THE CLARIFICATION OF QUALITY OF OUTPUT OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING FOR ACHIEVING DEMOCRATIC VALUE IN NIGERIA

BY

TIMOTHY KAYODE TOWOJU, Ph.D,
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SCIENCE EDUCATION
KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY
MALETE, NIGERIA.
timothytowoju@kwasu.ed.ng
towoju.tk@gmail.com
08035127628

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

One of the major concerns of the open and distance learning is getting the good quality of output from the products of the system. This is based on the fact that education has been adjudged to be the instrument for excellence without which there can be no reasonable development by any society of the nation. The quality of output signifies the decent ways of life of the people receiving knowledge in course of educating in any nation. On the ground of this the paper makes a clarification of quality of output of the open and distance learning in the areas of cognitive, affective and psychomotor to show how it

can be manipulated to improve the solidification of democratic value in Nigeria. The paper concludes that the quality of output is indisputably a force and catalyst for achieving democratic value through open and distance learning. It is concludes that the paper would serve as eye's opener for an individual who wants to know much about the quality of output of the open and distance learning for achieving the democratic value.

Keywords:

Quality, output, democratic value, open learning and distance learning, quality of output, Domains of learning.

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Introduction

Education is regarded as the bedrock of democratic value that breeds national goals and development. Consequently, the quality of output of education in the national development cannot be over-emphasized. The graduates of the open and distance learning are the products output of the programs. Hence, the quality of output of the open and distance is quite worthwhile to the breeding of democratic value needed for social growth and development needs to be achieved in education.

As generally know, the open and distance learning enables and assists people to learn at their convenience time, and it is provided outside the coffers of the old traditional conventional system, and eventually resulted in a shift from traditional mode of instructions to the one that is delivered from a distance, it started inform of correspondence course and gradually metamorphosized into open and distance learning. As much as people shows interest this form of learning becomes more formalized in the middle of the 19th century when it assumed the same form of approach as a result of its growth in quality of output and industrialization. Peter (2002), the phenomenal growth of open and distance learning was as the result of quality of output and the various technological advancements which are use in the imparting of teaching and learning, the flexibility, accessibility, pace of growth, the convenience and the reference to the needs of the people.

From the above, the quality here aims to secure the "aims and objectives" of the open and distance learning. It is concerns with measure of input, output and the process. The input depicts both human and material

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resources put into the process of the learning system, the output includes the academic achievement on tests, scores, and behaviour, pass rates, the cognitive, affective and psychomotor powers at the end of the programs, the quality of the process implies the interaction, participation engagement in the process of learning which should be timely, flexible and smooth in the course of open, and distance learning. The paper therefore clarifies the concept of quality of output of the open and distance learning program to root out the democratic value in the society.

Statement of the Problem

The desires to transform the society has been the bane of concerns of the Stakeholders in education as spelt out in the objectives of the open and distance learning system. This is the quality/power with which the mode of the learning enables the students to efficiently achieve a worthwhile academic standard through the mode of acquiring knowledge from the open and distance learning. Hence, the patterns of achieving democratic values which breed national development is very important in the transmission of knowledge through education of the open and distance learning. This is because, the quality of output of their products are fundamental to the co-existence in the society of human beings in march towards social integration or unification and progress. Given the fact that knowledge transmission is the chief and most important business of open and distance learning, and that human beings are behavioural beings, the knowledge received in the course of open and distance learning may be used to promote democratic values in all society.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

- ✔ to analyse the concept of quality of output to dislodge the

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effectiveness of open and distance learning in achieving democratic values.

- ✔ to root out the bearing of the quality of output of the open and distance learning on the democratic values.
- ✔ to clarify how the democratic values can be achieved in the process of open and distance learning.

Methodology

The methodology of approach is conceptual analysis through the examinations of the meaning of quality of output of the open and distance learning for achieving democratic value in open and distance learning. This method of analysis is necessary when one needs to explain certain concepts in the areas of discourse as deemed fits.

The Concept of Open and Distance Learning

One of the most important innovations in Nigeria education system is the introduction of open and distance learning into it. The open and distance learning has provided the opportunity for those who couldn't attends or affords to leave their job to attend full conventional education in any institution of learning. Open and distance learning has bridged the gaps between developed and developing nations across the world. It has becomes necessary and generally popular across the globe with the emergence of radio, television, information and communication technology and the artificial intelligence (AI) for educational instructions. This is why we can defined open and distance learning as a form of non-formal education which provide learning opportunities, activities and innovation for the learners to study individually. According to UNESCO (2002), open and distance learning is one of the most rapidly growing field of education and its potential impacts on all education delivery system has world-wide-webs presenting approaches that

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focuses on open access to education and learning provisions, freeing learning from the constraints of time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunity to individuals and group of learners. This attests that in open and distance learning, the instructor (teacher) and the learners may not be physically presents in the same place and the same time, it accounts for flexibility, cost effectiveness, and wide range of coverage at a particular time and period. Okonkwo (2012) states some underlying principles of open and distance learning are:

- ✔ learning opportunity should be lifelong and should encompass both education and training.
- ✔ that learning process should be flexible so that learners can choose where, when, what and how they learn as well as the pace at which they will learn.
- ✔ that poor learning, poor experience and demonstrated competences should be recognized so that the learners are not unnecessarily barred from educational opportunities by lack of appropriate qualifications.
- ✔ learner should be able to assimilate credits from different learning context providers and should create the conditions for the fair chance of learning success.

One can sum up that open and distance learning (ODL) is provided outside the conventional classroom using any other technologies or other media to allow accessibility and flexibility in the teaching and learning.

The Clarification of Quality of Output of the Open and Distance Learning

In education, the term quality means more of the societal values embodied in the school curriculum. These are inculcated in the learners to breed good citizenry. Quality in education assists to yield the complete

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person, a whole educated humans of refined mind that is intellectually, morally, emotionally, socially, psychological and physically developed and well balanced in behaviours. The open and distance learning provides educational environment which enables students to effectively achieved worthwhile learning goals including academic standard. Hence, Aigboye (2007) refers to *quality to excellence or more of societal values embodied in the school curricular…* this involves stages, and activities that take place until certificate is issued.

One may opines that a quality may means, a measure of the power of effectiveness of open and distance learning education. This means that quality and standard are in relative terms to the particular place, period and time, hence the particular learners and their circumstances at the said time. Quality may take different forms or definitions at different situations, time and space, it is essential for teaching and learning depending on the challenges of academic standards for the students and, or ways of improving educational goals. In line with Afenikhe (2019) quality can be conceptualized from three dimensions as:

- ✔ quality as a stakeholder relative concept
- ✔ quality as mechanism
- ✔ quality as concept

In the above, one can corns quality as a stakeholder relative when different interest groups, have different priorities and hence their quality of output will be varied and not as unitary concept for example the employees may focus on the output, while the other stakeholder focuses on the process of education.

On the issues of quality mechanism, this focuses mainly as accreditation and assessment issues. As Kaffenberger (2018) puts its

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"quality is composed of process of assessment, accreditation, audit, and external examinations". This may be probable reason while there is external accreditation for all forms of open and distance learning programs. This is to improve the external or internal judgment of performance and standards as laid out. In line with this paper, quality as a concept can be seen as transformation. This lays emphasis on the empowerment of students through the provision of learning process, institutional changes that can leads to better learning and evaluation. In explicit terms: The quality of education is not determine by the attended institution nor by the number of people who attended that institution only, but in term of goods and desirable bahaviour, one can states that development of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective developments determined the quality of output of learning in any institution either through open and distance learning or by any means. The quality of output may be seen and understand through the following dimensions as explicit in the domains of education and they are:

- ✔ the cognitive domain
- ✔ the affective domain
- ✔ the psychomotor domain

The Cognitive Domain as Quality of Outputs

In the process of learning through the open and distance learning, the intellect of the students is targeted, is because intellect is the ability to think, reasons and solve problems. This inherently determines the quality of output as it deals with recall or recognition of knowledge as well as the development of intellectual activities. For example, the students did a mental estimates of reading meaning into ideas for the improvement of himself as output of his/her knowledge he/she acquires after learning. Osunde (2008) posits that *the cognitive output deals with the acquisition of knowledge...*

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acquisition of knowledge are demonstrated at the levels which include knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. These determined the quality of output of the open and distance learning. This is because the major instrument for accessing the output is cognitive power.

Affective Domain

The quality of output of the open and distance learning reflects itself in the feeling of concerns for the protections and safety of others during and after the education. This further describes change of interests, attitudes, and values and the development of appreciation as well as adequate adjustment under the reflection are – feelings, openness, emotions, interests, values, beliefs reaction, motivation, social relations as the determinant of social integrations. Ekundayo, (2010) experience has however shows that personality traits like honest, hard work, punctuality, self-denial and self-discipline which are necessary conditions for effective citizenship have disappeared. These are part of the quality of output that most reflects in the products of open and distance learning.

The Psychomotor Domain

This exalts the quality of output as motor activities. Ekundayo (2010) states that *skills assessment, requires some forms of performance texting under a controlled condition*. This lends credence to the view that writing logically, manipulative skills, such as making baskets, accurate reading of meaning to ideas, dancing e.t.c. shouldn't be excluded in the open and distance learning system. In support of Osunde (1997), the behaviour under the cognitive affective and psychomotor domains should forms basis for the teaching and

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learning process and subsequently assessments. Hence, they are regarded as the determinant of "fulfilled life" by the recipients of the education.

The Quality of Output of Open and Distance Learning for Democratic Values

Education can be seen as the transmission of cultures from one generation to another. It should be provided in a comprehensive manner through teaching and learning so that child should have equal opportunity to develop his talents, and that teaching and learning should be open and democratized as in open and distance learning. Adesanya, (2001) states that *democracy has two sets of values,* these are idealist value and empirical values. The idealist value of democracy involves liberty, justice, freedom, consideration of interest, and commitment to the life of reason... while empirical value gives meaning to experience that discipline can be acquired through exposure to learning. The democratic disciplines that are acquired as habit includes, tolerance, perseverance, endurance, spirit of cooperation. From the above, the indicators of democratic values are:

- ✔ accessibility to learning materials and socials amenities
- ✔ equal opportunities for all to attain learning as deemed fits.
- ✔ national consciousness and patriotism
- ✔ respect for worth and dignity or individual

The above lends credence to the view that the necessary tools for quality of output in the open and distance learning to breed democratic values may be

- ✔ availability of adequate of infrastructural facilities, and learning materials that can promotes quality and learning such as ICT, Radio, Television e.t.c.
- ✔ adequate funding of the open and distance learning programs.

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- ✔ good guidance and counselling for the participants.

The inherent democratic value in culture such as liberty, equality and justice enhance the beliefs that an orderly society is the one in which freedom is highly preserved. But education has been a valuable variable for human national survival and development. Generally, education can be used to mobilize the people to acquaint them with these values.

The learners are mobilized to understand better ideals of society through open and distance learning. The programs of open and distance learning increase the citizen's arouses for achieving the aforementioned democratic values through the discharge of good quality of education that yield good quality of output. Democratic values are the worth's we give to "ideas" or events that can promote educational survival and enhance peaceful living in the society. The knowledge of the democratic values imply that "our-self" should be placed in the position of other "self", some of these values are honesty, humility, discipline, responsibility, hard work, and are the values that will help to extol freedom, justice, equality, these enables learners to be able to explain themselves freely everywhere they are. Democratic value of open and distance learning disposes that equality may be applicable to free movement or equality before the law or education as right to equal education.

The Concept of Liberty as Democratic Value

One of the qualities of output which enhances democratic value in the open and distance learning system is liberty. Liberty is the state of being free in the society from the oppressor's restriction which may be imposed by the authority in one way of life behaviours or in the programs of educating in the society. The concept may entail different meanings in different contexts. In the field of education, the logical deductions of liberty

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in the course of open and distance learning are:

- ✔ the quality or state of being free to enjoy the responsibilities for the acquiring of knowledge through open and distance learning.
- ✔ the right or immunity to enjoy all education amenities provided through open and distance learning.

The Concept of Justice of Democratic Value of Open and Distance Learning

The concept of justice in education signifies "just behaviour" or treatment or fair play for mindedness in the process of learning, equity as the output of the open and distance learning. In this, education serves as the instrument for social development and integration. Hence, it enhances the mobilization of people for the understanding of their duties to national development in order to make them know their rights for national development.

The logical deductions from above are that the open and distance learning enhances:

- ✔ the maintenance of what is just especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignments of merited reward or text or examinations at the right time.
- ✔ the administrative of law for determination of what is wrong or right at the right time during the process of learning.
- ✔ The conformity of fact, or true, or reason for certain programs of learning or instructions through open and distance learning.

The Concept of Equality as Democratic Values

Equality as an aspect of quality of output of the open and distance learning means an aspect of democratic values which embraces the right of different groups of people to have a similar social position and received the

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same treatment on a matter relating to education.

The logical necessary deductions from equality in the course of open and distance learning are:

- ✔ equality as an aspect of quality premises on every process of learning as knowledge given through open and distance learning
- ✔ that everybody should be treated fairly and be given adequate and fair shares in the course of receiving knowledge through open and distance learning.

Conclusion

Knowledge dissemination is the most important and the chief function of the open and distance learning. The quality of output is generally been determined by the quality of knowledge received or passed across to the students during the programs of learning. The quality of output here implies the level of improvement or gradual betterment of learned values. The open and distance learning impact knowledge as bedrock as the key to the development of democratic values. This will aids and guides the citizens toward the right type of attitudes and values for the achievement of democratic values.

Recommendations

It is imperatives for the open and distance learning system to focus on the transmission of knowledge, values in their programs of education. This is based on the facts that great powers that can leads to the achievement of remarkable degree of success though planned, systematic and policies directed towards achieving good and viable community.

The following recommendations are made:

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- ✔ the curriculum should be reviewed to make civic education compulsory in all the programs of open and distance learning.
- ✔ the open and distance learning must integrates democratic value in all aspects from grade to grades. This is to raise a generation that can think for themselves, so as to respect the view, feeling of others, respects the dignity of labour.
- ✔ The open and distance learning must appreciate those values specified under the broad national goals that yield quality of output that can produce those that can live as a good citizens.
- ✔ The open and distance learning must footers on democratic values such as justice, that can fosters national unity stressing on the importance of the common ties that uphold diversities in nature.
- ✔ The democratic value of the open and distance learning must provide opportunities for further education irrespective of sex, social status, religious, or ethnic background.

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