

Instructional Material Development in ODL: Achievements, Prospects, and Challenges

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Abstract : Customised, self-instructional materials are at the heart of instructional delivery in Open and Distance Learning (ODL). The success of any ODL institution depends on the availability of learning materials in quality and quantity. An ODL study material is expected to imitate what the teacher does in the face-to-face learning environment. This paper evaluates these expectation based on existing data and evidence. It concludes that the reality has not matched the expectation so far in terms of pedagogic aspect of instructional delivery especially in West Africa. This does not mean that instructional materials development has not produced any significant positive results in improving the overall learning (and teaching) experience in these institutions; it implies what will help further to identify the new challenges. Obstacles and problems of instructional materials development that could have affected the open educational resource initiatives are well established. The first section of this paper recalls some of the proposed values of instructional materials. The second section compares achievements so far and suggests that instructional materials development should be consider first at an early stage to realise the aspirations of instructional delivery. The third section highlights the challenges of instructional materials development in the future.

Keywords : face-to-face learning, instructional delivery, open and distance education, self-instructional materials

Conference Title : ICEIT 2015 : International Conference on Educational and Instructional Technology

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : January 19-20, 2015