

*Promoting Alternative Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: A General Survey*

Gbolagade Adekanmbi

Independent Researcher, Botswana

0098

The Asian Conference on Education 2013

Official Conference Proceedings 2013



## **Introduction**

The search for alternatives in education is often tied to an observed lack of adequate educational resources, the need for different forms of content, methods or media, and a related need to promote democracy in education. Some calls for alternatives have resulted from a probing into the role of the school, and sometimes, the criticism of what it aims to be able to achieve, against what it is considered capable of doing. For some critics, such as the deschoolers, alternative approaches to education would enable students to utilise various networks and peers, (Illich, 1970; Reimer, 1971), and lead to a more authentic education. At UNESCO, some of the alternatives proposed over the years have been Non-Formal Education (NFE) championed mostly by Coombs and others, and the recurrent lifelong education proposals. Deschooling may have emerged as one of the most radical challenges to the educational status quo, represented by the formal educational system (Ireland, 1978). Related to these, adult educators such as Knowles (1970; 1980), Freire (1970), have pointed to the need to make changes to the familiar formal educational dresses and gowns which many adults have been forced to wear.

Beyond its adult education platform, alternative education has been a subject of discourse, experimentation and practice in the context of children. Such ideas as home schooling, project based learning, peer teaching, and community teaching and learning programmes are aimed at exploring alternatives. The growth of national qualifications frameworks has also been contributory, in many respects.

The promotion of alternative higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa has had its roots in the attempt to address problems of inadequate educational provisions. Major needs for reconstruction of society; of the need to correct past anomalies, such as the inequalities created by apartheid in South Africa; and to address other inconsistencies, have contributed to the growth of alternative education. The promotional platforms have included government agencies, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, universities and private institutions

This paper explores the nature of alternative education, its sub-Saharan African context and the various developments being observed. Some challenges in the provisions are also highlighted. The paper recognises that alternative routes to higher education in sub-Saharan Africa represent a major bridge to enhancing access and promoting a learning society.

## **The context**

Overall, Africa has a fifth of the world's surface area (Mandryk, 2010). Sub-Saharan Africa, home to 46 countries, with an overall population of over 745 million people in 2008 [UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2008], occupies two thirds of that area. The average life expectancy at birth was 54.4 years and expected years of schooling averaged 9.2 years in 2011 (Human Development Report 2011). About 75% of the world's poorest live on the sub-continent, and citing a World Bank estimate, about 40% of the people lived on less than one US dollar a day in 2009 (Aitchison and Alidou, 2009). *Operation World*, a Christian missions-oriented publication is described as a 'definitive prayer guide to every nation' (Mandryk 2010, cover page). If this assertion is true, the challenges raised about Africa in that publication,

highlighted as matters of prayer, are worth noting. Although it has the world's highest growth rate, (2.3% a year in comparison to the world's 1.6% a year), this growth is gradually 'slowing rapidly through reduced birthrates, emigration and the effects of disease' (Mandryk 2010, p. 31). Beyond this, other challenges are also included: low investment in agriculture, high foreign debt, poorly handled foreign aid; the lack of adequate infrastructure; a wide gap between the rich and poor; a continuing emigration of professionals, given at 20000 educated university professionals every year; the loss of about 25% of the continent's combined national income (about 150 billion dollars each year; a high prevalence of malaria, which 'kills as many people as AIDS and TB combined' (p. 31); and the high level of displacement of many due to military conflict (Mandryk, 2010). There are also corruption and governance problems. In closing the piece on the continent's economy, the book notes: 'Of the 33 lowest-ranking nations on the UN Human Development Index, 32 are in Africa.' (Mandryk 2010, p.31).

In spite of the picture just painted, there are a number of positive developments in economic growth which have been observed in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2012). For example, more than one third of the countries in the region have 'achieved growth rates of at least 6%' (UNESCO 2012, p.18). This development, as part of a wider observation, has been aptly described by the Human Development Report 2013 as 'a rise of the South'. For example, it was noted that the South 'as a whole produces about half of world economic output, up from a third in 1990' (HDR, 2013, p.13). Part of this development hangs on what has been seen as a growing massive expansion of the middle class in the South, pragmatic development policies, and an unprecedented connectedness in terms of ICT growth. The World Bank's Global Monitoring Report of 2007 notes that the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) targets 'have helped stimulate more rapid expansion of basic health and education services' (p. 4) in developing countries, of which Africa is a part. Riding on the back of this new wave, Sub-Saharan Africa appears to be showing glimpses of growth. However, various writers have suggested that such development, if it is to represent the kind of growth experienced in some of the Asian tiger countries, would depend on the nature of further government investments in education and skills training, and how such training is linked to labour market demands and needs (UNESCO 2012, p. 18).

While these are positive stories, attempts by nations in sub-Saharan African to meet up with developments in other parts of the world are still fraught with challenges. Various statistics indicate that the gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education in 2007 was 6%, against an enrolment ratio of 26% globally, 18% for developing countries and 67% for developed countries (UNESCO, 2010). Notably, less than a decade earlier, just 3.5% of the expected age group reached the tertiary level of education. However, the assertion by Chung (1999) while citing UNESCO World Education Report of 1998, that Africa's enrolments are generally the lowest in the world, is still true today.

All these have implications for the creation of alternative routes for those who need tertiary qualifications. We shall now examine the forms of alternative higher education.

## **Forms of alternative higher education**

As a term, alternative higher education refers to all forms of higher education, which are often different in their provisional formats from the conventional form of education, but which nonetheless lead, in many cases, to the award of certificates and various other qualifications. Generally, they take place in out-of-school contexts but often utilize existing educational structures and syllabi, and in many cases, are adaptations of formal programmes geared toward meeting a variety of needs. Such provisions include, but are not limited to adult and continuing education, distance education, workers' education, extra-mural programmes, web based learning, public education, and a host of others. In the USA Californian system, an alternative route to teacher certification exists through which many Californian teachers become professionally qualified (Mitchell and Romero, 2010). This was also the subject of the article in which they highlight the growing demands for alternative teaching and learning approaches in the USA (Chandler, Freiberg, Stinson and Nelson, 2002). Kennen and Lopez (2005) also write on alternative career paths for non-traditional students.

Many students preferring alternative routes to higher education may be seeking something cheaper and are sometimes in full time employment. Alternative higher education programmes serve as avenue for generating third income revenues for formal institutions. Writing on the major drivers for continuing education, Gehre (2003) identifies the growing need for specialization, the exponential growth in scientific knowledge; the recognition that many graduates now find themselves in multi-disciplinary contexts; and the requirement for most professionals to continue to upgrade their skills.

Another dimension to alternative higher education is seen in the use of Open Educational Resources to acquire knowledge and sit for examinations. When the University of London was established in 1836, the strict adherence to tuition by most universities was jettisoned and outsiders were able to write its examinations and awarded degrees. The availability of open educational resources is leading to a resurgence of the London University phenomenon in that the dispensing with the requirement for tuition, already seen in some aspects of alternative education will be further enhanced.

Adult and continuing education, as an umbrella term, possibly represents the widest range of alternative educational provisions available globally. Although many alternative routes do not use the term 'adult education' in describing what they offer, the content, programme, method, and often media of delivery used in adult and continuing education provisions are usually reflected in such programmes. As such, in this next description of alternative education, the semblance to adult education is deliberate. Many alternative educational programmes aim to equip individuals with work-oriented and life skills. They may also come in form of workshops and refresher courses, involve 'brick and mortar' learning organizations, but may also be run virtually. They may come as sandwich programmes, post literacy and evening classes, part-time credit based programmes, and others.

The pursuit of distance learning route by many is based on the recognition that learners do not need to be present where their teachers or institutions are, and that the fear of an income forgone for working clients is removed. Developments in the use of

new technologies are also further enhancing the growth of distance learning. Also, transnational is utilising distance learning methodologies in its promotion.

### **The place of adult and continuing education**

The development and growth of adult education at the university level in Africa has been as a result of colonial interventions, local initiatives, international involvement, and the active inter-university collaboration. In observing the tradition of premier universities established in former British Colonies in Africa, many universities, upon founding, immediately set up Divisions of Extra-Mural Studies. The goal was to provide a window on the wall of the university for those outside of it. Such units were set up in Ibadan, Makerere, Botswana and many other commonwealth universities. These units generally started out on a liberal note but with time, and based on identified needs, became involved in more utilitarian interventions. Departments of extra-mural studies were established, and later became full academic departments of adult education. Many later took on the dual role of providing education and training for adult education personnel, and also of organizing outreach programmes. The Universities of Ibadan and Botswana provide distinct examples of modes of adult education transformations within their campuses. While Ibadan went on to embrace literacy outreach, workshop organisation, community development work and later distance education, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Makerere Universities did relatively the same although with varying degrees of emphasis. On personnel development, as part of strengthening adult education work, (Oduaran (2000) has noted the significant work of universities in Uganda, Egypt, Algeria, Benin, Togo, Cameroon, Mozambique, and Mauritius. In addition, university departments of adult education in Nigeria have also done a lot in this regard.

Government provided overarching policies while the universities, in addition to training, participated in advocacy, also a feature of many non-governmental organisations. UNESCO leads in advocacy, policy initiatives formulation and supporting training on adult education, literacy and documentation. In addition, the activities of UNICEF, the UNDP, the German Adult Education Association, and the Commonwealth of Learning have been noted. Also foundations such as Kellogg, Rockefeller, the International Foundation for Education and Self Help (IFESH) have played significant roles in supporting adult education growth through funded researches, exchange of scholars, publications and other outreach activities. The Commonwealth of Learning, based in Vancouver Canada assists many African nations with promoting partnerships in distance education training and documentation, research and collaboration liaisons. The British Council, Department of International Development (DFID), Economic Commission for Africa and the United States Agency for International Development are greatly involved. The German Adult Education Association, CIDA Canada, and SIDA Sweden, and the Laubach Literacy International of the United States provide one form of technical support or the other to providers of adult education in Africa. The International

Labour organisation also promotes work and labour relations through relevant educational programmes. The Commonwealth Secretariat is promotes various educational programmes in commonwealth countries, with the Diploma in Youth in Development Work being a good example.

Oduaran (2000, p.40) lists the range of universities involved in this provision of support thus:

- University of Georgia at Athens
- University of Wisconsin
- University of Alaska
- Florida State University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Canada
- University of British Columbia
- University of Manchester
- University of Warwick
- University of Nottingham
- University of Hull
- University of London
- University of Leeds
- University of Reading

As an alternative route to promoting higher education, the African adult education scene has been quite successful. Many distance education activities began through the adult education departments, and some have become autonomous or semi autonomous units, carrying out their functions through separate centres. This is true of Ibadan, the University of Lagos, University of Botswana and the University of Namibia. The adult education academic involvement of universities was also the subject of the case studies discussed in the book edited by Indabawa, Oduaran, Afrik and Walters, (2000) in which various authors described practices in Botswana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

On the African universities offering adult education and adult education programmes, Table 1, from Oduaran (2000, p.39) highlights aspects of the provision of formal training to those promoting alternative education in various ways.

Table 1: Selected list of African Universities offering adult and continuing education programme

Universities		Selected programmes						
S/No	-	Ph.D.	M.Ed.	B.Ed	Dip.	Cert.	Distance ed.	Continuing ed.
1.	Nairobi				X			X
2.	Tanzania			X	X			X
3.	Swaziland			X	X		X	X
4.	Lesotho			X	X	X	X	X
5.	Zimbabwe			X	X		X	X
6.	Zambia			X	X		X	X
7.	Botswana	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
8.	Namibia	X	X	X	X		X	X
9.	Republic of South Africa	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
10.	Cape Town R S A				X		X	X
11.	Ghana			X	X	X	X	X
12.	Ibadan, Nigeria	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
13.	Benin, Nigeria		X	X	X			
14.	Nigeria, Nsukka	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
15.	Bayero, Kano, Nigeria			X	X	X		X
16.	Ahmadu Bello Zaria, Nigeria			X		X	X	X
17.	University of Maiduguri, Nigeria			X	X	X	X	X
18.	Uthman dan Fodio Sokoto, Nigeria				X	X	X	X
19.	Obafemi Awolowo, Ile Ife, Nigeria	X	X					X
20.	Port Harcourt, Nigeria		X	X	X	X	X	X

Legend: X= Indicator of the availability of the programmes

**Source:** Oduaran, A. (2000) Research and scholarship in adult and continuing education provision in Africa. In Indabawa, S. et al. *The State of Adult and Continuing Education in Africa*, p. 39.

## **The growth of distance education**

The initial motivation for the establishment of distance education institutions ranged from attempts to do something innovative, to purely humanitarian concerns. However, pecuniary benefits, especially for individual entrepreneurs also emerged as motivation. In spite of its initial rejection due to perceived inferiority, distance education has been fully accepted as an alternative and complimentary one to conventional education. Individuals, organisations, governments now make use of it to meet the educational needs of millions all over the world. Africa's reasons for using distance education include geographical and socio-economic circumstances, educational imbalance, the emergence of adult education departments in African Universities, the coming of communication systems. The diffusion of colonial practices and the tenacity of many distance education protagonists, have served as major factors for its acceptance (Adekanmbi, 2004).

Saints (1999) observes that tertiary distance education in Africa is the world's fastest growing educational sector. Many programmes at independence were secondary level education equivalents, civil service training and some level of tertiary education, with mostly foreign content. However, the emergence of local universities gradually changed this. In terms of early focus, teacher education was prevalent, and the liberal arts were common. The organisational model was generally integrated, and it was easier for the universities to offer some of their conventional courses. Roberts and Associates (1998) have noted that in Anglophone countries, university departments and faculties have been more involved, followed by private institutions and government departments in that order. In francophone countries, multilateral corporations have been more involved than university and government departments. At the time of the study, university students formed just about 10% of all the students attending from any of the three language group countries. Anglophone countries record as much as 38% in terms of those in vocational training while lusophone countries use distance education more for general public education and in-school programmes (Roberts and Associates, 1998). More Internet communication is recorded in the Francophone countries. The lusophone countries, more than any other group, are more engaged in the use of individual telephone contact and audio/video conferring. Education and business studies form the core of the general subject areas in sub-Saharan countries, followed by general science. Print was seen as the major form of instruction.

A few examples of some country specific distance education institutions include:

- The Namibian College of Open Learning, established to upgrade the educational levels of adults and out-of-school youths through open learning
- University of Namibia Centre for External Studies which runs degree programmes via the distance learning mode
- University of Botswana's Distance Education Department within its Centre for Continuing Education
- The Namibian Polytechnic, which in addition to its conventional programmes, also offers various certificate and diploma programmes by distance education.
- UNISA (University of South Africa)
- University of Pretoria's Distance Education Department
- University of Ibadan Centre for External Studies

- University of Lagos Correspondence and Open Studies Institute
- Lesotho's Institute for Extra Mural Studies
- Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning
- Open University of Tanzania
- Open University of Sudan
- Open University of Nigeria
- Zimbabwe Open University

In using new technologies to enhance distance education delivery, a publication on *Implementing an E-Learning Strategy: A Guide for Southern African Institutions* was published by NAMCOL, UNESCO and the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) in 2005. It details the how and why of pursuing e-learning as a major strategy for promoting teaching and learning in distance education, not only in Namibia but also in Africa. As far back as 1997, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Working Group on Higher Education (ADEA, 1997), has noted the following trend in the growth of the use of technology in distance education in Africa. They include:

- The establishment of an Internet-accessible, bilingual database on African higher education at the African Association of African Universities
- The use by the University of Antannarivo in Madagascar of audio visual materials to complement written ones for distance learners, including radio usage
- The creation of Internet sites in Djibouti to link teachers by e-mail with their advisers in French universities with related linkages with the African Virtual University
- The starting of a TELESON programme in Cameroun with multi media teaching possibilities and with five European universities involved with the University of Yaoundé
- The piloting by the University of Benin of the RESAFAD programme involving six francophone countries and a focus on Internet support to help design learning materials
- The starting of a Law degree in Burkina Faso at the University of Ouagadougou supported by an Internet site in 1998, while serving as a pilot site for African Virtual University distance learning programme
- The launching of the African Virtual University (AVU) programmes from 1997 which has to date utilized Internet based technologies at such places as Addis Ababa University, Kenyatta University, Makerere, Open University of Tanzania, University of Zimbabwe, Cape Coast, Dar es Salaam, Legon, and Kumasi Ghana, among others.
- Of the AVU, the installation of satellite terminals was done by the World Bank; courses were broadcast from various parts of the world; video-taped and live lectures were beamed, supplemented by class notes and textbooks, while a digital library programme was also introduced.
- The related establishment of the Francophone Virtual University comprising of French speaking higher education networks and utilizing video discs, compact discs, databases with courses in law, health and bio-technology taught.

There have also been reports by Adekanmbi (2006) and others on further developments in the region, among which are the following:

- The drive by staff of distance education institutions to obtain the International Computer Drivers' Licence
- The setting up of free toll lines by distance education organizations for students, a practice being utilised by NAMCOL for its students.
- Computer-aided programmes at UNISA
- UNISA's use of distributed messages to its students
- Other developments in South Africa, especially the Technology Enhanced Learning Initiative of South Africa (TELISA)
- [Former] Technikon South Africa's programme to enable learners to obtain courseware on-line
- UNESCO support for Internet/e-mail facility at the Institute of Distance Education, University of Swaziland
- University of Botswana's utilization of the video conferencing facility to reach its students.

Farrell and Isaacs (2007) have also reported on a number of developments in the use of ICTs in education in many African countries including in particular, the Commonwealth of Learning's on-going development of a Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC).

### **Open Educational Resources**

McGreal, Kinuthia and Marshall (2013) recently edited a comprehensive book on Open Education Resources (OER). Described as 'important learning materials with the potential to facilitate the expansion of learning worldwide' (McGreal 2013, p. xv.), open educational materials cut across print and electronic materials, are generally flexible and their content is openly licensed for free use. A variety of devices can be used to platform the resources and one key principle guiding their use is accessibility. McGreal (2013) further notes that OERs are not confined to e-learning or distance education. Currently, there are numerous platforms on the Internet where OERs are available for use.

Through the use of OERs, opportunities are created for individuals to access materials on line for formal education and self directed learning ventures. SAIDE has a website dedicated to promoting the use of such resources. Known as *OER Africa*, the site hosts a wide range of resources both explaining the nature of OERs in Africa and extending reader's links to actual existing educational portals, activities and projects. Some of the projects listed include the ACEMATHS project, the AGSHARE Planning and Pilot Project, the Health OER Inter-Institutional Project, the Health Informatics Building Blocks (HIBBs), the IADC-SADC Digital Resources Project, the PHEA Educational Technology Initiative, the Skills for a Changing World Project. A recent search of the website shows at least 25 vital links for web users. These include links to the Australian Flexible Learning Framework-Learning Object Repository Network (LORN), the Book-bot which has over 14000 books ready for downloading; Connexions, which is made of small knowledge chunk useful for developing books and courses; Development Gateway which allows for discussions on various issues and makes resources available; Internet Archive, Education, which

has hundreds of free courses; JORUM (JISC) which aids the use and re-use of resources; LectureFox which hosts high quality classes globally for teachers and lecturers' use; The Bazaar, described as a community portal for those who wish to exchange open resources. These are just a few of such open sources listed. These can be accessed at [Http://www.oerafrica.org/oeraction/OERinAction/tabid227/Default.aspx](http://www.oerafrica.org/oeraction/OERinAction/tabid227/Default.aspx).

Various universities are involved in promoting the use of OERs for their staff and students in Africa. However, various individuals make the use of the OERs on their own for a variety of tasks they want to perform.

### **National Qualifications Frameworks**

One major development which has enhanced the discussion on alternative higher education in sub-Saharan Africa is the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs). These frameworks are geared, towards ensuring the recognition of prior skills, promoting comparability of qualifications across countries, enhancing competition among different examination contexts and promoting educational quality. They give recognition to the qualifications gotten through alternative education routes. As a general organizing standard for various forms of education, it 'enables people with low levels of basic education to gain validation of what basic learning they have' (Aitchison and Alidou 2009, p.36). Among other gains expected is the creation of articulation pathways and credits transfer across institutions and national systems.

Citing the Global Distribution of Qualifications Frameworks Survey of September 2008, Chakane (2010) reports that as of then, there were over 107 countries worldwide involved in qualifications frameworks, out of which 16 had frameworks established while 83 were still working on theirs. While Australia, South Africa, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Scotland have advanced systems, many African countries are still at a development stage in its implementation and usage. Among the sub-Saharan African countries just starting out were Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Uganda, and Zambia. The reasons for starting the NQF's vary from one country to the other. In South Africa, its origin was linked to the need to correct the imbalances caused by apartheid. In Botswana, as in Australia, it was linked to promoting the kind of labour-related training needed in the vocational education sector (Chakane, 2010).

In linking alternative higher education with lifelong learning, the development of the NQF in South Africa incorporates early childhood development, general education and training, adult basic education and training, further education and training and higher education and training (Aitchison and Alidou 2010, p. 36). A body is required to manage the system and to establish policies. Harmonisation of qualifications was a major reason for NQF development in Kenya while quality assurance was one of the purposes in the Seychelles (Aitchison and Alidou, 2010).

### **Challenges in the pursuit of alternative higher education**

Historically, alternative education has never found early easy acceptance and often, challenges have been faced by early learners going through such routes. Among the challenges observed in the promotion of qualifications frameworks, in the context of

adult learning, Aitchison and Alidou (2010) have observed the following of South Africa, as summarized below:

- the complication seen how level descriptors, unit standards, specific outcomes and assessment criteria are used, which are ‘often mystifying’ (p.37) and which tend to require much training;
- the resource-intensive nature of the development of standards, courses and qualifications, with many operating in non-formal education sectors being unable to have as much resources as they need as opposed to the formal education sectors;
- the over ambitious nature of many unit standards which create further learning obstacles; the difficulty of integration of academic and vocational qualifications;
- the fact that some adult learners actually do not want accreditation;
- the cumbersome nature of implementation; and the formalisation by the NQF of all training provisions and providers with ‘consequences for genuine non-formal education and its providers’ (p. 37).

Ng’ethe, Subotzky and Afeti (2008) carried out a study as a collaborative venture between ADEA, the Association of African Universities and the African Region Human Development Department of the World Bank. They examined Differentiation and Articulation in Tertiary Education Systems in Twelve African countries. The countries included Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. They observed difficulties in articulation across universities and other higher institutions. They found the systems to be very diverse, mobility generally a problem, students having great difficulty in having pathways; universities not having regulations that enhance the recognition of polytechnic students in their midst; articulation between private and public universities is very difficult; the credit transfer system creates what they describe as major barriers; and in short, the articulation system on the continent is very much at its infancy (Ng’ethe, Subotzky and Afeti, 2008). With this scenario, alternative higher education suffers greatly.

In the area of open education resources, and writing on the challenges of open online courses, Siemens (2013) has observed a range of challenges. They include the problems of cheating and plagiarism, de-skilling of the professoriate, the unsustainability of the model and the poor completion rates observed. Citing an OPAL Report (2011) “Beyond OER: Shifting Focus to Open Educational Practices,” Vladimir, Aguilar and Montoya (2013) have noted five barriers that need to be overcome for educational institutions to encourage use of OER. They include:

- Lack of institutional support
- Lack of technological tools
- Lack of skills and time of users
- Lack of quality or fitness of OER
- Personal issues (lack of trust and time)

In the area of distance education, it is mostly in the application of new technologies and the need to ensure quality. Considering the historical origins and nature of formal

educational provisions in many African countries, the problems highlighted may be similar to what they also experience. There is therefore the need to address these challenges.

### **Conclusion**

While the challenges are obvious, the pursuit of alternative higher education in the sub-continent will benefit from the growth of qualification frameworks, the widening use of open educational resources, and the related development of technology-oriented education. With a growth in collaborative ventures between international and African institutions in adult education, the future of alternative higher education will be further enhanced. In one of its publications, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) sees qualification systems as a bridge to lifelong learning (OECD, 2007). In this regard, the growth of National Qualifications Frameworks will further define the future of higher education, and the growth of a learning society in the sub-continent.

## References

ADEA (Association for the Development of Education in Africa) 1997. Tertiary Distance Learning in Africa. ADEA Working Group on Distance Education Report, October 20-22, Saint Louis, Senegal.

Adekanmbi, G. (2006). Promoting Quality in Distance Education Programmes in Africa. 22<sup>nd</sup> ICDE [International Conference on Distance Education] World Conference on Distance Education, 3-6 September, CD-ROM.

Adekanmbi, G. (2004). Towards the Globalisation of Tertiary Distance Education in Africa. In P. T. Zeleza and A. Olukoshi (Eds.) *African Universities in the Twenty-First Century*. Pretoria: University of South Africa, pp.218-233.

Aitchison, J. and Alidou, H. (2009). *The state and development of adult learning and education in Sub-Saharan Africa: A regional synthesis*. Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Chakane, M. (2010). Understanding qualifications frameworks: international perspectives and lessons for Botswana. Botswana National Qualifications Framework Workshop, Ministry of Education, Mokolodi Game Reserve, Botswana, 30 November.

Chandler, W, Freiberg, M, Stinson, A. & Nelson, M. (2002). Alternative teaching/alternative learning: preparing in-service teachers for alternative education settings. *American Secondary Education*, 30 (2) Spring 2002, pp.1-16.

Chung, F.(1999). African educational response to the challenges of globalisation. Pan Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, Brunei-Darusaalam. 1-5 March.

Draper, J. (1998). *Africa adult education: Chronologies in Commonwealth countries*. Cape Town: CACE.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press; London: Penguin.

Farrell, G. and Isaacs, S. (2007). Survey of ICT and Education in Africa: A summary report Based on 53 Country Surveys. Washington D.C. Info Dev./World Bank.

Indabawa, S.A., Oduaran A., Afrik, T. and Walters, S. (Eds.) (2000). *The state of adult and continuing education in Africa*. Windhoek: Department of Adult and Non-Formal Education, University of Namibia.

Illich, I, (1970). *Deschooling society*. London: Penguin.

Kennen, E. and Estela Lopez, E. (2005). Finding alternate degree paths for non-traditional, NOW-Traditional Students. *The Hispanic outlook in higher education*, 15

(February 14, 2005) 21-22. Published at 210 Route 4 East, Suite 310, Paramus, NJ 07652, 1-6.

Mitchell, D. E. and Romero L. S. (2010). The politics and practice of teacher alternative education. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 46(3) 363–394.

McGreal, R. (2013). Introduction: The need for Open Education Resources. McGreal, R., Kinuthia, W. and Marshall, S. (Eds.) (2013). *Open educational resources: Innovation, research and practice*. Vancouver: Commonwealth of Learning, pp. xv-xxiii.

Mpofu, S. and Amin, M. (2003). *A survey of perceptions, delivery systems and funding of adult learning in Namibia 2003*. Windhoek: Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture.

Ng'ethe, N, Subotzky, G. and Afeti, G. (2008). *Differentiation and articulation in tertiary education systems: a study of twelve African countries*. Washington D.C: World Bank.

Oduaran, A. (2000). Research and scholarship in adult and continuing education in Africa. Oduarn, A. B. Afrik, T., & Walters, S. (Eds) (2000). *The state of adult and continuing education in Africa*. Windhoek: Department of Adult and Non-Formal Education, University of Namibia, pp. 19-30.

Oduaran, A. B. Afrik, T., & Walters, S. (Eds) (2000). *The state of adult and continuing education in Africa*. Windhoek: Department of Adult and Non-Formal Education, University of Namibia.

Oduaran, A. and Bhola, H.S. (2006). *Widening access to education as social justice: essays in honour of Michael Abiola Omolewa*. Dordrecht: Springer Books.

OECD (2007) *Qualification Systems: bridges to lifelong learning*. Paris: OECD.

Online Portal for Advanced Learning (OPAL) (2011). "Beyond OER: shifting focus to Open Educational Practices." The Open Educational Quality Initiative. Retrieved 23 February 2011 from: <http://oer-quality.org/> Accessed by Vladimir J., Aguilar B., and Montoya, M. S. R.

Perry, W. (1976). *Open University*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Reimer, E. (1971). *School is dead: an essay on alternatives in education*. Harmonswoth, Middlesex: Penguin.

Roberts and Associates (1998) *Tertiary Distance Learning in Sub-Saharan Africa. Overview and Programmes*. Toronto: Roberts and Associates.

Saint, W. (1999) *Tertiary Distance Education and Technology in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank.

Siemens, G. (2013). Massive open online courses: innovation in education? In McGreal, R., Kinuthia, W. and Marshall, S. (Eds.) (2013). *Open educational resources: Innovation, research and practice*. Vancouver: Commonwealth of Learning, pp. 5-15.

UNESCO (2010). *Reaching the marginalized. EFA Global Monitoring Report*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO (2011). *Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report*. Paris: UNESCO

UNESCO (2012). *Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report*. Paris: UNESCO.

Vladimir J., Aguilar B., and Montoya, M. S. R. (2013). *Academic Knowledge Mobilisation to Promote Cultural Change Towards Openness in Education. Open educational resources: Innovation, research and practice*. Vancouver: Commonwealth of Learning, pp. 17-32.

