



Lucie Zormanová

The Czech Republic

Models of Distance Learning in Higher Education

Abstract

This article is focused on distance learning in higher education. It analyses and compares the development of distance learning and conditions of distance learning in different countries. It describes significant differences in the development of distance education in higher education in individual countries.

We meet with various forms of implementation of distance education. The divergence in approaches towards distance education in different countries is caused by different cultural aspects, the tradition of distance learning, the development of information and communication technologies, and different legislative norms in the area of education.

There are many types of organisational models for distance education. A particular model might be dominant in one country, while in another country there may exist a variety of different organisational models for distance education.

K e y w o r d s: open university, distance education, electronic system, lifelong learning, organisational models for distance education

Introduction

Nowadays, labour market needs more people with higher level qualifications. However, combining work, family responsibilities, and study requirements is very difficult. So, universities are solving this problem by using e-learning. Distance

learning increases an access to education for people who otherwise cannot attend higher education (Zormanová, 2016).

Organisational Models for Distance Education

There are many types of organisational models for distance education in different countries. One model might be dominant in one country, while that which might be characteristic of another country is a mixture of co-existing models, for example, a large single mode institution and a number of independent dual mode institutions (Ganor, Gil'ad, Guri-Rosenblit, Ovsyannikov, Shelley, & Zaparovanny, 2000).

We know various models of distance education. The appearance of distance education in different countries is caused by different cultural aspects, political structures, different educational systems, different legislative norms in the area of education, the tradition of distance learning, the development of ICT, and the population density of the country (Hampl, Česal, & Vaškovic, 2008).

Single Mode Model

Universities which use this model provide only distance education; in these institutions distance education is the sole activity (Moore & Kearsley, 2012). This model is typical of open universities. It is characteristic of large national institutions which specialise in distance learning of all levels.

What is characteristic of this model is that the curriculum, the tools used in teaching, student support, and accreditation are designed to suit students studying at a distance form of education. The staff, devoted only to distance education, are interested in developing distance education methods. Although teachers do not demand face-to-face teaching because there are no on-campus student activities, sometimes we also encounter a regional network of study centres where students and tutors occasionally meet for consultation. These universities may have high setting-up costs, but their unit costs per student are generally lower than in traditional universities. Such institutions are supported by public finances.

This model is now realised in different European countries and is also very popular in Asia and Africa. There are famous open universities or single mode institutions all over the world. The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in India and Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) in Thailand can be mentioned here.

Table 1.
Open universities

Name of university	Country
Aalto University Open University	Finland
Al Quds Open University	Palestine
Allama Iqbal Open University	Pakistan
Arab Open University	Kuwait, Oman, Egypt, Lebanon, Bahrain
Bangladesh Open University	Bangladesh
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University / Andhra Pradesh Open University	India
FernUniversität in Hagen	Germany
Global Open University	India
Hellenic Open University	Greece
Indira Gandhi National Open University	India
Laweh Open University College	Ghana
Nalanda Open University	India
National Open University of Nigeria	Nigeria
Odisha State Open University	India
Open University	The United Kingdom
Open University in San Francisco State University	The USA
Open University of Hong Kong	China
Open University of Israel	Israel
Open University Malaysia	Malaysia
Open University of Mauritius	Mauritius
Open University of Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
Open University of Tanzania	Tanzania
Open University of the Netherlands	The Netherlands
Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University	Thailand
Tamil Nadu Open University	India
The Open University of Japan	Japan
Universidade Aberta	Portugal
UP Open University	The Philippines
Uttarakhand Open University	India
Vardhman Mahaveer Open University	India
Venkateshwara Open University	India
Wawasan Open University	Malaysia
Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University	India
Zambian Open University	Zambia
Zimbabwe Open University	Zimbabwe

Source: Own work.

Open University Characteristic: Open University in the United Kingdom

Great Britain is famous for its Open University. It is the largest open university in the world. It was the world's first successful distance open university.

Its headquarters are situated in Milton Keynes. Except its headquarters, the Open University consists of thirteen regional offices throughout the UK and nearly three hundred study centres.

The Open University was founded by Royal Charter in 1969 as an independent institution authorised to confer its own degrees. It was founded by the Labour government of Harold Wilson, who was its strong advocate. The University was established to allow quality distance education to people who could not regularly attend higher education. Nowadays, according to the National Student Survey, 92% students are satisfied with the quality of education ("The Open University").

For admission to undergraduate courses students need not have any educational qualification, but they must be residents in any of the countries with which a formal agreement has been signed. The Open University offers three types of programmes: undergraduate, postgraduate, and other areas of lifelong learning. There are eight faculties and schools: Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences; Open University Business School; Open University Law School; Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics; Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies; Institute of Educational Technology; Knowledge Media Institute; and Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships. It is also the largest European educational institution that confers an MBA degree. The Open University has the largest number of disabled students among universities in Europe, including mental health issues ("The Open University").

Open University Characteristic: FernUniversität in Hagen (Germany)

The German model is characterised by its *Fernstudium*, which means the distance university level courses. The institutions which realise *Fernstudium* can also provide programmes of *Fernunterricht*, which means distance training.

The FernUniversität in Hagen is the only distance teaching university in the German-speaking countries and regions maintained by the state. The FernUniversität has more than 30 centres within Germany, Austria, and Central and Eastern Europe. It offers two types of programmes: undergraduate and postgraduate with high-quality final degrees (Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate). There are four faculties: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science, Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Faculty of Law ("EADTU...", "FernUniversität in Hagen").

The FernUniversität is encouraged and regulated by the Ministry of Education, because it is one of the characteristics of a German single mode model. In Germany, the distance form of studies is regulated by the Student Protection Act, which protects students at distance learning programmes (Owusu-Boampong

& Holmberg, 2015; Kommers, Smyrnova-Trybulska, Morze, Tomayess Issa, & Theodora Issa, 2015; Zormanová, 2016).

Open University Characteristic: Allama Iqbal Open University (Pakistan)

The Allama Iqbal Open University was established in 1974. It was the second Open University in the world and the first one in Asia and Africa. The main aim of the University has been providing educational opportunities for masses. It has been a good educational opportunity for people who cannot attend higher education: a new opportunity for millions of people, including women.

In Pakistan the rate of literacy is much lower for women because many conservative parents, especially in rural areas, do not allow their daughters to go out to school. Distance learning has provided educational opportunities also for these girls and women so that the majority of enrolled people are women. The University is keeping the costs at the minimum and has created the Students Assistance Fund, so that the University is open also for lower middle classes and poorer classes. The university has four faculties: Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Sciences, and Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, 9 regional campuses, and 33 regional centres (“Allama Iqbal Open University”).

Dual Mode Model

In this model of higher education, distance education is integrated into the structure of traditional universities. Institutions providing this model of distance education teach both full-time students on campus and part-time students at a distance. Both types of students have the same curriculum and the same admission requirements, take the same exams and the same study materials (Ganor, Gil’ad, Guri-Rosenblit, Ovsyannikov, Shelley, & Zapparovanny, 2000).

Table 2.
Universities with a dual mode model

Name of university	Country
Aston University	The United Kingdom
Boston University	The USA
Ca’ Foscari University of Venice	Italy
California State University, Fresno (Fresno’s Open University)	The USA
Columbia University	The USA
Dublin City University	Ireland

Georgetown University	The USA
Higher School of Economics	Russia
National Chengchi University	China
Riga Stradiņš University (RSU Open University)	Latvia
San José State University (Open University in San José State University)	The USA
San Francisco State University (Open University in San Francisco State University)	The USA
University of Chicago	The USA
University of Michigan Law School	The USA
University of Navarra	Spain
University of Pennsylvania	The USA
University of San Andrés	Argentina
University of Paris	France
University of Texas at Austin	The USA
Washington University in St. Louis Engineering	The USA

Source: Own work.

University Characteristic: Dublin City University and OSCAIL (Ireland)

In Ireland, what is characteristic for a dual mode model of distance education is the cooperation of universities with other educational institutions which offer distance education, for example with the British Open University.

The Dublin City University was established in 1975 as the National Institute for Higher Education. DCU has been providing distance education for adults all over Ireland and also abroad for more than 35 years. In 1982 in DCU the National Distance Education Centre was located, which has been offering programmes in a traditional form of distance education. In 2004 it changed into OSCAIL–DCU Online Education because it wants to reflect that it offers the programmes with large elements of online support. OSCAIL is supported financially by the government (“Open Education Unit”).

DCU offers the following study online programmes: information technology, business, management, sustainable development, humanities, and nursing (“Open Education Unit”). It is also an institution which measures the quality of distance education, focuses on research in innovative distance learning, and encourages its development (“HEA...,” 2009; Zlámálová, 2007).

University Characteristic: National Chengchi University (China)

The National Chengchi University (NCCU) was established in 1927. Nowadays it has 9 colleges specialised in Liberal Arts, Law, Commerce, Science, Foreign Languages, Social Sciences, Communication, International Affairs, and Education, 34 departments, and 48 postgraduate institutes, of which 34 offer doctoral programmes. It offers master and doctoral programmes. For distance education, the National Chengchi University created its own mobile learning platform (NCCU-MLP) (“National Chengchi Univeristy”).

University Characteristic: Columbia University (USA)

The Columbia University is situated in the city of New York. It was established in 1754 as King’s College by royal charter of King George II of England. It is the fifth oldest institution for higher learning in the USA.

It consists of the following Colleges and Schools: Architecture, Planning & Preservation School; Arts School; Graduate School of Arts & Sciences; Barnard College; Business School; College of Physicians and Surgeons; Columbia College; College of Dental Medicine; Engineering; General Studies College; School of International & Public Affairs; Jewish Theological Seminary; Journalism School; Law School; School of Nursing; School of Professional Studies; School of Public Health; School of Social Work; Teachers College; Union Theological Seminary. The oldest college is Columbia College, which was founded in 1784. Barnard College was the college for women; it was established in 1889 (“Columbia University...”).

Columbia University offers various degree online programmes in various disciplines, for example science, social work, engineering, applied sciences (“Columbia University...”).

Model of Consortia

The model of consortia is a partnership of two or more institutions for the purpose of improvement to achieve mutually beneficial goals and to enhance services. All partners share distance learning materials. These partners may be universities or university departments, corporations, government agencies, companies, etc. Each institution as a consortium member has its own management structure. We know several types of consortia: multipurpose academic consortia, technology-planning consortia, local business and industry-linked consortia, and research and academic consortia.

Table 3.
Consortia

Name of university	Country
Boym Universities Consortium	Poland
Claremont Colleges	The USA
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area	The USA
European Consortium of Innovative Universities	European countries
Kajaani University Consortium	Finland
Open Universities Australia	Australia
Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium	The USA
University System of Georgia	The USA

Source: Own work.

Consortium Characteristic: UNINETTUNO (Italy)

The International Telematic University UNINETTUNO, which is a private university situated in Rome, was founded as NETTUNO in 1990. As UNINETTUNO it was established in 2005.

Nowadays UNINETTUNO consists of 43 universities and major telecommunications companies and public bodies. Administrative responsibilities are shared between the National Centre, which provides the national coordination, and partner universities, which enrol students and set up study curricula, timetables, and examinations. UNINETTUNO offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and a variety of diplomas in law, communication, engineering, economics, literature, psychology, and architecture (“Universita Telematica Internazionale Uninettuno”).

Consortium Characteristic: Claremont Colleges (the USA)

The Claremont Colleges are a consortium of five undergraduate colleges (Pomona College, Scripps College, Claremont McKenna College, Harvey Mudd College, Pitzer College) and two graduate universities (Claremont Graduate University, Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences), which are situated in Claremont in California. The Claremont Colleges were established in 1925.

The consortium offers bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees in the following disciplines: humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, economics, political science, international relations, public policy, finance, engineering, mathematics, computer science, physical and biological science, arts, psychology, educational sciences, religion, management, information system and technology, community and global health, botany, bioscience, and pharmacy (“The Claremont Colleges”).

Consortium Characteristic: European Consortium of Innovative Universities

The European Consortium of Innovative Universities is the international consortium of research intensive universities. The members are: Aalborg University, Dublin City University, Hamburg University of Technology, Kaunas University of Technology, Linköping University, Tampere University of Technology, Tecnológico de Monterrey, The University of Nottingham, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, University of Aveiro, University of Stavanger, and University of Twente.

The European Consortium of Innovative Universities was established in 1997. It has gained experience in unconventional teaching and learning methods, knowledge exchange (especially in research), and in administrative structures and practices (“ECIU...”).

Franchising Model

This model is characteristic of franchising partner institutions. Distance learning courses from one institution are used in these partner institutions and often adapted by them.

As Healey (2013) notes, many British universities franchise degrees to overseas providers: “Transnational education has become a big business for UK universities. [...] Many UK universities license a third party – usually a private, for-profit company – to deliver their degrees through a foreign college.” Transnational education has been very popular since 1992 (Healey, 2013).

Table 4.
Franchise universities and schools

Name of university	Country
BMC International College Pte	Singapore
Dimensions International College Pte	Singapore
Intercollege	Cyprus
INTI International University & Colleges	Malaysia
Open University Business School	European countries
Parkway College	Singapore
SRI College	Malaysia
University of Arts and Humanities of Bamako	Mali
University of Nicosia	Cyprus
University of Dar es Salaam	Tanzania
Vancouver Island University	Canada

Source: Own work.

Franchise University Characteristic: Open University Business School

The Open University Business School has worked with countries in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989. It is very popular in Germany and Austria, and also in the Czech Republic. The first school was founded in Hungary in 1989. The OU Business School has a global reputation. Students from more than 120 countries study there. It offers business and management education. It is also the largest European education institution that confers an MBA degree (“The Open University Business School”).

Franchise University Characteristic: SRI College in Malaysia

SRI College was founded in 2004. It focuses on Early Childhood Studies, English Language Studies, and Management Studies. It offers bachelor degrees in Education Studies and Early Years, Business Administration, Accounting, Finance, International Business, and Marketing. SRI College franchise partner is the University of Hertfordshire, which offers Bachelor of Arts in Education Studies (“SRI College”).

Conclusion

Local circumstances cause the dominance of a particular model of distance learning in a certain area. The single mode model was dominant in Europe and the USA in 1970s and nowadays is very popular in Asia – especially in India – and in Africa. The single mode model provides educational opportunities for masses, including people who cannot attend higher education, for instance women in Arabic countries.

The dual mode model is very popular in Australia and Canada. The majority of universities in Canada are dual mode model institutions. The dual mode model is also used in the USA. For example, one of Ivy League Universities – Columbia University – realises the dual mode model.

In the USA, Canada, and Australia the model of consortia is also popular. The model of consortia has been popular in Canada and USA since 1960s, and in Australia since 1990s. In 1960s and 1970s, a consortium consisted of colleges and universities which signed an agreement to cooperate in providing some services, such as faculty exchanges, purchase of goods and services, etc. Contemporary consortia are usually structured as multipurpose academic consortia (e.g., the Claremont Colleges in California), research and academic library consortia (e.g., GALLILEO in Georgia, PALCI in Pennsylvania), or business-university alliances (e.g., UNINETTUNO in Italy).

The franchising model is most common in Asia and in Africa. Many British and American universities franchise degrees to African and Asian universities.

Many countries, especially the USA, provide a model of diversity, so that there is no one dominant model of distance education, but there are also dual mode and consortium models.

References

- Allama Iqbal Open University. Accessed 21 March 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.aiou.edu.pk/>.
- Baumeister, H.-P. (1999). Western Europe. In K. Harry (Ed.), *Higher education through open and distance learning. World review of distance education and open learning. Volume 1* (pp. 244–255). New York: Routledge.
- Columbia Online. Accessed 20 March 2017. Retrieved from <http://online.columbia.edu/>.
- Columbia University in the City of New York. Accessed 26 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.columbia.edu/>.
- EADTU. Current members. Accessed 28 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://eadtu.eu/members/current-members>.
- ECIU. The European Consortium of Innovative Universities. Accessed 20 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.eciu.org/>.
- FernUniversität in Hagen. Accessed 28 March 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.fernuni-hagen.de/english/>.
- Ganor, M., Gil'ad, R., Guri-Rosenblit, S., Ovsyannikov, V., Shelley, M. A., & Zaparovanny, Y. (2000). *Distance education for the information society: Policies, pedagogy and the professional development*. Moscow: IITE UNESCO.
- Hámpel, S., Česal, J., & Vaškovíc, P. (2008). *Srovnání role a postavení e-learningu ve vzdělávacím systému vybraných zemí*. Praha: ČVUT.
- HEA (Higher Education Authority). (2009). *Open and flexible learning*. HEA Position Paper. Accessed 28 March 2017. Retrieved from http://edepositireland.ie/bitstream/handle/2262/80399/hea%202009_flexible_learning_paper.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.
- Healey, N. (2013). Why universities license degrees to foreign colleges. *University World News. The Global Window on Higher Education*, 270. Accessed 15 August 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130501170559465>.
- Kommers, P., Smyrnova-Trybulska, E., Morze, N., Issa, Tomayess, & Issa, Theodora. (2015). Conceptual aspects: analyses law, ethical, human, technical, social factors of development ICT, e-learning and intercultural development in different countries setting out the previous new theoretical model and preliminary findings. *International Journal of Continuing Engineering Education and Lifelong Learning*, 25(4), 365–393.
- Kommers, P., Smyrnova-Trybulska, E., Morze, N., Noskova, T., Yakovleva, T., Pavlova, T., Drlik, M., Malach, J., Delgado, S. C., Pinto, P., Issa, Tomayess, & Issa, Theodora. (2014). Contrastive analyses and evaluation of the ICT and e-learning competences in Australia, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Spain and Ukraine within the framework of the IRNet International Research Network project. In E. Smyrnova-Trybulska (Ed.), *E-learning and intercultural competences development in different countries* (pp. 13–31). Katowice–Cieszyn: Studio NOA, University of Silesia in Katowice.

- Moore, M. G., Kearsley, G. (2012). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- National Chengchi University. Accessed 20 March 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.nccu.edu.tw/en/about>.
- Open Education Unit. Accessed 24 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://dcu.ie/openeducation/index.shtml>.
- Owusu-Boampong, A. & Holmberg, C. (2015). *Distance education in European higher education – the potential*. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, International Council for Open and Distance Education and Study Portals B. V.
- SRI College. Accessed 15 August 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.sricollege.edu.my/>.
- The Claremont Colleges. Accessed 28 March 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.claremont.edu/>.
- The Open University Business School. Accessed 20 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://business-school.open.ac.uk/>.
- The Open University. Accessed 27 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.open.ac.uk/>.
- The Open University. Faculties and research centres. Accessed 20 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.open.ac.uk/about/main/faculties-centres/faculties-and-research-centres>.
- Universita Telematica Internazionale Uninettuno. Accessed 20 February 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.uninettunouniversity.net/en/universita.aspx>.
- Zlámálová, H. (2007). Distanční vzdělávání a elearning v evropských zemích. *Aula*, 15(4), 38–50.
- Zormanová, L. (2016). Distance education in European countries. In E. Smyrnova-Trybulska (Ed.), *E-learning methodology – Implementation and evaluation. Volume 8* (pp. 19–28). Katowice–Cieszyn: Studio NOA, the University of Silesia in Katowice.

Lucie Zormanová

Modele kształcenia na odległość w szkolnictwie wyższym

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł skupia się na zagadnieniach związanych z kształceniem na odległość w szkolnictwie wyższym. Analizuje on i porównuje rozwój kształcenia na odległość i jego warunki w różnych krajach oraz opisuje istotne różnice napotkane w poszczególnych krajach.

Można dostrzec różne formy implementacji kształcenia na odległość. Rozbieżności w podejściu do tej formy kształcenia spowodowane są aspektami kulturowymi, tradycją nauczania na odległość, rozwojem technologii informacyjno-komunikacyjnych oraz normami prawnymi dotyczącymi edukacji.

Istnieje wiele modeli organizacyjnych dla kształcenia na odległość. Pewien model może dominować w jednym kraju, a w innym może występować wiele różnych modeli.

Słowa kluczowe: uniwersytet otwarty, kształcenie na odległość, system elektroniczny, uczenie się przez całe życie, modele organizacyjne dla kształcenia na odległość

Lucie Zormanová

Модели дистанционного обучения в высшем образовании

Аннотация

Статья посвящена дистанционному обучению в высшем образовании. Анализируется и сравнивается развитие дистанционного обучения и условия дистанционного обучения в разных странах. Описываются значительные различия в развитии дистанционного образования в высшем образовании в отдельных странах.

Мы встречаемся с различными формами осуществления дистанционного обучения. Появление дивергенции дистанционного обучения в разных странах обусловлено различными культурными аспектами, традицией дистанционного обучения, развитием информационно-коммуникационных технологий и различными законодательными нормами в области образования.

Существует много типов различных организационных моделей дистанционного обучения. В одной стране может доминировать конкретная модель, а в другой стране может быть множество различных организационных моделей дистанционного обучения.

К л ю ч е в ы е с л о в а: открытый университет, дистанционное обучение, электронная система, обучение в течении всей жизни, организационные модели дистанционного обучения

Lucie Zormanová

Modelos de aprendizaje a distancia en educación superior

Resumen

Este artículo se centra en el aprendizaje a distancia en la educación superior. Analiza y compara el desarrollo del aprendizaje a distancia y las condiciones del aprendizaje a distancia en diferentes países. Describe diferencias significativas en el desarrollo de la educación a distancia en la educación superior en los distintos países individualmente.

Nos encontramos con diversas formas de aplicación de la educación a distancia. La aparición divergente de la educación a distancia en diferentes países proviene de diferentes aspectos culturales, de la tradición del aprendizaje a distancia, del desarrollo de la tecnología de la información y la comunicación, y de las diferentes normas legislativas en el área de educación.

Existen muchos tipos de diferentes modelos de organización para la educación a distancia. Un modelo particular puede que sea dominante en un país, mientras que en otro país puede contener una variedad de diferentes modelos organizativos de la educación a distancia.

Palabras clave: universidad abierta, educación a distancia, sistema electrónico, aprendizaje permanente, modelos organizativos de la educación a distancia