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Compare and contrast the Open University system and distance education in United Kingdom and South Africa.

This essay compares and contrasts the Open University system and distance education at a university located in United Kingdom, in a developed country, and a college situated in South Africa, in a developing country. In this view, everyone should have adequate access to educational opportunities in the developed and developing countries. Conversely, Open Educational Resources (OERs) can affect an individual's right to education, especially if there is a need to promote academic development and cost effective in educational environments (Prinsloo & Slade, 2014). In addition, this essay reveals that, everyone does not have equal access to educational opportunities from both distance learning institutions, particularly in South Africa University than United Kingdom College (Wilson, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the definition of Open University and distance education, based on the comparative analysis, measurement and interpretation and the benefits of this program.

Definition of Open University

The definition of Open University is very complicating, and it is frequently used with terminologies that consist of open learning and distance learning. In addition, students have to depend on the OERs, whenever it is available through Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), in order to work with the Open University system and distance education pedagogy (Wilson, 2008). This implies that students are expected to have equal access to OERs with adequate choices of educational opportunities, in both developed and developing countries. It is also important to highlight that these technological pedagogies include a two-way interaction between instructor- students, instructors- instructors, and students-students. In this view, students

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participate in classroom away from campus, with a selection of educational technologies by a personalize communication of teaching and learning, with their fellow students or classmates and instructors, conducted by a particular institutional organization (Da Silva-Beharry, 2015).

Related Issues

In relation to these issues, this essay reveals different circumstances with reference to equal access to education in South Africa and the United Kingdom Open University system. Based on the research findings by Wilson (2008), the college in the United Kingdom and the university in South Africa suggested that distance learning OERs are intended to enhance the teaching and learning experience for learners. Conversely, the OERs are complicated, because the start-up and updating of content information for the OERs are not cost effective to produce, and students are expected to have equal access to OERs (Wilson, 2008). This is indeed a very complex issue, where some learners will not have equal access to the OERs, because OERs are not cost effective to produce. This can also affect the right to entry of students to attend colleges and universities, in South Africa and United Kingdom. With this view it is required to highlight a comparative analysis of adopting OERs in United Kingdom and South Africa Open University system.

A Comparative Analysis Adopting OERs

This essay highlights that the university in South Africa and the college in United Kingdom achieved high academic standards. The Open University system was promoted because the distance education OERs can be re-used. Therefore, the college in United Kingdom, as well

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as the university in South Africa, can be compared with the conditions and implications for institutions in developing countries with those of developed countries. In addition, inequalities exist in educational achievements between the Open University system in United Kingdom and South Africa distance education institutions, because the economic resources are not distributed equally (Wilson, 2008). We should also take into consideration the less-fortunate people who are living in United Kingdom, because those people cannot afford to pay expensive tuition fees to attend college, therefore, they would continue to experience obstacles to education. I will emphasize that the cost of tuition fees affects them tremendously from enrolling in college, and they are not able to have entry to the Open University system. As a result, it is necessary to analyze the contrasting views in each country, to determine if OERs is either equally or unequally accessible in each situation of South Africa University and United Kingdom College, Open University system.

Contrasting Views

South Africa continues to experience unequal access to distance learning in its higher education system, despite the high qualities of accomplishments of academic standards in their OERs. In addition, there is unequal access to, ICT and modern computers. In addition, the Internet is extensively available in the large cities rather than the remote rural areas (Wilson, 2008). The United Kingdom is a developed country, and people in the remote rural areas do not have equal access to education, because different institutions have different entry requirements. In some cases, resources for staff and equipment vary considerably and hence they provide

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different learning experiences for the students in the rural areas. Students from low socio-economic and minority ethnic groups only consist of a small percentage of the British student population (Wilson, 2008).

Consequently, it is important to emphasize that access to ICT facilities is much more accessible with wider choices of education opportunities in United Kingdom than in South Africa. Based on this view, the Open University colleges in United Kingdom are adopting online learning environments to enhance teaching and learning processes for their course delivery. Access to online colleges in the United Kingdom, can also be extremely expensive, particularly to those learners who earn low income or no income. Nevertheless, the enrollment number for students has been rapidly increasing at the institutions in the United Kingdom (Wilson, 2008).

Conclusion

However, based on a comparative analysis of United Kingdom College and South Africa University, the paper highlights that students in South Africa does not have easy access to education opportunities. Conversely, the students at the United Kingdom College have easy access to education opportunities. Therefore the right of entry to education is more appreciated and promoted at the United Kingdom College than at the South Africa University. For example, the cost of tuition can be a barrier to hinder students from attending the University in South Africa. Very often, the students experience obstacles to education and digital divide, if they reside in remote rural areas, and earn no income or low-income. These encumbrances emerge from several factors that have a direct correlation with the required resources to sustain the Open

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University system. For instance, the OERs are obtainable through ICTs, because the OERs and DE depend on the ICTs to promote the Open University system. Additionally, these resources and technologies are unequally accessible between different countries, based on the countries' level of development with regards to differences between the facilities and academic resources provided by various institutions (Wilson, 2008). Therefore, it is critical to highlight that in some situations, open learning focuses more on the specific needs of students, with regards to the individual needs and requirements (Todhunter, 2013). In concluding, in order for the Open University system to be successfully implemented, it is important to emphasize that, the academic experts of South Africa should ensure that they incorporate a social context of unbiased academic strategies towards adopting the Open University system.

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