

THE ROLE OF THE OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING SUBJECT SPECIALISTS IN PROMOTING SELF-DIRECTED AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING: AN EVALUATION

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ABSTRACT

This study tries to assess the roles of the Open and Distance learning subject specialists in the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Open University (PUP OU) in promoting self-directed and independent learning as perceived by themselves. Results of analysis showed that PUP OU subject specialists were also active teachers with an accredited portfolio.

INTRODUCTION

The Polytechnic University of the Philippines, in consonance with its constitutional mandate to provide education at all levels accessible to every Filipino and to develop “non-formal, informal and indigenous learning independent, and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs” has conceived a Distance Learning System (DLS) in the graduate and undergraduate levels. This innovative approach is in line with the goal of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on access and equity.

The PUP as a state university believes that education is an enhancement of nation-building. It believes that meaningful growth and transformation of the country are best achieved in an atmosphere of brotherhood, peace, freedom, justice, and nationalist-oriented education imbued with the spirit of humanist internationalism. On the strength of this guiding philosophy, the PUP mission is to democratize access to educational opportunities, including the marginally poor and the socially disenfranchised population.

PUP experience in open and distance learning

The Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) has launched several innovations such as the ladder type curriculum, the Non-Traditional Education Program, the Open University System through Distance Learning or the Pamantasan Bayan Program.

The terms “Open University,” “Open Learning,” “Distance Learning,” and “Pamantasan Bayan” has become a catch word or slogan in many countries for the last

decade, and it often suggests that it is the same thing as Distance Education.

While formal education systems at all levels and in all regions of the world struggle in a crisis which, Philip Coombs (1) in far reaching publication of UNESCO, as well as the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE) has scrupulously analyzed, a parallel system is emerging, diversifying, and undertaking a place which positively challenges traditional types of education.

The Philippines consists of 7,100 islands, separated by water and mountain ranges. It is divided into 15 regions with different geographical terrain, economic conditions, and far from educational access and opportunities. This situation resulted in unequal opportunities to the people residing in areas which may be considered depressed, disadvantageous and underserved, and far from existing colleges and universities. So, to give chance and provide access to education, the PUP had initiated and implemented the program of Distance Learning through its Pamantasan Bayan or Open University. At present, materials are being reproduced to implement the modular approach for the graduate program. Consortium approach has been done with other universities in the far flung areas like Iloilo, Palawan, Quezon, and the Bicol Regions. The Technical-Vocational Education, is also implemented in several provinces in the country. The courses include basic and advanced secretarial, basic and advance computer technology, practical electronics, radio TV repair, automotive, motorcycle, and hand tractor repair, sewing,

cosmetology, and bag making (Carague 1994).

The Open University System caters primarily to the traditional needs of the economically disadvantaged students, out-of-school youths, teachers, administrators, etc, who are interested in pursuing degree or non-degree courses, but unable to do so, because of distance, time, constraints, and economic reasons.

Right now, the delivery system employed by the traditional teachers may not be effective for the university of congregation has shifted to a university of the convergence of technologies. Sources of information are varied.

The Open University System is an innovative approach that will re-engineer traditional learning approaches through the use of print-based (modules), audio-based (radio), video-based (Television), and technology-based systems particularly satellite, telecommunications and computers.

At present, printed materials are being produced to implement modular approach in OU Programs. PUP cannot possibly produce these materials if it were not for the use of Information Technology. PUP-OU intends to prepare more high-quality, pre-produced, modular multimedia materials that could be adapted and modified by both teachers and learners to suit individual needs.

The objectives of the Pamantasang Bayan or Open University are as follows:

- 1.To bring quality and affordable education to a greater number of the Philippine citizenry especially to the poor and economically disadvantaged, in complimentation with the present traditional university curricular offerings.
- 2.To offer a second chance to dropouts and/or out-of-school youths, unemployed adults, men and women in the rural areas, to acquire the necessary skills for employment purposes, or attain self-enrichment for entrepreneurial undertakings.
- 3.To advance and disseminate knowledge by diversity of means, both formal and non-formal, including communications technology through Distance Learning

System.

- 4.To strengthen and make relevant the degree certificate and diploma courses of the PUP so as to meet the needs of employment necessary for the recovery of the economy and progress of the country.
- 5.To promote the acquisition of knowledge in a rapidly developing society and to continually offer opportunities for upgrading of innovations and research in all fields of human endeavors; and
- 6.To provide suitable undergraduate and post-graduate courses of study for those already employed at Philippines and abroad, but cannot rise beyond their present level of employment for lack of necessary educational qualification.

Legal bases of Open University System

- 1.The Open University System is in fulfillment of the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

The Polytechnic University of the Philippines in consonance with its Constitutional mandate to provide quality education in all levels accessible to every Filipino and to develop "non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems particularly those that respond to community need" had conceived a Distance Learning System (DLS) in the graduate and undergraduate levels.

PUP as a state university believes that education is an instrument for the development of the citizenry and the enhancement of nation-building. Guided with this philosophy, the PUP mission is to democratize access to educational opportunities, including the marginally poor and the socially disenfranchised population.

- 2.House Bill No. 13484 known as the "Open Learning System Act of 1994."

To fully support House Bill No. 13484 - An act establishing the Philippine Open University, PUP as well as UP responded to the invitation of the Committee on Education of the House of Representatives to participate in the discussion of the Bill. PUP reiterated

then its desire to effectively respond to the working people's desire of acquiring formal higher education, and expanding educational opportunities for the people in a more effective and economic manner - through the Open University System.

3. Republic Act No. 7722 known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994."

PUP believes that the creation of RA No. 7722 is very timely. Thus, enthusiasm for the OU System and Distance Learning System and recognition of its potential influence on the present and future educational structure have grown more. PUP certainly maintains its stand that OU System assists in the universalization and democratization of education, to create educational opportunities for adults, to supplement the school program where it is deficient, to improve the professional competence of teachers, and to enable other professionals to add knowledge in their mid-career.

PUP-OU System Current Programs

The Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) through its Pamantasan Bayan (Open University) and the Graduate School have conceived a Distance Learning System (DLS) on the graduate level, starting with "Master in Educational Management" in 1990. This program was conceived in order to provide graduate courses on educational qualifications of teachers, head teachers and principals of elementary and secondary schools, as well as faculty members of colleges and universities. The course served its clientele in economical ways as the participants underwent training/course without leaving their respective stations.

Today, PUP OU offers other programs as well

Degree Courses

Advanced (Masteral) Courses

Master in Educational Management
Master in Public Administration
Master in Mass Communication

Master in Construction Management

Post Baccalaureate Courses

Computer Technology

Higher (Baccalaureate) Courses

Bachelor in Entrepreneurial Management

Bachelor in Broadcast Communication

Non-Degree Courses

(Short Term Technical-Vocational Courses)

Computer Technology

General Secretarial

Computer Secretarial

Computer Technician

(Technology Courses)

Automotive

Refrigeration & Air-conditioning

The pilot center for the MEM-DLS Program was the PUP-Lopez, Quezon with 75 students enrolled in 1990. MEM was also executed in Northern Iloilo Polytechnic State College (NIPSC) in Barotac, Viejo, Iloilo with 200 students, and the Palawan National Agricultural in the second semester of SY 1993-1994. PUP Maragondon and PUP Ragay were likewise given a "go" signal by PUP former President Zenaida A. Olonan to implement the MEM-DLS Program in these two branches, in the first semester of SY 1995-1996. For SY 1996-1997, three centers were added. In Palompon, Leyte; Taguig; and Pulilan. In 1999, President Ofelia M. Carague signed a Memorandum of Agreement to offer scholarships in Malolos, Bulacan sponsored by the Governor and her staff.

Other places that are requesting for the implementation of the MEM-MPA Programs are: Bansud, Oriental Mindoro; Dagupan, Pangasinan; Leyte; Antique; and Metro Manila. To date, the PUP-MEM-DLS Program has successfully graduated students from NIPSC, Iloilo, Palawan, Bulacan, PUP-Lopez, Quezon, Taguig, and Manila.

The objectives of the MEM-DLS Program are as follows:

1.1 Provide teachers and school administrators additional knowledge, skills and management

competencies;

- 1.2 Strengthen teachers and school administrators; in grasping human relation/community relation;
- 1.3 Provide an understanding and appreciation of educational research and monitoring and evaluation as an instrument of institutional management; and
- 1.4 Promote general efficiency and efficacy among leaders and school administrators/managers.

Vocational-Technical Program

For the Non-degree Program, short-term technical-vocational courses are being offered. At present, the PUP Pamantasang Bayan has successfully graduated more than 8,000 students from the provinces of Bataan, Ragay, Bulacan, Cavite, Rizal, Maragondon, Pulilan Bulacan, Camarines Sur, Lopez, Unisan, Quezon, Pangasinan, Oriental Mindoro and Metro Manila.

The program affords a second chance for drop-outs or out-of-school youths, illiterates or unemployed adults, farmers, fishermen, rural women and housewives to acquire education or expand their knowledge and thus gain the necessary skills, upgrade latent craft for employment purposes and to attain self-enrichment for entrepreneurial undertakings.

The Delivery System

The PAMANTASANG BAYAN (Open University) in PUP is a system of acquiring education aside from the traditionally graded, structured, and class-oriented formal system. This innovative mode of delivery/acquisition includes, and is not necessarily limited to the use of computer, radio, television, print media, audio/video equipment, face-to-face interaction, observation, etc., and at a place and pace of study determined by the student himself.

Technology is used to create the "virtual classroom." This enables conventional, classroom-based teaching to be delivered by technology to distant sites. Also, by using technologies such as audio-graphics or televised classes, teachers do not have to change their teaching approach rather, distance teaching has acquired some relatively

straightforward modification of their usual style.

The Internet has also implications for Open University or Distance Education. The Internet provides a massive, increasingly accessible distribution system available at a moderate to low cost.

The development and connection of the world's major electronic networks into the Internet provides unprecedented opportunity for distance educators to develop new modes of program delivery.

The single most important pedagogical characteristics of the Internet is its support of human interaction, unbounded by the restraints of time and distance. The Internet can be used to support distribution of traditional media such as print based course guides and texts or even audio and video clips.

Internet has the potential to support many types of learning activities and strategies including: provision of student access to conversations among leading practitioners in nearly every academic and professional field; support for exploration of library collections and data bases of thousands of educational and government organizations; support for students to pursue their interests and academic curiosity with other students, professionals and interested amateurs.

In summary, the Internet recreates the meeting place in which knowledge is not only shared, but created and recreated. The capacity of the students to "talk back" and add to dialogue, provides opportunity for development, application and linkage of new knowledge to the students' own learning context.

With the present problems of the world, such as rapid increase in population, rising prices, etc., it is very advisable to introduce innovative approaches like distance learning, in order to reach the population in far places to provide and equip them with the necessary education to improve the quality of life.

There should be strong collaboration and consortium among colleges and universities in the implementation of the distance learning program, in order to optimize the use

of human and material resources, facilities and instructional materials.

Action plans should be prepared with the delineated functions and responsibilities of the university involved.

Pamantasan Bayan of PUP is not just an ordinary certificate/diploma granting institution. It's main goal is man centered focusing on a tripod aspects of his development: his social status as a professional; his economic well-being as an entrepreneur or as a businessman; and his total commitment and contribution to improve the quality of life and to help build a prosperous Philippines.

Statement Of The Problem

Distance Education/Open University is becoming popular. A number of schools are trying to incorporate this type of learning system to their own systems. Although the Open University Program of PUP has only started its operation in 1990, several schools in the country have already requested for its implementation (Carague, 1994) - an indication that the program is not only working efficiently but also effectively. The success or failure of a program depends on how it is being managed and implemented (Rodriguez and Echanis, 1993). The PUP-OU Program has been going on for 12 years now, but so far no studies have been made regarding its implementation.

This study evaluated the role of the Open University Subject Specialists in promoting self-directed and independent learning systems. Specifically, the study answered the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of the following selected variable:
 - 1.1. Highest educational attainment
 - 1.2. Position/Office
 - 1.3. Length of service
 - 1.4. Eligibility
 - 1.5. Performance ratings in the residential mode
2. How do the subject specialists rate themselves in performing their role in the Open and distance learning system?

3. To what extent are the following resources available to the subject specialists?
 - 3.1. Materials
 - 3.2. Manpower
 - 3.3. Methods
 - 3.4. Machines
 - 3.5. Management
4. What are the problems encountered by the subject specialists in the implementation of the PUP OU programs?
5. Are the subject specialists of PUP aware of the OU guidelines on their roles as facilitators.

Significance Of The Study

Findings of the study will provide some insights on how to manage an Open University Program. This will also serve as an assessment of the implementation of the Distance Education/OU Program at PUP and serve its goal of making program successful. Furthermore, this will guide future program planners in planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling an Open University Program.

Specifically, the results of this study will allow PUP OU implementors to:

- 1.0 Assist the subject specialists in improving their weaknesses and strengthening their good teaching points;
- 2.0 Give solutions to the problems encountered by the subject specialists particularly in teaching or facilitating the learning of OU students;
- 3.0 Identify more qualified subject specialists and real/true believers of the ODL System;
- 4.0 Provide subject specialists a thorough orientation on ODL System and a clearer definition of their roles in the System;

Limitations Of The Study

The study concentrated on only one university, the PUP. It involves the subject specialists from the different OU programs for SY 1999-2000. A study on the Open University Program of other universities could have provided more

information especially on the different styles in managing a Distance Education and/or OU program.

Also, in the Philippines, Open University Program had only been given due recognition and importance in the 90's and a lot of changes and improvements are still taking place. As a consequence, references available in the country are limited, if not western-based.

Findings

1. Profile of the respondents

1.1) 53 out of 125 subject specialist respondents were Doctoral Degree holders, 39 were MA degree holders and 33 were bachelor degree holders. Majority of the doctoral degree holders were specifically from the Masters in Educational Management Program with a total of 25 out of 33, followed by those teaching in the Masters in Public Administration Program.

1.2) 44 out of 125 subject specialists were holding various positions in the traditional schools of PUP. 16 subject facilitators were department heads, 9 were holding directorial positions, 8 were deans, 7 were from the office of the Vice Presidents and 2 were from the President's office. The rest were holding other administration positions.

1.3) 43 out of 125 respondents have a length of service ranging from 20-24 years, followed by 15-19 years of service in the case of 31 respondents. Those belonging to less than 10 years length of service obtained the lowest number of response, with a total of 5 subject specialists, under the category.

1.4) 109 out of 125 PUP OU subject specialists obtained eligibility. Most were from the Masters in Educational Program with 32 eligibles, followed by the subject specialists under the Masters in Public Administration Program with a total of 22 respondents. Subject facilitators teaching in Masters in Mass Communication Program and Bachelor in Broadcast Communications obtained the lowest number of eligibles with only 5 respondents.

1.5) 73 out of 125 respondents were performing very satisfactorily in the traditional schools of PUP, while 50 were performing outstandingly and only 4 subject specialists were performing satisfactorily.

2. Among the 22 roles of OU subject specialists specified in the questionnaire, "Promote self-perceptions of competence and feelings of self-efficacy among students" obtained the highest mean score of 3.93 described as always. Followed by in rank order: "assist students to develop human relationship skills" and "model appropriate strategies for independent learning" with a mean score of 2.5; "attempts to get students to attribute their successes and failures on school tasks to effort and the use of strategies" and "instruct students in appropriate procedures for working in-groups" followed next which garnered an overall mean score of 3.88 both.

"Allow students to self-select content for learning activities" obtained the lowest mean score of 1.36 described as never.

As a whole, the PUP OU subject specialists were indeed aware of their duties and responsibilities as facilitators of learning in a distance delivered education and that they are truly performing teachers in the PUP OU as evidenced by the result of the general mean of 3.41 verbally interpreted as "frequently" doing their job.

3. "Management" was rated very much available among OU subject facilitators which obtained an overall mean score of 4.00. The following were likewise rated very much available by the PUP OU subject specialists in rank order, "Methods" with a mean score of 3.90; "Materials" with a mean score of 3.85; and finally "Manpower" with a mean score of 3.79. "Machines" obtained the lowest mean score of 3.05 described as "available."

4. The problems and difficulties encountered by OU subject specialists and their recommendations are the following:

RESEARCH PAPERS

1. Too Many students in a class
2. Small rooms during once-a-month contact sessions
3. Late submission of reports and requirements of students
4. Transportation to the OU Learning Centers
5. Unavailability of modules on the Orientation day due to delay of delivery, because of unavailability of transportation
6. Access to contact session's facilities, computer laboratory, fax machines, computers, Xerox machines, e-mail facilities
7. More OU personnel to assist subject facilitators during contact sessions
8. Lack of teaching equipment like overhead projectors and LCDs
9. Inadequate forms like gradesheets, completion forms
10. More assistance from the OU Office-reannouncements of meeting dates and consultation sessions
11. More classrooms as well as function rooms for student's presentation of their reports/projects
12. There should be a room for one-on-one or individualized instruction
13. Oral defense room not appropriate for graduate students
14. Different salary scale for OU subject facilitators because of unsolved big classes
15. No seminar or lecture forum rooms for the students
16. Subject facilitators should be informed of their teaching assignments at least prior to three months or a semester
17. Teaching assignments should be delivered to the subject specialists for accomplishment of daily time record
18. There should be an OU room for subject specialists to receive and send e-mail to their students
19. Subject specialists should be taught on the use of computers so that they can e-mail their students
20. The subject specialists shall be given more than one (1) load every semester for preparation
21. Increase in pay for subject specialists to be different from traditional classes
22. The subject specialists should be assigned in different OU Learning Centers and there should be reshuffling of assignments.
23. Different subjects should be assigned to subject specialists to give them chance/s of being assigned to different centers
24. The subject specialists should be invited as speakers or resource persons in seminars in different learning centers
25. Oral defense panelists should be assigned to experience it.
26. Course syllabus/outline should be provided to subject specialists
27. There should be regular follow up of OU personal on the meeting dates of subject specialists
28. OU should be responsible in the reservation of transportation to the Learning Centers
29. Subject specialists who are not designees should be given more than one teaching load just like the top university officials
30. More seminars and lecture forums should be provided to OU subject specialists especially on open and distance learning and teaching
31. Mastery of the subject matter should be the base of giving OU Loads
32. Outstanding subject specialists should be given more than one load just like in the traditional mode
33. Subject specialists should be evaluated just like in the traditional set up

34. Subject specialists should have a faculty room as part of OU offices
35. OU personnel should collect the requirements of the students and deliver them to the concerned subject specialists
36. Every subject facilitator should have a locker or box where the requirements can be gathered and collected by the subject facilitator
37. All subject specialists should be assisted by the OU personnel in contacting their students especially during contact sessions
38. Subject specialists should be provided with the OU school calendar for proper scheduling of classes
39. The OU personnel should provide the subject specialists all OU forms before or in the beginning of the semester
40. The OU office should provide the subject specialists the schedules of other subject facilitators in the same program, so no duplication of meeting dates shall be made.
41. Subject specialists shall be consulted on subject preferences and center preferences
42. More meeting dates should be allotted for every subject specialist
43. OU office should design the matrix for the meeting schedule dates to avoid overlapping of meetings
44. Subject specialists should be consulted on meeting dates preferences, by the OU office
45. OU subject specialists should be provided free copies of the modules and other supplementary materials
46. The subject specialists should be given transportation allowances in case of unavailability of PUP vehicles
47. Hazard pay should be one of the incentives of OU subject specialists, since OU centers are located all over the country

48. Overtime pay should be provided to the subject specialists for Sundays and contact sessions scheduled on Holidays.

5. 118 out of 125 subject facilitators were aware of the PUP OU guidelines for the subject specialists' roles, while only 7 were not.

Conclusions

1. Almost 50% of OU subject specialists were doctoral degree holders; while more than 30% have finished masteral degree.
 - ◆ Almost 40% of the total number of respondents were holding various positions in the PUP OU traditional school.
 - ◆ Most of the PUP OU subject specialists fall under 20-24 years length of service.
 - ◆ Majority of the respondents, which is more than 80% obtained eligibility.
 - ◆ Greater percentage of the respondents which account to almost 60%, were performing very satisfactorily in the traditional school.
2. The PUP OU subject specialists rated their role as subject specialists as "frequently" performing.
3. "Management" was rated by the PUP OU subject specialists as very much available.
4. The PUP OU subject specialists specified 48 problems which they encountered.
5. Almost all of the respondents were aware of PUP OU guidelines for subject specialists' role.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations have been posed to help bring about improvements in the role of subject facilitators in the promotion of self-directed learning.

For the initial part, specific suggestions arising from the study have been forwarded. The next part presents more general recommendations, directed to distance education universities which include a framework and rationale for support services for distance education

teachers, as well as calls for more institutional research, for appropriate training of course developers and instructors, for coordination of support services for distance education teachers, and for the provision of more courses and programs through open and distance learning mode.

A. Specific:

1. Profile

The fact that the generated profile of PUP OU Subject specialists is already good, considering that majority of them have doctoral degree, have quite a long experience in teaching and eligibility requirements-signifies that the institution can proceed now to a much higher level of strategies in terms of improving the Subject specialist's profile. Since many of the subject specialists have doctorate degrees in education, that may indicate that many of them are well exposed to the emerging ODL theories, research and applications, because this has been the rage of education literature at this period.

The study of Brooks that mentioned "that the teaching skills of the faculty were considered the most important criterion for faculty success in the DL classroom" augurs well in the PUP OU case as revealed in the profile data. According to Brooks, "demographic data pictured the composite DL instructor as having a Ph.D., with the rank of either a full or associate professor, and about 51 years of age. Additionally, this faculty member was likely to have taught one or more DL classes, and have taught in the DL environment for 4 years or less."

The Subject specialists profile indicates that instead of putting up more incentives or programs for the faculty to help them get a higher degree, resources of the institution should now concentrate on providing more training to the mentors, who are aligned in the field of instruction in open and distance learning. Moreover, the concept of life-long learning should be advocated to this group, in order that may initiate further professional development activities even if they have already acquired doctorate degree. For instance, the institution may continue their implementation of the following activities/training with adherence to the need to put more substance into the

content of these initiatives;

- A. Module writing and evaluation
- B. Techniques in developing student interaction
- C. Developing instructional materials
- D. Applying and Mixing selected ICT in classroom and DE instruction
- E. Evaluating the DE delivery process and the student Outcome
- F. Seminars on distance education and information and communication technologies, trends and policies
- G. Integrating multimedia applications
- H. Instructional materials development and usage
- I. Faculty evaluation
- J. Legal and Intellectual Property (e.g. ownership of materials, copyrights)

2. Rating of the Respondents in Performing Their Role in Open and Distance Learning System

Out of the 22 items, 12 items in the subject specialists' role got the highest rating. About 9 items got the second highest rating. This indicates that subject facilitators perceive that they have well fulfilled the role of subject facilitators.

The lowest performance was achieved in the following item, "Allow students to self-select content for learning activities". Moreover, the items which got only the second highest rating are mostly referring to the subject facilitators role in promoting self-directed learning among their students. The data indicates the need for assistance to the subject facilitators for them to be well versed in guiding their students to become an independent learner.

The OU subject specialists need specific assistance in their teaching/facilitation methods used and in how they can

- a. stimulate students to think
- b. recognize individual differences
- C. make the learning conducive to independent study (they should be trained to provide guidance in the learning process. They should learn how to provide course materials (guide questions, modules, syllabus,

textbooks, others) that are clear and helpful.

- d. Provide effective support system to the students in the form of advising, counseling, tutoring, feedback and others.
- e. Provide students a clear understanding of their own responsibilities (what behaviors are expected of the students at the end of the course (the learning objectives), what information is required for the students to meet those objectives, and what is the most effective, efficient means of getting that information to the students.)
- f. Make appropriate instructional methods that are adapted, whereby the learners are engaged to have active, rather than passive learning experiences.
- g. Work on providing equal educational opportunities for all students in the DE classroom by creating new and different ways of achieving the same tasks.

On the part of PUP OU, it can produce the following:

1. The Subject specialist's Package that feature tools like:
 - a. Subject specialists Workbook that will help them to be exposed to the theory, research and best practice in distance teaching.
 - b. Examples of Case Studies about instructors in distance education.
 - c. Self- Rating Instruments that help the subject facilitators be reminded of the important components in distance teaching, and evaluate their own performance and effectiveness.
2. Buying and providing subject specialists with access to books on topics such as those "How to Promote Self-Directed Learning".
3. Availability of OU Resources to subject specialists

The " management" factor is the highest available resource while the "machines" are the lowest as indicated in the score. Given these results, the following are recommended:

 - 3.1 Materials (modules, books, readings/clippings, etc.)

All of the available instructional materials in the mother university (e.g. books, VHS in the library) can

be accessed by the subject specialists. However, many of them expect that PUP OU has to have its own and provide a way, where the subject specialists may use them. In this case, the PUP OU may survey all available instructional support offered by the Mother University and provide the subject specialists a listing of these as well as the procedures in accessing them.

- 3.2 Small rooms during once-a-month contact sessions. The PUP OU has already secured a function room intended for this purpose. However, given simultaneous activities, at times, contact sessions are done in regular classrooms. The PUP OU should communicate to the subject specialists that the PUP OU can only make arrangements for a bigger venue for contact sessions, if the subject specialists can inform the office of such a need at least a month in advance.
- 3.3 Late submission of reports and requirements of students. The subject specialists should also devise other ways in which students are helped in fulfilling their academic requirements.
- 3.4 Transportation to the OU learning centers. The PUP OU should be provided of its own transportation vehicle, given its dire need for it.
- 3.5 Access to contact session's facilities. These are computer laboratory, fax machines, computers, photocopy machines, e-mail facilities, overhead projectors and multi-media projectors. With the meagre budget of the mother university, the PUP OU is looking for ways to secure these facilities by asking the help of sponsors, conducting fund-raising projects and asking the OU student council to prioritize such immediate needs of subject specialists.
- 3.6 Inadequate forms like gradesheets, completion forms etc. As part of the university savings measure, the printing of bulk forms is not encouraged as this has inventory and storage costs. The PUP OU has already encoded all these forms in the computer and are available in soft and hard copy per

demand. The PUP OU students are given only one copy of completion forms and are asked to have these photocopied at their expense, in order to unload the university with big expenses on this kind of items.

- 3.7 More assistance from the OU Office regarding announcements of meeting dates and consultation sessions. The PUP OU does this by posting these at (1) PUP Open University Website (2) PUP OU e-mail address per program (3) PUP OU Bulletin boards (4) Answers to phone queries. To make optimal use of all of these, the PUP OU should strictly enforce the requirement for subject specialists to submit as soon as possible their scheduled contact sessions.
- 3.8 There should be a room for on-on-one or individualized instruction. The mother university provide a specific room for this purpose. The PUP OU should ways remind the subject specialists that an area is available at the Academic Room of the PUP OU. Meanwhile, the main library has likewise set aside a specific place for the OU students to research and to confer with the subject specialists.
- 3.9 No oral defense room appropriate for graduate students. - no recommendations
- 3.10 Subject specialists should be informed of their teaching assignments at least prior to three months or a semester before. Teaching assignments should be delivered to the subject specialists for accomplishment of daily time record.
- no recommendations
- 3.11 There should be an OU room for subject specialists to receive and send e-mail to their students. Such facilities are already available at the PUP Information Communication Technology Center (PUP ICT). The PUP ICT provides free e-mail address to the community.
- 3.12 Subject specialists should be taught on the use of computers, so that they can e-mail their students. Annually, the PUP ICT provides training for this

purpose.

- 3.13 The subject specialists shall be given more than one (1) load every semester for preparation. The PUP OU operation is still small and subjects and enrolments are limited in terms of teaching load, the PUP OU may devise or propose an instrument that may provide quantitative data on how to allocate the OU load.
- 3.14 Increase in pay for subject specialists. The PUP OU should make representation to the proper authorities for the approval of a higher rate for PUP OU subject specialists. Likewise, additional remuneration and benefits should be worked out like free use of PUP ICT facilities, complimentary modules, transportation/per diem for those who would be assigned in other centers, free training in PUP ICT, hazard pay, incremental pay during holidays, etc.
- 3.15 Course syllabus/outline should be provided to the subject specialists. The PUP OU already provides this in the package kit provided to subject specialists before the orientation session. In case, this is not available in the kit, a soft and hard copy is available at PUP OU upon request.
- 3.16 More seminars and lecture forums should be provided to OU subject specialists especially on open and distance learning and teaching.(no solution recommended)
- 3.17 OU personnel should collect the requirements of the students and deliver them to the concerned subject specialists. This is one way to assist the subject specialists and the students as well.
- 3.18 OU Office should design the matrix for the meeting schedule dates to avoid overlapping of meetings. To make this possible, the PUP OU should strictly require all the subject specialists to submit their schedules before the orientation for coordination.
- 3.19 Awareness of OU subject specialists of the guidelines on their roles as facilitators of learning.

Even if the research results provide a very good indication of the PUP OU efforts to inform subject specialists of their roles as facilitators of learning, there are other additional initiatives that can be done by PUP to further help in raising the quality of instruction in distance education such as:

1. Conduct regular subject specialists meetings, say, once a month or on a quarterly basis among OU subject specialists.
2. Form the association of PUP OU subject specialists group.
3. Set minimum standards of working out, for providing OU subject specialists the opportunity to attend at least one professional development meeting per year.
4. Undertake regular activity where subject specialists can share, learn, and implement appropriate "best practices" in teaching/learning activities.
5. Collate all information that subject specialists must access in order to succeed in research, teaching or service. Produce a general information data base on this that can be packaged in such a way that all faculties can have equal access to it.
6. Undertake programs that provide incentives to subject specialists like: recognition, certificates, token/gift, "faculty of the month", running list of accomplishments, financial assistance, payments to articles in the journal, subsidy in research undertakings, free additional loads, increased space, increased time to use resources, voucher for free use of multi-media projector, overhead projector, provision of student assistants in a semester

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