MANAGEMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION UNDER DUAL MODE – PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

The development of any nation largely depends on its educated persons. Their role is crucial in the process of modernization by using their knowledge in various fields of economy. That is why society realized to have an effective and encompassing educational system to change and influence its growth which promoted the community to continuously focus its attention on the planning and organization of educational system in the society and to achieve higher literacy rates. However conventional education is not catering of the educational needs of growing population in the country due to various constraints and inherent weakness. On the other hand, distance education plays a pivotal role in reaching a large number of needy persons through its characteristics features such as easy access, equity and relevance.

Distance education is imparted normally under the modes, open university i.e. single mode and dual mode. Single mode institutions i.e. open universities are catering to the educational needs of off-campus students, whereas the institutions dual mode, serves the educational needs of both on campus and off-campus students to meet the growing demand for education. In this process, the dual mode technology driven taught situation, which are summed up as follows.

Keywords: Distance education, single mode, dual mode on campus, off-campus delegates, management.

Introduction

Education is the pre-requisite for the development of human resources of any progressive nation and more particularly technology, driven education is quite effective and desireous. Traditional mode of class room teaching is quite long and anscestral basis for the evolution of modern off campus learning methods. Even though, the on campus teaching is primitive and significant, still there is a greater lucane of educational needs in bringing to unreached sections of the society.

As in this process distance educational centers have been evolved and emerged as provider of a qualitative higher education by offering various programmes through distance mode like national open universities, state open universities and directorates of distance education functioning under conventional universities i.e. dual mode universities.

However, distance education institutes under the dual mode are facing innumerable problems in reaching students and helping them in their course of studies. In particular, they are constrained in planning, organizing and managing the size and scope of the distance education institutions, increase in number of students, increase in number of centres under study and advancement of information technology, there arise the problem of managing the system upto the satisfaction of all the stakeholders, particularly students pertaining to various courses. Further as distance education is emerging as an enterprise and exhibitory industrial features it would be appropriate to use the management techniques to the maximum advantage of the growth of the system. In this connection, an attempt is made to analyze the various functions performing by distance education institutions under dual mode systems and suggest various management measures to appropriate to the best advantage of the students as well as distance education institutions. The major problem that are encountered in performing their functions are summed up as follows.

1. **Delivery techniques are inappropriate:** The institutes of higher education under dual mode are not able to meet the demand for well designed institutional system, to both the regular and distance students. In the conventional system it is the teachers sole responsibility to convey communicate and impact knowledge to the student. If the interaction between the teacher and taught are not maintained properly, the instruction may tend to be ineffective, where as in the distance education the learning process starts through the combination of intra-personal, interpersonal and mass communication system. When if the organization uses the latest delivery techniques such as internet and teleconferencing and either technology driven means of communication, it may lead to success or failure. That is why a strategic planning should be chalked out about the students in connection with the use of advanced delivery techniques.

2. **Course development:** In majority of the dual mode institutions, the course which is designed and developed for on campus purpose, simultaneously using for off-campus student. The course framing for distance students should be in such a way as to learn themselves, hence it should be more "student centred".

3. **Distribution of study materials**: In conventional education system, the student can get the subjects study inputs regularly from teacher. But in distance education, the study materials will be sent through post. But, under dual mode, organizing thousands of people all of whom study and use materials on different time schedules is an organizational might more on large scale.

4. **Coordiation**: Preparation of course material, generally done by a team of course writers, drawn from different academic disciplines, particularly, for inter disciplinary courses cooperation and a high degree of coordination is sought among various individuals or departments for generating the qualitative and useful material within the stipulated period. Coordination is existed in dual mode institutions, because of design and development of numerous courses.

5. **Control**: There exists a limited control over student learning activities and on study centres, tutorial services, and a role to be played by the assistant co-ordinators in the study centers.

6. **Education:** Effective measurement of student learning in diminished by time, distance and the lack of personal contact. The institutes of higher education under dual mode are busy with on-campus activities like designing and expansion of various lucrative self-financing courses, and its evaluation with respect to generation of additional income, conducting day to day proceeding scheduling examinations and its announcement of results on one hand; improving enrollment concentrating on new courses (to be offered) to plug the market niechese, monitoring its performances, analysis of competitors move etc. on the other. Under these circumstances effective, evaluative, evaluation of student learning activities are minimal.

7. **Weak student support services:** These services like tutorials, counselling, information, advice and guidance are providing on traditional lines. These services should help to solve the learning difficulties of learners, assist in getting feedback,

attaining cognitive support and on top of it should enable the learner to develop their personality. But infact these services are meagre in dual mode institutions.

In addition to above inadequate infrastructural facilities, lack of professionalization in managing the institutions. Reducing stake of funding by Govt. low level technology changing market environment, commercialization of higher education, reluctance to use changing technology by professors are the major constraints.

To encounter these problems swiftly, and to harness the dual mode institutions, an effective and result oriented techniques of management is desired. It requires interdependent system which involves constant administrative attention and teams work. It should be flexiable in the sense that it has to adopt over time to changes and over the range of functions.

Suggestions

1. Applications of management functions:

   Under dual mode the management of a distance technology institutions have to apply four key elements of management, like planning, organizing, leading and evaluators[1]. Planning involves organizational identity sense of purpose and response to new opportunities. Studies of organizational design and structure needs to examine the environmental fit. While organizing distance teaching institutes like division of labour, span of control, departmentalization and unity of command are to be taken into account. Division of labour is essential in an open education system as the system is time bound as it involves some specific functions like preparation of course material, production of material and the dispatch of materials and the use of multimedia.

2. Enforcement of cellular approach

   Under dual mode distance teaching institutions are based not on individuals, but on team works of many skilled persons like writers, editors, media people and publishers. Hence a cellular approach is required in its administrators by which the responsibility like squarely on the cell rather than on an individual.

   Montellow and Wimberly[1] has proved the system approach is best suited to manger the educational enterprises. The system approach considers all the factors of interrelationship relevant to the system. The emphasis of the approach is whole

rather than on the parts, as such all the activities are to be integrated towards accomplishment of overall objectives.

Kaye and Rumble (1981) the system model of distance education based on the concept of Miller and Rice (1967) where the activities of organization are divided in to 3 categories.

1. Operational activities: Describe the nature and role of the enterprise

2. Logistic activities: Supply the necessary resources for proper functioning of the enterprise (recruitment, training, purchasing etc.)

3. Regulatory activates : Coordination and control of all process with the enterprise as well as it links to outside environment

The operating activities of distance education enterprise are under the sub-systems, i.e. the materials sub-system which covers the design, production and distribution of mediated learning materials. On the other hand "the student subsystem involves different activities concerning facilitating student learning activities and managing their progress through the institution from admission to certification. The point of contact between the two subsystems occurs when the students receive the learning materials and start to use them. This system tend to support the rational aspects of management.

3. Application of information technology

With the advent of I.T; world wide web in 1990's has had a remarkable impact on universities, particularly the universities who never before had any distance education programme. Development of software such as WebCT, Lotus notes learning space, and black boards has made it increasingly easier for professors to develop their own online teaching components. This is often in Britan.

The distance educational institutes are to introduce and develop face to face teaching and online learning by the use of I.T (Internet Tele Conference)

The most common use of the web is to support class room teaching. Web CT reckons that in the 1400 universities now with web CT license, 80% of the use is to support class room teaching. The university of central Florida in USA is one of the most advanced institutions using on line learning, but even there the majority of causes combine face to face with online teaching.

4. Recognition of changing markets and designing the courses accordingly. The thrust area of distance education is the growing importance of life long learning. A competitive globalized knowledge based economy depends on continuing improvement and change. Education and training therefore does not stop with a B.A, and M.Sc or even a Ph.D. Learning is literally for life. Universities need to respond to this with new programmes, new qualification and new means of delivery.

5. Education is a big Business in the present day society.

    There is also a growing tendency to treat education as a business. The CEO of the gaint American network company, Cisco has described education as the next internet killer application. Education is seen as just another application of e-commerce. Hence the dual mode institutions should be competitive.

Conclusion:

Dual mode educational institutions should adopt techniques of management which are practically result oriented, i.e. from the view point of cost effective, student centric, and time constraints.

Use of information and communication technologies is order of the day which fosters the ready view of respective student curriculumn need and information through online. The principle of delegation of authority and responsibility should be made to more rampant between distance learning and Traditional class room learning, thereby decision on any course with reference to its introduction running and scheduling the courses of exam is a pre-requisite. Organization of study centres and appointment of course co-ordinators is an important bearing for success of any course in distance learning. Controlling the waste expenditure in preparation of study material and dispatch of the same is a focusing task at institute front. Co-ordination of various distance learning centres for its timely completion and students accessibility, besides balancing the regular mode of learning is the cardinal element of success of the institution running under dual mode of education.

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