

Adoptable Strategies in Human Capacity Building through Open and Distance Learning

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Abstract

Human Capacity building refers to the need to develop a certain skill or competence by individuals in order to upgrade their performance ability. The paper discusses the adoptable strategies in open and distance learning to develop capacity building in individuals. The important areas such as civil aviation, meteorology, agriculture, health, nutrition, education are generally considered for skill development. The main objective of this paper work is to explain the development of capacity building in higher education through open and distance education. A recent survey conducted in India highlighted that nearly 2,50,000 educational institutions could easily convert themselves into skill development institutions without moving away from the mainstream courses they presently offer. Therefore, it could be suggested that there is also a need to re-structure the present models of learning to inculcate basic skill through government private partnership. The present paper work explains certain adoptable strategies followed in a community college established in 2010 in Chennai, India by conducting a survey regarding the usage of open resource materials to improve the basic skills.

Introduction

Capacity building basically defined as the ability of country's human resources in scientific, technological, organizational, institutional environment to possess the skill needed for the up gradation of the society. Hence the fundamental goal of capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on an understanding of

environment potentials and limits and of needs perceived by the people of the country concerned". Some of the objectives of capacity building are listed as follows:

- The creation of an enabling environment with appropriate policy and legal frameworks in all organizational sectors especially in Educational Institutions.
- Institutional development, including community participation (of women in particular).

- Human resources development and strengthening of managerial systems. Human resource development, the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively.
- Organizational development, the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community).
- Institutional and legal framework development, making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities.

The paper work discusses about the strategies educational institutions should follow in order to enhance the skill of students enrolled in different type of institutions at tertiary level. It has been identified that the need for capacity building is always changing hence appropriate strategies to be adopted based on the local situation and organisation. Belmont, Butterfield, & Ferretti, [1, 2] suggested good learners take very specific and systematic actions planning, writing, and revising which include action based activities known as cognitive strategies. Campione, Brown, & Connell, [3] suggested meta cognitive strategies such as learner's awareness of the learning process and how to achieve good results in a specific learning task. The meta cognitive task includes self-regulatory strategies by setting goals for learning, talk to themselves in positive ways about learning, use self-instruction to guide themselves through a learning problem, keep track of (or monitor) their comprehension or progress, and reward themselves for success. This could be achieved in two ways that is by according high priority to the development of core competencies including learning skills, communications, creative and innovative thinking, team work, leadership, ethics and values and creating strong partnerships between governments, academia, business communities and workers in the development and implementation of human capacity building for the New Economy.

Creation of Able Environment in Educational Institutions

Educational organisations imparting knowledge through ODL system must ensure that every learner has access to computers especially in the developing countries. In developing countries like India access to computers is still a dream for certain section of the society. For such students the education providers through ODL system should organize for community forums in their study centres with

access to computers. The study centres should provide access to computers for students who enrol in their universities. Some of the recommendations to be made are

- Developing programs and policies relevant to the curriculum based on societal needs with the active participation of students, to facilitate increased investment in the ICT infrastructure, and the monitoring and evaluation of these programs in order to obtain permanent achievements.
- Improving widespread access to the Internet among populations in remote areas by means of community-based facilities.
- The implementation of programs in ICT that promote technical assistance to reduce the digital divide across and within Member Economies while emphasizing the opportunities offered by the New Economy.
- The development of long distance e-learning programs with the cooperation of local and central governments and business and academic sectors to expand networks of knowledge and building skills in Member Economies, especially for rural areas. This will allow those areas to become more adapted to the New Economy and the new technology revolution.
- Information and communication technology should be used to facilitate family-friendly work practices in order to respond to gender disadvantage, to provide a promising future to youth and improve community life.

Development of Human Resource Management

The present research work focuses the following areas in need training namely good governance, conflict resolution, gender equity, project planning, implementation, management, procurement financial, and disaster management and mitigation. In ODL system it could be possible to give training in this field is by conducting contact seminars during their course work in the above mentioned fields. The students should be encouraged to participate in group discussions, brain storming sessions, to participate in field work etc. so that they achieve capacity building potential. Through these activities individuals develop skills personally as well as professionally.

Organizational Setup

Organization plays a key role in individual as well as societal capacity building. An effective organization which sets importance to skill development among students. Alan Kaplan(2000) identified four key areas to be focused in capacity building.

- **Conceptual framework**--an organization's understanding of the world, "This is a coherent frame of reference, a set of concepts which allows the organisation to make sense of the world around it, to locate itself within that world, and to make decisions in relation to it.
- **Organizational attitude**--this focuses on the way an organization views itself. Kaplan asserts that an organization must view itself not as a victim of the slights of the world, rather as an active player that has the ability to effect change and progress.
- **Vision and Strategy**--this refers to the organization's understanding of its vision and mission and what it is looking to accomplish and the program it wishes to follow in order to do so
- **Organizational Structure**--a clear method of operating wherein communication flow is not hindered, each actor understands their role and responsibility.

Ann Philbin[4] believed that organizations engage in developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world.

Institutional and Legal Framework Development

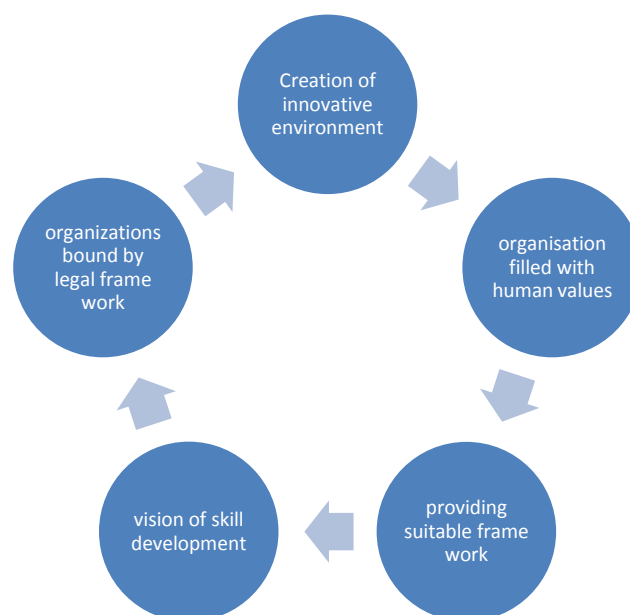
One of the most important aspects of capacity building is that the extent with which an institution is bound by legal frame work, such institutions undoubtedly emphasise on capacity building of their stakeholders. DavidWatson (2007) suggested monitoring an institutional clarity of involves evaluating an Institution’s goals and how well those goals are understood throughout the Institution. Some of the recommendations are given as follows

- Monitoring an Institution's leadership involves evaluating how empowered the Institution's leadership is-how well the leadership encourages experimentation, self-reflection, changes in team structures and approaches.
- Monitoring an institutional learning-this involves evaluating how often an institution participates in effective self-reflection, and self-assessment. It also involves how well an institution "learns from experience" and if the organization promotes the idea of learning from experience.
- Monitoring an institution's emphasis on on-the-job-development- this involves evaluating how well an institution encourages continued learning, specifically through hands on approaches.
- Monitoring an institution's monitoring processes- this involves evaluating how well an institution participates in self-monitoring. It looks at whether or not an institution encourages growth through learning from mistakes.

Through ODL system as instructional media with capacity building of their stake holders could be established focusing on the above mentioned five areas. A simple capacity building model has been proposed by the author taking in to consideration five basic elements.

Capacity Building Model

The following Capacity building model explains how to develop capacity building skills in educational institutions adopting ODL. First being the creation of innovative environment in the organization which is bound by legal frame work filled with human values which would eventually lead to vision of skill development through suitable frame work.



Model interprets that all the five elements needed for effective capacity building is interrelated even if one element is missing the entire system would collapse.

Methodology

The present paper work brings out the importance of skill development through capacity building in educational institutions. A survey was conducted 100 students in the age group 15 to 20 years(male and female) studying in a community college located in Chennai city

based on the capacity building model proposed by the author on the five basic components of the model that is 1. Creation of innovative environment, 2. Organizations bound by legal frame work, 3. Organizations bound by human values, 4. Vision of skill development and 5. Providing suitable frame work adopting ODL strategy. The following results were drawn based on the survey. Out of the total sample of the population almost equal percentage of the sample felt priority should be given to the first three options followed by vision of skill development and suitable frame work.



Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn based on inculcating capacity building among students through ODL system are listed as follows.

In general the use of ICT to deliver the course was a success and worth the investment. This method of course delivery can open self-learning ability developing their own skills.

By proper planning and assessment of learners' level of computer literacy, the extent to which they would access computers, leads to success rate.

Overall it could be concluded that by identifying international and local consultants to assists in the implementation of training and technical assistance activities.

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