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Research Paper Title: **A Review on Enhancing Quality of Online Distance Education**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby would like to explicitly state that the write-up titled “**A Review on Enhancing Quality of Online Distance Education**” is original and has not been published earlier, or that it is not under consideration for possible publication elsewhere.

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A Review on Enhancing Quality of Online Distance Education

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Abstract

Increasing number of distance learning options for the students has led to competition between the institutions, universities and online e-learning platforms striving for attracting students for enrolment. This development can be considered as 'globalization of online distance education' as top-notch universities across the world are offering courses on online platforms. Because of this, all existing online distance education-providing institutions are stressed upon to improve the quality of distance education to sustain as well as to grow in this new competitive arena. The study aims to review high quality research papers and chapters to identify quality parameters for online distance education. This study attempts to identify top five quality parameters related to online distance education which, if improved upon, can help enhance the quality of distance education.

Keywords: Online distance education (ODL), e-learning and quality parameters.

Introduction

Since inception of distance education in India, there has always been a doubt in the minds of people whether distance education provides quality education or awards a certificate, diploma or degree just for the sake of it. With the adaptation of Information Technology in the area of distance education, the new term that occupies the centre-stage is distance education. Most of the progress in e-learning is visible during last two decades in India. With flexibility in learning, the online distance education is very popular with students and working professionals. Top universities across the world are now offering their courses on online platforms and are targeting students across the world. This now has put tremendous pressure on existing online distance providers to change themselves as per the changing online

distance education environment. To prevail in this competition, enhancing the quality of online distance education is must. Therefore, the present study attempts to identify top five online distance education parameters. If the institutions focus on these top parameters, it will lead to enhancement in quality of online distance education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to review the high standard published authentic research papers and identify top 5 ODL quality parameters which, if improved upon, will help boost the quality of online distance education.

Source of Data

The research papers for the review were retrieved from standard and high quality online research repositories such as Research Gate, Sage Journals and Springer Link.

Literature Review

Ascough (2002) in the written chapter endorsed that technology, content development and content delivery act as important parameters for delivering quality in online distance education.

As per Kebritchi et al. (2017), the quality of content development, integration of

multimedia in content and instructional strategies play an important role in enhancing the quality in e-learning context. The review of the literature conducted by Markova et al. (2017) identified that for maintaining quality of online distance education the key factors are instructional design, instruction delivery skills, student engagement, learner support and standardised and continuous assessment.

While undergoing various online learning standard documents, Martin et al. (2017) summarized that while ranking from top to the bottom the criteria namely instruction analysis, instructions design and development, student satisfaction, student support, institutional mission, institutional structure, quality control, technological support were the major criteria mentioned in a majority of the reviewed documents.

Al-Rahmi et al. (2018) endorsed that use of proper technology enhances the learning experience amongst the enrolled students. Goodman (2018) identified that online courses are becoming of popular choice for learning as they provide flexibility in learning.

Paul and Felicia (2019) endorsed that there is a difference between face-to-face learning and online distance learning, whereas student's satisfaction, content development and content delivery play a

pivotal role in maintaining quality of online distance education. Rodrigues et al. (2019) explored that student's satisfaction through delivery of quality content and use of proper technology are prominent quality parameters in e-learning.

According to Radosavljevic (2019), the important quality parameters for effective e-learning are 'adaptive learning' as the students and faculties need to adapt to the virtual environment of teaching-learning and 'assessment.' Also, the technology used for disseminating the subject knowledge is being considered as an important parameter. Salloum (2019) found that e-learning acceptance by students is a

critical parameter and students' need to be ready to accept learning under virtual environment, quality of content delivery and the trust of students are also considered as important parameters for e-learning acceptance by the students for effective learning.

In the context of e-learning, which considers learning thorough utilization of electronics and information technology, Bhattacharya et al. (2020) identified that learning support and continuity, multilingual availability, course reliability, personalization, reliability and collaboration are the key e-learning parameters in Indian context.

Table 1.1: Identifying top 5 key parameters essential to boost quality of online distance education

Sr. No.	Quality Parameters in ODL	Ascough, R. S. (2002)	Kebritch I M., Lipschuetz A. & Santiago e L. (2017)	Tatiana Markova, Irina Glazkova & Elena Zaborova (2017)	Martin, Florence & Polly, Drew & Jokisalo, Annika & May, Birgit. (2017)	Goodman J., Melkers J. & Pallais A. (2018).	. Waleed Al-Rahmi, Ahmed Aldraiweesh, Noraffandy Yahaya, Yusri Bin Kamin and Akram M. Zeki (2018)	Helena Rodrigues, Flomena Almeida, Vanessa Figueiredo, Sara L. Lopes (2019)	Paul Jasmine & Jefferson Felicia (2019)	Radosavljevic, V., Radosavljevic, S., & Jelic, G., (2019)	Salfoum, S.A., Al-Emran, M., Shaalan, K. (2019)	Bhattacharya S., Roy S. & Das P. (2020)	Frequency of Parameter Appearance	Rank
1	Appropriate Technology/IT/ Technology Support/ Multimedia Integration/ Virtual teaching environment	Yes	Yes	...	Yes	...	Yes	Yes	...	Yes	Yes	Yes	8	1
2	Quality Content Development/ Instructional Design/ Course reliability	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	...	...	...	Yes	...	Yes	...	6	3
3	Quality of Content Delivery/ Instructional Strategies/ Instruction Delivery design/ Delivery Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	...	...	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	...	8	1
4	Institutional Mission	...	...	...	Yes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	6
5	Institutional Structure	...	...	...	Yes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	6
6	Quality Control	...	...	...	Yes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	6
7	Students Satisfaction/ Enhanced learning experience/ Students Engagement/ Students e learning acceptance/ Students Trust/ Personalization/ Students Collaboration/ Learners Support	...	...	Yes	Yes	...	...	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	2
8	Standardised and continuous assessments	...	...	Yes	...	...	...	...	...	Yes	...	...	2	5
9	Flexibility in learning	...	...	...	...	Yes	...	...	...	Yes	Yes	...	3	4
10	Multilingual Availability	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Yes	1	6

Conclusion and Discussion:

The top five parameters identified through review of literature are technology to create virtual learning environment and quality of content delivery (Rank 1), student's satisfaction through enhanced learning experience (Rank 2), quality content development and course reliability (Rank 3), flexibility in learning (Rank 4), standardised and continuous assessment (Rank 5). Rank 6 is shared by the following mentioned ODL quality parameters: Institutional Mission, Institutional Structure, Quality Control (as a Department) and Multilingual Teaching Support.

There exists no doubt that for online distance education, the creation of a virtual learning environment is essential and we can achieve this with the help of available innovative information technologies. Online distance education providers should focus on student's satisfaction, which can be achieved through enhanced learning experience, using various tools of student's engagement and lending students support to solve the problems arising in teaching-learning process.

Quality content development and instruction design can be considered as quality assurance in online distance education as it makes sure that no inferiorly

designed course is provided to the students. This enhances the level of course reliability amongst the students. Online distance education providers is the popular option amongst students as well as working professionals as it provides flexibility in learning with any-time learning and support option. In this case, the institutes can concentrate on enhancing the learning experience of the students. Standardised and Continuous assessment helps students to be engaged with the course on continuous basis, as it stimulates the growth in learning and performance of the students.

Thus it can be concluded that being focused upon the above mentioned top five quality parameters pertaining to distance education will lead to enhancement of level of quality of online distance education.

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