A review of open and distance learning within management development

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Introduction

This paper surveys and evaluates the existing literature on open and distance learning, with particular emphasis on the management development field.

There is a substantial literature on open learning, and the various other terms that relate to the concept (e.g. distance learning, flexible learning, self-paced learning, resource-based learning, etc.). However, there is relatively little discussion of the impact of open learning and its implications in the management development context. Therefore, this paper will highlight and critically review some of the areas in the management development open learning field that are not sufficiently covered by the current literature.

The paper addresses four distinct areas: the difficulties surrounding the definitions and terminology of open learning; the relationship of open learning and management development; the usefulness of current models and frameworks in open learning – particularly in a management development context; and the argument that there is a "gap" in the literature which could be partially filled with a more comprehensive model of open learning in management development.

An introduction to open learning

Although open learning, initially in the guise of correspondence learning, has been in existence for many years, there is relatively little in-depth analysis of its impact on and interrelations with other forms of learning. In fact, open learning can be traced back to the nineteenth century (and earlier in non-formalized usage), but it is still regarded as something relatively new. As Mann[1] comments: "open learning (or at least forms of it) has been flavour of the month for some time". Not only is open learning dismissed as a "passing phenomenon" or "buzz word", (see [2]), but its early sister – "distance learning" – has been regarded as "the Cinderella of the education spectrum"[3]. It is perhaps because of these perceptions that only limited in-depth analysis has been conducted in this area.

Open learning is subject to many interpretations and meanings. Indeed, its definition has been a matter of drawn-out debate. (See [2-12], each of whom has discussed the terminological issue at some length, though many authors have failed to go beyond this surface level.)

Although the literature on open and distance learning is voluminous, there is, as Marland[13] observes, very little sign-posting of exactly what there is in the literature and which are the more important documents. The information and literature on paradigms and models suitable to researching open and distance learning are very limited in scope. Yet they can be extremely useful, particularly in a research community where they serve as a screen on which to interpret findings (see Doyle[14]). It seems curious that for a learning method that is now utilized so widely there are not more models in existence which could be used to help understand the nature and interactions of open learning in the market-place and how it could be used more effectively as a learning method.

It is reasonable to ask: "what is open learning and how does it differ from distance learning?" There are several terms in the field that are used inter-changeably. A common source of confusion is to take the different terms to mean the same thing: in particular, it should be made clear that *open* learning is not the same as *distance* learning. As Kember and Murphy[15] note: "the equation of open and distance learning is not supported by the literature". Hodgson[2] notes, "the terms [open and distance learning] are obviously not synonymous". There is a degree of agreement among commentators that distance learning (like most of the other closely associated terms) is a form of open learning (see [16,17] for confirmation of this). Kember and Murphy[15] represent this view effectively in their diagram shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 supports the argument that distance learning, resource-based learning and other associated terms are labels for specialized forms of learning which are subsets of open learning.

Unlike open learning, distance learning can be more readily defined as the process whereby the student learns while separated from the tutor. Keegan[3], in a series of publications between 1980 and 1990, has synthesized the many different and overlapping definitions of distance learning to produce an overview of the more distinctive characteristics of distance learning.

One difficulty with open learning terminology is its close association with technological development. The rapid advances in technology have meant that open learning has continued to evolve (see [18]). The literature fully
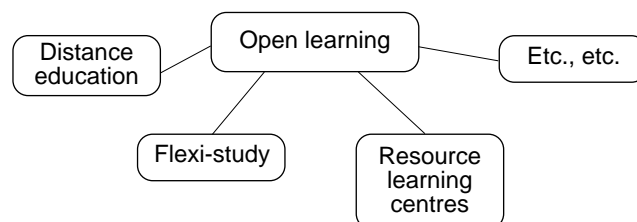
Note Etc., etc refers to all the other closely associated terms, such as correspondence courses, self-paced learning, student-centred learning and flexible learning

Source: [15, p. 4]

Figure 1.
Kember and Murphy's view of open learning – "open learning interpreted as an umbrella term"

acknowledges this. Coffey[19], for instance, comments that "one could not nail open learning to the floor as a fixed concept. It was and continues to be, a process." MacKenzie *et al.*[20] argue that open learning is "an imprecise phrase which eludes definition". Holt and Bonnici[21] refer to it as a "multi-faceted concept", while other authors, such as Penfold[22] have simply referred to it as "any kind of learning where the learner has choice".

Many practitioners have argued that it is counter-productive to try to define it rigidly, because the very flexibility of its approach is what makes it so attractive. As MacKenzie *et al.*[20] note: "its very imprecision enables it to accommodate many different ideas and aims". To try to narrow down the definition of open learning any further would only restrict it to something which it has the potential to exceed because of its changeable and adaptable nature.

However, it is possible to identify what the main characteristics of open learning are: a strong emphasis on flexibility, the removal of barriers and a learner-centred philosophy: Rowntree[12], Lewis and Spencer[16], Paine[23], The Manpower Services Commission[24] and Jack[25] all agree with this statement. Open learning is a learning philosophy which is not fixed in any particular way but maintains openness (in access, delivery and interpretation) as its core value. Of course, other learning approaches also possess elements of openness, but they are often more rigid in their delivery and definition.

Figure 2 has been developed with the aim of clarifying the distinguishing characteristics of "typical" learning approaches and concepts in relation to open learning. It shows how open learning can encompass the various other learning systems, and highlights some of the more distinguishing characteristics of

Open learning				
Correspondence	Distance	Flexible	Flexi-study	Resource centre
• Approach – uses one particular approach	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
• Distance – nearly always involves separation of student and tutor	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
• Method – one particular method	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
• Definition – is a defined phenomenon	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
• Philosophy – is in an evolving state	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
• Interchangeability – can be both open and distance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Communication – relies on the provision of two-way systems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Technical media – is often utilized	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Educational origins – is largely confined to educational institutions	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
•Group/individual – it is presumed that the learner will be alone	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗

Figure 2.
A matrix highlighting defining characteristics of selected learning systems

those systems. It is their distinguishing characteristics which have a direct effect on how they are perceived and interpreted in models and frameworks, which is what the ensuing sections of this paper will explore.

The relationship of open learning and management development

It is evident that the field of management development is vast and in continuous flux. Therefore it is helpful to put some order on the various categorizations and see where the role of open learning fits into this framework. The field of management development received considerable attention in the 1980s and, as a result of this, a fairly comprehensive review of management development has already been completed by Storey[26], from whose work the following categorizations have been drawn.

Storey[26] categorized the literature into four distinct areas:

(1) that literature which defines the essential nature of what management development is;

(2) that literature which describes the practices of management development or, put more succinctly, what is actually done to managers – or in some cases should be done to managers;

(3) that literature which examines specific features of management development, such as demographic issues; and

(4) that literature which explores management development in context.

It is the second category on which the remainder of this section will focus, since it is that category of the literature where the role of open learning can be outlined most explicitly. There are various different approaches to management development. Figure 3 provides a summary of what managers might typically do in their development process:
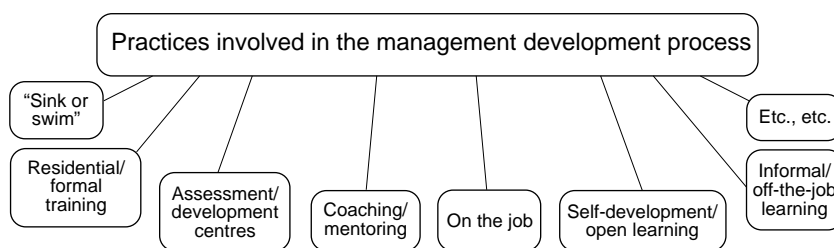
Note: Etc, etc. refers to the various other approaches such as outward bound learning which are sometimes referred to in the management development literature

Figure 3.
Practices in management development

Of course the practices highlighted in Figure 3 interrelate and overlap; for example, it might be that some of the activities at a development centre utilize open learning techniques. Likewise, off-the-job learning may be done experimentally or deliberately (for career progression purposes) through open

learning. The message therefore is that it is impossible to place every form of learning, education or development under a specific label. There is, however, an increasingly apparent role for open learning in management development, which is having an impact on the more traditional approaches to training and development.

Management development within the context of open learning

Over the last decade the literature on management development has grown considerably. The impetus to this expansion were the Constable-McCormick [27] and Handy[28] reports, which revealed that UK managers were less well equipped with managerial competences than their international competitors, and the basic message was that too little had been done in the field of management education, training and development in the UK. This was at a time when internationalization of trade, market competitiveness and globalization issues were at the forefront of business strategy.

The response to this clear message of inadequate provision was a national one in the form of the Council for Management Education and Development, now known as the National Forum for Management Education and Development. It identified the need for a coherent structure of educational qualifications to be linked more closely with the career progression of individual managers. The Management Charter Initiative (MCI) was set up as a lead body for managers and supervisors and has attempted to link government initiatives (such as National Vocational Qualifications, Training and Enterprise Councils and Investors in People) into its operational framework. The MCI has been an advocate of crediting competence, continuous development, self-development and open access (with more flexible credit accumulation and transferable modular approaches), thus creating a pathway for open learning within a management development framework. Over the last five years there has been a rapid increase in the provision of open learning practices in management development, which can be visibly built into the MCI framework.

On an educational level there has been a growth in the number of MBAs (traditionally seen as *the* management qualification), delivered in a distance format (the University of Strathclyde Business School was the pioneer of this delivery in the UK; from 1983 it was funded by the then Manpower Services Commission through its Open Tech Unit). Now many universities offer MBAs in a distance learning format and along with the colleges of higher education cater for other management qualifications, such as the Diploma and Certificate in Management, in distance learning format.

There is also the burgeoning management consultancy provision which offers management development in a variety of different open learning formats, media and packages. It is evident that many companies have jumped on the open learning bandwagon and this has resulted in a considerable mishmash of provision of varying quality and credibility (see [29]).

Generally speaking there are two distinct categories in the literature: literature with an academic orientation; and literature with a more pragmatic/practical orientation.

Academic orientation
The academic literature on open learning is relatively sparse. It can, however, be divided into two main areas: research that concentrates primarily on distance learning as a learning approach adopted within the traditional educational system; and research which concentrates on open learning in non-traditional areas, such as adult learning and management development.

Distance learning in traditional education
A great deal of the earlier literature on distance learning, from the 1970s and 1980s concentrates on comparisons of distance learning with other educational learning methods and therefore equates it with teaching and learning theory, most of which was developed in the 1950s. This research was mainly conducted by educational psychologists who concentrated "around the concepts of pedagogy (the art and science of teaching children)"[30]. Only more recently has there been recognition that adult learning and learning within business settings are quite different from pedagogic learning.

The research which Holmberg[31] conducted attempted to relate what constitutes distance learning to various teaching and learning theories (among them Skinner's behaviour-control model and Gagne's general teaching model). His general conclusion was that some of the models investigated were more applicable and adaptable than others to distance learning. However, these were models that were already established in behavioural learning theory and had then been applied to distance learning. As such they do not go any way to explaining the phenomenon of distance learning or its interactions with other forms of learning in any depth.

Other earlier attempts at researching distance learning have also examined the approach in terms of generally established models of education and learning. For example Rumble[32] studied a number of models and theories which attempt to integrate the defining characteristics of distance learning. He went on to identify three main educational models to which distance learning could be equated: institution-centred models; person-centred models; and society-centred models:

(1) The *institution-centred distance education model* is compatible with many distance education projects in the formal education sector, especially where the primary focus is on increasing the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the institution as a provider of mass education. In such a model the learner is, to a large degree, a passive recipient of the educational message devised by the materials producers. Direct communication between learners and materials producers is usually minimal and in many cases non-existent. As such the model is incompat-

ible with humanistic or person-centred approaches to education and, therefore, with open learning theory, where the individual takes responsibility for a large part of his or her learning. The model presents a lack of personal choice for learners in developing their own course, which is reflected in standard institutional course models (e.g. where examination times, assignment deadlines, course start dates, etc., are stated by the particular institution). Hence this model is not consistent with an open system where the learner has choice over where, when and how to learn.

(2) In contrast, *the person-centred educational model* presents the learner as being an "independent" consumer of the products of the system. Person-centred models emphasize the learning contract concept – where a negotiated agreement of individualized courses of study are incorporated and agreed with mentors acting as a support mechanism in the learning process. The person-centred approach is more compatible with the philosophy of open learning than is the institutional approach, in that the focus is placed on the individual. The institution still has a role to play, but the needs of the student are placed more centrally. It can be argued that a person-centred approach is not always practicable from a cost perspective because large numbers of students are more difficult to accommodate. However, a counter argument would be that a more flexible and open system frees up time for a tutor to spend with individual students.

(3) The *society-centred models* stress the work of the group in identifying problems and relating them to the personal experience of its members before there is any resort to texts and secondary materials. This obviously changes the roles of the distance educator and of the centrally produced materials quite radically. The latter become aids to the group learning process which can be drawn on where this is felt to be useful, and groups also produce materials for their own use and for inter-group exchange. Society-centred social action models tend to have lower reliance on media and higher reliance on two-way and group communication – features shared with contract learning programmes and project type courses (see [32]). Clearly such a model is more in keeping with the philosophy of open learning than with that of distance learning where it is more characteristic for the individual to learn alone, with tutor contact often being limited to occasional meetings (if at all).

Models specific to distance education
As well as the general educational models of distance learning, Rumble's[32] study revealed several models more specific to distance education which provide a useful perspective against the planning and management of distance education. Among them are: a systems model of distance education; a holistic model of distance education, which was originally developed by Perraton[33]; and a transactional model of distance education.

The systems model is useful in helping to identify the key activities which are involved in the operation of a distance learning institution. It defines the difference between a purely educational publishing organization (which requires only the materials subsystem) and a distance learning institution (which also includes the student subsystem). However the weakness of this model is that it views the whole concept of distance and open learning purely from a "provider" perspective and fails to consider the implications of the recipient, technology, government and other external factors involved in the system in any significant way. Clearly the marketplace is affected by the actions of government, technology, accrediting bodies, etc., yet these are factors which have as yet not been comprehensively examined in any model or framework. Therefore as a stand-alone model, the systems model fails to tell the whole story; but, as a model looking at the providers' side of planning and management, it is useful.

In the holistic model of distance education the whole basis of the model is built on the hypothesis that different media are similarly effective for teaching. This assumption is based on Schraman's[34] research in which he conducted a series of comparative studies on the use of print, radio, film, television and live teachers. The strength of the holistic model is that it provides a plausible argument for the adoption of distance education as part of a general national educational policy. The weakness of the model is in its relation to the relatively new multimedia technology, where it has to be asked whether the general assumption that different media are similarly effective for teaching is still true.

However, it is the transactional model which has the potential to be expanded to address the wider arena of open learning, rather than the more defined concept of distance learning, and which could be developed to examine some of the interrelations with both the immediate circle of actors and the more complex and "invisible" actors. It emphasizes the human relations aspects of management, in contrast to the previous two models which adopt a more "rational" or systems approach to management. The transactional model of distance education considers various competing factors which are involved in distance education, these being: producers, tutors, counsellors, materials produced, and the learners; and the relationships or transactions between them. However, the model is based on the assumption of a very specific kind of distance education system – much in line with the UK's Open University (this is important to note as different models of distance education will have different transactional patterns and distinguishing characteristics) – and therefore it is limited by its assumption of the kind of system it should be applied to.

None of the models discussed encompasses all aspects of distance learning comprehensively, still less those of open learning. Most of the more detailed and credible models of distance education were developed in the 1970s and early 1980s when the wider-ranging concept of open learning had not fully emerged. There is clearly a need now for a model which attempts to define the complexities and interactions of open learning. The literature on what is happening in

the marketplace of open learning and the actors involved within a management development context have not been examined.

There are some models which have been proposed more recently, such as Kember and Murphy's student-centred open learning diagram[15]. However, most are limited by their subjectivity and consider only the defining characteristics of open and distance learning, omitting the external factors and their effects; therefore they are unrealistic in interpreting how open learning occurs in a business or management development environment.

Open learning in non-traditional education provision
It has been indicated that a substantial amount of the literature termed *academic* is limited in its scope to the concept of distance learning with little research devoted to the broader concept of open learning.

Within non-traditional areas, such as adult learning and management development, there is even less analysis in the literature on open learning or even that on distance learning. There has been, however, a series of studies conducted by the Centre for the Study of Management Learning (CSML), based in Lancaster, into the areas of open and distance learning with a particular focus on their implications for management development. The CSML has also encouraged academic focus through several conferences, reports, theses and books on open learning in the management development field (see [35-38]).

The CSML has been instrumental in placing a focus on the impact that adult learners (usually experienced managers) have on management development through open learning. For example, Hodgson and Boot[39] question whether the classic theoretical approaches (e.g. Kolb's learning cycle) are appropriate when dealing with open learning as a form of learning, and they conclude that: "… currently taught learning theories do not do justice to what actually happens and can be an inadequate guide to the learner". They go on to comment that self-managed forms of learning induce learners to address the process of *how* they learn, and therefore to question the patterns by which they learn.

Hodgson and Boot[39] are advocates of the argument that open learning has a strong developmental orientation through which emphasis is placed on the development of the whole person and the learners' ability to construct meaning in and through their lives, and where the removal of constraints is essential. This is in contrast to the other basic orientation, which regards open learning as a means of dissemination (or networking) where the emphasis is on the process of instructing the learner in a particular expertise.

The CSML school of thought "demonstrates that in moving beyond distance learning towards open learning we are moving beyond an educational approach with roots in the transmission and regularization of knowledge towards one with roots in the individual's creation of his or her own meaning and understanding"[39].

Pragmatic/practical orientation

It is in this section of the literature that there is an abundance of material relating to open learning though it is of varying quality and credibility. Much of the literature has emerged as a result of market interactions in the open learning field, such as trade exhibitions, conferences, product/course developments and media coverage. This has not produced models on the processes of distance or open learning, as is the case with the academically-oriented literature; rather the literature supports general arguments about the future direction of open learning. Several arguments are evident, including: a technology-led argument for open learning; an economic/cost-led argument for open learning; and a political/government-led argument for open learning.

Technological considerations

The advent of new technologies has made open learning more transferable, not just within its educational origins, but also to the larger area of vocational training and development and, in particular, the management development field. Industry is one of the biggest consumers of the technologies which open learning is increasingly utilizing – most companies/organizations will have the equipment which open learning courses and approaches utilize. Once this is combined with the fact that employees do not need to move from their place of work to embark on a training course, it becomes obvious why open learning is increasingly an attractive and cost-effective form of management development.

Over recent years the growth in technologies has been considerable: there is constant talk of the advent of an "information super highway", along with the potential of "virtual reality", "interactive multimedia" and "cyberspace". It is easy to get carried away with the excitement of the potential that all of these creations hold. However, at present little of this is realized in the mainstream. People in general are frightened and sceptical of new technologies and rapid change. As Hodgson and Boot[39] comment: "There are many buzz words, especially in new technology … where potential is seen or imagined but which may fail to work out, prove to be too expensive for most educational systems, or be superseded and never enter the permanent vocabulary". However, there is a very definite view that technological advance is the way forward for open learning and management development (see for example [18]).

This forms the technology-led argument. There are, however, differences of opinion as to how technology should lead the way. There are those who feel that technological advances should be harnessed and tailored to education, training and development[40]; and there are those who feel education, training and development should be fitted around the advances in technology.

It is apparent that these two sides of the argument form a big part of the discussion on open learning – as they help to answer the question "what is the way forward in open learning and management development?"

Economic considerations

There is a very definite category of literature dedicated to the cost-benefits approach to open learning. In cost terms, open learning is usually seen in an

attractive light because it can save on travel and subsistence costs since it can be undertaken at the workplace (or home), thus minimizing interruption to output and production schedules. Also, it can be used to meet multiple training needs quickly and efficiently, often through off-the-shelf materials.

Traditionally, costs in conventional educational institutions can be viewed as variables which are directly related to student numbers. However, in distance and open learning the production function of education changes. This is in line with the view that capital (open learning materials) can replace labour (teachers/lecturers), and that education providers have "a mass production alternative to the traditional craft approach"[41]. Laidlow and Layard[42] have carried out a study to calculate the fixed costs and variable costs of conventional and open university courses to determine the cost efficiency per student. However, drop-out rates of open and distance learning courses tend to be higher than those of conventional courses (see [32,43]), so that, although an open or distance system may have lower annual unit costs per student, because the drop-out rate is high the unit costs may well be higher than in a conventional system.

It would seem that there is little doubt that distance and open learning can be a cost-efficient form of training provided that the costs of the various media and the probable number of students are taken into account. This is due largely to the high fixed cost and low variable cost structures of open and distance learning, which makes them attractive options. However, they are also potentially vulnerable when it comes to higher level and specialist subject areas, and the effectiveness of open and distance learning will vary depending on an individual's preferred learning style.

The introduction of new technologies has had an effect on the cost structures of open and distance learning. The extent to which certain technologies will be adopted depends partly on their absolute cost and partly on their market penetration into the homes and workplaces of those wishing to learn in these ways. Rumble[32] observes that distance education is becoming "parasitic" on the facilities which students have available in their own homes or workplaces as aids to self-learning. Some of the more advanced technologies are very expensive (e.g. interactive CD-ROMs) for the smaller companies or the individual to afford (i.e. the cost can include or exclude the recipients' ability to use the open learning approach). Paradoxically distance and open learning were originally seen as means of bringing education at a lower cost to the educationally deprived or economically disadvantaged. Now, as a result of the technologization occurring, cost structures are changing, with a shift in the financing of the learning environment from the educational institution to the student, which in turn could mean that it is becoming inaccessible for all but the relatively well-off[32].

Political considerations
The government-led argument for open learning is based on the powerful influence the government exerts through the policies it announces, the initiatives it backs and the funding it provides. Government support, however, does not always have a positive effect on the development of open learning. For

example, the Open University initially *suffered* from the government backing it received because it came to be seen as a purely political project (of Harold Wilson's Government) and therefore it initially attracted severe criticism from the opposition parties at the time. Nevertheless its prominent position in the public eye and its ability to control the public purse strings mean that government can be a significant driver in the world of open learning. For example the Government has played a part in the financing of the Open University, the National Examining Board for Supervisory Management (NEBSM), and the Open Tech Programme, to name but a few. It is through institutions and initiatives like these that large-scale distance and open educational provision have been made possible.

It could be argued that government support of educational technology throughout the 1980s has helped to keep some technologies and companies afloat. However, the security blanket of finance that government has provided has fragmented substantially during the late 1980s and early 1990s: Laurillard[40] refers to it as a "stop go" policy. The Open Tech Programme is a good example to illustrate this point. During the early 1980s over £45 million was invested in over 100 projects, yet by the late 1980s all government investment had been withdrawn. Mapp[44] observes that this is in line with current government policy, where investment is now much more targeted, so that it can be measured against a stated performance criterion or performance table. This has meant that investment is being concentrated only on proven technologies – where it is known standards will rise when measured through individual performance.

The Labour Party announced in May 1994 its plans for a "university for industry", the proposed setting up of a distance or open learning university specifically for the workplace (i.e. a university to do for the workforce what the Open University has done for home learning).

There are, however, two main criticisms of the Labour Party's proposal: first, employers would need a lot of convincing and persuading of the merits and relevance of learning provision for all their workers; and, second, there is the problem that such an institution might threaten the existing universities which provide distance learning courses, leaving the "university for industry" to specialize in this area. The removal of competition would of course be unhealthy, leaving government with a monopoly on provision for industry.

The current Conservative Government is an advocate of *laissez faire* (or free market) provision, so that increasingly it is being left to the market, through several innovative projects and companies which tend to be run on minimum budgets. This is particularly true of the many multimedia suppliers and companies in the marketplace, where there is an abundance of provision but of varying quality.

As Rumble[32] foresaw, private enterprise is indeed exploiting technological advances in open learning areas for commercial gain. Government has the power to influence the direction of open and distance learning, though it has

competing priorities to balance. It is apparent that open and distance learning have the potential to meet the educational needs of large numbers of those leaving conventional schools who are unable to enter the next level of education or the job market; but current political direction has yet to fully emerge.

A summarization of the literature review findings

Several issues have emerged as a result of this literature review, and the findings may be summarized as follows: first, although there is a blossoming literature devoted to distance learning an open learning, the majority of publications have focused on narrowly-defined issues and concepts and on distance rather than open learning. The field of management development has largely been overlooked by distance and open learning authors. Yet, given the growth in use of open learning approaches in management development, it is surprising to find how little research in this area has been conducted, particularly on how people actually learn when using open learning. There is a gap between what is being provided at a practitioner's level and what is being researched by academics.

Second, the literature which does seek to go beyond the surface level of terminological issues, is of limited usefulness, and this is particularly true of the models developed which do not bridge the gap between what is happening with the market and how open learning is actually being used. The issue of the inter-relations between the various "actors" (stakeholders) involved and the environment in which they currently operate has not yet been comprehensively reviewed. For example, it is evident that the marketplace is dominated by certain stakeholders more than by others – some of the main drivers are the technology, the political and cost implications – but there are other actors, such as the professional bodies, accrediting bodies and the recipients, all of whom exert considerable pressure. Yet how these actors interrelate and compete has still to be examined in any detail.

Third, in view of these findings, there is a legitimate argument for a multiple-stakeholder model of open learning in management development, which would seek to show who the influential actors are, the impact they can exert, how they relate with others involved and the direction in which they are pushing open learning in management development. At an academic level, it would go some way to exploring the open learning phenomenon and how it differs from distance learning, while on a more practical level it would provide guidelines for practitioners on which stakeholders should be given priority when deciding on a particular training and development approach or strategy. It is on the basis of such observations in the literature that it is hoped that future research will be based around a multiple-stakeholder model of open learning in management development. Case studies are currently being conducted on the interrelations of the various actors involved and will form part of a future review of issues indicated in this paper.

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