

# A Perspective in the Attitude towards the Quality of Education Delivered Through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) System

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## Abstract

This paper reviews the available literature on how to reach Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system potential customers or learners and potential quality practitioners. In this review, the following categories will be discussed: Praxis to Attract Learners in ODL System, The Use of IT/ICT Tools with ODL, and Praxis to Train ODL Trainers. The use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) as an integral part of the design of distance taught courses raises interesting challenges to our thinking about course design and learner support. These have typically been conceptualized as two complementary but distinct systems in distance education, characterized by different practices often carried out by different groups of staff. Where CMC is designed as an integral part of the course, with collaborative learning as essential to assessment and study, this separation breaks down. The design of online activities is integral to both learner support and the course content, with new possibilities for open and distance learning as a result. Where the learning group itself is a resource for study and personal development, it also becomes feasible to orientate courses and programmes towards local teams and communities. Online tutors play a key role and need to develop 'the technology of conversation' and expertise in the design of activities, as part of their facilitator role.

**Keywords:** ODL; ICT; Learners; Open and Distance Learning; Computer-Mediated Communication.

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## **1. Introduction**

Formal education was brought to Africa through missionaries and travelers a long time ago. But even before then Africans had their own educational systems within their tribes. For example the Batswana in Southern Africa had the traditional initiation ceremonies for both men (Bogwera) and women (Bojale) at puberty where they were taught adulthood respectively. After formal education standards have been put in place as the global educational standards, Africans in general and most disadvantaged societies such as Asians and South Americans lagged behind in education and educational resources due to poverty. Then researchers such as Holmberg [1] came up with and explained the concept of distance education (DE) which started dissipating slowly serving the rural areas and to the less privileged. At the beginning words such as correspondence education, radio education (radio lessons), TV School and many others cropped up. These systems were very common in countries such as Botswana and were geared to those who did not do well in conventional educational institutions' setups and were supplementing their educational grades. The stigma automatically got attached to the DE system as a system of failures. Then society looked at any form of DE from that stand point based on how it started. Even today with sophisticated DE systems and sophisticated graduates, societies still have less respect for DE especially in the Southern part of Africa. Hence it is hard for Governments to fully accredit many Institutions to provide DE or Open and Distance Learning (ODL) to the society. This is because many top governmental officials were educated through the conventional educational system which is believed to be the best by default. Looking at Zimbabwe as a live governmental example, Bukaliya [2] asserts that even today, only one university has been accredited to run as a fully-fledged ODL programmes, which is the Zimbabwean Open University.

This paper provides a platform to discuss three major issues encapsulating the progression of DE/ODL system.

Section 2 discusses friendly mechanisms to attract DE learners from all walks of life hence the open and distance learning (ODL) phenomenon.

Section 3 then addresses the issue of mode of educating through ODL system, emphasis on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools.

Section 4 addresses proposed praxis to educate and train conventional educators in transforming their conventional teaching to accommodate ODL support.

## **2. Praxis to Attract Learners in ODL System**

In different societies, there is always going to be local cultures for different localities. These cultures come with stereotypes of certain practices due to societal customs, religion, education and everyday common practices. Invading any society with a practice they are not used to can shock that society's conscience. Some new practices maybe interesting and others may seem unreal at the beginning. To win the attention of such societies the presenter must be smart on how they campaign because some issues such as issues of religion and politics can be fatal. With that in mind, education systems are cultures and follow the same realm. In regions such as the Southern Africa, formal education was brought by the British and was administered and influenced by them for

a long time. They standardized the system and it became normal education for decades to the people of Southern Africa. When Distance Education and later Open and Distance Learning were introduced to the same societies of Southern Africa, the phenomenon came in different formats targeting certain audience. For example, DE in Botswana was developed at first under what the government of Botswana called correspondence education, geared for those who did not do well on the “normal” British Primary School, Junior School or even Secondary school levels. Other programmes emerged again in Botswana targeting adult learners who never went to school called “Thuto ga e golelwe” in the local language translating to “you never get old to get educated / Education has no age limit”. The government of Botswana then added more programmes targeting workers who wanted to further their education or attain credentials as they worked. All these were done under the Botswana Department of Distance Education which is now known as Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL) which has been mandated to be Botswana’s first Open and Distance Learning University by Parliament in 2008. We are using Botswana as our core example but there are many other Southern African Countries and other world countries with similar practices.

### **2.1. Stereotypes**

After decades of graduating students through the British Cambridge Educational System the society got to respect Secondary to University level graduates because the graduates secured good paying jobs in small developing markets such as that of Botswana. The introduction of DE was then associated with failures and not taken very serious. This stereotype did not only affect DE system it went further to affect other education systems such as the Vocational Education system. This is because most vocational training produce artisans and technicians and these professionals by default society construe them as shortcut takers to the industry because they could not articulate core theories at universities hence no respect is awarded to such professionals despite their important role in firms, organizations and society. We experienced such stereotypes about vocational training when we were working for a Mercy Vocational High School in Philadelphia in 2007/2008 as a Computer Technician Instructors. Most people thought Mercy Vocational High School (MVHS) was a school of dummies, just because the school gives a chance to slow learners, hand craft gifted students and certifications to go straight from high school with a skill to the job market. This is the only private Vocational High School in the United States of America graduating high school graduates with both high school diploma and an industry certification of their choice, from a list consisting of culinary arts, electrician, carpentry, computing, beauty therapy, hair dressing and business certifications. These graduates have a choice to go to a university and continue education, get in the industry and start working or Start their own business. We believe society has an enormous negative attitude towards DE system and qualifications attained through it compared to the conventional university because society has little knowledge about DE/ODL or online education and the quality of education brought by such. “Studies have found little difference in the quality of education received through distance learning versus conventional university classroom settings. Many studies have determined that students taking distance learning courses perform as well as students taking courses via traditional methods [3]. More often than not, perceptions of the distance learning system in the instructional process is influenced by an individual’s beliefs about the advantages of distance education, for himself, as a student, as an employer (whose employees are also distant learning students), or as an educational planner (desirous of providing potent solutions to educational problems)” [4]. With the above background it is now imperative to come up with a way

to educate societies about DE and ODL systems outlining their significance in our society and asserting their long term goals and fruits. Before we come up with any step by step learner recruitment praxis, we need to understand who the learner is. A learner is that curious being who has the drive to use available resources to access knowledge and skills from their environment. “The constructivist perspective describes learning as a change in meaning constructed from experience [5]. Constructivists believe that ‘knowledge and truth are constructed by people and do not exist outside the human mind’ [6]. This is radically different from what objectivism conceives learning to be. To the objectivists, ‘knowledge and truth exist outside the mind of the individual and are therefore objective’ [7]. ‘Learners are told about the world and are expected to replicate its content and structure in their thinking’ [6]. To our understanding of learning in the constructionists’ concept, learning is accumulation of knowledge and skill continuously for as long as you can. The knowledge and skill are acquired from your environment using available resources and learned behavior. Therefore this means that with the right mechanisms in place you can recruit practically any one to be a learner as long as they are interested in your pitch.

### **2.1.1. Proposed Step by Step Praxis to attract ODL learners**

#### **1. Locate Potential Learners**

**Table 1:** Sample of locations ODL learners in the Southern Africa

Remote Areas (less than 100 people)
Remote Areas (100-1000 people)
Populated Areas( 1000-5000 people)
Densely Populated Areas (5000-10000 people)
Very Dense populated Areas(above 10000 people)
Small settlements, cattle posts, small farms, fields
Villages, Commercial Farms,
Big Villages and Small Towns
Towns
Big Towns and Cities
Districts /Constituencies

#### **2. Plan Information Sessions / Workshops**

- a) Liaise with the leaders of the communities you go to: (Sub Chiefs, Farm Managers, Council Clerks and District Commissioners, Political Representatives, Mayors, Members of Parliament etc.)
- b) Engage employers so that they all see the need to educate themselves and their human resources without losing time at work.
- c) Break sessions according categories (you can use Primary School, Junior School, Senior Secondary School, Adults Sessions, Worker’s category, local young men and women session etc.). This will

eliminate overcrowding and cutting down costs on demonstration tools and human resources so that all can participate.

- d) Use modern ICT Tools such as Skype to train many locations at one time with prior setups.
  - e) Training must be setup to be continuous even after first encounter to keep potential learners interested and motivated to enroll. (Monthly video releases, CD/DVDs, brochures, websites frequently updated on latest events etc.).
3. Have plenty of activities during training
- a. These must include real time and asynchronous interaction with other ODL centers in the region or you can setup such dummy centers where the training is taking place and have trainees be agents to demonstrate the capability and the reality of your training. (these real systems may include Skype stations, emails, brochures or any other long distance demonstrations you can find fitting depending on the audience)
  - b. Engage systems such as cellphone online access so that many can use their cellphones to access your training info, text, video or live feeds depending on the quality of their machine. Low cost applications such as WhatsApp should be encouraged and be introduced to those who don't already know about them. Social familiar platforms such as Facebook must be heavily engaged as communication modes.
4. Engage local former ODL graduates if any so that they can help train their local communities and share real ODL experiences and results.
- (This is important for the recruits to aspire to be where the trainers are and be motivated to enroll)
5. Bombard the media with commercials on DE/ODL systems, what it entails and what you can achieve with live examples.

Science has proved that when people see something positive being publicized that they have participated in, even if the participation was brief, they want to be recognized as part of it, hence media, before, during and after workshops will jump start enrollment numbers for ODL.

6. The use of local language.
- a. To deliver your messages to the potential learners, it is important for the recruiters to relate to their recruits not only physically but also verbally to minimize language barrier and stereotypes.
  - b. In most cases translating learning materials in the local languages make a big difference in a number of learners to be recruited. Because there is a chance of other recruits to not enroll not because they did not want but because they did not understand what was being said.
7. Advertise and offer subjects relevant to current market needs and local needs.

Encourage projects (examples) local to the recruits to improve their lives and their communities hence the

global community. For example if one is doing ODL recruitment anywhere in Botswana today, would find it to be appropriate to encourage Botswana to do research on projects which can better electricity supply in Botswana as a whole. This is because there is shortage of electricity supply in Botswana and its neighboring supplier South Africa, so alternative electric energy sources are encouraged for continuity, business and humanity. Other projects to be encouraged are agricultural systems to better organic food production. Organic to minimize chemically induced health complications hence improving societal health, economy and self-sustainability.

8.       Emphasis on the study where you are phenomenon.

Most ODL learners in remote locations are economically challenged, especially to move from their village setting to rent apartments in towns and cities to attend school. It is only fair and attractive for educational systems such as ODL to come to their comfort zone, their home and improve their lives without displacing them. We are talking, wives, husbands, adolescents, elders you name them. You do not want an educational system that is going to break families apart, wife have to leave home to go to town for four years of studies, there are too many temptation on this phenomenon. An adolescent leaves parents in the village to attend school in the city and it is her first time in the city, she will be renting an apartment. I do not think any parent will be thrilled to part with their teenager for such an ordeal. How can we minimize and/or eliminate such risks? Educate the latter individuals in their community with quality international standard education through ODL system. But first make huge efforts to educate them on WHAT ODL system is so that they lose the stereotypes. If the above Praxis is followed and perfected, we are confident to say the more people are trained to understand ODL systems the more they will embrace them and the better the society.

- a.   ODL system is a good remedy to minimize divorce rates across the globe.
- b.   ODL system done proper will help minimize rural to urban migration.
- c.   Minimize crime because all will be equipped with education and tools to make ends meet for themselves.
- d.   ODL systems can be used to minimize teenage pregnancies, teens stay home and study with their parents' supervision.
- e.   Minimizes educational costs to individuals and governments immensely.
- f.   Minimize employer, human resource development costs and maximize productivity by keeping and improving the same qualified individual on the job.

### **3. The use of IT/ICT Tools with ODL**

IT is an acronym for information technology, which is a proficiency that uses computers, networking platforms, software programming and other equipment and processes to store, process, retrieve, transmit and protect information. Today the IT acronym is loosely used interchangeably with ICT acronym. ICT is the acronym for Information Communications Technology. In the ICT acronym a new word has been added, communications. This makes sense in our concept of open and distance learning (ODL). In ODL system there has to be a learner and an information service provider (it maybe human, machine or process), hence communication between the latter parties. Riley [8] emphasizes this by saying "A good way to think about ICT is to consider all the uses of

digital technology that already exist to help individuals, businesses and organizations use information. ICT covers any product that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically in a digital form, for example personal computers, digital television, email, robots.” For the purposes of this paper we will use IT and ICT acronyms interchangeably. In the beginning of ODL systems, communication was done mostly through written text physically mailed by paper post letters back and forth learners and facilitators. Today with the help of ICT tools, learning in ODL communities takes place at any time and at any place decided by the learner. The learner has a platform to customize their learning environment at cost effective arrangements. Even traditional institutions are widely adopting this ODL system because ICT technologies have made learning so easily accessible to a wide range of learners across the world. Private educational institutions have made this phenomenon their new business niche; (ODL using IT technologies) hence run dual educational platforms. An Indian researcher, Suri [9] emphasizes this under the sub topic “ICT ADOPTION IN ODL INSTITUTIONS” when saying, “Apart from IGNOU, only two other state open universities have introduced media-based tutorial support, in the form of audio and videocassettes, and CD-ROMs at the study centers. IGNOU transmits its programmes through 10 radio channels, GyanVani and three television channels, Gyandarshan. Teleconferencing, one-way video and two-way audio are available across 150 study centers but the counseling available is of a restrictive nature.” Suri wrote this paper during the time when people living in remote areas in India really had a huge challenge in accessing education and educational facilities and the government of India at the time had started putting in place ODL systems to solve that problem. In the same paper [9] Suri continues under the sub topic “Positioning of ICTs” to say “ICTs are positioned as a transformative tool; claims that are based on their perceived ability to support autonomous learning. Interactivity and learner-control are its most valorized features...” We have asserted that IT technologies have made it easy for multitudes across the world to get education from anywhere at any time. This achievement has been a success due to technologies such as e-learning, web-learning, virtual learning and mobile learning (m-learning). “E-learning is useful particularly for Open Learning and Distance Education Institutions in which large numbers of study centers are distributed in remote areas and there is a wide network of study centers... Web-based learning has an advantage to the learner, the learner has the freedom to learn anytime, at any place and at his own pace and convenient to him. The major thrust of flexible learning is the use of the World Wide Web to support teaching – learning... So while traveling or waiting for something, you can use a mobile phone to connect to the Internet and continue learning. Accessibility to communication is becoming much easier; cost of this communication is being reduced rapidly. Mobile communications are being spread out quickly. IGNOU started planning for programme delivery to its learners using mobile phone technology” [10]. On a personal perspective ICT technologies are a vital component of ODL systems. ICT technologies define today’s dynamic society. The ever changing technologies are here to better the lifestyles, the caliber of today’s learners and improve their mind scopes. For example, today an average adult has a cell phone, especially in our region, the Southern part of Africa. The same individual is able to perform basic operations such as calling and receiving calls. These calls are synchronous communication. Most of cell phone holders are able to send and receive messages. This can be synchronous or asynchronous depending on the efficiency of the cellphone holder. We just described one of the most basic latest communication modes readily available. With the cell phone service providers’ one can get more functionalities such as internet access, search the web, send emails, chat and even video conference. These functionalities add to the characteristics of IT technologies in the ODL system. If one can do all of the above at

the comfort of their home, work or school, would they need to travel long distances to acquire knowledge? The answer is no, hence lowering the cost of accessing quality education. Accessing the internet while farming in remote areas will help farmers search for better fertilizers for their soil, do research on topics of interest of what is happening around them comparing results to the world in general through the internet, blogging and/or Skype professionals. Well understood research projects would be feasible and localized by the people who understand the needs of their immediate communities. For example if we were pursuing a post graduate degree in social science researching on hunger in rural areas of say Botswana, then it would be wise to choose a village such as *Tshesebe* and the North East District villages as my test benches, because we originate from that region and hence we understand the needs and problems of our people. On that basis we can come up with a project which is sound and most likely with excellent on-the-ground immediate impacting solutions for the day to day hunger problems. If you compare our research to the research from someone studying at a University overseas, studying about our local villages, our research would probably have a more saddle analysis hence we give thanks to IT technologies available at our convenience and the convenience of our local villages [11] .With the above proposals in mind, the following table shows an example of how learners and trainers can be categorized based on location and availability of resources.

**Table 2:** Rough Sketch of How ICT Tools can be used per Region per Availability

Section	Mode /Mechanism/	Estimated Population	Region
A	Postal (Video Tapes, Audio Tapes, CD/DVDs, Brochures, Printed Materials ), Cellphone e-Learning, Local Internet Cafes,	Remote Areas (less than 100 people)	Small settlements, cattle posts, small farms, fields
B	A, Public Libraries, Affiliated Local Schools both Private and Public,	Remote Areas (100-1000 people)	Villages, Commercial Farms,
C	A+B +Research Labs, Stake holder Local Colleges and Universities Facilities(educational Institutions plus)	Populated Areas( 1000-5000 people)	Big Villages and Small Towns
D	A+B+C + Any Stake Holders Interested (Volunteers etc.)	Densely Populated Areas (5000-10000 people)	Towns
E	A+B+C+D +(International Stakeholders)	Very Dense populated Areas(above 10000 people)	Big Towns and Cities
F	A+B+C+D+E plus		Districts /Constituencies

ICT tools are available in many societies especially in the Southern Africa. Their availability does not necessarily mean everyone is able to use them. In the same token we need to give credit to phone companies and

internet service providers for availing basic ICT tools such as cellphones and their functionalities to the wider public. We also need to recognize and give credit to businesses such as local banks such as First National Bank (FNB) for providing easy to use ICT based services such as cellphone banking, internet banking and e-wallet. These services have groomed a good percentage of “our” audience, the audience we as researchers of ODL are targeting to educate through ICT tools.

Let us narrow down to three categories of target audience.

1. The working class including traditional trainers with little knowledge of ICT tools.
2. Non-Working Class with very little to no knowledge of ICT tools
3. Average individual with basic knowledge of ICT tools such as a cell phone (Students, Parents, and Teachers etc.)

Approaching each category of audience is not going to be the same as the other. For example approaching non-working class of people with very little knowledge of ICT tools, strategies such as collaboration with local cellphone companies, local radio station presenters and even local teachers to easy the attention capture using familiar audience. Many people tend to look out ICT tools construing them as complicated tools, not meant for them. So as an ODL/ICT canvasser one should incorporate such techniques as they do their workshops as outlined in section 2.

On the other hand approaching vibrant audience that is familiar with ICT tools and even the latest ICT tools that you probably have no idea they exist, the best bet here is to use each and every one in the audience to educate the audience about how they can use their tools to learn through ODL after your ODL presentation and allow for open suggestions to improve such. This kind of audience usually starts training at a high level. This does not mean that the other audiences are any less important. As an educator especially ODL educator, the idea is to be patient with all learners and be consistent until the processes become normal to the trainers. ODL training and ICT tools usage require dedication and discipline to be familiar and perfect their ordeals.

#### **4. Praxis to Train ODL Trainers**

##### ***4.1. The Teacher/Tutor/Trainer***

The teacher in a traditional classroom setting is the deliverer, facilitator and examiner to some extent. In ODL system the tutor is usually a student link to the program they are studying. We say link here loosely because at some instances the tutor never physically meets the students or they meet very minimally during the course of the program. The tutor for DE is responsible for posting all the necessary requirements of the course to be taken by the learner. This can be done through many channels such as mail, email, chats, Skype, Facebook, or information centers. As much as learners on a DE program are not physically at the same physical locations, today's ICT tools give them the opportunity to discuss and share ideas. This is made possible by the tutor who usually links them through the same channels. “Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism, as opposed to Piaget's individualistic approach to constructivism, emphasizes the interaction of learners with others in

cognitive development. ... As Chung (1991) described, a constructivist learning environment is characterized by (1) shared knowledge among teachers and students; (2) shared authority and responsibility among teachers and students; (3) the teacher's new role as guide in instruction; and (4) heterogeneous and small groupings of students" [12].

#### ***4.2. Tutor/Teacher's deeds to improve learning***

As much as the constructivism learner theory leads to a constructive learning process, this process cannot take place if the teacher/tutor is not in the mix. We will discuss the DE situation. To make learning for distance learning students more conducive, the tutors must (1) give very clear and comprehensive instructions on what needs to be done, (2) ensure all deadlines are clearly outlined prior to the beginning of the course, (3) and the tutors must have an open channel of communication so that learners can consult with them at any time during the course. The tutor can always give advice and recommendations to the learners through postings or noticeboards online or emails. Without tutors, constructivism learners' theory in practice for DE can be a challenge to a failure.

Constructivism is centered on learning as an active process. This is because in distance education, learners are guaranteed to deal with multiple sources of information either virtually or physically. We say guaranteed because most of the time DE is based on some virtual platform and is student driven. "During the process of learning, learners may conceive of the external reality somewhat differently, based on their unique set of experiences with the world and their beliefs about them [6] . However, learners may discuss their understandings with others and thus develop shared understandings. While different learners may arrive at different answers, it is not a matter of 'anything goes'. Learners must be able to justify their position to establish its viability [12].

#### ***4.3. Challenges Facing DE Trainers***

For years colleges and universities did not have any mechanisms to train distance education trainers. This has been so because the assumption has been any teacher can teach DE modules by adjustment. This misconception follows the numerous DE stereotypes discussed earlier in chapter two. As sophisticated DE systems evolved, DE researchers found it fitting to have training programs specific for DE trainers/practitioners. Colleges of distance learning such as the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL) in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) came up with programs such as the Practitioner Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST).

"The PREST training resources aim to help open and distance learning practitioners develop and extend their research and evaluation skills. They can be used on a self-study basis or by training providers. The resources consist of two sets of materials: a six-module foundation course in research and evaluation skills and six handbooks in specific research areas of ODL. There is an accompanying user guide..." ([www.col.org/prest](http://www.col.org/prest)).

PREST is designed to train any practitioner out there to understand ODL system and understand how to deliver in ODL systems. At BOCODOL, PREST students are mostly teachers and lecturers of cross-sectional

backgrounds hungry to understand the core of ODL systems to get out of their traditional educational shell and expand their educational training scopes. PREST is also giving any industry practitioner who wants to adventure into teaching, tutoring and/or training others without disturbing their daily routine, a chance to learn how to do so. To top the mandate of BOCODOL and COL, PREST is delivered through ODL system. Learners are from different countries of the Southern Africa with us from Botswana included.

As traditional lecturers at a local University and ODL tutors with BOCODOL we have met challenges delivering ODL modules and we found it fitting to go through this Practitioner Training so that we can improve our efficiency in ODL delivery and understanding. The reality is today's conventional Colleges and Universities are widely adopting the dual mode of educational delivery.

Dual mode education system is the system which consists of implementation of both the traditional face to face classroom school setting and the today's Open Distance Learning (ODL) system. Single mode educational institution is an institution which offers the traditional face to face education system only or the ODL system only which is rare especially in our SADC region. BOCODOL in Botswana is a typical example of single mode education institution whereby students do independent work, send them to their tutors online, by mail or in person and rarely meet their tutors (at least once a semester).

Taking an example of Strayer University in the United States of America, they started as a traditional face to face University in Maryland and since late nineties they introduced Distance Learning system by opening satellite colleges in different states in the US. Their education system today is purely Dual offering courses from Certificates to Masters level degrees. They have incorporated ICT tools for e-learning which include Blackboard (formerly known as WebCT), email systems and intranet, servicing students across the world including ourselves ([www.strayer.edu](http://www.strayer.edu)).

Dual mode institutions vary in the way they are set up. Some of them such as Drexel University, main campus in Philadelphia, PA has also introduced distance education program, but not all program can be accessed through their e-learning system. These programs are run in parallel with the normal traditional face to face classes. Other institutions doing the same in our region include but are not limited to University of South Africa (UNISA), Botho University in Botswana in Collaboration with several Open Universities in the UK. All these institutions aim to meet the educational demands of today and they find the DUAL education system as the only way to go.

Based on the literature, we recommend ODL training of trainers to be the best way to attain quality ODL trainers who would eventually produce quality training materials and quality graduates. Benchmarking praxis of training ODL trainers is an effective mechanism which we have seen with BOCODOL working with COL to come up with a practitioner's graduate course of PREST. The recommendations that can be made also are encouraging the training of traditional education teachers/trainers so that they are flexible and expand their training scope to fit in today's dual education institutions.

With all mechanisms in place, the big question arises, is there quality in the distance education materials and

system benchmarked? “The quality of online education is a central issue for the sustainable delivery, development and future of technology-supported learning. With the growing availability of educational technologies, educators want to know how to make the best use of them. With the expansion in e-learning adoption by institutions comes the demand for quality and accountability. A significant issue in this regard is that while there is a free and growing market in e-learning, there is also a proliferation of benchmarks and quality guidelines...” [13].

## 5. Conclusion

Stereotypes are part of life. If we look back into slavery, powerful nations with very strong human rights movements against racial prejudice such as South Africa and the United States of America still face issues of racial prejudice. Religion is another powerful example where prejudices prevail and will remain in prevalence as long as humanity is concerned. Because as human beings we can never agree on everything hence stereotypes. Education systems face the same stereotypes. Back in the day, the time of wars societies such as the San and the Khoi of Southern Africa had lifestyles and traditions. The San were nomadic, hunting and gathering was their lifestyle. Young girls were taught by elderly women how to gather fruits, vegetables and firewood as technology advanced. Young men were taught by elderly men techniques of hunting even if it seemed impossible in some cases. Following animal foot prints and smells, the Khoi had similar techniques only that they settled at one place longer than the San. The Khoi also reared livestock and planted crops for food. The two groups' lifestyles consisted of education in many ways. Things changed after the *mfecane* wars and large settlements of tribes took place in Southern Africa. European lifestyle invaded the region and systems as education systems were affected. The indigenous people felt their traditional education was looked down upon and demolished. The European system bombarded the Southern Africa Heavily through mission schools. Then Dual education systems existed in many societies for a long time. Dual in such that it was traditional and European formal education. As life became sophisticated and the so called civilization embraced the world educational systems became more and more sophisticated from traditional education to Formal Education and now there is Distance Education. Even today some societies practice traditional education, embedded in the formal education system and now Distance education is embedded in the trio. Criticism and improvements are running on all systems. Societies like the Batswana in Botswana do not want to lose their culture so they are bringing a lot of the tradition in today's education. The same society is promoting Open and Distance Learning to expose such systems and exotic knowledge to the less privileged and to the ambitious. My perspective to all this is, educating any society in many different education systems is the best way to go because it leaves the world in a synchronous frequency vibration when it comes to knowledge and research hence world peace.

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