Integral University ODL Assessment Approach

Assessment is an integral part of any system of education. It is closely linked with learning experience of students. Assessment in ODL system is a complex process. It is a challenge to assess and manage quality in a widely spread system of education. To sustain quality, in never expanding quantity can be possible if the system function in order. ODL systems should ensure that students can earn marks/grades according to their competency, the existing system in ODL cannot be called failure; rather there is the need for renovation in the existing practices. Assessment mechanism in ODL require a more cautions and vigilant approach to discharge their duties. TO ensure quality assessment in ODL system we need to renovate the present practices of assessment procedure and to think over the alternatives assessment procedures that could be helping to learn and fulfill the alternative aims of education. Mainly there are three types of assessment qualities, which are effective assessment .They are validity reliability and fairness.

The role of assessment is to increase students learning and development, rather than simply to grade or rank student performance.

Purpose of Assessment

Assessment has different purposes .The main purposes related to the teaching learning process are:

i)   **Certification**-Assessment helps in certifying that a student has achieved a particular level of performance.

ii) **Stimulating Learning**-Assessment can stimulate learning in different ways.

iii) **Improving Arrangements** –Assessment information helps to review the effectiveness of arrangements.

Methods of Assessment

Following are the main methods for the assessment:

- **Objective Assessment:** Here the word"objective" refers to the method of marking the questions. This marking is a simple mechanical process.
- **Short answer Questions:** Short answer questions may be of different types like one sentence answer, completing a table/diagram, preparing a list, writing a paragraph etc.
- **Long Answer Questions:** Long answer questions also may be of various types like essay, reports etc.

Why Assessment?

- We conduct assessment in ODL system mainly: to provide feedback to learners starting from assignment to the term-end examination; to get an idea about what they are really doing and what they are supposed to do to complete the programme and to generate a spirit of consciousness to connect the concept of written materials with the varieties of practices carried out by the learner.
- To reach at summative evaluation based on formative assessment, which helps learners to examine their performance at every stage of their study and progress successfully to attain the course objectives.
- Assessment in ODL is not   only meant for students to earn a grade, it is equally helpful for monitoring the effectiveness of academic programmes and adopting appropriate strategies to accomplish institutional objectives.
- The practice of assessment in ODL is not only for certifying students, it also impacts their learning improvement and helps learners to develop a positive attitude towards the institutional system.

Assessment for whom

Assessment in ODL is not a satisfy a single stakeholder; rather it is for the multiple users working in the system such as: students, institutions and community

> Assessment helps the students to be aware of progress in their studies, to achieve mastery of the concept, to find the cause of the difficulties and to get the remediation to overcome the learning difficulties .It also helps learners to improve their learning in the positive direction if they fail to achieve the required standard.

- It helps the teachers to assess the effectiveness of the instructional strategies, communication, and involvement of the students, It also helps teachers to modify learning behaviour of the students and make teaching learning process effective and outcome oriented.
- Assessment also satisfies the need of society of large –satisfying the board and long term need of the society, providing appropriate job opportunities for the student.

How to Assess?

Several assessment techniques are used in ODL system, such as essay type examination, short answer type and objectives, oral assessment in tutorials, practical examination, project, observation of performance in personal contact programme.

Reliable and valid Assessment

Reliability and validity are terms used for educational assessment .In this context validity refers to what we really measure and what we are supposed to measure as per the detailed objectives.

For the validity to be high:

1-The assessment must analyse student's performance on each objective.

2-The assessment should provide the appropriate situation possible for measuring the specific abilities being measured.