2 TYPES OF SERVICES

There is a debate about what types of counselling services should be provided to students so that every aspect of guidance and counselling cannot be overlooked. Robinson, Bernadette (1981, PP.157-158) described the role of a counsellor in a distance system of UKOU as:

- advising applicants;
- providing induction meetings for new students;
- explaining the UKOU distance learning system;
- advising students on course choice;
- giving guidance on problems of an administrative nature, such as payment of course fees, choice of summer school, withdrawal from courses, late submission of written work, examinations, appeals against tutor's grades non-arrival of course materials;
- helping students to develop study skills;
- helping students to maintain motivation;
- facilitating study group activities (student organised).

For further detail, please read the below mentioned book:

Ramakrishna, Purshpa, C (1994)	"Contact-cum-Counselling: Their Role and Potential, In Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, (1994) Distance Education: An interface, Hyderabad. PP.113-120	4-5

4.6.4 MEDIA OF COUNSELLING

Distance Education system caters to a large number of students belonging to far away and remote areas with the help of different media support. Similarly counselling can be provided to distant learners by the use of various media such as face-to-face, telephone, counselling by letter, counselling handbook, by audio and video cassettes, broadcasting, computer or interactive video-disc etc. Face-to-face counselling is the most important medium for counselling of all kinds but is comparatively expensive in terms of inaccessibility to learners.

Telephone counselling is another popular medium but relatively less accessible to most of the students in developing countries. Majority of the students belongs to remote and less developed areas where it is very hard to find easy telephone facility.

Counselling is also done by letters or circulars in developing countries because it is cheaper than any other form of media. But this type of medium is time consuming through less responsive.

Sometimes counselling is provided with the help of radio and T.V. But it appears more informative than counselling. Counselling through broadcast is only one-way communication and students are mostly unaware about their timings.

For further detail, please read the below referred material:

Harris, N.D.C. (1979)	Preparing Educational Materials, London Croom Helm. PP.81-91	4-6

4.7 ACTIVITY

1. Discuss your study problems with your tutor in the study centre. Observe his/her way of counselling and prepare a summary of your discussion.

2. Write down your own experience of counselling by the tutor concerning your personal problems.

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Prepare a chart of counselling techniques and hang it in your study centre.

4.8 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Explain the concept of counselling.

Q.No.2 Critically examine the significance of counselling in the system of distance education.

Q.No.3 "Counselling can be regarded as backbone of the student support services in distance education". To what extent do you agree with the statement.

Q.No.4 Discuss different techniques of counselling in student support services.

Q.No.5 Describe counselling services provided in any institution of distance education.

Q.No.6 "Tutor must be expert in the counselling techniques otherwise the desired objectives of effective teaching cannot be achieved".

Discuss.

Q.No.7 "The main purpose of counselling is to assist the individual in his difficulties in the study". Discuss.

Q.No.8 "Counselling is important because it is the only way of clarifying teaching needs, reconciling conflicting demands of home and work, and coming to terms with isolation and previous experience". Discuss.

Q.No.9 Critically examine the potential role of contact-cum-counselling sessions in student support services.

Q.No.10 Discuss various counselling services. Give examples in support of your answer.

Q.No.11 Critically examine the role of media in counselling .

Q.No.12 Write short notes on the following:

a) Centrally and local based counselling services.

b) Types of counselling services.

c) Need for counselling

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UNIT NO.5

TECHNIQUES OF STUDENT SUPPORT

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

5.1 INTRSODUCTION

The techniques of student support are probably the most fundamental to the learning process. Such techniques have been derived from psychological theory and research. The techniques are based on certain principles.

Normally tutors are instructed in how to utilise almost every aspect of the environment to capture and sustain students' attention. Particularly emphasized is the effectiveness of engaging as many of the student's senses as possible when initiating a lesson. Instruction which appeals to sight and hearing and perhaps also smell and touch certainly gains and holds the learner's attention better than utilising only sight or hearing alone. The increased use of multi-media presentation in distance education is certainly in accordance with the motivational principle.

According to Kennedy, (1968, P.47) "researches have indicated that children improve dramatically in motivation and subsequently in subject-matter achievement, once they are able to independently set learning goals and monitor their progress toward their goals. At this level of schooling, goals are actually selected by the student from among the learning objectives prescribed by the school. Inexperienced learners need to learn to set realistic goals which they can accomplish with a reasonable amount of effort.

Students in distance education system are particularly much more free to set their own learning goals. Many students of distance education are presumably proficient in setting realistic short-term and long-term educational goals. However, some may not be so proficient and may consistently set goals which are either impossible to achieve or far below their capability. Both types of behaviour may be due to an exaggerated fear of failure alongwith an acquired tendency to ascribe out-comes as being due solely to a ability and luck rather than personal effort. Both types of un-realistic goal-setting have a high probability of resulting in non-completion of a particular course or, more drastically, termination of all education endeavours.

The tutor of the distance education students can diagnose and help the learner change his self-defeating behaviour. To do this, the tutor must have comprehensive information regarding the background of students. A student with a record of failures or incompletes needs special help in overcoming the adverse motivational effects of past failure. The tutor can guide him in selecting learning

tasks etc. Here the role of tutor will be of a counsellor too.

Further, Childs (1963) and Wedemeyer (1963) have stressed the importance of rapid and complete feedback to the student/learner.

In addition Baath (1972) has confirmed this traditional wisdom and also indicated some parameters which distinguish effective forms of feedback. Feedback has two functions: (1) to help the learner ascertain which of his performances are correct or adequate and (2) to enable the student to correct and improve performance.

Certain skills can be learnt by observing and imitating a demonstration. Further re-enforcing by the tutor is another important technique of student support.

Keeping in view, the importance of the student support techniques effort has been made to highlight all such important techniques in this unit.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, you should be able to:

1. identify the individual learning styles;
2. discuss the teaching of study skills;
3. describe the conducting of tutorials in the system of distance education;
4. evaluate the two way communication facility in the system of distance education;
5. explain the advantages of group meetings; and
6. analyse the role of interactive activities in distance education.

5.3 IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUAL LEARNING STYLES

Over the past few years, educators at all levels have become increasingly

aware that individuals differ widely in intellectual abilities, skills and conceptual learning styles. Accompanying this growing awareness has come a heightened conviction on the part of educators at the elementary and secondary school levels that instructional programmes should accommodate individual differences among learners and thus meet the need of all students.

However, it would also be fair to indicate that the researchers, curriculum developers, and school administrators and teachers involved in this movement have focused largely upon accommodating instruction to cognitive differences among learners. Each learner's educational programme is tailored to suit him in terms of his level of acquisition of requisite knowledge and skills, his rate of learning, and, to some degree, his style of learning. But, just as learners differ in educationally important ways on cognitive dimensions, they also differ widely on affective or what we might call motivational factors. Moreover, the latter differences probably account for a much larger portion of the variation in the performance on learning tasks than do the former.

While the system of Individually Guided Motivation (IGM) which has resulted from these efforts is intended for the elementary school level, several aspects of IGM may be of interest to those involved in developing programme for the adult independent or distance learner. Certainly, motivation plays an important role in the learning of adults. The coming paragraphs will discuss some of the principles of motivation, indicate briefly how they are applied in the IGM system, and suggest some ways in which they might be effectively implemented in correspondence or other forms of distance education.

A definition which we have found useful for guiding the development of IGM states that "motivation is an aroused state of an individual characterised by the student's initially attending to the teacher and then working at assignments and activities until they are completed". The motivational state of an individual student is directly related to how well he learns and achieves as well as to how he conducts himself as an independent learner. The term 'Individually Guided' is used to emphasis the fact that the individual rather than the class is the instructional unit.

The motivational principles of IGM have been derived from psychological theory and research. Those principles which appear to have direct relevance for adults as well as children are stated as internal conditions of the learner which determine his level of motivation. From the principles guidelines can be derived

which can direct teacher behaviour or the design of curriculum materials. Performance on such tasks provides the most information to the learner concerning his ability and effort; success at these tasks promote a feeling of competence. A learner who sets goals of intermediate difficulty for himself is constantly reinforced for expending effort to achieve success. He becomes less likely to rationalise lack of effort by ascribing outcome to ability or luck.

It should be noted that goal-setting behaviour as described above refers largely to the setting and attaining of immediate short-term learning goals. The assumption is that proficiency in this type of behaviour is vital to the ongoing learning process. The setting and striving for long-term educational and life goals is motivationally important. However, proficiency in setting and attaining relatively short-term goals is a necessary precursor to attaining more remote goals. For example, it is doubtful that the long-range goal of becoming a doctor will be realised if the student cannot set and attain such sub-goals as gaining sufficient mastery of anatomy or biochemistry.

Educational technology has provided new methods which captilise on the motivational principles of feedback. Programmed instructional material is designed specifically to provide immediate and frequent situations to provide rapid and accurate feedback (Baath, 1972). Such devices are useful, but one must keep in mind the tradeoff involved between efficiency and the possible adverse motivational effects of complete reliance on such depersonalised techniques. Feedback by personal contact either by mail, by telephone become an increasingly important motivational technique as the utilisation of mechanised learning-feedback systems grows. This is because personalised feedback can provide reinforcement as well as knowledge of results to the learner.

Many skills can best be learned by observing and imitating a model. For example, learning the various strokes in golf or tennis is facilitated when these actions are demonstrated by a skilled player. Modeling as a motivational principle refers to the observation and imitation of behaviours indicative of positive attitudes toward warning. In IGM, teachers are trained to be good models themselves and are encouraged to provide children access to others who may be good models.

Reinforcing and providing feedback are not the same thing. Feedback is limited to providing information about the correctness of a performance. Reinforcement is much more broadly defined as anything which follows a

behaviour that tends to strengthen that behaviour. Many adults as well as children need more than information they sometimes need to know that someone approves of their performance. (Rashid, M. 1998)

In IGM, schedules of reinforcement may be set up for underachievers or for children who have been classified at discipline problems. Reinforcement (sometimes, concrete rewards but usually social reinforcers) are made contingent upon behaviour such as attending to learning tasks, initiating learning tasks, persisting in tasks etc. External reinforcement is gradually decreased as the child begins to engage in learning activities because of the satisfaction he derives from the activity itself or because of the reinforcement provided by success in achieving a self-set goal. This decreased reliance on external reinforcement from others is only possible if learning activities and goals are meaningful to and have intrinsic interest of students.

Many adults experience pleasure (reinforcement) from engaging in interesting activities which challenge and exercise their skills and abilities. However, in many cases an activity is more likely to be initiated, with greater effort expended for its completion. The desired reinforcement may vary widely from person to person. For example, some adults may engage in formal independent study for the joy of acquiring new knowledge and skills. Others may experience this pleasure but also find added incentive from gaining the approval of relatives and peers. Still others may view the study activity as a means to promotion and increased earning power. For many, all of these things plus others are desired ends and thus can operate as reinforcers.

A large discrepancy between an adult's expectations and the actual rewards he receives from engaging in a course of independent study can quickly kill motivation and lead to termination. One way to prevent this is through careful counselling of the potential student so that he can select courses which will come closer to fulfilling his expectations.

In the proceeding paragraphs we have examined some of the principles of motivation on which IGM is based. It has hopefully been demonstrated that these principles are relevant to distance education of adults. Of course, these principles are likely to be incomplete for the purposes of adult distance educators. On the other hand, these principles are probably the ones most fundamental to the learning process.

The motivational principles and guidelines have been stated in general form. As in any other field, it is up to the practioner of the art to design and test specific applications of such principles. For example, IGM consists of a set of motivational instructional procedures which are specific ways of implementing the motivational principles within the distance learners. the procedures are highly successful with children because elementary school teachers with the necessary experience and savvy had a large hand in designing them.

Similarly, while various ways of applying the principles to distance education have been suggested in this section of the unit. It is really up to practioners to evolve particular procedures or products which incorporate the principles in a way that is palatable to their audience.

Some additional techniques for focussing attention which can easily be incorporated into distance education courses or other forms of learning are:

i) Raising a question is more likely to hold a student's attention than giving information.

ii) Presenting something novel to the student or learner is more likely to gain his attention than presenting something familiar.

iii) Changing the tempo and face of activity is more likely to increase attention than maintaining an even tempo.

iv) Involving the learner in discussion is more likely to hold his attention than presenting information.

v) Ensuring the learner's understanding helps to hold his attention.

Perhaps the principles can best serve as a checklist. In developing courses for the distant learner, the educator might ask himself the following. Given the characteristics of the target learners the content, skills and attitudes to be taught and the resources available how can best:

- focus attention effectively

- help learners set and attain meaningful goals

- provide feedback
- provide dynamic models
- provide appropriate reinforcement.

If these guidelines are kept explicity in mind during the development of distance education courses, the end product will certainly be better in terms of promoting learning than if they are not.

In teaching-learning process, the role of the tutor and distance students has an immense importance. The process never happens if one of them is absent from it. The most common arrangement of teaching in formal education is by use of the lecture, with the teacher as active participant and the learners as passive receptors. But in distance learning system, it is reverse that the tutor is passive participant while student is active learner.

There are some principles involved in individual learning methods. A variety of descriptions are used for different aspects of individual learning. Some of the commonly used individual learning styles in Distance Education systems are teaching of study skills, conduct of tutorials, two-way communication, group meetings and interactive activities.

In order to gain some insight into the individuals learning styles, please read the following pages.

Roger Lewis (1981)	How to Tutor in an Open-Learning Scheme: Self-Study Version, London, CET, PP.148-152.	5-1

5.3.1 TEACHING OF STUDY SKILLS

Study skills are so important in the life of a student that his/her failure or success in his/her academic career very much depends upon it. Different educationists explain the term "Study Skills" in different ways. Some say it is the best way of acquiring knowledge, others point of view is that it is a systematic study habits, and so on. By analysing all such views, one can explain the term

"study skills" as these are the skills or strategies that a student employs to study and come to grip with the study materials independently and efficiently.

Study skills play a very vital role in distance education in which teachers and students are at a distance most of the time in the teaching learning process. In this system of education, students mostly have to depend upon the course materials because of occasional face-to-face contact with tutors/teachers. If a student does not develop study habits and that study should be meaningful, he/she will have to face adverse results in most of the cases. He must know how to study the distance study material and what will be the proper time to study it. He must consult his tutors and seek advice and guidance about how to use the study material. He should wait for the tutors' comments to clarify his doubts. A student of distance learning system also depends upon audio-video material but its effectiveness will be entirely based on how well he has developed his study habits.

Broadly speaking following are the study skills needed by the learner to succeed:-

1. Reading learning material speedily.

2. Comprehending learning material easily.

3. Taking and making notes speedily and accurately.

4. Listening carefully to the tutor.

5. Comprehending broadcasts.

6. Understanding the questions in the question paper and answering them with speed, accuracy and exhaustiveness.

Moreover, students of distance education are generally confronted with the following types of questions:-

1 **How to study?** This implies: (i) preparing a study time-table; (ii) studying everyday, whatever a bit it may be; (iii) studying from the very start of the session; (iv) studying the tough topics when one is at one's best; (v) making a definite note of what is to be achieved in each study session; (vi)

recapitulating the matter after every five minutes; (vii) writing main points; (viii) having break for about 10 minutes after each hour of study; and (ix) studying for about 2 to 3 hours in one session leaving enough time for recreation.

2. **Where to study?** This involves: (i) Finding a place as free from distraction as possible; (ii) obtaining the equipment needed for study; (iii) having sufficient light at the place of study; (iv) having light from the left; and (v) providing for plenty of fresh air.

3. **How to read and study better?** Two Rs are very important for reading and studying better. They are Recall and Review.

   Stop after each section of the material recall what you have read and make note of the main ideas and important details. Review what you have read during first half of the session and test the accuracy of your notes. It should be kept in mind that studying is a more comprehensive term than reading. What needs to be studied is always somewhat harder than what is intended for reading. We may read for pleasure or recreation but we do not study for pleasure and recreation. Study is always utilitarian.

   The following points are suggested to keep in view while reading and studying:

   1. Keep the purpose of the reading and studying in mind.

   2. Quickly run through the entire material that you want to study in one sitting of your programme of study.

   3. Quickly run through each paragraph that you want to study before taking it up.

   4. Pick out the main idea in each paragraph often contained in the first or last sentence.

5. Look for important details, e.g. examples, proofs for support of main idea.

6. Take note of the diagram and illustrations which are intended to supplement the textual material.

7. Have an open mind. Do not take author's words as gospel truth.

8. Think yourself for examples and look for the application in the light of your own experience.

9. Skip paragraph and whole sections if you find them very difficult.

10. Use dictionary whenever new words crop up in your reading.

11. Make glossaries of words commonly used in your subject.

4. **How to read?** In this regard, following care should be taken:

   1. Do not mouth the words or say them aloud as you read.

   2. Read in units.

   3. Practise reading faster.

   4. Only the eyes need to hover the written lines. Do not run you fingers below the lines while reading.

5. **How to make notes?** Note-making is very important for comprehending a topic. This exercise keeps us active and concentrating. It provides a written record for revision.

   Following points may be remembered while taking notes:

a) Notes should include author's main ideas and important details.

b) Notes should incorporate the logical structure of the author's argument.

c) Notes should include important references made by the author.

d) As far as possible the learner should use his own words.

e) Notes may be stored in a loose-leaf binder.

6. **How to learn from T.V. and Radio Broadcasting?** The points to remember are as follows:

1) Pay close attention to what is spoken or shown.

2) Make a few notes if possible.

3) Pick up the main line of argument from the programme.

4) Immediately after the telecast or broadcast, try to reconstruct the programme in your memory or in a note form.

5) Discuss the contents of the broadcast or telecast with your fellow student.

7. **How to deal with examinations?** Broadly speaking two issues are involved in this regard. It includes:

1) Effective preparation for examination. Following points should be borne in mind:

a) Prepare a study-schedule from the time you begin your course.

b) Study systematically from the time your course begins.

c) Study lesson notes received very carefully.

d) prepare your assignments with the assistance of some books suggested in the notes.

e) Go through previous question papers thoroughly. This exercise is very helpful in knowing not only the trend of question papers but also various aspects of a topic. In fact going through the question papers is a valuable educative exercise.

f) In the first instance write outline plans for answers.

g) Write complete `model' answers for as many questions as possible.

h) Give yourself `model' examinations.

i) If possible, discuss some of the questions with two or three other students.

j) Study two or three good books on each paper, besides lesson sheets or units received from the Institution of distance education.

k) Revise your work after the end of the week.

Activities on the examination day and before the day of examination and in the examinational hall are as given below:

A. Before and on the examination day.

a) Do not try to learn new things.

b) Revise normally.

c) Relax moderately.

d) Go to bed early.

e) Rise as usual.

f) Gather examination equipment.

B. Advice for work in the examination hall:

1. Ensure that the answer book is complete and contains all the pages as mentioned.

2. Write the roll number etc., at the appropriate place.

3. Study all the questions thoroughly.

4. Decide the questions that you would like to take up.

5. Attempt all the questions.

6. Budget your time for all the questions.

7. Answer your best question first but stick to your time budget.

8. Plan your answer by jotting down the main ideas.

9. Write direct and to the point.

10. Take care of your spellings and grammar.

11. Write legibly.

12. When you have finished writing, check through your answer for necessary corrections.

The most important points regarding examination are also given below:

i) Preparation for an examination begins at the outset of your course

and not in the last four or five weeks before the examination.

ii) Remember that the length of an answer is not necessarily a guide to its merit as an answer. A good candidate is distinguished by his capacity to select the relevant facts and set out his knowledge or reasoning in a logical way, or by his mastery of fundamental principles and his capacity to apply them to the solution of given problems.

For more details, please read the below mentioned material.

Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.93-99	5-2

5.3.2 CONDUCT OF TUTORIAL

Tutorial is follow-up study of lectures. It is highly invidualised remedial teaching. The strategy is based on following principles:

1. Principle of individual differences. This strategy involves the following steps:

   a) Diagnosis: After delivering the lecture in the general class, the tutor tries to find those students who have some problems in understanding the content. These students are divided into particular groups on the basis of similar problems.

   b) Prescription: The tutor tries to generate teaching relating to the needs, abilities and capabilities of each group of students. These classes are known as tutorial-classes.

   c) Follow-up: The tutor tries to evaluate his teaching in terms of learning-outcomes of the learners.

2. Type of tutorial classes.

   1. Supervision tutorials - In this type of tutorials, tutor selects

those students who are of above average intelligence. Tutor assigns a problem to the student and he is asked to present a paper on that problem. The student presents his paper related to the problem before the tutor and his classmates. The tutor observes and supervises his paper-presentation. The audience may put questions and he has to answer them. When he is in a difficulty to satisfy the queries of the audience, the tutor helps him by giving appropriate and satisfactory answer to the listeners.

2. Group tutorials - These types of tutorials are arranged for students of low intelligence. Those students, who have difficulties in classroom teaching, are grouped together on the basis of nature of the problem. Tutor provides them remedial teaching and thus, helps to make the lecture clear and legible.

3. Practical tutorials - This type of remedial classes tries to remove difficulties in practical-work. These tutorials can be organised after lecture and practicals in the subjects like Science, Home-Science, Art, Music etc. These tutorial are basically employed to achieve psychomotor objectives.

3. Advantages of tutorials are as under:-

a) As individual differences are taken into consideration, it is supposed to be an effective and efficient way of teaching.

b) tutor is like a doctor to diagnose the weakness of the learners and on the basis of these weaknesses, he provides specific treatment of teaching.

c) Tutor is helping and co-operative to the learners, thus, he gains the confidence of the learners in revealing their problems.

4. The disadvantages of tutorials are as under:-

i) Due to over crowded classes, it is very difficult for the tutor

to solve the problems of each student and in each and every subject.

ii) The time alloted for teaching is so tight that remedial teaching cannot be possible at each and every step.

iii) Feeling of jealousy inculcates in the tutorial groups.

iv) Even in tutorial groups, equal opportunities are not provided for all the students. There are some students who dominate the tutorial group.

v) Tutor, sometimes, becomes biased and does not show equal interest towards the group.

However, the above disadvantages can be resolved if the following cares are taken.

1) There should be some criteria for forming the tutorial groups.

2) It is the moral duty of a tutor to be just for his pupils.

3) The tutor should be sympathetic, co-operative and have patience towards the weak students who may demand further tuition.

4) The tutor should not opt democratic behaviour so that he is able to encourage and motivate students to take part in discussion.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Desmond, K., Sewart, D. Holmberg, H, (1983)	Distance Education: Interna-tional Perspective, London, Croom Helm. PP.334-335.	5-3

5.3.3 TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION FACILITY

The influence of educational television, radio, programming and more or less inexpensive teaching and learning aids has made itself felt at all levels of education. The new approaches to instruction have started an era of unparalleled educational revolution. Not the least, teaching by distance education has been profoundly affected by the present technological explosion.

The concept of the distance education course has undergone a radical change. It has been broadened and diversified. Teaching by television or radio, sound tapes, or programmed instruction now in fact often forms an element in modern distance education, which in principle may even be based on courses of an entirely non-verbal character. But whether the distance education course is written, televised or taped, one of its fundamentals is still the two-way channel of communication between the student and the instructor. As one of the few really distinguishing features of distance education, it deserves more attention than it generally receives. Particularly the recent focussing of attention - necessitated by the technological development - on the design and nature of the course material has tended to obscure the function of this two-way communication.

Two-way communication is one of the humanising elements in distance education. It is essentially dependent on the tutor and, like most human relationships, is fraught with many problems of adaptation and cooperation. Yet it is one of the determinants of a successful written instruction scheme. Teaching through distance education is essentially and perhaps paradoxically an exercise in personal participation and mutual responsibility.

Self teaching, which is a term sometimes used to describe distance education instruction, seems to imply an obliqueness of the tutor student relationship. There is nevertheless a one-to-one, direct interplay between student and tutor, even though do not meet face to face. The personalities of the administrator, course-writer, tutor and student together form a pattern that is creative and dynamic only as long as those taking part in the educational process are emotionally and intellectually involved.

The two-way communication is at present more often than not through written notes. Other forms that have been attempted are telephone contacts and the exchange of recorded sound tapes, both of which enable the parties involved

to carry on a regular conversation. The sending of recorded material between the student and tutor has been particularly practised by different Open Universities of the world. On the basis of these facts a few main principles may be formulated, regarding the type of communication required.

Two-way communication has two principal functions - **an instructional and a motivational.** They are in practice interwoven. But it is usually possible in distance education to say that, from a formal point of view, some communications between student and teacher are primarily instructional and others primarily motivational. An example of the first kind is when the student submits his assignments for correction, comments and marking. An example of the primarily motivational kind of communication is student counselling, which chiefly deals with the individual student's private problems and difficulties of study, apart from details of subject matter.

Motivationally, spoken communications are probably better than written ones. This favours the use of telephones, tape recorders, etc. in distance education. From an instructional point of view, the immediate advantages of spoken communication are not always clear. In very many instances a "spoken" communication is a great instructional asset, viz. when some kind of speaking proficiency is one of the educational objectives the instruction is to achieve. Technical innovations must not, however, be sought simply for their innovative value. Ours is still, in spite of radio, television and films, a culture that fundamentally rests on written symbols. In a great many fields it is the quite natural to have both written courses and written two-way communication. Differences in age among the students are certain conditions work better from written instructions.

In the future it is extremely unlikely that distance education organisations will employ a single type of two-way communication only. They may use a variety of communication channels. For example, the students alternating between written communication, audio-visual material in different forms and possibly computerised instruction. Two-way communication between student and tutor and vice versa consists of at least two stages, preferably three: (1) student to tutor, (2) tutor back to student, and (3) (confirming communication) student to tutor again. The two-way communication should furthermore in principle not be automatic, like a self-checking exercise, but should allow the student and tutor structure their own programme.

The exchange of communications takes place in a time flow, which may affect the nature of the communication. The time factor is especially pronounced when, as in distance education, the communications are set by mail, leading to a delay between despatch and answer of from 3-5 days to perhaps 2-3 weeks. During this period both tutor and student undergo changes. New information and delay in receiving information alter their relationship, their instructional and motivational needs. The shorter the lapse of time between the exchange of communications, the better. Even if the time-lag is reduced to a minimum, however, the problem in essence remains. The very process of instruction brings about a modification which influences the direction and aims of the educational process. The motivational factors are those that are probably most affected; the student's sum of knowledge, his rate of progress and the time the exchange of communications takes are all factors determining his ambitions, endeavours and view of his own present and possible situation.

It has been found that adults have difficulties in learning, if the relationship between the information field and control becomes complicated. For example, where subjects could only observe the results of their actions through a mirror or in a different plane or through a visual he faces the difficulty of translation that is the act of receiving the information in one channel and reorganising (it) for use in another. The two-way communication in teaching adults by distance education approach should, therefore, perhaps not be "mixed", i.e., not require receiving a communication in one medium and preparing an answer in another.

The existence of the two-way communication - the interplay of human relationships, even when the student is studying on his own makes the teaching by distance education more than just another technical gadget in the field of education. It can be almost as "living" a kind of instruction as face-to-face teaching, although in some forms superficially more impersonal. It has, too, unjustly suffered from the many soullessly mechanised examples of distance education that can be found in all parts of the world. The situation resembles the one that would exist, if the image of face-to-face teaching were determined by the type of rote learning prevailing in large areas of the world today, where unqualified teachers struggle to earn their subsistence in a low-status they do not care for.

The element of communication is rightly considered a back-bone of the distance education system. The more stronger and easier the communication

system, the more effective will be the distance education. Communication in the form of correspondence, or telephone is not less valuable than face-to-face chats because of the element of feedback. With one-way communication media, such as print or broadcast signals, feedback is extremely absent from it. In teaching learning process such media should be used which is capable of supporting adequate feedback. No doubt, the quality of any educational transaction or activity is dependent upon tow-way communication; so every technology of distance education must be capable of providing feedback to learners.

Many educationist of distance education give due importance to two-way communication in the system. Moore (1986, P.11) says that the effectiveness of distance education is determined by a complex interaction of variables which include learner variables, teacher variables, subject variables, and communication variables. Distance education is dependent upon communication technology, but effective communication and instruction are considered independent of these devices. Robert, D (1984, P.21) explains as:

> "...it is only through the sound application of basic principles of communication and instruction, not through bigger and fancier gadgets, that we will be able to enhance distance education through technology. The devices of communication may be remarkably successful at making information available to students. But the way information is delivered has very little effect on the way it is understood. We can only facilitate understanding by good planning and sound instruction"

For a detailed study, please read the book mentioned below:

Holmberg, B. (1981)	Status and Trends of Distance Education, London, Kogan Page, PP.83-88.	5-4

5.3.4 GROUP DISCUSSION

Group meeting is a technique in which students are motivated and encouraged to listen others and then express their point of view to others. Students learn from group discussion as to how they can convince others by using effective and fluent language; how to justify the things. The group discussion if it is a well organised can enable the distance education learner to learn about the interaction as well as about the views of others. The role of each participant in group

meetings is important as he has to involve in that discussion and express his point of view regardless of others agree or do not agree with him.

Clearly there is no universally accepted method for any of the skills like taking notes on written materials, tutorials, and broadcasts. Different methods will suit different students. The tutor-counselor, by discussing a variety of approaches with groups or with individuals, should set the students thinking about the way they study and how they can work more efficiently. In addition to helping students acquire the skills and attitudes necessary for them to become effective independent learners, an absolute necessity since the amount of face-to-face tuition gradually. The tutor-counsellor has a responsibility to familiarise his students with group learning techniques, developing an attitude of interdependence which will initiate and sustain study groups. One of the most important aspects of University education is the discussing of one's work with fellow students. This occurs informally in all higher educational institutions, and has been formalised in the Open University by encouraging students to form study groups.

Much of the success of these groups depends on the training students receive in their preliminary. In this context, the tutor/ counsellor can help prepare his students by using a variety of techniques himself and explaining the reason why he is employing a particular technique with the material under discussion. One of the main elements of successful discussion is a commitment on behalf of all concerned to prepare for the work and, int his context, some groups have found structured group discussion methods helpful.

Not all group work need discussion. Science students may be encouraged to get together to work on their home experiments (although actual experimental work is not allowed in most study centres); Mathematics students may form small problem solving groups. The tutor need not be involved in discussion work all the time. Groups should be encouraged to continue on their own while the tutor/counsellor sees individual students may or may not remain present. Students may wish to come in for study group work in the weeks between normal study center sessions and the tutor-counsellor should help them to prepare for such meetings even though he will not be present himself. By making explicit his reasons for certain actions in training students in the effective use of group work, the tutor-counselor can lay the foundation for effective study groups at intermediate and graduate levels.

Being responsible for both teaching and counselling gives the tutor-counsellor a very close insight into the development of his students and, as he gets to know the students individually, identifying and alleviating difficulties becomes a matter of mutual concern. However, he must be aware that some students may feel apprehensive at approaching the tutor/counsellor with academic difficulties. They may be afraid to display their ignorance by asking questions in group sessions in case it indicates to the tutor/counsellor and to other students that they lack knowledge or understanding.

For further detail, please read the below referred material.

Mary Thrope & David Grugeon, (1987)	Open Learning for Adults, UK, Longman Open Learning. PP.275-312	5-5

5.3.5 INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

Most theories of learning explain that the learning will be effective if in learning process, the learner responds in same way to the learning material. It is not enough for a student just to observe or read the learning material rather has to do something with it. They must demonstrate that they have understood completely or upto some extent. Feedback is an important element in learning process that provides learners with knowledge of results, to demonstrate that they have learned correctly, or takes the form of a reaction from another person, which provides an indication of how well the learner has learned.

In the system of distance education, learners generally belong to remote areas and miles away from the nearest distance educational institution or study centre and thus are not engaged for the greater part of their time in meaningful face-to-face interaction contrary to students of conventional institutions. It is a fact that both conventional and distance education students, spend a large part of their study time interacting with books and other study materials. Due to occasional face-to-face interaction in distance education, the designers and writers of distance educational materials include interactive activities in the material so that the distance education student can easily respond to material and get feedback from it. He can even judge his ability of grasping knowledge by the help of interactive activities.

The famous Latin Maxim, "Precepts pauca, exercitatio multa", as a principle of education is as true today as it was when it was first propounded. The fewer the precepts and the more the exercises the better. No one can learn by mere listening to or looking at principles. One must actually attempt to do something if one is to learn to do it at all. No one can claim any competence in driving a motor car by simply reading a book on learning How to Drive. If he is to drive a car at all, he must learn by actually driving one. Learning is by doing and not by mere looking. this is why questions, exercises and tests are all important learning experiences. Exercises are even more important in distance education where the main communication, at least in many developing countries, is through the written word, or the correspondence lecture. Oral questions are impossible in this situation because of the absence of any response and feedback. Written questions can be used, but because of the physical distance between the teacher and the student there is no immediate feedback and this has an adverse effect on the interest of the student. A "question-and-answer" session is almost non-existent in what we would like to call the conventional type of distance education.

While still on this subject of the need for activity in distance teaching we must caution that activity is a magic word, it is by no means a panacea. Activity for its own sake is just as bad as too much activity or too little activity. In each case, it is purely an academic exercise without any learning experiences at all. such a situation leads a student to dislike activity. Furthermore, for activity to be useful and to be appreciated by the student, it must be meaningful, that is, the student must see the need for it. Student activities are necessary because they help the student, to learn, and to test himself what and how much he has learnt.

Because of the special conditions of distance education not every form of activity that takes place in classroom teaching finds a ready place in distance education. The lack of personal face-to-face contact between student and teacher is one such condition that distinguishes distance education from classroom teaching. The "question-and-answer" technique which is used frequently in a face to face situation, has serious handicaps in distance teaching. Of these activities, exercises and tests play a very important part. As Rashid, M (1998) points out in his article on `Exercises and Tests', considering correspondence education as an educational system in which written messages pass between students and instructor, we have to bear in mind two essential points, namely: that correspondence education approximates closely to self-teaching where the student's share of activity is directed or controlled by self-teaching. He goes on to

add that any good tuition tends to make the student capable of effective self-teaching and, therefore, this essential point should be borne in mind while considering the exercises and tests in distance education.

In distance education no less than in classroom teaching, exercises are the most effective stimuli for the conversion of passive reception into active learning. An instructor should throughout the lecture use such motivating devices as putting questions or placing problems at the beginning of each course, at the beginning of a lesson or just before the exercise itself. It need not be emphasised too strongly that good exercises must not be just media for reinforcing the things learned; they must be aids to the self-development of the individual in a broader sense. They must help the individual to acquire the faculty of learning in a changing world. Tests are used to give the student and the instructor evidence of the student's level of performance, and should initiate both communication and didactic correspondence. In distance education tests must also check the effectiveness of the lesson itself and the degree of preparedness for a final examination.

When arranging questions, exercises, or tests for distance education courses, one faces a far more difficult problem than in face to face situation, because there is no immediate feedback between the teacher and the student within a series of lessons. The questions and answers are independent of each other. The long lapse between question and reply, assignment and correction, and lack of quick interaction, are in fact the greatest limitation in student activity in distance education. By employing all modern methods of the psychology of learning to guide the students carefully and to evolve their latent potentialities, and by careful correction, comment and evaluation of the students' assignments, activity can be enhanced. It is not enough for the tutor to recognise that a student has made a mistake or has not understood or mastered the lesson, it is his prime duty to find out the reasons. Therefore, the correction of initial lessons plays an important if not decisive role as the tutor can ascertain from them whether the student's personal capacities are adequate to satisfy the standard of the course he is following.

In order to evoke activity from the student and hence achieve the objectives of distance education, the tutor must ask himself the following questions: Do I have the knowledge of the subject to the extent that it more than meets any student's requirements? Has the subject matter which I shall give to the students chance of ever becoming functional and life-enriching in the pupils? This is necessary because one can imagine a distance education course, no more than

half a page in length, with nothing but a list of titles of books to be read for examination.

In order to activate motives of learning among students, it is very important to influence the attitude of students to the learning process and this is why the receipt of good marks has such a positive effect upon students. However, it must be pointed out that sometimes even negative effects can evoke a real desire to learn. One of the strongest motivational forces that a tutor in distance education student take advantage of is the desire and need by man for recognition. By correcting and commenting students' work realistically and meaningfully the tutor can transform the initial readiness to learn into a delight to learn.

On the others hand, the tutor must avoid trying to evoke delight in learning in the student by unrealistically inciting the anticipation of success if the student experiences a failure instead of the promised or anticipated success this will create a temporary distaste for learning. As the student's self-esteem deteriorates, his attitude towards the learning process, and hence the degree of his activity will be adversely affected. Therefore, in order to obtain lasting results, direct motivation is better than indirect motivation.

Finally, it may be stressed that activity depends on the tutor and his mode of evaluation or what he expects his pupils to achieve on the nature of the lesson, on the student himself in terms of what he can or cannot do, and on such factors as home environment and the degree of fluency in the medium of instruction.

Be this as it may the important thing is that, given a reasonably favourable atmosphere, one can learn what he has to learn in keeping with the limits of intellectual abilities. The fact does remain that whether it is distance education or not, the written work, exercise or test is the condition of achievement control. The prove whether or not the student has really acquired the material taught and has absorbed and understood it to the extent that he can respond independently in his own words and according to the simplest possible method of solution. After all, the goals of education are no less than the ability to think logically; to express an idea properly and concisely; to perceive the essentials of an object and to distinguish between values. The student needs the tutor's guidance and help to perceive his mistakes and to learn how to avoid them. If a distance education course does not bring this about that course is a failure.

For further study, please read the following referred material.

Desmond, Keegan, Sewart, D., & Holmberg, B. (ed) (1983)	Distance Education: Interna-tional Perspective, London, Croom Helm. PP.339-359	5-6

5.4 ACTIVITIES

1. When working with the students, you would like to spend your time behaving in the following way:

2. Draw a diagram indicating the main principles to be kept in mind for interactive activities.

3. List below the important steps for teaching of study skills.

4. Discuss the main functions of two-way communication with your tutor in the study centre and prepare the report of your discussion.

5.5 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have studied the unit, now please answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Critically examine the student support techniques in distance education system.

Q.No.2 "The techniques of student support are probably the most fundamental to the learning process. Such techniques have been derived from psychological theory and research". Discuss.

Q.No.3 Discuss the principles of students motivation.

Q.No.4 Describe the term Individual Guided Motivation (IGM). Give examples of effective IGM.

Q.No.5 "In teaching learning process, the role of tutor and distance students has an immense importance that the process never happens if one of them is absent from it." Discuss.

Q.No.6 Critically examine the role of study skills in the student support services.

Q.No.7 Discuss the main functions of two-way communication.

Q.No.8 According to Moore (1986) "The effectiveness of distance education is determined by a complex interaction of variables which include learner variables, teacher variables, subject variables and communication variables". Discuss.

Q.No.9 Critically examine the effectiveness and techniques of group meetings.

Q.No.10 Explain the significance of interactive activities in student support services. Give example in support of your answer.

Q.No.11 Write short notes on the following.

a) Conducting group meetings.

b) Reinforcement.

c) How to study better?

d) How to make notes?

Q.No.12 Discuss the techniques of conducting tutorials in distance education.

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UNIT NO.6

SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Distance education is a growing industry, particularly at the higher education level. New distance education institutions are being established in the world whose sole business is distance education. Institutions which previously took no interest in this form of education are entering in the field. Those which are recognised providers are seeking to increase their share of the market. This interest is reflected also in the upgraded quality of educational materials. These materials are upgraded - by represented not only in the improved editing and graphic design but also improved instructional design. Materials in print are being supplemented and complemented by audio and video programmes. Telephone tutorials are increasingly being used. Counselling and advising procedures are being extended and refined. Regional networks of study centres are being established. Much of this development has occurred within the last decade.

In brief, support for students learning provides an important interactive rout for the institution to advise students entering in the system, tutor them face-to-face, or communicate by telephone, audio-tape or correspondence, study centres are provided in the immediate vaccinity of the home or workplace or at special residential schools. Self-help groups of students without the presence of tutors can also be valuable addition to the learning process.

6.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, you should be abie to:

1. identify the problems of distance learners;
2. discuss the problems relating to study techniques and learning;
3. compare and contrast the problems of students vs tutors:
4. state the personal problems of distance learners;
5. evaluate students needs in distance education;
6. specify the role of study centres in imparting education to the distance learners;
7. discuss the significance of tutoring by telephone and tele-tutoring;
8. explain the management of student support staff.

6.3 IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEMS OF DISTANCE LEARNER

The first and foremost step in any attempt in helping students to overcome their problems is to be aware of the actual problems. It is often noticed that administrators, principals, teachers and others concerned have a tendency to wait for problems to occur instead of predicting the possibility of the occurrence of the problem. Only when they become aware of the problems they attempt to take steps to solve them. Problems do not errupt all of a sudden. Careful observation will enable tutors to notice their signs and symptoms. One student, who is normally very well behaved picks up an argument over a very trivial issue and creates a big scene with his tutors. Another student, who is regular in attending classes and is sincere in his studies starts absenting himself from the class without prior permission of the concerned tutor. The third student always sits alone in a depressed and withdrawn mood without involving himself in the activities in the class. Behaviour of these types are indicative of the different types of problems of students. Some of them may be serious and others not so serous enough to warrant attention.

Garrison, D.R. (1988, P.14) says that "identification of problems affecting academic performance of students and their personality development is a matter of serious concern for all tutors. Two factors are important in prompting them to take suitable action:

- impact of the problem on the whole class;
- incidence of periodicity."

Sometimes a problem may affect instruction as in the case of an aggressive student frequently holding up the class proceedings by asking irrelevant questions. Such a behavioural situation may have a negative influence on the rest of the class. Some problems such as the third student as who shows signs of depression and withdrawal behaviour may be an indication of his poor emotional adjustment affecting his own personality development as mentioned earlier. A few problems are noticed by tutors time and again as in the case of malpractices in tests and examinations, late coming to classes, delayed submission of assignments and project briefs, etc.

Most tutors are often concerned with the unsatisfactory performance of students in their academic work. They often notice that students who are known to

be capable of superior performance perform rather poorly. Some students do not show significant progress in spite of the best efforts of tutors. Some others exhibit considerable difficulty in understanding the lesson taught in the class. It may look perhaps too simple to generalise all problems of students under the category of under-achievement as most teacher do. Under-achievement may be because of a variety of factors such as poor motivation, acute situational reaction, relatively serious neurotic problems, health problems etc. In fact, these may be the actual problems and they show of in the form of under-achievement. Under-achievement is a name for a host of behavioural problems and is not just a single difficulty. It may just be the result of the problem but not the actual problem itself.

Great care must be exercised in identifying problems by using the most appropriate tools and techniques. One of the most useful methods for identifying a problem is observation. Tutors who are keen observer of their students will more easily anticipate a problem than others. All others will come to know of the problem after its effects have proved dangerous either to the individual student or the group. Observation is an everyday affair and every individual is involved in observation of incidents or situations. Certain principles are to be followed in using observation as a tool for problem identification. Otherwise it may not be possible to identify the actual problem, although one may have observed lot of facts and through it might have gathered mass of data.

Psychologists, researchers and educationists have made indepth studies of the problems of students. Their studies have highlighted the fact that the problems mostly occur in the context of a surrounding or setting. For example, students disrupting instruction cause a problem. Such action by students would have been influenced by the classroom setting such as instructional inefficiency, external factors like inadequate transport facilities, dissatisfaction over provision of sports facilities, etc. It is, therefore, important as a rule to always observe the whole situation. Such observation will provide cues necessary to interpret the meaning of the behaviours. Tutors, through their interaction with their students and colleagues, would be in a position to point out the possible trouble makers i.e. those who have a problem or are likely to cause one. Having identified such students the next step is to observe them carefully with a view to get more accurate and complete data. Observation must be carried out in a natural setting i.e. where the students are involved. It would be a gross mistake to jump to any conclusion on the basis of observation over a short period of time. The best approach would be to observe over a sufficiently long period before drawing any inference. But the fact may be kept in mind that the tutor may have only

infrequent contact or opportunity for student observation period.

One of the more serious mistakes one often comes in observation is to state the problem on the basis of a sample of student's behaviour in different setting instead of getting all the necessary data about the student's behaviour. Another serious limitation is the observer's biased opinion which may disturb the data. While we observe, we must be free from any bias. Any biased observation is always subjective and the inaccuracies in data can be greatly reduced when observation is planned and made purposeful.

According to Rashid, M (1998).

> "It is not enough if an existing problem is identified through observation. The most important action is to help the student to get over the problems at the earliest and take corrective steps to see that the problem does not occur again. The solution maybe in counselling 'problem students' to realise their strengths and weaknesses, set realistic goals etc. It may also result in aiding them to make proper and effective adjustments. The approach to problem solving should be based on systematic and scientific approach rather than on a commonsense approach"

The most important method of identifying a problem is observation. By studying the whole situation or the setting in which the problem has manifested itself, the problem may be pinpointed. It might be useful to classify the problem into main and subsidiary categories.

The next step is to carefully analyse the problem situation so that all the available data can be gathered. From a careful study of the problem case, the background information can be listed. Some data may also be available from tutors and peers. Such information is likely to provide certain cues and insight to help hypothesis the probable causes for the problem.

The strategies used by teaching are expected to assist the student to overcome the problem. But there may always be the possibility of the problem recurrence. In fact, it is also the responsibility of tutors to take steps to see that the same problems do not occur again. Temporary solution should not be the goal of tutors, but they should work toward a permanent solution. This is where follow up action always play a very vital part.

Different approaches have to be used for assisting students to overcome specific problems in various areas of guidance. The choice of the approaches for implementation depends upon different factors.

The main characteristics of Distance Education is the wide gulf between students and teachers which is filled by the help of different media. Due to this gap between students and organisation, a lot of problems relating to study, examination, assignments, admission, etc have to be faced by the students. Some of these problems are generated by the students themselves but mostly arise due to lack of communication between two concerning parties. These problems can be categorised as:

6.3.1 PROBLEMS RELATING TO STUDY TECHNIQUES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

In distance learning system, most of the students do not have sufficient opportunities to discuss their problems with their tutors and even course notes. They have to face ample difficulties regarding their studies. They find it hard to make schedule and keep smooth pace of their studies. Sometimes, they face difficulties to understand specific articles or topics which subsequently creates anxiety and boredom for them. They give up their studies and call it a hard and laborious task. They do not know how to study and comprehend difficult topics that require special attention.

The problem of learning in distance education can best be identified, by analysing the activities of the learner and then bringing to near what we know about the distance education. The learner goes through a sequence of activities something like this:

1. The learner becomes motivated and sets a goal.

2. He appraises the situation; checks out the means at his disposal for reaching the goal.

3. He makes some preliminary trials.

4. He continues the trials; and he applies to the task wherever he can previously acquired understandings, knowledge, skills, processes, abilities.

5. If he is succeeding, he confirms appropriate responses, the new methods that he has devised and the solutions he has come to know. He drops those responses that are inappropriate. If he is not succeeding, he has failed to develop and confirm appropriate responses.

6. He reaches his goal; or does not reach goal.

7. He experiences satisfaction or he experiences frustration, a sense of failure.

These steps, psychologists suggest, describe what we do in learning purposefully. Let us look at this sequence of activities to identify the chief cognitive processes that are going on in the learner. There appear to be three processes going on nearly simultaneously as stated by Garrison, D.R. (1988, P.15)

"1. The Acquisitional Process: The process of collecting cataloguing, storing of new information derived from new experiences.

2. The Transformational Process: The manipulating, comparing, analysing, interpreting, and generalising of information for understanding and use of knowledge.

3. The Educational Process: The testing and checking to see whether the new knowledge and understanding fit the task at hand; the making of judgements regarding plausibility, correctness, adequacy, and satisfaction with results."

Having separately reviewed the sequence of learning activities - the steps that the learner goes through, and the cognitive process we believe are going on in him throughout these activities - we are now ready to see the learner as he learns by distance education especially with reference to our concern for the quality and intellectual aims of education.

Looking at topic subject in this way, we can identify five major problems in learning through distance education. These problems are not at all peculiar to correspondence study, but the nature of distance education requires that we study these problems to improve learning. Let us identify them:

1. The first problem is one of developing interest in the task, in the process, and in the outcomes of learning. Interest, of course, leads to motivation. Developing interest involves recognising the task, and desiring the outcomes. Interest extends to the process by which the task is to be achieved. Even though the learner may have no previous experience with the distance education process, motivation may be stirred in terms of self-desires, or they may be desires to satisfy some other person such as a parent, a tutor, or one of his peers. A learner's motives may even be contradictory. This method may involve concepts of the self: the self of the past, the self of now, and the self that one hopes to be in the future.

   In a guided learning situation, the tutors are important at this point. The previous experience of the learner may be utilised to provoke interest. In addition, there is the stimulation of opening doors, the challenge of the unknown, the pressure of requirements for achieving a certain status, the anticipated excitement of discovery and the curiosity to be able to do something.

   The distance learner may be at a disadvantage. Interest building devices that are common to the classroom are often lacking in distance education. Extensive collections of attractive books, wrapping materials, charts, displays, films and other devices are commonly used to motivate. Furthermore, the student may not have an opportunity to be counselled by a person whose responsibility is to motivate and encourage. On the other hand, the distant student is generally somewhat highly motivated than others to begin with. He does not get into a distance education course without an effort on his part. He must go through the process of selecting a course, making application, being accepted, and paying a fee. There is an initial selection process going on, and we can assume that the distant student has some degree of interest/motivation at the start.

2. The second problem is that of sensing readiness for learning. The non-starts, the early dropout, the under achiever might not be ready for the learning experience selected or brought to him. Teachers generally assume that the students who show up in their classes or in distance education instruction are indeed "ready." This assumption ought to be regarded skeptically. Readiness is a complex state of

being. It involves past experience, tentative acceptance or setting of goals, appraisal of the situation, assessment of the means/goal relationship, a fairly realistic concept of the self, and acceptance of evoked motives of whatever kind.

In distance education what do we know about the readiness of a learner? We leave the responsibility to the learner to decide, by and large, whether he is ready - although we have checked his record for prerequisites and requirements, grades, achievement scores, etc. These tools are only part of the picture of readiness. The non-starts, early dropouts, low and under achieves may be the evidence that readiness is a problem which in distance education as well as in class instruction, we have not yet learned a assess properly.

In readiness a problem for the learner because his previous experiences are too limited? Not remembered? Not meaningful? Are his goals incompatible with his motives? Are his capacities incompatible with his goals and the tasks required to achieve them? Are his interests too parochial?

3. The third problem is that of grasping the structure of the subject to be learned. The structure of the subject being learned has been found to be of considerable importance to the learner.

The distance learner may be handicapped in finding structure in his subject. Some courses limit his learning activities to reading alone, followed by questions or problems for each unit or lesson. In such courses the tutor may be dependent wholly on the author of the text to lead the student to perceptions of structure. The distance learner is often too dependent upon the textbook/coursebook. Learning requires more of experiential activities than even the good textbook generally supplies. The well designed/developed study guide can supply this requirement only in part. The communication or comments of the tutor on returned assignments can supply this requirement only in part. And if returned lessons or assignments are late and long delays occur between submission and return of assignments, structure is hard to perceive, interest wants, and learning diminishes.

4. Fourth is the problem of learning intuitive as well as analytical thinking. The distance student needs to perceive the possibility, the need, even the imperative, of two kinds of thinking about what the structure of subject matter means.

   According to John Twining, ed. (1982, PP.140-42) " For most students, analytic thinking is the only kind with which they have had experience. Where thinking is taught in schools, it is usually analytic. The importance of this kind of thinking is well known, whether it be deductive or inductive. Analytic thinking is the careful, well-defined, step by step process of reasoning most often associated with learning. The other kind of thinking is less often and less well taught, though it is now being emphasized in the new curricula and new methods. This is intuitive thinking, and though it is less well understood it may be of equal importance to analytic thinking"

5. Fifth is the problem of evaluation. Throughout learning, the learner must be able to keep a running count of his wins and lesson in learning; to perceive the ratio or balance of success/failure in his efforts; to chalk up a kind of Progress Quotient for himself in learning and moving towards his goal (John Twining, ed., 1982, P.151).

6.3.2 STUDENT VS TUTOR PROBLEMS

There is another set of problems of communication which is related to the physical separation factor. Communication is undoubtedly facilitated when two people know each other well. We consciously or unconsciously adjust our communication procedures to the person with whom we are communicating and the better we know him the more likely we are to select those procedures which will be most effective. Many tutors get to know their students very well, but they do not have the opportunity directly to observe these students in a variety of situations which is the way in which we most commonly evaluate behaviour. There may be gaps in our knowledge concerning our students. This imposes the necessity for devising other means of learning to know students so that warm personal relationships may be established.

Another problem is related to the fact that in distance education one is regularly dealing with tutors who are not familiar with the distance education

medium. Most tutors have had years of preparation for teaching, and during all of this time it was assumed that the tutor would work in a classroom and his preparation was pointed in this direction. Like wise any experience he may have had in teaching will in all probability have been in a classroom setting. It is from the ranks of classroom tutors that distance education tutors and course writers must be drawn since there is no other source of supply. No institution has a programme for preparing distance tutor as such particularly at AIOU.

Many teachers make the transition to distance teaching without too much difficulty, all require some orientation and in-service education. Also, there are many who will not or cannot make the transition. There are, for one thing, those tutors who cannot sense the difference in the relationship of the teacher to the student in the classroom on the one hand and to the distance education student on the other and make the procedural changes which the difference in relationships requires.

Another problem in working with teachers inexperienced in the distance education process is that some of them apparently attribute to the process powers they do not possess. They seem to feel that distance education students can learn with a minimum of tutor assistance. The next problem in distance education is the one which results from the fact that we live in a world characterised by rapid change which, in turn, imposes upon educators the necessity for making continuous adjustments to keep abreast of changing conditions. This idea has been expressed many times and particularly well, if somewhat dramatically, by Margaret Mead in an address entitled "Changing Education for a Changing World" when she said: " We are now at a point where we must educate people in what nobody knew yesterday, and prepare people in our schools for what no one knows yet, but some people must know tomorrow.

Certainly the general problem of keeping instruction abreast of new developments is not one which only distance educators face. However, distance education procedures create some special problems which need to be resolved but with which we have not yet come to grips because the pressure has not been sufficiently compelling.

The primary difficulty here evolves from the rather high degree of rigidity inherent in current distance education procedure. A good syllabus takes time, and effort, and money to prepare. Obviously, it takes additional time, and additional effort, and additional money to revise or rewrite it. Also, as one would expect and

as distance education administrators know, the best syllabi are prepared by the most competent people who are, as a result of their competence, in demand for other things than revising distance education syllabi. The effect of these various forces is to keep a syllabus in use, in its original form, for a period of time which in some cases, may be educationally justifiable. Perhaps we have reached a time when we must consider how, in areas particularly sensitive to change, we may introduce more flexibility into the structuring of the syllabus so that change can be more readily effected.

The fifth, and perhaps the most important, problem area is lack of adequate knowledge about how to teach in distance education. Of course, one must know a great deal about it because we do teach this way with remarkable effectiveness. Our students learn and learn very well. They continue to come to us in large numbers and many of them send us fervent letters of praise for the educational opportunities we provided.

Experience has shown that sufficient efforts are made to provide facilities to distance students so that they can cope with their problems. Self-instructional materials help a vast majority of learners to work through. They complete courses successfully, but there is a large number of learners who for one or other reason find it difficult to get the best out of such materials. They require additional support to achieve what they want to. On the other hand, tutors have to face various problems regarding their contact with students, assignment schedule, receipt of course materials and proper communication between tutor and the organisation. The problems on the part of students and tutors make the distance learning system ineffective unless they are solved.

6.3.2 PERSONAL PROBLEMS

In distance learning system, most of the problems are the result of the system itself which can be solved by the concerning organisation by improving its services and methodologies. But, there are many problems called personal problems faced by the students. For example, a student of distance education has not enough financial resources to study further. Majority of the students in remote areas do not have a separate study room. Many of them cannot attend tutorials due to their domestic problems. Their life is so busy that they cannot make studies according to schedule and miss the assignments and examinations. They may not get contact with their teachers/tutors and fellow students due to living in remote areas.

6.3.5 THE ROLE OF STUDY CENTRES

Study centre is an important student support service in distance education system. The nature and function of study centres vary from country to country and institution to institution. There are several difficulties that learners face while studying at a distance and they themselves do not overcome them. The establishment of study centres in several areas helps to minimise the difficulties faced by students. A study centre is part of an overall system of support for learners. The main source of regular face-to-face support is usually available at the study centre. In developing countries the network of such study centres is not strong which may be due to non availability of financial resources and lack of sufficient trained tutors in several areas.

A study centre is a place where students come for seminars, workshops, private study or individual meetings with a tutor or counsellor and to meet with other fellow students and discuss their problems. Study centres need some equipment, trained staff not necessarily high level specialists, restricted working hours, small reserved space in a local institution. The main functions of a study centre are:

- teaching learners the study skills that they need to study at a distance;
- dealing with problems and difficulties encountered in understanding the subject matter;
- practical work;
- teaching learners to learn from each other;
- individual teaching;
- teaching the use of media;
- access to learning resources;
- counselling; and
- administrative activities.

For detail information, please read the following referred book:

Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation, PP.34-36	6-3

6.3.6 TUTORING BY TELEPHONE

Teaching at a distance relies upon the technologies of printing and many other modern technologies have supplemented this, but none have replaced it. The telephone has offered direct substitute for student/tutor interaction. The student can receive an immediate response to his/her question through the telephone or in the lecture room. However, telephone is limited in time, since tutors and students must have their interchange at the same time and it is limited in space both by the requirement of an installation and by the cost of the link.

Distance education asks for interaction between students and teaching systems. There are many traditional ways of feeding back information to students: personal, mailing, using the telephone. In the last decades electronic networks in many countries have grown steadily, allowing more and more private households to have access to interactive information exchange. The cost-benefit ratio has decreased simultaneously.

Thus, we have to reconsider the traditional media approach of distance education. Television and broadcasting, as well as the mailing of printed material, are one-way media. They can be complemented by using new electronic media; the networks as well as central data banks, computer-aided learning, conference settings in networks, etc. This will modify teaching and learning strategies and should improve the quality of distance education. However, we need new technical as well as new methodical ideas to put together and use this new media mix.

Presently we have, as standard services in most countries, telephone networks which allow both the exchange of speech and data transfer at rates in the range of 120 to 9600 bits/sec. For our purposes the exchange of spoken words-as a

support or an integrated part of distance education is well-known and used in many institutions. However, there is little usage of alphanumeric text transfer, with the rare exception of computer-based learning using central computer systems. The reason is the expensive hardware (at the users end) which is necessary to transfer alphanumeric information. Electric typewriters as well as modems or special cathode ray tubes have been used widely until recently to allow students access to the network. Likewise, he use of E-mail now-a-days is common in various institutions of distance education.

The development of data in Great Britain – in Germany called "Build-Schirmtest"-eases this technological obstacle by combining the telephone network and the already available TV set via inexpensive interface. A simple keyboard allows the user to send his message into the network while watching input and responses on his T.V. screen.

The British, the German, and other European Post Offices will be offering access to a net of local data banks and interactive computer systems with this technology within the next few years. Thus, in early years of next century everybody in Pakistan, having a telephone and a T.V. set already and adding the appropriate but inexpensive interface will access to relatively large data bases. Computer-based learning programme can be made available via the network control computer programmed by the institutions offering distance education.

The German Post Office had given some preliminary ideas of the cost of using the Viewdata. Installment will be at about $100 per user, monthly rates about $4 plus time-dependent charges for dialing into the network, these charges will be about the same as for local calls. Germany will have at least two larger pilot projects, including 10,000 households each, experimenting with the two-way cable possibilities.

For further detail, please read the below referred material.

Bates, A.W., ed., (1984)	The Role of Technology in Distance Education, London, Croom Helm. PP.121-138	6-4
Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation, PP.106	6-5

6.3.7 TELECONFERENCING

Olgren & Parker (1983, P.330) say that teleconferencing has been formally described as two-way electronic communication between two or more groups, or three or more individuals, who are in separate locations; includes group communication via audio, audiographics, video and computer systems.

The focus of this section will be upon audio and video teleconferencing. Audiographics, a hybrid of the previous two, may support two-way communication but will be discussed as ancillary media because each has deficiencies in independently supporting an educational transaction. These three forms of teleconferencing are made possible by telecommunications technology. On the other hand, computer conferencing results from advances in computer processing and, as such, possesses its own unique characteristics..

Garrison, D.R. (1988, P.66) says that "teleconferencing to distance education has escaped many theoreticians. Teleconferencing has usually been lumped together with a variety of ancillary audio-visual media used as an adjunct to distance education. The unique characteristics of teleconferencing in supporting the educational transaction have not generally been recognised and are usually overshadowed by the primacy role of print media. Teleconferencing is a group method of learning at a distance. Of all the means used to support distance education, teleconferencing most closely simulates the transaction between tutors and students in a contiguous or conventional form of education. The exchange is conversational in nature, it may be spontaneous, and it is immediate. In these respects teleconferencing differs from all other technologies used to bridge the distance in distance education.

Before the advent of teleconferencing, distance education methods (i.e. correspondence) were considered to be an individualized and, therefore, independent method of learning. Even today some distance educators equate individual and independent study with distance education. However, this is no longer the case, nor is there any inherent reason why it should be. In fact dialogue and negotiation are essential whenever it is appropriate for the particular educational objective. Independence and isolation need not be regarded as inherent characteristics of distance education. On the contrary, interaction to facilitate and support the educational process must be seen as the central feature of any education transaction including distance education. The richness and variety of this interaction is brought about through sustained contact with other students

as well as with teachers.

A second defining characteristic of teleconferencing is the regularity and immediacy of two-way communication. The potential of teleconferencing for the negotiation of goals and meaning with the instructor as well as the sharing of meaning through dialogue with fellow students is unprecedented in distance education. Providing for regular and immediate two-way communication means that control issues may be better addressed. The manner and pattern of communication is changed with the use of teleconferencing. Regularity or frequency of communication may be increased considerably compared to distance education and the feedback is immediate. "The regularity, immediacy, and naturalness of communication by tele-conferencing also make possible a full range of instructional techniques. In fact, few, if any, traditional classroom techniques are not adaptable to teleconferencing" (Garriso, D.R. 1988, P.67)

A third characteristic of teleconferencing is that it is ideally suited to the design and delivery of distance education to small and widely dispersed target groups. Unlike correspondence study where economic feasibility is dependent upon large numbers of students, a teleconference course could be quickly and inexpensively developed and delivered for small groups of students. This makes it of particular interest to `dual mode' students. This makes it of function is not distance education. While most teleconferencing makes use of print materials they do not have to be highly structured and attractively packaged. Relatively disjoint materials can be integrated in real time along with other media into a unified, well functioning and dynamic educational transaction.

The other type of teleconferencing is called audio teleconferencing. The increasing popularity of audio teleconferencing can be understood by examining the characteristics that have influenced its adoption. One of the roles of distance educators has been, and continues to be, the adoption and diffusion of innovations. Roger and Shoemaker (1971) suggest there are five important characteristics affecting the rate of adoption of innovations. They are relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability. The adoption of innovations framework provides a useful method to explain why audio teleconferencing has been so popular and successful.

Audio teleconferencing is not a stand-alone system. Robertson (1987, P.124) suggests that `educational users should think of audio teleconferencing only as a portion of an integrated learning system'. The key elements of such a

system are the instructor, the students, printed instructional materials, various visuals, site coordinators and the hardware. An effective audio teleconference is dependent upon the consideration and integration of these elements.

The instructor of an audio teleconference must be very organised and be prepared to use the strength of the technology to allow participants to interact and get involved. To use a teleconference only as a medium to transmit curriculum content is a misuse of the technology's communication capabilities. When the instructor designs a programme around interaction, participants are able to make up for the loss of visual cues through voice intonation and modulation.

From the students' perspective, they generally must come prepared for a teleconference. They should have read various materials, listened to an audio tape or viewed a video tape. At this point they are ready to validate their knowledge through feedback from both tutor and fellow students. Both the cognitive and affective learning domains may be addressed during a teleconference. A unique advantage of audio teleconferencing when more than one student is at a particular location is the opportunity to clarify or discuss briefly an issue among themselves (without disturbing other participants) while still attending to the general conference.

Integration of a range of visual resources will also have to be considered. The potential for visual enhancements of an audio teleconference are enormous. They may consist of slides, overhead transparencies, video tapes or various audiographics capabilities. A key player in the integration of these resources is the local teleconference assistant. The teleconference assistant is also responsible for setting up the basic teleconferencing equipment at the site. Another important individual in this system, not mentioned previously, is the teleconference (bridge) operator who handles all the technical functions and any problems which might arise. This allows the instructor to concentrate on educational matters. with the local assistants and the bridge operator the technology should become transparent to the teleconference participants.

The final element of this system is the hardware. Clearly a wide area telecommunications service is necessary to transmit the audio signals. For the organisation that wishes to operate its own teleconference system the largest outlay for equipment will be a bridge. The bridge is the device that interconnects all the telephone lines from the sites. While there are many kinds of bridges, a stand-alone bridge specifically designed for teleconferencing man support many

functions such as breaking a teleconference into smaller groups, adjusting volume levels and filtering out noise, operating manually or automatically, playing pre-recorded material and recording a conference. Other equipment would include a headset or lapel microphone for the instructor thereby making it easier for the instructor to move materials around. The last elements of the equipment subsystem are the speaker and microphones at each of the sites. It is very important to have quality speakers and noise free lines to conduct a successful audio teleconference. All the key elements of the learning system may be integrated in a quality manpower rather than be ruining by poor quality audio. What is worse, when this happens these technical problems are generalised to audio teleconferencing per se and consequently the technology may be viewed as being an inadequate or poor technology for distance education.

It would be unjust not to mention an ancillary media here. There is another set of hardware associated with audio teleconferencing which is used to enhance and extend the basic audio capabilities of the system. While a wide range of media may be used to enhance audio teleconferencing, the media most closely associated with its enhancement are grouped under the label 'audiographics'. Audiographics refers to the transmission of graphics and text information over a narrowband telecommunications channel, such as a telephone line (Olgren & Parker, (1983, P.321). Three common types of audiographics are facsimile, slow-scan television, and telewriting.

The facsimile system is used to transmit any form of visual information (print or images) affixed to a piece of paper, reproducing a similar hard copy at remote locations. Information may be transmitted before or during a teleconference; however, since it takes time to reproduce the documents for each participant (in addition to transmission time), in an educational setting it may be better to transmit documents before the teleconference. Although facsimile systems are a useful and a common device, yet the facsimile does not integrate well into a natural and continuous learning process when used in real time.

Another useful media device to be used during an audio teleconference is slow-scan television or freeze-frame video. Slow scan captures an image from a television camera and sends it line by line over a narrowband channel. The results are still video pictures viewed in the remote sites on television monitors. The slow-scan system may be somewhat more flexible than the facsimile system but it normally takes more than thirty seconds to send the signal which also may adversely affect the natural pace of a teleconference class. Problems may also

arise if copies of an image are needed for each participant.

For educational purposes, telewriting is perhaps the more exciting audiographics enhancement of audio teleconferencing. Telewriting in distance education is comparable to the blackboard and overhead projector in the traditional classroom setting. while telewriting images may be produced by using a light pen to write directly on a television screen or a piece of chalk on an electronic blackboard, the most versatile system is the electronic tablet. With this latter system, any participant may write a message on a small tablet and it is simultaneously transmitted to all sites. At normal writing speeds, information is transmitted and received at the rate it is generated. The system may be made fully interactive with participants adding to the image or reading their own. One of the more promising aspects of the newer systems if that both voice and data can be transmitted concurrently along a single line. This eliminates even delay the cost of second transmission line and eliminates audio delay while data is being transmitted.

The video conferencing provides for a two-way exchange of both five television images and audio signals between two or more sites and three or more individuals. In this way the students can see teacher and the teacher can see the students. The major disadvantage of such a system is the enormous technological problems that arise as a number of sites increase. To avoid this, the more common approach is to use one-way video and two-way audio where the students can see the teacher but the teacher can't see the students. Since the visual image is in only one direction there is some question as to whether this is a true video teleconference. Perhaps it is more correctly described as an audio teleconference enhanced with a visual image from the main site.

At first glance, video conferencing appears to have a relative advantage because the initial reaction of most educators is that participants simply must be able to see the teacher. If, as is the case in fully interactive two-way video, students, then the educational transaction at a distance is virtually identical to a traditional classroom setting. This is a very powerful and attractive attribute of video teleconferencing for distance education. But with this apparently strong relative advantage over audio teleconferencing, why has video teleconferencing not penetrated the market to a greater degree than it has to date?

Clearly the reason for this is the enormous cost associated with the technical set up, production, and transmission of a video conference. To conduct a

video conference of any length on a regular basis is generally prohibitively expensive for most educational organisations. As a result of these cost and production constraints, educators began to realise that the lack of full motion video is often not of crucial importance. And when it is, the deficiencies can be overcome with the use of less expensive audiographic and other ancillary media.

For further details, please study the below referred materials.

Peter, Zorkoczy (1984)	'Teletext System' In A.W. bates (1984) The Role of Technology in Distance Education, London Croom Helm. PP.165-172	6-6

6.3.8 THE MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF

The organisation, training and supervision of tuition and counselling staff are important features of support services provision. But unfortunately, these are not provided effectively and are frequently neglected. Some institutions of distance education consider that because student support staff is mostly part-time, they will already know how to do the job, so there is no need of their training. But it is an admitted fact that they do have training needs to maintain good standards in the work of tutoring and counselling. The management of student support staff varies from country to country and from institution to institution.

Staff training appears to be an area in need of further attention and development. Sometimes the training given is inadequate, or the period for preparation is un-realistic. Training needs to be available both for particular course structure and content and for general staff development, in terms of tutoring or counselling skills. Booklets and documents, workshops on particular topics, simulation exercises with groups of tutors, individual advisory sessions with supervisory staff, and frequent feedback on performance are prominent components of training programmes. In many organisations of distance education, one of the most important areas for training and management of tutorial (and counselling) staff concerns the assessment of students work, in the form of assignments, self-assessment tests, essays or long-term projects.

For further study, please study the below mentioned materials.

Rumble, Greville, (1986)	The Planning and Management of Distance Education, London Croom Helm. PP.124-135	6-7

6.4 ACTIVITIES

1. Prepare a chart of problems faced by the students of distance education.

2. Discuss the problems relating to study techniques and learning with any expert of student support services and prepare a report of the outcome of your discussion.

3. List below the problems faced by you as distance learner.

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Discuss the important points of the role of telephone tutorial and teleconferencing with your colleague and write the conclusions below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

6.5 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have studied the material by now answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Critically examine the problems faced by distance learner. Support your answer with examples.

Q.No.2 Discuss the problems relating to study techniques and learning.

Q.No.3 "The problems on the part of students and tutors make the distance learning system ineffective". Discuss.

Q.No.4 "Both the tutors and students put emphasis on the punctuality in the study centre but fail to observe". Discuss the statement keeping in review the impact if punctuality is not observed either by tutor or student.

Q.No.5 Critically examine the personal problems of distance learners.

Q.No.6 Explain the student needs in distance education.

Q.No.7 Why study centers are an important student support service in distance education? Support your answer with examples.

Q.No.8 "Study center is a place where students come for seminars, workshops, private study or individual meetings with a tutor or counsellor and met their fellow students and discuss their problems" Discuss.

Q.No.9 Discuss the significance of tutoring by telephone. Do you think that telephone tutoring is feasible in Pakistan and why?

Q.No.10 What are advantages and disadvantages of tele-tutoring in distance education? Explain and give examples in support of your argument.

Q.No.11 Discuss the management of student support staff

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UNIT NO.7

DROP OUT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

7.1 INTRODUCTION

It is apparent that `open' and `distance learning' schemes are obliged to take the matter of student progress very seriously. Institutions offering distance education programmes want to ensure that it is a sound investment, and where the programmes relies upon subsidies from public funds there is also a need to justify continued funding. Also, on strictly humanitarian grounds, any programme which is based on the philosophy of `open-ness' should be concerned about its drop-out rate.

One of the major problems which the systems of distance education are faced with is the problem of dropout i.e. the learners who give up a programme or a course without completing it. The fact is that in distance education system, very high percentage of learners do not complete the course (s) successfully. Panic occurs when a particular course is seen to have a high drop-out rates in general are greater than the previous year. The phenomenon of drop-out exists in all forms of teaching, but in distance teaching it is a major characteristic since its incidence in often many times greater than in any form of conventional teaching, and its very existence threatens the `cost-effectiveness' which is so often listed as an advantage.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, you should be able to:

1. explain the concept of dropout;
2. specify the types of distance learners;
3. analyse the causes of dropout;
4. suggest possible solutions to the problem of drop-out in distance education.

7.3 CONCEPT OF DROP-OUT

`Drop-out' is a term frequently used in a variety of educational contexts and, by and large, people share a general conception of what it means. Drop-out concerns the students who start a course but do not complete it. There is a big

difference between drop-out and failure and we should not confuse dropouts with failures. Failure refers to students who complete their course requirements prior to examination and qualify to sit in the final examination but fail to clear it. On the other hand, dropout refers to those students who do not complete the course work and thus there is no question of their sitting in the final/term examination. However, they have to apply afresh and then they can sit in the final examination after completing the required course work.

In the traditional system of education, a failure is an educational reject. A failure may try again and again and fail again. The traditional system has nothing to offer him/her to improve his/her performance. On the other hand, credit goes to distance education system in which the issue of drop-out has been discussed and tackled seriously as the cost effectiveness of distance education very much depends upon the rate of drop-out. It is true that drop-out rate in correspondence courses is much higher than would be expected in full-time face-to-face teaching system courses and that it is particularly heavy in the early stages of a programme. Drop-out rates vary with the length and type of programme involved.

For further details, please read the following material.

Desmond, Keegan (1986)	The Fundamentals of Distance Education, London Croom Helm, PP.173-182	7-1

7.4 TYPES OF DISTANCE LEARNERS

Distance learners may be divided into the following three types in the context of drop-out.

1. Good distance learners.
2. Non-starters
3. Mid-Course drop-outs.

7.4.1 GOOD DISTANCE LEARNERS

Good distance learners are those who complete the course of distance education. A case-study of an institution which imparts teacher training through

the mode of distance education was conducted. (Support Services ES-313 IGNOU, 1995 PP.8-17). The entrance qualification for admission to the training was a master's degree. The training inputs comprised about twenty distance teaching units per subject (six subjects in all) and two contact programmes of five weeks in all. The study included ten batches of students, ten sessions obviously, who took admission between 1973 and 1981. The conclusions of the study revealed that most of the trainees who completed the training successfully:

* did feel the need for additional and supplementary reading materials
* did not feel the need for bringing about any changes in the syllabus and the content of the training programme
* did not feel that they were at a disadvantage as they (some of them) did not attend the optional contact programme/counselling session.
* did not think that the number of assignments per subject was more than what it should have been
* had completed a number of assignments under pressure of time
* had discontinued their studies for varying periods of time at varying occasions during the academic sessions for difficulties posed by social commitments - 64% difficulties posed by occupational commitments - 26%, and difficulties posed by the study units - 10%
* accepted that there were hardly any postal delays, and
* accepted that in general there were no delays in receiving the study units and the evaluated assignments from the institute.

7.4.2 NON STARTERS

Non starters are those who drop-out without attempting any learning task. They do not submit even a single assignment. There are various reasons of their giving up the course. They may feel that the course material is not suitable for their purpose or they feel the course material is too difficult to understand. The following are some of the major reasons for not working on the study units.

* Lack of time
* Difficulties in concentration
* Family or domestic problems
* Organisation of time and planning
* Low levels of motivation
* Lack of study skills
* Lack of counselling
* Anxiety
* Isolation

7.4.3 MID-COURSE DROP-OUT

Mid-course drop-out are those who start the course enthusiastically but give up over a period of time. The major reasons for giving up the programme after completing few courses are generally the difficulty level of study material, the non-availability of time and lack of support in studies. Among those reasons, the difficulty level of study material is the strongest but some say time availability is also the major reasons.

Mary Thorpe and David Grugeon (1987) have discussed drop-outs in the below referred book, four measures of student's performance and also part-time, full-time study impact on drop-out which is worth reading. Please read the below referred material for further comprehension.

Mary Thorpe & David Grugeon ed., (1987)	Open Learning for Adults, UK, Longman Open learning, PP.54-61	7-2

7.5 CAUSES OF DROP-OUT

It is an admitted fact that lack of ability is not the sole cause of student drop-out in distance learning system. There are some student factors such as motivation, personality and background and some institutional factors such as selection process instruction and treatment of learner. Drop-out is a result of the interaction of these student and institutional factors.

Moore et al eds., (1990, PP.192-204) identified some causes which are worth reading as indicated below.

Peter S. Cookson (1990)	`Persistence in Distance Education: A Review'. In Moore Michael, Gparter Cookson, Joe Donaldson and B. Allan Quigley, ed., (1990) Contemporary Issues in American Distance Education, Oxford, Pergamon Press, PP.192-204	7-3

7.5.1 LEARNER BASED FACTORS

Some of the factors which underline drop-out from the students' perspective are:-

- Course found too difficult or not sufficiently advanced.
- Course required too many hours study each week, i.e. `overloaded'.
- Course badly designed and/or taught.
- Content found uninteresting.
- Content not according to the expectation and course description.
- Personal and domestic changes such as illness of student or relative, change in material status, shifting of residence.
- Lack of encouragement by spouse or employer.

- Lack of necessary study skills/ background knowledge.

- Goal has been achieved, e.g. gained promotion.

7.5.2 INSTITUTION BASED FACTORS

There are several institutional factors that cause students' drop-out in distance education system. These are:-

- Inadequate classroom, equipment, parking, accommodation, etc.

- Administrative errors, e.g. non mailing of teaching material, or late delivery of learning material, mailing of wrong course package.

For further details, please read the below mentioned material.

Mary Thorpe and David Grugeon, ed., (1987)	Open Learning for Adults, U.K., Longman Opening Learning, PP.61-69	7-4

7.5.3 SYSTEM BASED FACTORS

The system of distance education varies institution to institution and country to country but the basic objective of the system remains the same. The system varies due to various characteristics of students and the vacinity they belong to. A considerable proportion of students do not complete their course work due to problems and weaknesses of the system. The major causes of drop-out on the basic of the system are:

- Shortage of time

- Assignment and assessment

- Support for study

- Difficulty level of study units

7.5.3.1 SHORTAGE OF TIME

Time factor is the root cause of high drop-out rates not only in distance learning system but also in formal system of education. Most of the students who do not complete their courses call time factor is the basic hinderance in the way of their success. Some students have sufficient time for study and some have very little time because of their nature of work, domestic problems, other social activities. Such students find it difficult to allocate sufficient time for their study and thus, subsequently, give up their distance learning course work. The problem of shortage of time can be avoided by allowing reasonably adequate time to complete the courses.

7.5.3.1 ASSIGNMENT AND ASSESSMENT

Assignments are a crucial part of the distance learning system. They usually demand a different kind of effort from students. In fact, assignments enable students to test how effectively they have been studying their course. The assignments the students submit for assessment represent their own response to the course work and often require a period of intense, emotionally - charged activity.

The assignments may also be the chief mechanism through which students receive evidence about their own progress and how to improve it, whether via computer feedback or tutor feedback. The tutor marked assignment is distinctive because of the opportunity it offers to the students for dialogue with a teacher who knows their work.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.83-92 and 103-105.	7-5

7.5.3.2 SUPPORT FOR STUDY

Some students cannot complete their course work due to lack of support from their relatives, family and friends and even from the institution concerned.

This happens particularly in distance learning system in which students have dire need to get support from their concerning parties for study. Lack of support for study significantly contributes towards the high rate of drop-out in distance education system.

The distance education system is quite distinct from that of the formal system. Students of this system have to face numerous problems regarding their studies, exams, etc. They have little opportunities to interact with peer group, their tutor because of isolation. They feel difficulties in sharing/discussing their problems with fellow students. In such situations, they look for some kind of support to keep them on the course of their studies. They also look for motivation and encouragement from their homes/ families.

Rashid M. (1998) has laid down some strategies of support for the study in his below mentioned book. If these are applied properly in the student support services, the drop-out rate can be minimized. Please read his below referred book for further details.

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.44-54.	7-6

7.5.3.3 DIFFICULTY LEVEL OF STUDY UNITS

Experience reveals that the difficulty levels of study units is a stronger reason for dropping out. Effective study units play very vital role in the successful completion of the course. In distance learning system specially designed learning materials are used. Study units not only provide information (content) but also play the following roles:-

- Provide directions to the student on the objective.
- Provide practice and further example
- Provide feedback

- Advise on how to set about studying the topic (e.g. whether or not to take notes)

- Motivation, encouragement and persua-tion.

The distance learning material/study units should be effective and able to sustain the interest and concentration of the student, otherwise, they force the learner to quit the course due to level of difficulty. The material usually include:

- study objectives, which explain to the student what he can expect to learn;

- self-assessment questions, which enable the student to check the extent to which he has mastered the objectives;

- a discussion of the answers to the question, with which the student can compare his own answers;

- assignments;

- study guidance;

- an attempt to keep the student's interest - for example by writing in a lively and clear style and by attempting to relate new concepts to the student's experience.

The study units must follow the pattern of the distance learning system and conform to the needs of the distant student, otherwise, the results will be absolutely different from expectation and students will not be able to complete their course successfully and thus increase the drop-out rate.

Further details can be read in the below referred material.

Rashid, M.(1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation, PP.77-82.	7-7

The Academy of Educational Planning and Management (1985, PP.8-27) has pointed out some causes of drop-out in all provinces of Pakistan. Although the causes mentioned are related to primary education yet these are equally applicable on the distance education drop-out. Hence, please read the below referred material for further comprehension.

Academy of Educational Planning & Management (1985)	Re-training of Primary Education Personnel advanced level workshop to cope with drop-out repetition problems, Islamabad, EPM Academy. PP.8-27.	7-8

7.6 SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS

Any organisation of distance that wants to reduce the number of its dropouts must established the below mentioned basic standards:

7.6.1 EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The unit objectives must be appropriate clearly defined, simply stated, readily understood and reasonably attainable for the types of students enrolled.

7.6.2 EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

The materials should be:-

- comprehensive enough to achieve the objectives of the course;
- up-to-date and accurate to reflect correct knowledge and practice;
- accompanied by suitable instructions on how to study the course and learn effectively;
- on a reading level keyed to the reading competence of the average enrolled (students) in the course;

- enhanced by effective use of teaching devices and supplemental instructional aids;

- prepared by qualified person(s) competent in their field specifically for distance education students or adopted for their use;

- organised and presented in accordance with sound psychological principles of learning;

- effectively illustrated where appropriate with photographs, charts, diagram etc. of functional, educational or inspirational value;

- attractive in layout, format, legibly reproduced and suitably bound.

7.6.3 EDUCATION SERVICES

These services should include:

- preparation of assignments that effectively test the knowledge and skill required. These are evaluated and instructional assistance is provided if necessary and then returned to student;

- resident (terminal training) if necessary to attain the stated educational objectives of the distance education course;

- encouragement and help for failing students until they demonstrate satisfactory progress.

- adequate provisions to meet individual differences and provision of counselling and guidance as required to assist the student to attain the educational goals;

- a continuing plan for securing the reactions of students to their courses as one basis for evaluating and improving instructional materials and services;

- a constructive programme to encourage students to start, continue and finish their courses.

7.6.4 STUDENT SERVICES

The students services should include:

- prompt return of accurately evaluated assignments;
- provision of ample study materials at all times to the student and maintenance of essential student records;
- availability of competent counselling upon request from the students.

7.6.5 STUDENT SUCCESS AND SATISFACTION

The students' success and satisfaction should be ensured with the proof that:

- a high proportion of students normally seem to be satisfied with the training and educational services;
- a satisfactory percentage of enrolled students start, continue and finish their courses.

7.6.6 QUALIFICATION OF THE FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIONS

The persons involved in the system of distance education should be:

- qualified personnel like Vice-Chancellor, educational director/Dean or equivalent and faculty members have overall administrative responsibi-lities for the educational programmes.
- Regional directors/Regional Coordinators are adequately trained, and are directly responsible to the Director Regional Services of the organisation.

7.6.7 ADMISSION PRACTICE

It should be assured that:

- only those students who can reasonably be expected to benefit from the course be enrolled;

- the written enrolement contract on application form specifies clearly the course.

7.6.8 ADVERTISEMENT AND PROMOTION

Advertising of distance education courses should ensure that:

- Advertisements, and promotional literature make only clear and provable statements;

- Promotional activities should be used with the technique suited to the clientele.

7.6.9 FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The financial responsibility assure that the Distance Education Institution can meet its financial obligations and provide satisfactory services to its students.

7.6.10 TUITION FEE POLICIES

These should ensure that:

- the tuition fee is reasonable in the light of educational services rendered and the AIOU's operating costs;

- tuition fee collection policies and procedures are fair. They should encourage the progress of students and seek to attain their good will. Further they must be in keeping with sound, ethical business principles;

- tuition fee refund policies provide for equitable tuition fee adjustment if, for legitimate reasons, the student is unable to complete with benefit to himself.

7.6.11 PLANT AND EQUIPMENTS

- these should be adequate to handle the educational programme and comply with local fire, building, health and safety requirements;

- it should be ensured that all educational financial and other essential records are maintained in a safe, fireproof and reasonably accessible place as long as they are likely to be needed.

7.6.13 RESEARCH AND EVALUATION CENTRE

it should include:

- use of sound research procedures that measure how effectively the stated course objectives are being met.
- evidence of professional growth of Institution faculty and staff;
- evidence that the organisation staff is progressive in its efforts to improve operating efficiency and service;
- an established self study programme which reflects a desire to improve course materials, services to students and growth of the AIOU's faculty and staff;
- efforts to constant institutional research to provide information and feedback on various aspects of distance education.

The above mentioned points, if taken well care of, certainly will help to reduce the drop out rate in the system of distance education. Please read below referred material.

Kuppursamy, K. Rao, (1994)	'Drop-outs: The Neglected lot', In Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (1994) Distance Education an Interface, Hyderabad, B.R. A.O.U. PP.44-48	7-9
Stanley, H.C., Edwin,L. H., Charles, N.M& Thomas, T.F. (1970)	Research and the School Counsellor, New York, Houghton Mifflin Company. PP.143-162.	7-10

7.7 ACTIVITIES

List below any four causes of drop-outs in the system of distance education.

_____

_____

_____

2. Prepare a chart of the causes of drop-outs in distance education.

3. Discuss the problems and their possible solutions of drop-out with any educationist of your area and prepare a report of the outcome of your discussion.

7.8 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have studied the unit, now please answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Describe the concept of drop-out in distance education.

Q.No.2 "The system gives the freedom to a learner to progress at his/her own pace... it is not possible to identify a drop-out till the time allowed to complete the programme is over". Discuss.

Q.No.3 Critically examine the causes of drop-outs in distance education.

Q.No.4 Explain the types of distance learners.

Q.No.5 Discuss the system based cause of drop-outs. Give examples in support of your answer.

Q.No.6 What are the institutional based causes of drop-outs.

Q.No.7 Give possible solutions to the problems of drop-outs in

distance education. Also give examples in support of your suggestions.

Q.No.8 Write short note on the following.

a) Good distance learners.

b) Mid-course drop-out.

c) Learner based causes of drop-outs.

d) System based courses of drop-outs.

e) Suggestions to improve support for study.

f) Removing of difficulty level of study unit.

Q.No.9 Discuss the causes of drop-outs as pointed out by Academy of EPM (1985). How these causes are equally applicable to distance education drop-outs?

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UNIT NO.8

THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN STUDENT SUPPORT

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Most people in the developing countries live in villages and are typically isolated because of illiteracy and lack of adequate communication facilities. A major task of the governments of developing countries is to stop the flow of people from the rural to the urban area. This can be accomplished, in part, by encouraging small rural and urban enterprises such as small cottage industrials and other activities related to agriculture. However, to achieve such objectives, efficient and effective rural development is one of the most pressing needs of the developing countries.

> Schramm, W. ed. (1972, P.3) commented on the growth of the media: "The importance of the printed matter development in the fifteenth century is that the balance was swung from the long centuries of spoken, first hand communication toward visual, second hand communication on a large scale. The importance of this development in the nineteenth century is that some of the limits were taken care of communication. It was extended over the heads of specially privileged and specially able to the masses who had need of it. And the importance of recent electronic development is that the balance of communication channels is again swung back of spoken and first hand communication although to a fantastically large audience".

In reviewing the research into the effectiveness of media (both Radio and TV) as a teaching medium, it is necessary to return to Schramm's (1972) conclusion that learning depends on how a medium is used rather than which medium is used. The research further shows that learning can take place as effectively, on courses taught by media (Radio and TV) as on courses taught by other means (the usual comparison is with face-to-face and media been found for tasks involving information transmission, problem solving, and generation of ideas. However, tasks such as getting to know some one, or persuation, or negotiation are affected by the medium through which they are done.

Anyhow, both radio and television, generally, are regarded as one-way communications media. They have helped to bring superior teaching to large number of students who might otherwise have only had mediocre instructor. They also freed teachers from routine, repetitive lecturing and enabled them to plan stimulating and inspiring group and individual instruction. It must be pointed out, however, that they have at times been used inefficiently and also that a medium is

not better than the teacher who uses it. The use of television, radio and non-broadcast media in teaching, has necessitated certain modifications in the roles of professional personnel in classrooms. These changes will be discussed in this unit. We will consider first radio, then television and non-broadcast media and the use of these media for instruction.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the material, you should be able to:

1. classify the media used in student support services with their characteristics;
2. specify the potential role of radio in student support services;
3. compare the advantages and disadvantages of the use of radio and television in distance education;
4. appreciate the role and three broad types of characteristics of T.V.;
5. identify the role of T.V. in particular mental skills;
6. discuss the role of non-broadcast media in student support services; and
7. evaluate the effectiveness of the use of non-print media in distance education particularly in student support.

8.3 CLASSIFICATION OF MEDIA

The major characteristic of distance education system is that it can accommodate a large number of students irrespective of places or residence. For example, only AIOU in Pakistan caters for hundreds of thousands of people through its multi-media approach which is much more than the total clientele of the conventional universities. It is the advancement of communication technology that has made this possible. Distance learning courses are best delivered by a variety of media popularly termed as media mix. This is because one medium may serve a teaching function better than another in a particular area while learners may have different preferences for the medium they best learn from.

Wilbur Schramm (1972, P.48) delineated the role of the educational media:

> "...given a reasonably favourable situation, a pupil will learn from any medium- television, radio, programmed instruction, films, filmstrips or others. This has been demonstrated by hundreds of experiments. In general, the same things that control the amount of learning from a teacher (face-to-face) also control the amount of learning from educational media; among others, the relevance and clarity of the content, individual abilities, motivation to learn, attention, interest in the subject, respect and affection for the teacher, emphasis and verification of the central points to be learnt, and rehearsal by the learner.

In distance education system, different media (mediums) are used to impart knowledge and training to learners generally belonging to far flung areas. The most commonly used media are printed materials, radio and television, video, audio tapes, computers, telephone etc. The medium of print plays a crucial role in distance teaching. It is enough to say that they are clear and precise, and that the students can interact with them, repeatedly and conveniently within the time available. Broadcasting by T.V. and Radio is also a very popular means of communication in distance education. It carries essential teaching materials to the student in their homes. Video cassettes play the same role as television programme but students have greater control over the learning process by giving as many pauses or replays as necessary. Microcomputers are the most recent development in the field of communication. Computer can act as tutor and stimulator and can test levels of competence or certain kinds of skills and knowledge.

In a learning situation the human voice, gesticulations, hand-written notes, duplicated hand-outs, chalkboards, displays, specimens, models, overhead projectors, slide projectors, filmstrip projectors and 16mm projectors are the more common media. Harris, N.D.C. (1979, P.81) described a range of criteria that can be used to determine the effectiveness of these media for learning.

1) Cognitive learning (at a variety of levels)

2) affective learning (variety of levels)

3) Psychomotor learning (at a variety of levels)

4) Entertainment value.

5) Interactive possibilities

6) Freedom of choice by the learner

7) Cost

8) Ease of use

9) Ease of production/provision

10) Specificity/generalability

11) Potential size of audience

For detail, please read the below referred book.

Asian Association of Open Universities (1990)	Interactive Communication in Distance Education" Annual Conference, Indonesia PP.235-245.	8-1

8.4 ROLE OF RADIO

Radio was introduced in some schools in the developed world as an instructional medium early in the 1920s. Its appearance created a great deal of interest but educationists did not seem to be ready for it and it did not become the effective instructional medium it might have been. Teachers failed to recognise duly its potential and too often it was used as a substitute for, rather than a supplement of teaching. Today, partly due to the advent of educational technology and its new devices, teachers are more cognizant of the contribution that the radio can make to improve instruction. Consequently, the study of many subjects, such as English literature, social studies, and music appreciation, is being enriched by the use of radio as a supplement medium.

However, radio is economically attractive for instructional purposes for several reasons. First, radio transmitters are relatively inexpensive to use. Second, radio instruction is non-rival. One listener's use of instructional radio does not limit the instruction of another. This is in contrast to a class-room situation where the number of people, able to participate in instruction is some-times limited only by the total classroom space available. Thirdly, in a country with a large area characterised by geographic features which isolate a portion of the populace, or in countries with a widely dispersed population, it is sometimes not feasible to provide formal schooling in rural areas. The benefits of providing a formal educational system simply do not outweigh the enormous costs.

Finally, in some cases rural families are either unwilling or unable to send their children to school, especially where this involves time apart from normal work activities. Instructional radio provides a compromise solution which does not require the rural family to forego time in the field. These are the potential benefits of instructional radio as viewed from the perspective of those concerned with the costs of providing education to rural people. They fail to take into account the effectiveness of radio when the individual is solely responsible for his or her own education.

The critics of instructional radio emphasise the remoteness of the source of learning from the people. Particularly in countries with diverse populations or with several cultural traditions, instructional radio emanating from a central source may not be effective in motivating learning. Instruction may have to be translated into regional dialects, made applicable to the unique conditions of the group receiving the instruction or reinforced differently for different groups. In this setting, single source of instruction may be ineffective in meeting its basic programme goals. Distance education institutions of the developing world are normally providing instructions through radio broadcasts in regional dialects. Moreover, it is a cheaper medium of instruction than the T.V.

Radio is thus an instrument that can reach distant places where even the postal system can not reach. Hence, the need for radio to broadcast the entire course in a given educational programme as well as to supplement the written material sent to the students. broadcasting of lessons calls for special skills on the part of the broadcasting teacher which is more difficult and complex than the routine lecturing. The electronic medium is particularly useful in providing social science and technology courses (Rashid, M. 1998)

In order to comprehend the role of radio, please read the below referred book.

Das, R.C. (1993)	Educational Technology: As Basic Text. New Delhi, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, PP.78-93.	8-2

8.5 ROLE OF TELEVISION

Many advantages of instructional T.V. can only be fully realised by complete coordination of the instructional process by the television producer, director, the television teacher, and the professional teachers. Many teachers in today's educational system recognise the value and uniqueness of television instruction. Perhaps its greatest value is found in the fact that highly qualified teachers using the best teaching materials can reach students in many different institutions or places.

T.V. as an instructional medium, is the best known approach to the problem of over-crowded classrooms and offers a means whereby the effectiveness of a competent teacher can be extended to reach an unlimited number of students. It may be open circuit, closed circuit or the new closed circuit broadcast (a special technique used on larger campuses). There are technical terms, which are meaningful only for a few readers, but the significant factors are that open circuit permits viewers other than a particular institution to benefit from the instruction, whereas closed circuit keeps the presentation within a closed circuit of the school system itself. Live television permits the lesson to be presented to many students in many classrooms simultaneously. Video tapes or cassettes are television presentations that are recorded on tapes cassettes so that they may be used many times. The extend the advantages of live television even further by permitting repeated slowing of the lesson at different times as well as simultaneously. It may be mentioned that video cassette tape can be the recording of the T.V. programme or it may contain non-broadcast video programme which provides detailed explanations and instructions for activities to be carried out by the learner.

Television instruction is primarily a one-way communication medium. Partly because of this characteristic, the proponents of this medium have

sometimes been unduly criticised. In many cases in developed countries a simple electronic device is being used to convert the audio part of live closed circuit television so that two-way communication is possible between the television teachers in the studio and the students in any classroom receiving the instruction. During instruction, whenever a student wishes to speak to the teacher, the presses a buzer or key which alerts the teacher in the studio. The teacher, then opens the two-way communication system and carries on a conversation with the student during the live television production. The video part of the television instruction remains a one-way medium; hence, television teaching continues to be regarded as a one-way medium particularly in the situation like Pakistan.

The one-way presentation of instruction that is the mark of television teaching is only the beginning of the teaching-learning process.. When properly used, the viewing of a lesson is only one part of the student's learning experience. As it is a one-way communication and students may appear unreceptive while quietly viewing a lesson. Television instruction has sometimes been severely criticised. A silent viewer may be unreceptive and disinterested, but this cannot be known for sure until testing takes place. There is little doubt that a silent viewer is likely to learn more than the active viewer. There are many effective ways by which the learning that takes place can be measured. One very simple and effective one is to give a test immediately after a telecast lesson.

In order to teach most effectively with television, the instruction must be accompanied by:

i) pre-viewing activities

ii) activities feasible during the viewing, and

iii) post-viewing activities for follow-up activities

A teacher or lecturer should plan and provide for these learning experiences at the time he selects and schedules televised instruction for his students.

One thing is certain in this new field of teaching. A good classroom teacher is not necessarily a good television teacher. To portray and reflect great interest in a subject while looking into a camera lens is very difficult thing for most teachers to do. Teaching with some response from the student is quite

different from teaching in a studio atmosphere. Exact timing of a lesson may also have a restrictive effect on a teacher, for he has been accustomed to the five and ten minute margin of time in the average teaching situation. The art of successful television teaching is a difficult one and one which requires no small degree of innate talent for the task.

In order to fully comprehend the role of television in distance education, please read the below mentioned book.

Usha Rao (1991)	Educational Technology, Bombay, Himalya Publishing House, PP.88-94.	8-3

Bates T.W.(1982) discussed the role and characteritics of television and some implication for distance learning. While writing, the author highlighted the broad types of characteristics of T.V. and its potential role in developing certain skills. Please read the below referred book for further comprehension.

Tony, W.Bates (1982)	'Roles and characteristics of television and some implications for distance learning'. In the Journal of Australia and South Pacific External Studies Association, Distance Education, Vol.3 No.1, 1982.PP.28-50.	8-4

8.6 ROLE OF NON-BROADCAST MEDIA

As you are aware that the sensory experience forms the foundation for intellectual activity. Sensory aids effect an economy of time in learning. For long, the common practice to communicate knowledge has been by means of written and oral language. But language has many limitations that may contribute to learning difficulty. Generally modern educators recognise in non-broadcast media such basic values as concreteness, enrichment and dynamic interest. The use of non-broadcast media in teaching has become so numerous that today a teacher of any subject need not resort to any of the archaic methods of teaching. Even the most abstract concept can now be presented to the pupil in a concrete way by means of more than one aid. Some of the distinct advantages claimed for the use of non-broadcast media in helping teachers to arrange more effective

environments for learning are discussed below:

i) By using non-broadcast media materials, inacessible processes, materials, events, objects, changes in time, speed and space could easily be brought to the learners. Teachers often face difficulties in making information available to students in certain cases. Students in a large classroom or group may not be able to see the demonstrations, small models, objects and small pictures shown by the teacher.

ii) The use of non-broadcast media material result in greater acquisition of knowledge of facts and ensures longer retention of the information gained. Non-broadcast materials provide first hand experience in a variety of ways and sometimes make the pupil actively participate. Hence they not only help develop meaningful vocabulary but also enable the pupil retain the information for a pretty long time. The non-broadcast media technology provides pupil with meaningful sources of experience, primary visual sources as well as additional resources.

iii) The use of its materials in the tutorials or classroom can provide effective substitutes for direct contact of students with social and physical environment. A teacher may take his class by means of an appropriate picture to any distant place and things. Such media may serve as a magic carpet for providing needed experiences.

iv) By using suitable non-broadcast materials, any expected change in attitude and behaviour could be facilitated. Such materials generally add an interest and involvement to the lesson. Students learn more if they are involved in significant and appealing activities. Active participation maintains interest and increases learning whether they are participating in individual or group activities like a project.

v) The non-broadcast materials supply a concrete basis for conceptual thinking, giving rise to meaningful concepts. They present abstract information to the learners in various forms. Teachers in this complex age should be able to guide them to the vast reservoir of knowledge by making use of additional resources like television, films, diagrams, charts, globes maps and transparencies. All these

resources enhance clarity of communication and increase speed of comprehension.

vi) The use of non-broadcast material involves more than one senses and hence they will be able to secure and retain the attention of pupil as well as develop the communication skills in pupil.

vii) The non-broadcast material could motivate and stimulate interest of pupil to gain further knowledge.

viii) The said material could be used to advantage any age or ability group. It may be used as supplements to illustrate, to clarify and to focus attention.

Close scrutiny of these roles of non-broadcast media indicate that they may be put to work in the classroom for effective and efficient teaching learning process. The effective use of such media has been highlighted by Harris (1979) in the below referred book. Please read for comprehension.

Das, R.C. (1993)	Educational Technology: As Basic Text. New Delhi, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, PP.32-59.	8-5

For further details of the role of non-broadcast media, please read Unit No.5 of Educational Technology Course (834) PP.26-40.

8.7 NON-PRINT MEDIA IN STUDENT SUPPORT

Student support services consist upon several activities. It ranges from the entry of students into distance education to the completion of the course and sometimes continue even after the completion of the particular programme. Several media are used to help students whatever and whenever they need. The term audio-visual is just one of the many used as teaching aids. Audio-visual media, learning resources, educational or instructional media and educational technology are also often used interchangeable.

Audio-visual aids are instruments which help or aid the teaching learning process. They accelerate the rate at which pupil learn and also make teaching learning interesting and comparatively easy. Audio aids are materials which help learning through the sense of hearing and visual aids are materials which help learning through the sense of sight. Some of the popularly used audio-visual aids are, gramophone, record player, phonograph, cassette players, real-to-real, different articles, e.g. coins, balls etc., blackboard, chart, photographs, posters, maps, models, films (silent) film (sound), television, sound projector, etc.

There may be students who would learn without any difficulty from the printed words. But, in the same tutorial session, there may be students for whom the printed word is not enough to grasp a concept. As a result there is a need for the use of materials other than the printed one to motivate and communicate with individuals of different educational background.

Audio-visual materials are useful in helping the teacher to cope with the various abilities and different levels of motivation in his tutorial session. However, the use of audio-visual aids in teaching process makes learning effective.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Usha Rao (1991)	Educational Technology, Bombay, Himalya Publishing House, PP.60-69.	8-6

8.8 ACTIVITY

1. Please discuss the potential role of radio in student support services with an expert and prepare a brief report of the outcome of the discussion.

2. Suppose you are a tutor, select and justify the media you intend to use as student support.

3. List below the advantages of educational television in student support services.

4. List below the disadvantages of using radio in student support services.

8.9 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have studied the unit, now please answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Explain the classification of media used in student support services.

Q.No.2 Critically examine the potential role of Radio in student support services.

Q.No.3 Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the use of Radio and Television in student support services.

Q.No.4 Discuss the role of television in student support services.

Q.No.5 "Radio and television broadcasts may be major sources of knowledge for home-based students with direct teaching or supplementary techniques in distance education". Discuss.

Q.No.6 Discuss those mental skills which are best developed by television.

Q.No.7 Critically examine the role of non-broadcast media in student support services.

Q.No.8 Analyse the effectiveness of the use of non-print media generally in distance education and particularly in student support services.

Q.No.9 Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Radio and non-broadcast media in distance education.

Q.No.10 Describe the overall role of media in student support services.

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UNIT NO.9

PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN STUDENT SUPPORT

BY

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rashid

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Open Universities in their routine work over the years have come across a variety of students' problems of varying magnitude and dimensions affecting instructional activities. Some of them are late coming and continuous absenteeism from classes, boycotting tests and assignments, malpractices in examinations, teasing, strikes etc. While some of these problems may be so serious as to affect the individual's growth and peace of the institution, others may not be so serious. When problems become violent, they may cause damage to the institutional property and disrupt its normal life. It becomes imperative and inevitable for open universities to initiate appropriate and timely action to overcome the problems and minimise their effect. In this process, they generally depend upon their own experiences and that of others in tackling problems. such approaches may result in temporary solutions leading to the possibility of recurrence of such problems. Attempts are made to find solutions of a permanent nature based on well formulated and tried out principles rather than depending upon casual approaches.

The effectiveness of instruction imparted in institutions including optimal use of institutional resources depends, to a very large extent, upon the way the students are managed by teachers or tutors. Managing students in and out of the classroom, helping them to overcome their problems is a complex process. Teachers are known to make all possible efforts to use appropriate methods of managing their students and helping them in solving their problems.

The first and foremost step in any attempt at helping students to overcome their problems is to be aware of the actual problems. It is often noticed that administrators, and teachers and others concerned have a tendency to wait for problems to occur instead of predicting the possibility of the occurrence of the problem. Only when they become aware of the problems they attempt to take steps to solve them. Problems do not erupt all of a sudden. Careful observations will enable teachers to notice their signs and symptoms. Hameed, who is normally very well behaved picks up an argument over a very trivial issue and creates a big scene with his teachers. Zeeshan, who is regular in attending classes and is sincere in his studies starts absenting himself from the class without prior permission of the concerned teacher. Muhammad Abdullah always sits alone in a depressed and widhrawn mood without involving himself in the activities in the class. Behaviour of these types are indicative of the different types of problems of students. Some of them may be serious and others not serious enough to warrant attention.

Identification of problems affecting academic performance of students and their personality development is a matter of serious concern for all teachers. Two factors are important in prompting them to take suitable action.

- impact of the problem on the whole class
- incidence of periodicity

Sometimes a problem may affect instruction as in the case of an aggressive student frequently holding up the class proceedings by a volley of irrelevant questions. Such a behavioural situation may have a negative influence on the rest of the class. Some problems such as the one of Muhammad Abdullah who shows sings of depression and withdrawal behaviour may be an indication of his poor emotional adjustment affecting his own personality development. A few problems are noticed by teachers time and again as in the case of malpractices in tests and examinations, late coming to classes, delayed submission of assignments and project briefs etc.

Most teachers are often concerned about the unsatisfactory performance of students in their academic work. They often notice that students who are known to be capable of superior performance perform rather poorly. Some students do not show significant progress in spite of the best efforts of teachers. Some others exhibit considerable difficulty in understanding the lesson taught in the class. It may look perhaps too simple to generalise all problems of students under the category of under-achievement as most teachers do. Under-achievement may be because of a variety of factors such as poor motivation, situational reaction, relatively serious neurotic problems, health problems etc. In fact, these may be the actual problems and they show off in the form of under-achievement. Under-achievement is a name of a host of behavioural problems and is not just a single difficulty. It may just be the result of the problems but not the actual problem itself. Great care must be exercised in identifying problems by using the most appropriate tools and techniques.

One of the most useful methods for identifying a problem is observation. Tutors or teachers who are keen observers of their students will more easily anticipate than others. All others will come to know of the problem after its effects have proved dangerous either to the individual student or the group. Observation is an everyday affair and every individual is involved in observation of incidents or situations. Certain principles are to be followed in using

observation as a tool for problem identification. Otherwise it may not be possible to identify the actual problem, although one may have observed lots of facts and though are might have gathered mass of data.

Psychologists, researchers and educationists have made indepth studies of the problems of students. Their studies have highlighted the fact that problems mostly occur in the context of a surrounding or setting. For example, students disrupting instruction cause a problem. Such action by students would have been influenced by the classroom setting such as instructional inefficiency, external factors like inadequate transport facilities, dissatisfaction over provision of sports facilities etc. Students emotions by throwing plates in the dining hall of the hostel, under-achieving, strikes by students need to be observed in the total context of the atmosphere prevailing in the hostel, the relationship between the mess staff and the inmates of the hostel, important as a rule to always observe the whole situation. Such observation will provide cues necessary to interpret the meaning of the behaviours. Tutors and teachers through their interaction with their students and colleagues would be in a position to spot out the possible trouble create i.e. those who have a problem or are likely to cause one. Having identified such students the next step is to observe them carefully with a view to get more accurate and complete data. Observation must be carried out in a natural setting i.e. where the students are involved. It would be a gross mistake to jump to any conclusion on the basis of observation over a short period of time. The best approach would be to OBSERVE OVER A SUFFICIENTLY LONG PERIOD before drawing any inference.

One of the more serious mistakes one often makes in observation is to state the problem on the basis of a sample of students' behaviour in different settings instead of getting all the necessary data about the students' behaviour. Another serious limitation is the observer's bias which may disturb the data. WHILE WE OBSERVE, WE MUST BE FREE FROM BIAS. Any biased observation is always subjective and the inaccuracies in data can be greatly reduced when observation is planned and made purposeful.

It is not enough if an existing problem is identified through observation. The most important action is to help the student get over the problem at the earliest and take corrective steps to see that the problem does not occur again. The solution may be in counseling `problem students' to realise their strengths and weaknesses, set realistic goals etc. It may also result in aiding them to make proper and effective adjustments. The approach to problem solving should be

based on systematic and scientific approach rather than on a commonsense approach.

The following steps are to be followed in problem solving:-

1. Problem identification.
2. Gathering the data available.
3. Hypothesising the probable causes of the problem.
4. Identifying the data needed and collecting the data.
5. Arriving at the actual causes.
6. Implementing the strategy for solving.
7. Follow up action initiation.

The most important method of identifying a problem is observation. By studying the whole situation or the setting in which the problem has manifested itself, the problem may be pinpointed. It might be useful to classify the problem into main and subsidiary categories.

The next step is to carefully analyse the problem situation so that all the available data can be gathered. From a careful study of the problem case, the background information can be listed. Some data may also be available from teachers and peers. such information is likely to provide certain cues and insight to help hypothesise the probable causes of the problem.

Hypothesising the causes is a very important step as it helps in evolving the appropriate strategies for problem solution. Great care must be exercised in guessing the causes. This step will lead to the use of appropriate method for collecting data. The experience of the teacher and discussion with colleagues would enable the teacher to make a shrewd guess about the possible causes. All the probable causes must be listed.

The next logical step is to pinpoint the actual causes for the problem. This is done by testing the causes identified on the basis of objectively obtained data.

The data has to be obtained using appropriate tools such as observation, interview, rating scales, intelligence tests, personality tests etc.

We must analyse the available data and the obtained data to arrive at the actual causes of the problem. Any error in pinpointing the actual causes would lead to the use of ineffective strategies for problem solving.

Based on the causes arrived at, the efforts of the tutor or teacher should be to see that the effect of the factors that cause the problem are eliminated. Such elimination helps in solving the problem. Teachers need to make use of different strategies. The strategies will depend upon the identified causes.

The strategies used by teachers are expected to assist the student to overcome the problem. But there may always be the possibility of the problem recurring. In fact, it is also the responsibility of teacher to take steps to see that the same problems do not occur again. Temporary solution should not be the goal of teachers, but they must work towards a permanent solution. This is where follow up action plays a vital part.

Different approaches have to be used for assisting students to overcome specific problems in the various areas of guidance. The choice of the approaches for implementation depends upon various factors.

The strategies for problem identification and data collection through the use of appropriate tools and tests, the variety of strategies for providing guidance and counselling services towards students problems.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit, that you should be able to:

1. discuss the problems involved in student support in distance education;

2. explain the problems of punctuality of students and tutors in study centre;

3. describe the significance of regional offices and study centres;

4. appreciate the training of tutor in student support system;

5. evaluate the usefulness of monitoring and briefing of tutors; and

6. suggest some possible solutions to the problems involved in student support system in distance education.

9.3 PUNCTUALITY OF STUDENTS

A student selects an individual degree programme by harmonising three principal elements. The first element is the student's goals, capacities and aspirations. Each student initiates a programme which responds seriously and concretely to these factors. Since the student takes the major responsibility for learning, this first element is a fundamental and essential part of every effective programme, The second is that each student is expected to demonstrate achievement in the broad areas of intellectual competence and also to strive for personal development. It is through demonstrating these competencies that the degree requirements are met. Thirdly, each student engages in several modes of learning and relationship in those areas of study in which the AIOU or any distance education institution has approved the programme, experienced faculty (academic staff), appropriate inter-institutional relationships and adequate learning resources.

It can only be done if the students remain punctual in the study centre. There is a complaint by the tutors that the students are not punctual in the study centres. The reason perhaps is that there is no compulsion or incentive for attending the study centre, though the students get the advantage of discussing their problems with the tutors in the study centre. Attendance should be made compulsory to solve the problem of punctuality. However, with certain steps, punctuality can reduce this problem.

9.4 EFFICIENCY AND PUNSCTUALITY OF TUTORS.

The efficiency and punctuality of tutors is another problem. Almost all the tutors appointed as part time by the University belong to formal system. They have no previous teaching experience in the system of distance education. Such tutor must be trained in how to tutor in distance education

Moreover, another related problem is of punctuality of the tutors, sometime, they do not take it seriously to be punctual in the study centre. In order to make the tutorial support effective, the punctuality of tutor in the study centre must be checked/supervised properly. The tutor, must have the following abilities:-

1. The ability to plan and manage the time available for learning more effectively.

2. The ability to recognise and understand objectives relating to processes of thinking as well as concepts.

3. The ability to recognise and provide for individual differences among learners who are gifted or weak.

4. The ability to organise and manage teaching and learning through a combination of class, group and individual activities appropriate to the needs of learners, the level of study and the nature of the subject matter. The ability to provide a stimulating and effective environment for learning through good class organisation and display.

5. The ability to use the environment and the learners' direct experience as a resource for learning.

6. The ability to use stimulating teaching and learning techniques where necessary, (including questioning techniques) based on the use of process skills and leading towards a more active and problem-centered approach to teaching and learning in all subject areas.

7. The ability to receive and provide better feedback and also to stimulate feedback between learners themselves, hence:

8. The ability to evaluate the results of learning through the careful setting, monitoring and assessment of pupils' output.

9.5 COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Distance learners in remote areas may be confronted with communication problems. Where distance learners depend on printed materials, mail service may be slow and feedback too infrequent. In remote areas educational broadcasts are not always received clearly. Increased use of audio cassettes is one possible solution.

Another problem has been the status of the media people. The television producer, for example, has tended to be regarded by the academic staff as a technician. He is consulted, if at all, after the course content and objectives have been selected by the academic staff.

Limited radio time for educational programmes has been a severe drawback. For example, the allotment or broadcast time for the Allama Iqbal Open University is too small to handle the increasing number of subjects to be taught, and TV lesson are also available in small quantity. Eventually the university hopes to be given permission to operate its own radio-TV transmission system. However, the university has its own radio and T.V. studios and almost all the programmes are produced by AIOU.

9.5.1 CONSTRAINTS IN THE USE OF COMMUNICATION

1. Language-wise complexity of the audience.
2. Inadequate institutional facilities for the use of radio and T.V.
3. Less coverage of the contents of education by the radio and T.V. media.
4. Inadequate maintenance and repair facilities.
5. Low socio-economic levels of our students of distance education to afford audio and video cassettes.
6. Small number of students having a regular access to the radio and T.V. broadcasts.

7. Inability of the educational institutions to meet the financial liabilities for the use of new technologies, specially video production and computer technology.

8. Technical and expensive process of preparing good quality video films.

9. Satellite Institutional Television Experiment (SITE). The experiment brought to light that advanced communication system demanded advanced soft-ware facilities, trained personnel and competent monitoring services involving a huge sum of expenditure.

10. Ignorance and apathy of the large sections of population towards education and any new communication technology.

9.5.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING CONSTRAINS IN THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY IN DISTANCE EDUCATION.

1. Learning material may be developed after taking into consideration the abilities and experiences of students of distance education.

2. Indigenous materials may be made use of in the preparation of material.

3. Indigenous technology may be developed on the basis of the experience gained from the improved technology.

4. Media experts may be trained to respond to different situations.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Holmberg, B. (1981)	Status and Trends of Distance Education, London, Kogan Page, PP.83-96	9-1

9.6 PROVISION OF REGIONAL OFFICES/STUDENTS CENTRES

The faculty at the main campus is expected to develop instructional material in approved mediums of instruction. The Regional Office also provides instructional experiences and co-ordinates various agencies at the Provincial level. It is expected to be well-equipped with library, laboratory and various audio-visual materials. Regional centres should take initiative in organising broadcasts and telecasts. They should also be equipped with micro-computer for Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI). Permanent staff should also be posted at these centres. For organising personal contact programmes, regional centres may invite experts from system of higher education. Regional centres may also distribute written material to the student of the region. It would also be the responsibility of the regional centres to send assignments and providing feedback after correction.

However, successful functioning of the regional centre can be as under:-

1. These regional centres should take care of admission, instructions and guidance and counselling and evaluation of these students.

2. The centres should be well-equipped in terms of library facilities for books, journals, audio and video cassettes.

3. Specially trained tutors and counsellors should be appointed at these centres.

4. Face-to-face contact sessions should be held at these centres as much as possible.

5. Contact courses should be organised according to the convenience and needs of the learners.

6. Suitable remuneration should be paid to the tutors and counsellors.

7. There should be adequate provision for giving individual attention to the learners.

8. Distance Education Centres to be really effective, must enjoy a reasonable amount of financial and functional autonomy.

9. They should arrange workshops for various courses.

Just as the nerve centers are to the human body, so are the study centres to an Open University. In an Open University system there is no direct interaction between the teacher and the learner. The study centres attempt to overcome the barrier and provide an opportunity for face-to-face interaction.

The success of any distance education programme depends not only on printed material but also on the face-to-face contact sessions at the study centres. The study centres are mainly located in the conventional educational institutions, colleges and universities.

The study centres are the contact points to the students of the University. The host institutions where the study centres are established provide sufficient accommodation usually free of cost, for the office of the Coordinator, for the library, audio-visual equipment and classrooms for tutorials.

The study center is headed by a Study Centre Coordinator assisted by sufficient ministerial staff. Counselling is done mostly by senior teachers from academic institution usually on Friday afternoon and on Sundays to suit the convenience of the students who are mostly employed people. The Study Centre Coordinator can head the institution or he may recommend a senior academics of the institution for appointment as Study Centre Coordinator. He plays a vital role in the work of the University, being the link between students and the headquarters. He is the Head of the Study Centre, is the Public Relations Officer of the University and responsible for the activities of the centre. He renders local help to the students in advising about general and non-academic issues.

The Study Centre Coordinator is responsible for arranging facilities for tutorials and monitor the tutors about the tutorial classes. He coordinates the work of all individual tutors, maintains proper reports of the tutors and the students. In short, the Coordinator is responsible for all the activities of the study centre and acts as a liaison officer between the university, the regional centre and the study centre.

Experienced teachers from established educational institutions, able administrators from public and private enterprises and competent professionals are appointed as Academic Tutors usually called tutors, depending on the nature of instruction on the recommendation of the Study Centre Coordinator and the academic department where possible. The criteria for appointment of tutors are set and provided by the academic department at the main campus. The Tutor is

responsible for the overall academic progress of the students and can be compared to a regular teacher in a conventional university. The tutor's task is much more difficult as the majority of the students are mature and motivated. Adults are in a better position to interact with the tutors and counsellors. A tutor is responsible for the academic counselling, guidance, assignment, grading and to collect the feedback from all the students allotted to him. He should make effective use of University's multi-media system by involving the students. He has to assist the Coordinator in intensive coaching programme where scheduled, evaluation of examination scripts, assignments etc.

Dr. Rashid, M. (1998) has given the following suggestions for the successful working of the Open University Libraries at Campus and Regional Offices.

i) Keeping in view the philosophy of distance education in Pakistani situation, the success of implementing the collection development policies would mainly depend upon two major factors "budget" and "staffing". Separate, adequate budgets both for Central and Study Centres. Libraries and professionally qualified and experienced staff to organise the libraries on modern lines, by having automation of some operations to provide. Library services both to the academic staff and students are essential.

ii) Cooperation in collection development at the Open University Library is a complex process involving several internal and external persons and organisations. Internal cooperation includes coordination between the library staff of different sections, library and the management, different branches of the University, academic staff responsible for selection of books, technical staff of the audio-visual art and computer sections, Coordinators of the study centers, Central Library users and students through the feedback from the Coordinators.

iii) External cooperation aims at the coordination of the library with the booksellers and publishers, non-book publishers and distributors, hardware suppliers, libraries of the conventional universities, various higher educational institutions, distance teaching universities and public libraries. There should be coordination between Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation and Pakistan Television Corporation staff

for the assistance in getting the information regarding the radio broadcasts and television telecasts of different universities.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education. Islamabad. National Book Foundation. PP.40-54.	9-2

9.7 AVAILABILITY OF STUDY MATERIALS

Sometime, availability of study materials creates problem in student support services. The desired objectives cannot be achieved if the study material is not printed in time and made available to the students.

There are many factors involved in the delay of study materials availability. These include:-

1. The study material is not printed timely due to shortage of manpower, paper or other equipment deficiency in the printing press. The problem can be overcome by inviting applications/tenders for printing of university material from the external printers.

2. The course coordinators or the writer do not prepare assignments and tutor materials in time. In order to make the system efficient the Bureau of Academic Planning and Course Production at AIOU as such or such other section should take care of collecting assignments and tutors materials well before time from the concerned departments and forward to the concerned section responsible for printing arrangements.

3. Provision of library books or reference material should be put at the disposal of main library, regional libraries or study centre libraries.

However, in order to make the student support services effective, the university must ensure the availability of study materials.

9.8 AVAILABILITY OF TUTORS

Availability of trained tutors is another problem in the system of distance education. Unless the tutors are properly trained, the desired results cannot be achieved. In some places, the tutors in the related areas are not available. In such situation, the institution feels great difficulty.

9.9 TUTOR BRIEFING

There are few tutor briefing facilities available for new distance education tutors either in this country or in most other countries. It is in fact difficult to see who would, under the existing conditions, arrange such formal training unless correspondence study were to be a part of the general public educational provision. It is also not easy to forecast who would be the clients of such course if such courses were arranged, as the individual economic gain to be made by the teacher from perfecting such tutoring skills is so uncertain and marginal. This may well be regretted by many who use and have faith in correspondence study. A study should that in practice many of the tutors themselves (one-fifth of the tutors responding) do not even believe that this form of teaching demands any special skills distinct from the skills of classroom teaching. Most of the remaining four-fifths of tutors had preferences for different forms of initial training for new tutors, and of in-service training for themselves as experienced tutors in need of improvement in their own tutoring work.

Two points might be made here in the light of the above referred study. First, that the individual tutor normally accepted the suggestion (in the questionnaire) that there might be a distinction between their own need for themselves as established tutors and the needs (on the other hand) of the inexperienced tutor, whether or not they had received normal teacher-training. Secondly, that correspondence tutoring is a particularly isolated activity, where the tutor is left alone with his problems and his uncertainties.

9.10 MONITORING OF TUTORING

Another problem involved in the system of tutorial support is the monitoring of tutoring. Instances have come to the notice of university that there is no uniformity in the tutorial support given by the tutors. For example, some tutors remain absent from the study centre. Some do not mark the assignments properly. there is variation in giving grades to the students while marking the assignments.

Such problems can be overcome by regular monitoring of the study centre by the Regional Office and of assignments by the academic department or the academics if appointed in the regions. The monitoring must include:-

1. Monitoring the punctuality of students in the study center.

2. Monitoring the tutor marked assignments.

3. Monitoring of the tutor punctuality and his/ her attendance in the study centre.

4. Monitoring the activities of the tutor at study centre.

9.11 COORDINATION BETWEEN THE TUTOR & COURSE COORDINATOR

The coordination between the tutor and course coordinator is another problem. Most of the study materials are developed by the course coordinator. They give instructions to the tutors on how to use the study and tutors material. Sometimes, the instructions given by the course coordinator are not fully taken care of by the tutor.

It is the responsibility of both the tutor and the coordinator to develop coordination in facilitating the student support services. The tutors must seek guidance from the coordinators in case of difficulty related to course/study material. Proper guidance can also be taken in solving the assignments, marking the assignment and distribution of marks to certain questions in the assignments.

However, to make the tutorial system effective and efficient, the coordination between tutor and coordinator is absolutely essential.

9.12 FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

In order to overcome the financial constraints the following measures are suggested:-

1. In a system where expenses are constantly rising and the government grant has become static, there is a dire need to raise the income through alterative resources. If it is not done it may lead to re-

allocation of funds in favour of non-teaching expenses which may adversely affect the standards of achievements. Findings of the study shown that Productivity Trends in Correspondence Courses has gone down (Wagner, 1972, P.37).

2. If we study the techniques of Correspondence Courses, we come to know that it is comprised of the following:

   a) Preparation of lessons or units

   b) Evaluation of assignments (students response sheets).

   c) Arranging classes through contact camp.

   The study of Wagner (1982) brings out the percentage, of share of expenses on courses has reduced to one half, showing a very significant decrease. In such a situation where the technique itself is being under emphasised, the standards are bound to be affected adversely which leaves a question mark on the existence of these courses. Therefore, there is a dire need to increase the share of the expenses if these courses are to run efficiently.

3) This system is dependent on a good library, because of primarily two reasons:

   i) To supplement the knowledge of the reading material.

   ii) To develop the habit of study which may finally lead to develop the habit of self study which these courses aim at.

   Therefore, a good library, comprising good books and journals is a must. But, looking at the expenses incurred on books and journals the situation is miserable, since the expense incurred on them is less than 1 percent of the total expenditure. If calculated in per capita terms it comes to about Rs.3 students per year. Therefore, there is a dire need to increase these allocations sharply.

So we can say that in a country like Pakistan with resource constraint, this system of education is a dire need of the day.

For further details, please read the below referred material.

Rashid, M. (1998)	Student Support Services in Distance Education, Islamabad, National Book Foundation. PP.28-36.	9-3

9.13 EVALUATION

In the context of education system the term evaluation means assessing or determining the value or standard of knowledge and skills of the examinee after a fixed period of time and at a particular time, i.e., the time when he appears at the examination. The examining body, a University or a Board or an institution plays the role of co-ordination between the two ingredients of evaluation examinee and examiner. There are different ways of assessing the standard. An examinee may be asked to speak on a given topic. The examiner may discuss the topic with him. He may watch the action of the examinee if assignment is of a practical nature. He may ask him to write the answers to the question paper.

The word `Evaluation' in place of word `Examination' is now being increasingly used in current educational literature. The evaluation process is not "restricted to the result of tests and examinations, scales and inventories and such other gadgets as conceived and employed by the teacher, but it has a wider meaning and in that sense it includes the learner's own estimate and appraisal and that, in fact, is the truly significant and the most important evaluation".

According to the Wrightstone, "Evaluation is a relatively new technical term introduced to design a more comprehensive concept of measurement that is implied in conventional tests and examination". In examination and measurement the emphasis is upon the academic subjects only whereas evaluation includes all the changes that take place in the development of a balanced personality and measurement of the qualities of head, hand, health and heart of an individual.

Fairly exhaustive techniques have been designed by educationists to evaluate the various aspects of learner's growth. Following are the commonly used techniques:-

1. Intelligence tests.
2. Achievement tests.
3. Aptitude tests.
4. Personality tests.
5. Tests of attitude and behaviour
6. Rating scales.
7. questionnaires and check lists.
8. Interview.
9. Anecdotal records.
10. Autobiographical method.
11. Pupil's diary.
12. Case history.
13. Sociometric techniques.
14. Projective techniques.

CONCLUSION:

a) Evaluation must be comprehensive in scope. It is concerned with all aspects of the growth of the person.

b) Evaluation must be comprehensive in method. It employs different procedures and seeks many kinds of evidence.

c) Evaluation must keep in view the objectives of the instructional programme.

d) Evaluation must be treated as a cooperative enterprise. Teachers, administrators, pupils and parents where appropriate, should be involved at different levels of participation in the formulation and definitions of goals and values and in the collection and interpretation of evidence.

e) The testing programme should become an integral part of the curricula and should not be treated as separate activity.

f) Greater reliance and insistence is necessary on teacher made tests or assignments.

9.14 ACTIVITIES

1. List below the important problems of tutorial support involved in distance education.

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Discuss the problems of student support which you experienced in the study centre with any educationists and write the report of your discussion.

3. Write below the problems which you experienced in the study center other than the problems mentioned in this unit.

_____

_____

_____

_____

9.15 EXERCISE

Hopefully, you have read the unit, now please answer the following questions.

Q.No.1 Critically examine the problems involved in tutorial support in distance education.

Q.No.2 "No programme can be successful if the tutor is not efficient". Discuss.

Q.No.3 "Without proper communication to the students, the teaching learning process cannot be regarded as successful". Discuss the statement with reference to the role of communication in teaching learning process.

Q.No.4 "The Regional Offices and Study Centre are the back-bone of distance education system". To what extent do you agree with the statement and why? Give examples in support of your answer.

Q.No.5 "The teaching learning process can fail if the tutor is not properly trained." Discuss.

Q.No.6 Explain the system of tutor briefing in distance education. Also discuss the advantage of tutor briefing.

Q.No.7 "The availability of study material in the study centre and Regional Office facilitates the students to write their assignments easily." Discuss.

Q.No.8 How you will overcome the financial constraints in the system of student support services?

Q.No.9 "Without evaluation nobody can say that the teaching is effective". Discuss the statement keeping in view the significance and potential role of evaluation in distance education.

9.16 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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