A TELESCOPIC ASSESSMENT OF DUAL MODE EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY SYSTEM IN A SINGLE MODE INSTITUTION: AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the myopic view and the temerity with which ODL institutions are treated, many African traditional higher institutions of learning are rapidly adopting dual delivery mode in all their programmes. Adopting the dual or the multiple delivery sub-systems of education is fast becoming the vogue in majority of higher institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Considering however, that not all the conventional institutions have the wherewithal to successfully deliver ODL programmes due to lack of competently trained human resources, adequate infrastructural facilities, professional expertise and managerial acumen in ODL, it raises issues of some ethical and social justice questions (Braimoh, 2010; Lockwood & Latchen, 2004). The questions which therefore agitate the thinking of policy makers, educational managers and researchers are: Is dual delivery of education widening access for success or failure? Is it commercialising or democratising education? Does it sustain the notion of ill-equipped programmes offered for mass production but with doubtful skills acquisition? Otherwise, does it positively raise the hopes of desperate learners only for their aspirations and expectations to remain unfulfilled?

REVIEWING THE DUAL OR MULTIPLE DELIVERY SUB-SYSTEM IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Open and Distance Learning (ODL), may be traced back to Biblical times when Paul the Apostle wrote his epistles for the purposes of teaching Christian communities in Asia

Minor how to live as Christians. At this point in time, ODL was in the form of Distance Education (DE). From these beginnings, the historical development of ODL was related to industrialisation, which allowed for the mass production of printed material with the invention of the printing presses in the middle of the 19th century. This enabled the educational demands of the time to be met through the mass production of educational materials, and developments in the transport systems such as rail and road networks. At this time, DE was used to make education accessible to populations in sparsely populated regions of the former Soviet Union, Australia, Argentina and Canada (Peters, 2004). Distance learning was a means through which remote learners could receive education, and was used by the colonisers to provide education for their citizens stationed in various colonies in the third world.

ODL, which is characterised by widening access to a larger pool of students than traditional higher learning institutions can cater for, continues to gain popularity both globally and in Africa. The growth of single-mode mega-universities is the most important phenomenon in the current development of higher education (Daniel, 1998). The widening of access, coupled with the need for higher education institutions to increase their sources of funding has occurred against a backdrop of decreased public funding. The result has been seen in some traditionally face to face higher education institutions in Africa now, adopting ODL practices and offering ODL programmes as part of their academic structures.

Traditionally, many higher education institutions received all of their funding from the state in order to meet their operational requirements. Today, however, decreased funding for higher education is an endemic global phenomenon as higher education fiscal needs appear invisible in the light of other pressing needs such as health care, welfare and primary education (Archibald & Feldman, 2006; Ehrenberg, 2006; Hearn, 2006; Kane, Orszag & Apostolov, 2005; Heller, 2001; Duderstadt, 2000). Global economic recessions have therefore, created environments which have resulted in reduced funding for services which governments view as non essential, including higher education.

In Africa, most countries experienced independence in the early 1960s, which came with a feeling of optimism in higher education (Woodhall, 2001). However, in the 1980s much of this optimism dwindled as a result of challenges facing higher education in the region (Neave, 2003). These challenges were as a result of the expansion of institutions beyond the public's financial capacity, declining economic performance, weak institutional management, lack of donor interest in higher education and civil wars (Oketch, 2003; Ajayi, Goma & Johnson, 1999). In South Africa, the advent of democracy in 1994, brought with it the need to make quality education accessible to previously marginalised sections of the population. ODL was seen as a means of increasing access to education in the region (Harry & Perraton, 2003). The demand for quality education in Africa, coupled with HIV/AIDS pandemics which forced nations to allocate limited funds to areas other than higher education, resulted in the the adoption of ODL programmes. When the ODL programmes were adopted and it became the vogue, it lessened the burden of education while at the same time, if facilitated greater accessibility of students' enrolment.

Against this backdrop, the survival of higher education institutions was dependent upon sourcing funds from avenues such as student fees and the public-private partnerships. Competition for students grew between institutions which now developed vibrant marketing plans in order to attract fee paying students. This saw the institutions change into more commercial enterprises at the risk of losing the core purposes for which they were established. ODL was seen as a means through which institutions could offer courses to a wider clientele without the need for expanding their physical facilities. This gave rise to the introduction of dual mode education delivery in African higher education institutions. Currently, a large number of higher education institutions in Africa offer dual mode programme delivery. In South Africa, the University of Pretoria introduced interactive television broadcasts in 1997, (University of Pretoria, http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=1371). Other universities in South Africa which today offer some of their programmes using ODL practice include: The University of KwaZulu Natal which offers accounting via distance learning and Tshwane University of Technology. Kenyatta University, Egerton University and the University of Nairobi in

East Africa, among others, which offer dual mode instructional programmes. Higher education institutions across the continent offering dual mode education also include University of Abuja, University of Ibadan, University of Lagos and the National Teachers Institute in Nigeria. University of Zambia, University of Juba, Kigali Institute of Education, University of Eduardo Mondlane, and Copperbelt University are some of the other African institutions offering dual mode delivery programmes.

PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE QUALITY OF ODL PROGRAMMES VIS-À-VIS ITS MULTIPLE DELIVERY SUB-SYSTEMS

ODL institutions have faced a number of challenges over the years, the most contentious one being the public perception regarding the quality of ODL programmes. This negative perception is the result of un-regulated environments which have allowed commercial institutions to offer ODL programmes without stringent quality control mechanisms and legislation. Some conventional face to face institutions have encountered resistance from academic staff when implementing ODL programmes due to the belief, among sections of the public and academics, regarding the quality of ODL programmes. Bower (2001), citing an article by McKinnon (1998), states that most faculty members at Florida Gulf State University expressed serious concerns about the quality and effectiveness of ODL in meeting educational needs. Apart from the challenges of accreditation and certification, Potashnik and Capper (1998) also highlight the challenge which globalization poses as 'instructional material broadcast from abroad have heightened fears about contamination of cultures and values'.

The commercialization of higher education led to the mushrooming of fly-by-night establishments which joined the fray, offering qualifications at a distance to vulnerable students at competitive rates and compromising on quality control mechanisms. The sole purpose of the fly-by-night establishments was to make quick financial rewards by offering sub-standard qualifications in an inadequately regulated environment. This idea has been reinforced by Braimoh and Osiki (2008:59) when they opine that "there is

unnecessary proliferation of distance education institutions under the guise of creating wider access to education while in actual sense such effort is motivated by the issue of commodification for economic rewards to many mushroom distance education institutions which may only exist to exploit the innocent learners". With the advent of the Internet, students have a wider choice in terms of institutions through which to acquire higher education qualifications. The Internet is today a source through which students may receive qualifications at the right price. Websites abound offering to write student assignments for them at a fee thus negatively impacting the image of ODL programmes in the eyes of the public. This lack of control has seen some legitimate ODL institutions record drops in admission rates as they lose students to institutions offering attractive programmes and packages, but which do not adhere to ODL best practices.

The nature of ODL programme delivery, while beneficial to students who are unable to attend conventional institutions due to a variety of reasons, has the potential to have a negative effect on the learning process if accepted ODL practices are ignored, thereby resulting in continued negative public perceptions regarding ODL programmes. Another factor contributing to these perceptions is the control which the conventional ODL programmes exert over the learning process. Instructional designers direct the learning of the student on a pre-determined route, thereby specifying external conditions of learning such as what learning resources may be used, in what learning environment and which instructional methods will be employed in managing the learning process.   However, in an ODL environment, the student has flexibility in terms of the learning environment, the management of his learning process and the learning resources he or she will employ. In a learner who is not adequately prepared or motivated, and disciplined, this may cause attrition, thus further advancing negative perceptions, regarding ODL programmes. In order to counter negative perceptions it is important for providers of ODL programmes to conduct ODL practices according to the specified guidelines which militate against the mentioned threats to quality of ODL programmes. At best, it is necessary that a policy framework be developed, according to Braimoh and Osiki (2008), particularly within the African sub-regions, especially by each of the governments of African nations. This will serve not only as a roadmap to follow in organizing ODL programmes by any institution,

be it private or public, but it will also serve as control mechanism to standardize the quality of ODL programmes and products.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ODL IN TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

ODL has developed through the centuries from a teacher-centred teaching and learning paradigm which was supported by correspondence learning, to a flexible student-centred paradigm where the student is an active learner who has a voice in what, when and how he or she will learn. Taylor (2001), illustrates the changes that have occurred in the characteristics and flexibility of delivery technologies for ODL. These changes are widely referred to as generations of ODL. The first generation is characterised by print based correspondence courses, the second by print, audio-visual technology, computer-based learning and interactive video. The third generation of ODL is synonymous with audio-teleconferencing, videoconferencing, audio-graphic communication and broadcast television and radio. The fourth generation of ODL sees the use of online interactive multimedia, Internet-based access to resources and computer mediated communication for the facilitation of learning. In the fifth generation of ODL, the campus portal access to institutional processes and resources is incorporated into the existing technologies (Taylor, 2001). It is however, important to note that the distinguishing characteristics of these generations of ODL are not clear cut, and most ODL institutions of higher education borrow characteristics from a number of generations to facilitate teaching and learning.

ODL has consequently transformed itself through the decades from the print based correspondence education to an interactive collaborative form of learning while still adhering to the principle of providing education for remote learners. The remote learner is today not only geographically isolated, but includes learners who have been marginalized and therefore unable to benefit from conventional education institutions by factors such as time constraints, gender, religion, physical impairment, age, and social standing to more recently rigid programme offerings.

Access to higher education is a means by which diverse population may acquire skills and competencies necessary for them to meaningfully contribute to, and participate in the economic growth of their countries. The positive correlation between an individual's earning capacity, professional development and higher education qualifications, has led to an increase in the demand for higher education qualifications (Branson, Leibbandt & Zuze, 2009). Coupled with this awareness, was the placement of education as a fundamental human right which all sections of the human population may aspire to achieve. This includes previously marginalised individuals who were excluded on grounds such as gender, religion, age, race, physical impairment and those who live non-mainstream lifestyles such as the nomadic populations in Africa who are not confined by national borders. These developments occurred in congruence with a decline in public funding for higher education and resulted in higher education institutions looking to meet their financial obligations by charging fees and admitting more students. In order to address the increased demand for quality higher education in Africa, many higher education institutions saw ODL as an innovative means of casting their nets wide to reach, and offer education to working adults, the remote students and all previously excluded sections of the population. ODL was also seen as an attractive option as it did not require the brick and mortar lecture halls and residences to accommodate the growing number of students.

ODL'S ENHANCEMENT OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

ODL has been, and continues to be, a viable way through which professionals may enhance their professional competencies while continuing to work, thus earning a living when learning. Similarly, the ODL student does not have to attend on campus lectures and may determine when and where he or she wishes to study.

According to Teal (2000), in sub-Saharan Africa, unemployment rates vary between 3 percent to 30 percent and the educated labour force in Africa is low when compared with other regions of the world, thus leading to skills shortage for a number of vital sectors of

the economy. These sectors include education, health and manufacturing industry. Woods argues that Africa's low skill's level mean that Africa's exports will continue to be dominated by natural resources (Braimoh, 1998; Wood & Mayer, 1998; Wood & Berge, 1997; Wood, 1994). In addition, the continent loses about 20,000 skilled personnel annually due to the brain drain. In order to change this trend, ODL offers the possibility for skills enhancement and capacity building for individuals who are currently employed. These individuals may thus learn while employed without the fear of sacrificing their employment, in an environment where unemployment levels are relatively high, at the altar of learning.

QUALITY CONTROL MECHANISMS TO ENHANCE THE STANDARD OF ODL OFFERINGS

With the political emancipation of many African countries from the sting of colonialism that manifested in different guises and which led to majority of people being kept in perpetual darkness as a result of lack of access to formal education, human capital development in Africa became fixated. Paradoxically however, the surge in the demand for general education and particularly the tertiary education, could be attributed to the process of democratization of education. This is because of the common understanding that knowledge is power and such legitimate power can be derived from education. Education which should be a legal right of all the citizens of the world if illiteracy is to be defeated, and for national development not to be stunted, is still largely an elusive commodity to a massive world population due to many factors (Braimoh & Osiki, 2008).

The advent of ODL as a global movement to widen accessibility to education, especially of those who would not have had the privilege of benefitting from the formal tertiary education, has ushered in the lofty value of educational transformation. Nonetheless, it is pertinent to ensure that such an innovation remains untainted in any form by any of its numerous stakeholders. In essence, for ODL to fulfill its mission of providing flexible access to quality educational acquisition at a cost effective rate, there must be some

deliberate mechanisms put in place to assure quality control and for the sake of the enhancement of the standard of its programme offerings. In ODL, learning can occur anywhere, at any time and for a heterogeneous clientele but the positive educational outcomes which the educational planners may be curious to achieve will bring into play the following issues:

a) Learning environments which include physical, psycho-social and emotional elements.

b) Educational content which includes relevance, usability and depth of learning materials, the curriculum and the standard to be achieved.

c) The process of learning which will involve the teachers, the learners, the management, the public, the government and the parents, in order to have an acceptable output produced from an ODL institution for the public consumption.

It must be noted that quality control in this regard starts from the political will of the government, not only in providing adequate funding for the ODL institutions in order to effectively carry out their mandate, but also to design an operational framework in terms of a national ODL policy which is meant to regulate the practice of ODL. Gokool-Ramdoo (2009), conceptualizes a national policy as a roadmap that establishes the vision of a government and its people. It draws on national resources, contributes to a better understanding of concepts that are related to national concerns, organizes more effective and efficient practice and plans for positive changes. As pertinent as this kind of document might be, it is unfortunate that there is no dedicated national distance education policy in Anglophone and francophone sub-Saharan Africa except in a Lushophonic country of Mozambique, according to SARDEC (2005). Even in India where Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), a mega ODL institution operates, Panda (2005) states that contrary to the perception of many, distance education does not have an integrated governmental policy within the policy framework of educational planning and the five-year plans.

The ODL policy will state the criteria to be met in operating an ODL outfit, either as a single or bi-modal institution. Through this, quality can be measured from a regular monitoring and evaluation process. Considering the importance of policy formulation particularly with regard to ODL, Kinyanjui (1998) argues that distance education policies should promote, encourage and support the orderly development of DE as well as associated technologies, infrastructure and capacity building. He concludes that such well articulated policies should help to enhance the effectiveness and management of DE at minimal economic and social costs.

On the other hand, any institution that wishes to adopt or embrace ODL as a weapon of mass instruction must guarantee quality by taking into consideration the following issues among several others:

   i.   Staff complement in terms of quantity and quality.

  ii.   Adequacy of infrastructural facilities provided.

 iii.   Institutional governance and change management structure in place.

 iv.   Further staff professional training and capacity building plan.

  v.   Pedagogical best practice adopted.

 vi.   Relevance of its curricula and learning materials produced.

 vii.   The assessment practice and procedures used.

viii.   Staff turnover, retention and workload.

 ix.   Organizational climate and cultural beliefs.

  x.   Working conditions, staff morale and commitment.

 xi.   Institutional audit and programme benchmarking.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The hallmark of any university includes among other things, according to Braimoh (1999), the attainment of high quality staff and maintenance of academic excellence as opposed to the promotion of mediocrity. In order to achieve quality, equity, stability, relevance and high productivity in all aspects of ODL institutions, especially in the developing African countries and across the programmes offered, students output including the competence level of the lecturers, constant professional development programme is one of the essential ingredients that must be put in place. This will be with the aim of regularly updating the knowledge base of the lecturers, who are expected to be the manufacturers of good products (students of ODL institutions) for the consumption of the job market or for such products to become job creators.

Human beings must consciously engage in learning endeavours so that they can learn new ideas and therefore acquire valuable knowledge while at the same time undertake to unlearn old and unprofitable habits which may no longer be relevant to the present day technological development. This is because as human beings with the capacity to think we daily live in a constantly changing world and for us not to become static and irrelevant in the process of global development, we must be prepared to embrace transformation. Braimoh (2003), opines that for any higher educational institutions to remain relevant and acclaimed, especially in this globalized world where the floodgates of competition from within the region and at the international levels have been opened, coupled with stiff challenges to the sole right and control over "commodificatoin" of education, there must be outstanding quality in terms of academic programmes on offer and particularly the quality of staff in terms of their ODL knowledge and experience.

IMPLICATIONS OF DUAL MODE EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY IN A CONVENTIONAL INSTITUTION

Where open and distance learning was once seen as an experimental alternative to traditional delivery, new technologies have now made it much more than an experiment. Steyn (2001), stresses that ODL has grown into a higher education industry on its own

and has thus become one of the major pathways to global education. ODL does not only offer a low cost alternative for the expansion of education, particularly with regard to on-the-job-training for professionals as well as the expansion of secondary schooling in Africa, but also as a means of stimulating national development and as a viable means of producing the much needed competent human resource capacity. On-the-job professional development has many positive by-products to the learner. One of such by-products is the practical applicability on an immediate basis, of the knowledge gained from the ODL venture. In essence, rather than the reservation of the newly acquired knowledge until a future time, especially after the successful completion of the formal full-time residential training, the work environment in this case, becomes the practical laboratory to test and apply the new knowledge gained in the process of improving professional competence.

In this section, we shall engage in a critical assessment of the likely implications of the dual mode educational delivery in a single mode institution in Africa on:

a) The conventional institution

b) The staff of the institution

c) The students

d) The government

e) The interested stakeholders, such as the employers of labour and the general public including the parents.

This assessment will be done against the backdrop of the efforts by conventional institutions to achieve democratization, massification and globalization of education and training in the face of their limited absorptive capacity to engage in full-time teaching and learning activities on campus. We must note from the outset that such analysed implications may either be positive of negative or both regarding any of the identified sectors listed above.

Distance education is aimed at solving the problems of overcrowded universities or colleges of education, upgrading the qualifications, skills and performance levels of many

groups of professionals, majority of whom are working adults who also live far from the cities and are thus devoid of the enjoyment of the paraphernalia of modern life. Even in the present day Africa, employers of labour are basically reluctant to release their employees to undergo full time in-service training for professional improvement because of the biting effect of the global economic recession.

The whole world is witnessing a paradigm shift, according to Jegede (2000) with regards to how information and knowledge is packaged, transmitted, distributed, accessed, and processed. This shift, he goes further, has been propelled by four distinct developments which are integrating the impact on how teaching and learning occur. These are:

- The shift in the concept of education from an elite-based system to mass higher education with open access and a view to developing a knowledge/learning society;

- The exponential growth in knowledge with which the world is finding difficulty keeping pace;

- A post modernist view of knowledge generation which has changed from a hierarchical, restrictive nature to a non-linear, socially negotiated construction of knowledge accessible to anyone within the vicinity of a keyboard and the internet; and

- The phenomenal development in information and communication technologies with the emergence of affordable, portable, personal computers laden with multimedia capabilities and the availability of networking which allows global contact asynchronously or synchronously (Jegede, 2000:101).

We have synthesized below, the possible implications of operating a dual mode educational delivery system in a single mode institution for the different identified clusters of stakeholders as shown in A-E below:

A   Implications on dual mode conventional institution

- ✓ Problem of maintaining parity of the same course content between the on, and the off campus, based on the integrated pedagogical structure that may be adopted as a way of reducing institutional overhead costs.

- ✓ Problem of how to provide adequate and suitable facilities that will be accessible to students and easy to use for their learning encounters.

- ✓ Inadequate provision of learner support services to distance learners as the institutions may engage in the principle of one-size-fits-all syndrome.

- ✓ Inefficiency of programme administration and coordination resulting from the inadequate supply of qualified academic and administrative staff for programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

- ✓ Learning methods that are mediated through the applications and utilization of various technologies, such as DVDs, CD ROMs, audio cassettes, computers, video-conferencing and so on.

- ✓ Resource allocation and utilization may become questionable for all programmes.

- ✓ Administrative problems regarding the breaking down of such same courses to equitable number of years to suit the ODL learner, and for determining the maximum number of years as course duration that the ODL learner will take to complete the programme.

- ✓ Commercialization drive is the order of the day, especially in the face of dwindling governmental funding of higher education institutions and thus becoming more market-oriented and customer-focused.

- ✓ Educational delivery mode which has predominantly been print based because of the level of technological development among most African Tertiary Institutions (ATIs) is still at a low ebb for many obvious reasons.

- ✓ In order to reduce overhead costs and to achieve economies of scale, collaboration between and among higher institutions of learning becomes inevitable.

- ✓ There will be possible partnership between the private industrial sector and the universities.

- ✓ High initial capital investment will be required in order to acquire the needed hardware technologies.

B   Implications on staff of the dual mode institution

➢ The mindset of staff is focused on the operation of the face-to-face (F2F) system, therefore, the irregular shift from the customary practices to ODL will create confusion and frustration, especially with a lack of in-depth knowledge, training and expertise in offering such courses using the ODL mode.

➢ Multiple roles will bring about increased workload which can lead to stress, tension and consequently inefficiency and ineffectiveness that will manifest in poor quality of academic performance as a result of shoddy service.

➢ Engaging in research activity will suffer a great deal among academic staff, who will soon become stagnated and therefore a brood of academic mediocre.

➢ Low levels of continuous professional development programmes to regularly update the knowledge, skills and competencies of academic staff as a result of limited financial resources.

➢ The perception of academic staff not only divorces distance learning from the mainstream programme of the university but also portrays it as a part time commercial money-making venture.   This has been exacerbated by several factors, including: the academic staff's awareness that distance learning programmes are not supported by the government, but are purely income-generating ventures; and the non-recruitment of full-time independent distance teaching staff. Instead, regular lecturers are hired on a separate contract as service providers and paid accordingly (Maritim, 2009).

> Problems with curriculum design for the two groups, with possible commissioning of the learning material writing but with unclear policy regarding who owns the copyright and whether such outputs count towards the promotion of lecturers or whether such materials would be recognized as academic publications.

C   Implications on the off-campus students of dual mode institutions

❖ Mixture of delivery technologies with occasional traditional F2F teaching may increase support, flexibility and access, leading to enhanced throughput rates.

❖ Possible cheating in the systems just to acquire the certificate which has now become a meal ticket in Africa.

❖ Some high cost is subtly transferred to the ODL learners when on-line approaches are used for educational delivery, through communication and printing costs of learning materials from the internet.

❖ Increased workload.

❖ Psychological challenges of a water-down educational process when compared with their campus-based colleagues doing the same course.

❖ The primary focus, loyalty and pre-occupation of academic staff in a dual mode institution is on traditional students. This puts the ODL learner at a disadvantage because learner support services to them will be inadequate if not non-existing.

❖ Accessibility is indirectly restricted since not all learners may have equal access to the technological resources, particularly in Africa, as a result of the lack of economic strength (poverty), technological infrastructure, technological hardware and software and support services as well as training in the use of technologies. Furthermore, geographical location of some learners in rural remote areas where they are devoid of the paraphernalia of modern life will inevitably add to their marginalisation.

D   Implications on the government

➢   Lack of proper national ODL policy formulation as a roadmap.

➢   Accreditation and recognition of the two products from a single industry, particularly without any discrimination on the basis of employment

➢   Shifting financial responsibility over to the institutions at the expense of quality and accountability.

➢   Wider opportunities for access would have been created but what will be the implication of access for success in this regard.

➢   Generous investment in ICT for instructional delivery systems in order to achieve accessibility and for cost effectiveness to both the ODL institutions and the ODL learner, will be required.

➢   High degree of corruption and favouritism with regard to governance and management structure of the dual mode institution, will be the order of the day

E   Implications on the interested stakeholders (employers, the public and the parents)

✓   Concern with appropriate skills acquisition and application of knowledge competence in a practical job environment.

✓   Curricula standardization in a participatory process with the dual mode institutions to achieve relevance to the industrial setting and the society.

✓   Joint programme sponsorship as partners with the endowment of specific disciplinary chairs in a dual mode traditional higher educational institutions as a means of investment for the purposes of guaranteeing the production of quality products.

✓ Parents would like to maximise output on their investment in their children's education through a high quality and recognizable certificate which will be issued to their children on completion of their respective training programmes. Such certificates must not only be suitable to attract good salaries but also capable of generating appropriate employment for the student.

✓ Public opinion can make or mar the reputation of any dual mode tertiary institution, depending on such factors as programme accreditation, staff competence and the provision of appropriate technology to facilitate effective learning processes.

CONCLUSION

Education is a potent weapon of achieving social transformation, creating wealth, wiping out poverty and for stimulating national development. Despite the investment in education at all levels, both in the developed and the developing countries, there is still a wide gap between the supply and the demand for education.

In this paper, we have dealt with the salient areas that require some deliberate focus on, since it may be impossible to prevent many other universities in Africa from running some of their programmes using the ODL route, as that may negatively impact on access to education. However, we have to ensure that whatever we do in higher institution of learning, does not compromise quality and standards. The dual mode institutions should engage in regular continuing professional development programmes to update staff members' knowledge and skills, while there must be some form of collaboration, first as a process of sharing costs, but second, to benchmark our academic programmes in order to achieve global recognition, credibility and respectability.

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